

Written Support**House Ways and Means Committee*****House Bill 823: Education–Public School Teachers–Preparation***

February 22, 2018

On behalf of Maryland's independent colleges and universities and the 64,000 students they serve, thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony in support of ***House Bill 823: Education–Public School Teachers–Preparation***. If enacted, HB 823 would expand high school student access to Teacher Academies of Maryland; provide training in mentoring for teachers who supervise interns; create a statewide digital recruitment platform for teaching; and establish a data dashboard for teacher preparation programs in the State.

Eleven of MICUA's 13 member institutions offer State-approved teacher preparation programs. These programs include undergraduate degrees, graduate degrees, certificates, and alternative preparation pathways for career changers. Last year, MICUA member colleges and universities collectively produced 27% of all new Maryland-prepared teacher candidates. Over the past eight years, MICUA-trained educators have won local, state, and national awards, including 66 County Teachers of the Year; six State Teachers of the Year; four Finalists for National Teachers of the Year; and two National Teachers of the Year.

In seeking to enhance the visibility and status of the teaching profession, it is important to provide early and frequent exposure to teaching as a potential career path—HB 823 provides two specific supports to accomplish this. First, Teacher Academies of Maryland (TAM) are an effective model for early recruitment through building the teaching pipeline in high schools and providing students with opportunities to earn college credits. Thousands of Maryland high school students have participated in TAM programs over the past decade. We fully support the expansion of TAM programs into more Maryland high schools and counties. Second, a statewide digital recruitment platform for teaching would provide accurate information about teaching opportunities and routes to certification to a broad public audience. MICUA supports a centrally coordinated platform to help promote teacher preparation programs and to supplement marketing and recruitment efforts by Maryland's colleges and universities.

As is true for all professionals, teachers need opportunities to engage in lifelong learning and effective professional development. Training in mentoring practices for teachers who supervise interns, as established in HB 823, supports these efforts. Veteran mentor teachers play a crucial role in supporting new teachers both during their training and during those critical first years of teaching. For the past several years, MICUA has served as one of the main sponsors of the

Teachers of Promise Institute, which is convened by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). Maryland's public and independent institutions identify their best and brightest teacher candidates and bring them to this day-long professional development event, held each spring. MSDE matches these students with award-winning K-12 teachers, who serve as mentors to the participants and assist them in their transition from college students to first-year teachers. The positive impact of veteran mentor teachers on the experiences of new teachers simply cannot be understated.

Finally, teacher preparation programs at MICUA member institutions welcome the opportunity for access to the data points described in the dashboard report established by HB 823. The Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center, in collaboration with the Maryland State Department of Education and the Maryland Higher Education Commission, is well positioned to track teacher candidates, both in the short-term and long-term, as they graduate from Maryland institutions, become certified, and enter the world of work. It is very difficult for individual teacher preparation programs to reliably track this employment data over time. MICUA welcomes the opportunity to work with the Center on the development of this dashboard.

The entire education community, Pre-K through postsecondary education, must develop meaningful and long-term partnerships to improve teacher and student success. HB 823 supports these efforts through expanding the high school-to-college teacher candidate pipeline, raising public awareness of teaching career opportunities and pathways to certification, ensuring that teacher interns have access to high quality mentors and support systems, and providing longitudinal data to help assess teacher preparation program outcomes.

For all of these reasons, we urge a favorable Committee report for HB 823.