



Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

**Broadening Options and Opportunities for Students Today (BOOST)
Advisory Board Meeting – July 12, 2018
Summary of Decisions**

1) BOOST Payments:

- a. The BOOST Advisory Board authorized the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to determine a time in April each year after which new payments may not be initiated by schools. MSDE requested this authority to ensure there is sufficient time to process any final payments before the end of the fiscal year on June 30.
- b. The BOOST Board authorized MSDE to decline any further school requests for payments for school year 2017-2018. At this point, these requests would draw down funds from school year 2018-2019.

2) Communications:

- a. The BOOST Board requested that MSDE include contacts from the nonpublic school associations and groups on general emails to participating schools. In this way, the associations can help ensure that their member schools are adhering to BOOST deadlines.

3) Special education enhancement awards for 2018-2019:

- a. The BOOST Board decided that enhancement awards of \$1,000 each should be made to the 235 students who are eligible for special education services (based on parent/guardian reporting in the applications). These 235 students include Renewal and New applicants. The Board decided that the base awards for the special education students can be counted in meeting the BOOST law's requirement to provide higher award amounts for special education students. The decision on special education award amounts was made in conjunction with the decision on base award amounts discussed below.
- b. The BOOST Board directed MSDE to include in the fall enrollment confirmation process a way for schools to provide documentation to verify the students who are identified by parents/guardians as being eligible for special education services. The Board decided that the enrollment confirmation process does not need to include a way for schools to identify additional awardees who are eligible for special education services.
- c. The BOOST Board asked MSDE to develop a count by school of 2018-2019 awardees who are eligible for special education services.

4) Scholarship award amounts for 2018-2019:

- a. The BOOST Board decided to keep base award amounts the same for 2018-2019 as they were for the first two years of the program. With this decision, there are sufficient funds to grant all of the 3,400 Renewal and New eligible applicants a base award, and to grant special education enhancement awards. Total funds available for 2018-2019 are \$7.5 million.

BOOST Award Categories for 2018-2019	
Qualified for Free Meals, Attended Public School in 2017-2018	\$ 4,400
Qualified for Reduced Meals, Attended Public School in 2017-2018	\$ 3,400
Qualified for Free Meals, Attended Private School in 2017-2018	\$ 1,400
Qualified for Free Meals, Type of Prior School is None	\$ 1,400
Qualified for Reduced Meals, Attended Private School in 2017-2018	\$ 1,000
Qualified for Reduced Meals, Type of Prior School is None	\$ 1,000
Special Education Enhancement	\$ 1,000
Note: The category for "Type of Prior School is None" includes home school students.	

5) Renewal awardees for 2018-2019:

- a. MSDE reported that there are 193 Renewal applicants who did not submit sufficient income documentation. In the interest of supporting school continuity for students, the BOOST Board authorized MSDE to reach out to these applicants and provide them with additional time to submit a valid application. The Board authorized MSDE to reserve \$465,000 in funds to cover any awards that may be made to these applicants.

The Board specified that before any awards are made to Renewal applicants who did not initially submit sufficient income documentation, awards should be made to Renewal and New applicants who already have been determined to be eligible, and also to special education students.

6) Public comment:

- a. The Board received public comments from several individuals. The comments included a request for MSDE to send award information to schools as soon as it is available so that schools can adequately plan for the upcoming year. Also, it would be helpful if MSDE can provide ongoing information on reporting deadlines to the nonpublic school associations and groups so that they can help remind schools to comply with the deadlines.

- 7) School eligibility concerning non-discrimination requirements:
- a. The BOOST Board went into closed session at 3:57 pm to receive legal advice on a request for reconsideration by Arnold Christian Academy. The school had been deemed ineligible based on language in its student handbook that was determined to be discriminatory.
 - b. The BOOST Board came back into open session at 4:13 pm. The Board unanimously decided to deny the request for reconsideration from Arnold Christian Academy.

###