



*Quality Teacher Work Group
Final Report*

**Presented to the Maryland State Board of Education
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MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
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The Quality Teacher Work Group
dedicates this report to

Dr. Dennis Hinkle
1942 – 2003

Dean, College of Education
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Introduction

The link between student achievement and teacher quality is well documented in educational literature. During the last decade, particularly, a number of studies have corroborated the correlation between student achievement and the quality of instruction. In fact evidence has firmly established that the better the teacher quality, the better students learn. Teacher quality has also been found to be predictive of student outcomes.

In light of this continuing research that points to the quality of teachers as the key to improving student performance, it is understandable that the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act has focused on the “highly qualified” teacher as a centerpiece of the legislation. While, as educators, we would obviously support the philosophy that all teachers must be highly qualified, the NCLB approach has focused largely on certification in a content area, testing, and content credit hours as measures of “quality.” This approach has both positive and negative aspects.

The implications for jurisdictions in the State of Maryland (and nationally) are enormous. The mandates under NCLB will drive the development of an organizational infrastructure to identify, monitor and report the numbers of “unqualified” teachers, as well as the need for resources, development and support of teachers who do not meet the standard. This law provides three choices for teachers to comply with the mandates: take course work, pass a test, or undergo a uniform state evaluation. The irony is that many excellent teachers with histories of effectiveness, who deliver good instruction on a daily basis, may not be deemed “highly qualified” because Maryland’s certification system is not in alignment with the academic content area requirements under NCLB.

At the August 27, 2002 meeting of the Maryland State Board of Education (MSBE), the Division of Certification and Accreditation presented the *Teacher Staffing Report 2002-2004*. This annual report provides information about the number of teachers needed to staff local school systems throughout the state and the number of teachers prepared by Maryland institutions of higher education that have approved teacher preparation programs. Each year, the MSBE designates critical areas of teacher shortage based on data in this report. In response to the Teacher Staffing Report presentation and board discussion, Ms. Marilyn Maultsby, MSBE President, proposed that the Quality Teacher Work Group be formed to examine and make recommendations concerning the following three issues: (1) ways to ensure high quality staff in low performing schools; (2) ways to staff areas of critical teacher shortage; and (3) the need for aggressive recruitment and retention strategies.

The MSBE decided that the committee membership should include representation from various education associations and organizations such as: Maryland State Board of Education, Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE), Maryland State Teachers Association (MSTA), Baltimore Teachers Union (BTU), and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). The Quality Teacher Work Group assumed responsibility for examining the issues, requesting input from various stakeholder groups, and making recommendations to the MSBE, including a time frame for implementation. At the September 24, 2002 meeting of the MSBE, the following State Board Members agreed to serve on the Quality Teacher Work Group: Dr. Edward Root, Ms. JoAnn T. Bell, Dr. Karabelle Pizzigati, Dr. John Wisthoff, and Ms. Caroline Gifford. Dr. Root agreed to serve as chair of the Quality Teacher Work Group.

Dr. Root convened the first meeting of the Quality Teacher Work Group on October 30, 2002. At this meeting, Dr. Nancy Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools, charged the Quality Teacher Work Group with reviewing and making recommendations concerning three issues:

- (1) Ensuring high quality teachers in Maryland's schools beginning with the most challenging schools;
- (2) Staffing content areas of critical teacher shortage;
- (3) Recruitment and retention strategies.

At this first organizational meeting the work group agreed to meet on November 6, 2002, November 12, 2002, November 19, 2002, December 9, 2002, December 16, 2002, January 7, 2003, and January 14, 2003. The dates in November were reserved for outside testimony. Letters were sent out statewide inviting stakeholders to give testimony concerning the issues. At the next three meetings, the work group divided itself into three sub-groups, each focusing on one of the three issues: Highly Qualified Teachers, Critical Teacher Shortage, and Recruitment and Retention. At the final meeting, each subgroup reported back to the entire group with suggested recommendations.

The Highly Qualified Teacher sub-group that focused on the first issue, ensuring high quality teachers in Maryland's schools, struggled with the logistics of implementing the NCLB mandates. This subgroup considered ways to meet this challenge with creativity and also to use this challenge as an opportunity to consider the fundamental changes needed to truly enhance the quality of teaching in Maryland. Two areas, therefore, were considered in developing recommendations to implement the teacher quality provisions: 1) the basic requirements of the legislation that must be implemented, and 2) a vision for teacher quality within the twenty-four school jurisdictions in the state. The first is non-discretionary or what must happen and the second is a more ideal view of what could happen to create a quality teaching work force.

The Critical Teacher Shortage sub-group that focused on the second issue, staffing content areas of critical teacher shortage, specifically dealt with critical shortage areas, but also consciously kept "highly qualified" as the cornerstone of their challenge. Many qualified teachers in these critical shortage areas have other career choices outside of teaching. And as with the first issue, the mandates of NCLB presented additional concerns about adequate staffing of middle schools in Maryland.

The Recruitment and Retention sub-group that focused on the third issue, recruitment and retention strategies, felt that increasing the supply of teachers is essential, with salaries, working conditions and workloads as key elements in recruiting. Equally essential, they observed is the retention of experienced teachers in the classroom.

This report represents the efforts of the Quality Teacher Work Group and is organized as follows: Overarching Considerations; Recommendations, with the major recommendations grouped by the three issues charged, a general recommendation to ensure implementation of this work; and the Conclusion.

Overarching Considerations

Given the basic mandates of NCLB and related recommendations to ensure implementation, the work group felt it necessary to imbed the NCLB requirements in overarching considerations that drove the recommendations to be adopted. The premises established by the group were as follows:

- **Competitive Salaries and Benefits**

Salaries in teaching must be highly competitive with other professions in our state and neighboring states in order to attract quality individuals into the teaching profession. Without the appropriate salary incentives, public education will continue to have difficulty in recruiting and, more importantly, retaining quality teachers, so that students will be able to meet the standards for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). It is also widely believed that the pension system needs improvement to serve as an effective retention tool.

- **Teacher Working Conditions and Workload**

The Committee heard considerable testimony suggesting that working conditions for teachers have significantly worsened. Teachers are struggling with crushing workloads; they experience less support from administrators who are equally overworked; and they enjoy far less autonomy, and can be far less creative in their teaching, as the result of mandated testing and curriculum requirements. In short, teachers are being asked to do far more and are enjoying their jobs far less than in the past. It is no wonder, then, that teacher attrition rates are on the rise. No profession would thrive under these circumstances. A reasonable workload is essential to accomplishing the desired outcomes of student achievement as well as a greater retention rate for teachers. Until working conditions for teachers are substantially improved, it will continue to be difficult to attract and retain the best and brightest to teach in our schools. The basic question is, “Are we asking too much from teachers in the time available?”

- **Adequate Funding**

Public education must be funded at the highest levels possible, equal to, if not exceeding, national defense, since not properly educating students creates a permanent underclass that ultimately undermines the well being and security of our nation. Also recognizing that resources mean little if not well used, every system needs to examine the tasks before them. Systems should ensure that adequate resources are deployed to achieve specific outcomes as determined through NCLB standards and Maryland’s educational vision.

- **Quality Assurance**

With the challenge of meeting the NCLB mandates, as educational policy-makers we can also utilize this as an opportunity to review and improve state and local standards and add to the basics as designated by the NCLB Act. “Quality” must mean more than the holding of a certificate. There must be the assurance that certification requirements translate ultimately to quality instruction. Performance-based evaluation and other measures must be built in to ensure that certification and daily practice are supportive of quality. The work group feels quite strongly that, for Maryland, certification must equal “highly qualified” and the recommendations must reflect this view.

- **Accountability**

NCLB proposes exceedingly high accountability, not only for the individual teacher in the classroom, but also for other staff, parents, administrators, entire schools and school systems, as well as for students themselves. In order to achieve the AYP expected for all systems statewide and nationally and to reach full proficiency by 2014, everyone must assume accountability. NCLB is a “no excuses” bill that will dictate that teachers not blame students for their failure to learn and, likewise, that students assume full accountability for their own progress. Accountability “partnerships” must be formed if AYP is to be realized.

- **Incentives**

Incentives must be considered in a comprehensive manner as an overall package and not just to meet individual problems. Incentives need to be considered for inclusion at critical junctures rather than just for beginning teachers. There may well be more of a retention problem than a shortage problem when nearly half of all new teachers remain employed in teaching less than five years.

Recommendations

The following recommendations reflect both the need to meet state challenges and the requirements of NCLB. These recommendations also suggest both resolutions to immediate, critical problems as well as solutions requiring longer periods of time for planning and implementation before their full effects are realized.

I. Ensuring High Quality Teachers in Maryland's Schools

- 1. It is recommended that by July 1, 2009, Maryland require that all newly hired teachers will have completed an approved program. Approved programs will utilize flexibility to include traditional, alternative, and newly created programs leading to certification under a common set of standards. It is further recommended that the MSBE direct MSDE to approve innovative teacher certification programs developed by community colleges in conjunction with local school systems as well as four-year institutions.**
 - 1a. Consider creating an objective and uniform Maryland performance-based certification system aligned to standards, such as those of the Interstate New Teachers Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) and National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), as well as NCLB requirements, that require teacher candidates to demonstrate specified competencies.**
 - 1b. Support the funding and full implementation of the *Redesign of Teacher Education* with particular attention to the development, maintenance, and institutionalization of Professional Development Schools.**

Process and Procedures:

Upon approval of this recommendation, the State Superintendent of Schools should convene an educational summit of key stakeholders including four-year college presidents and deans, two-year college presidents and deans, University System of Maryland (USM) chancellor and representatives, and local superintendents to assess needs, engender ideas, establish partnerships, determine costs, obtain commitments, and establish timelines. The first year will be necessary for planning, program approvals/modifications, and resource allocation. The next five years will phase in increased AAT degree completers, increased four-year approved program graduates, increased fifth year MAT graduates, and additional creative MAT programs and ultimately graduates. A smaller, representative group will likely have to be formed to continue the planning on an on-going basis.

Because of unforeseen exigencies, the State Superintendent should retain a waiver option for unusual circumstances. This should be used very sparingly and only for proven hardship.

Rationale:

In an effort to produce more qualified teachers in Maryland, more flexible, innovative approaches to certification must be developed. Collaborations among local school systems and two and four year institutions should be a strong component to new, innovative programs. It should be clear that all programs offering certification should be held accountable for preparing quality teachers consistent with the NCLB Act of 2002. Therefore, all approved programs must meet a common set of standards, requirements, and accountability measures within a flexible framework. By ensuring that all paths to certification are under the auspices of approved programs and their regulation, Maryland will improve the quality of teachers at the onset of their employment.

MSDE and MHEC collaboratively developed the *Redesign of Teacher Education*, which has become the accountability measurement for approved programs in Maryland. All teacher preparation programs should be held accountable for the components of the *Redesign*, which include: alignment with content standards, internships in Professional Development Schools, performance assessments, and linkage with K-12 priorities. All approved programs, new and existing, need to be held to standards to ensure teacher quality.

- 2. It is recommended that MSDE conduct periodic reviews of Maryland’s qualifying scores on the Praxis I and II to ensure alignment with Maryland standards and expectations. It is further recommended that MSDE facilitate a statewide collection system of recognized and successful Praxis I and II preparation programs to be administered by institutions of higher education.**

Rationale:

Maryland must continue to maintain highly qualified teachers through its commitment to rigorous qualifying scores in certification tests. At the same time certification test scores must be comparable to those of surrounding states in order not to restrict Maryland’s ability to import teachers. MSDE should review Praxis I and II qualifying scores to ensure that they are not punitive to in-state and out-of-state candidates.

A statewide system designed to recognize quality test preparation programs would increase the overall passing rate of provisional teachers and teacher candidates by assisting institutions and local school systems in utilizing only those programs with known success.

- 3. It is recommended that professionally certified personnel may receive additional endorsements on their certificate by:**
 - i. Taking a minimum of 30 credits (appropriately distributed) in a specified content area**
 - OR**
 - ii. Passing Praxis II in that content area.**

It is further recommended that MSDE provide state incentives for course work completion, testing preparation, and Praxis completion as needed for incumbent, professionally certified teachers seeking to become highly qualified as defined in NCLB.

Rationale:

One impact of No Child Left Behind Act is that it will become imperative to find ways to encourage highly qualified teachers to seek certification endorsements in additional content areas. The current requirement includes 36 content credits, successful teaching in that content and/or level, and passing of the Praxis II content area tests. Some teachers prefer taking courses while others prefer taking tests. By providing these options, teachers will be motivated to expand their endorsements and assist local school systems in meeting NCLB requirements.

NCLB also seeks to assure high quality by requiring a test relative to specific content and level. Therefore, incumbent teachers hired prior to 1987, when Maryland testing began, are deemed non-qualified under NCLB. State incentives should compensate these certified and committed professionals as they pursue the status of “highly qualified” in the eyes of the federal government.

NCLB defines highly qualified at the secondary level as holding a bachelor’s degree, passing a state academic subject test, or successful completion of coursework equivalent to an undergraduate academic major as defined by their state. MHEC defines an undergraduate major as a minimum of 30 semester hours (half of which must be upper-divisional credit) in one field or in an interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary field [COMAR 13B.02.03.02(30)].

- 4. It is recommended that the Education Coordinating Committee (ECC), through the Maryland Partnership for Teaching and Learning K-16 Leadership Council, ensure that issues and policies related to teacher education are coordinated and aligned across all interagency constituents.**

Rationale:

The ECC established through statute and codified in Education Article §24-101, consists of eight members; three members of the MSBE, three members of MHEC, the State Superintendent of Schools ex officio, and the Secretary of Higher Education ex officio. Since 1957, the ECC has been charged to coordinate the policies and activities of the MSBE, the State Superintendent of Schools, MHEC and the Secretary of Higher Education on matters concerning elementary and secondary education and higher education. In 1999, the ECC consolidated its coordinating function through the Leadership Council of the Maryland Partnership for Teaching and Learning K-16.

The accountability measures and mandates that govern teacher preparation programs have evolved and will continue to grow and change as this nation strives to leave no child behind. In order for institutions of higher education to understand and abide by these regulations, one coordinating entity needs to ensure that policies, mandates, and regulations are uniform, non-conflicting and synchronized across all constituencies. It is

not the intent to have the ECC propose new requirements, but rather to have teacher education proposals by appropriate agencies brought to the attention of the ECC before implementation.

- 5. It is recommended that the Education Coordinating Committee (ECC), through the Maryland Partnership for Teaching and Learning K-16 Leadership Council, increase the capacity of Maryland's Institutions of Higher Education to produce the teacher candidates needed to fulfill the hiring needs of the local school systems throughout the state, particularly in content fields that are declared critical shortage areas.**

Rationale:

As the ECC coordinates policies and regulations for teacher preparation programs, the overall need for the state to fill classrooms with highly qualified teachers must be at the forefront in decision-making. The efforts required to fill to capacity existing programs and establish new programs to meet the requirements of each local school system, in areas of geographic shortages as well as state declared critical shortage areas, must be made. Barriers to teacher preparation program development should not render any local school system incapable of meeting their hiring needs. The ECC should help facilitate the communication among local school systems, IHEs, MSDE, and MHEC.

- 6. It is recommended that the Education Article Section §22-406 legislation be amended to permit retired principals and retired teachers to be rehired by their respective school systems beyond the June 30, 2004 sunset provision.**

Rationale:

This statute has proven effective in helping local school systems to ensure that highly qualified teachers are in the classroom and highly qualified administrators in schools. While the state still faces this shortage, it is important to maintain this proven effective strategy. Therefore, this statute should not sunset.

II. Staffing Content Areas of Critical Teacher Shortage

- 1. It is recommended that the MSBE direct MSDE to create a middle school certification endorsement for incumbent teachers who have a minimum of 30 credits in an academic content area OR pass the content portion of Praxis II for that field.**

Rationale:

The current elementary education certification level spans grades 1-6 and middle school, which may extend to grade 8. With NCLB legislation and new Maryland High School Assessments (HSA), teachers at the middle school level need more content knowledge in areas in which they teach. A middle school endorsement requiring content course work or successful completion of an appropriate test allows middle school teachers with elementary certification to be deemed highly qualified as required by NCLB. This ensures parents that students who take courses in the middle school for which HSA holds them accountable, have teachers with the knowledge and expertise necessary to teach their children. This would be primarily for elementary education majors, since secondary majors already meet these requirements, and no changes in their certification are required.

- 2. It is recommended that the MSBE direct MSDE to create a secondary content certification endorsement for incumbent special education teachers who have a minimum of 30 credits in an academic content area OR pass the content portion of Praxis II for that field.**

Rationale:

To meet the requirements of NCLB, special education teachers who are secondary classroom teachers of record must have expertise in the content area in which they teach. This expertise can be demonstrated through a test requirement or academic content course work. This recommendation would give special educators options for becoming highly qualified, certified teachers.

- 3. It is recommended that the MSBE work through ECC to request a legislative bill to award state-funded full tuition waivers to prospective candidates for two- and four-year public institutions preparing to teach in critical shortage areas.**

Rationale:

Prospective teachers need to be attracted into areas of critical shortage. This tuition waiver at both two- and four- year public institutions would be available to full- and part-time students as well as post-baccalaureate and career changers. Accepting the tuition waiver would commit students to teach a requisite amount of time in the state or repay the tuition.

4. **It is recommended that the MSBE direct the MSDE to fund Future Educators of America (FEA) clubs in high schools and middle schools to inform students of the critical shortage areas and to encourage students to become teachers in one of these areas.**

Rationale:

Maryland must currently import over 50% of its teacher workforce. More active FEA clubs would inform more students about the field of teaching, as well as provide better information on areas in high demand due to critical shortages in an effort to get students to consider teaching as a career at an early age.

5. **It is recommended that the MSBE endorse the Associate of Arts in Teaching (AAT) degree and support the immediate writing of outcomes in the secondary content areas, special education, and early childhood.**
 - 5a. **Ensure the full implementation and expansion where necessary of articulation agreements between Maryland two-year and four-year colleges and universities, assuring the acceptance of the Associate of Arts in Teaching (AAT) degree.**
 - 5b. **Strongly support the development and implementation of the AAT degree in secondary education, special education, and early childhood education. (Elementary education AAT programs have already been created; support must be given to the ongoing process of revising and supporting seamless transfer.)**

Rationale:

Over 50% of the teacher workforce begin their careers at a community college. The AAT degree ensures a seamless transfer of students from the two-year college to the four-year institutions. To increase the teacher production in Maryland, educators should market teacher preparation programs at the community colleges and guarantee the same time frame for transfer students as those who begin at the four-year institutions.

It is essential that this work be included in the group formed under Recommendation 1 of Ensuring Highly Qualified Teachers in Maryland's Schools. The development, implementation, and acceptance of the AAT degree in Maryland's four-year institutions must be ensured through an endorsement by MSBE. It is recognized that serious questions of accountability, general education requirements and variance in majors at four-year institutions are problems that can and must be dealt with and overcome.

6. **It is recommended that the MSBE include non-classroom professional positions in the annual declaration of content areas of critical shortage.**

Rationale:

Expanding the umbrella of statewide critical shortage areas to include non-classroom positions such as guidance counseling, speech pathology, and school psychologist will produce the attention and recognition needed to bring in personnel to these fields as well

as cover them in the Quality Teacher Incentive Act of 1999, as enacted by the Maryland General Assembly.

- 7. It is recommended that the MSBE request legislation to provide stipends or bonuses to highly qualified teachers teaching in critical shortage areas.**

Rationale:

The recent efforts to attract students to critical shortage areas have not resulted in significant, measurable results. Stipends and/or bonuses for highly qualified teachers in critical shortage areas would provide an incentive for beginning teacher candidates to chose one of these areas, as well as for experienced teachers to seek additional endorsements in these areas. This major effort will also retain qualified teachers currently teaching in critical shortage areas.

- 8. It is recommended that for certification areas where there are no (or only one) Maryland approved program(s) and corresponding areas of teacher shortage, the ECC take appropriate action to: (1) contract with out-of-state institutions to reserve an acceptable number of student spaces for Maryland students and/or (2) identify an appropriate and/or willing institution to establish a program primarily for Maryland students and to fund such a program for an initial start-up period.**

Rationale:

Currently, there are certification areas in which no, or only one, Maryland approved teacher preparation program exists. Due to the small number of teachers required in these areas, it might not be feasible to create new programs in Maryland institutions of higher education. With the federal requirements for highly qualified teachers, competition between states will intensify; therefore, hiring from out of state may become impossible.

This would be utilized in content/specialty areas where there are few or no programs in Maryland such as teachers of the visually impaired or technology education.

III. Recruitment and Retention

- 1. It is recommended that the MSBE form a task force of key stakeholders including representation from the General Assembly, P-12 teachers, local school boards, county government, and community representatives to develop a plan which will include funding and a timeline to raise existing pay schedules of teachers.**

Rationale:

In order to attract and retain quality teachers in Maryland a competitive salary scale must be in place. Maryland does not compete well in overall salaries with neighboring states. Additionally, appropriate adjustments have not been made in recent years for inflation and cost of living. As a state that imports more teachers than it produces, Maryland must have a base salary scale that will attract teachers from within and outside of the state.

- 2. It is recommended that the MSBE charge this same task force to develop a progression of classroom related leadership roles and responsibilities for teachers with appropriate additional compensation.**

Rationale:

Classroom teachers and quality instruction are recognized as the keys to overall student achievement. Therefore, it is necessary to recognize and compensate for leadership responsibilities that teachers assume while still maintaining their position in the classroom. It is highly desirable to keep qualified teachers in the classroom, while ensuring individual professional growth and adequate compensation necessary to discourage excellent teachers from seeking other positions in education or from leaving the profession.

- 3. It is recommended that the Governor and the General Assembly develop and fund substantive scholarships and loan forgiveness programs to recruit and retain highly qualified teaching candidates.**

Rationale:

To date, a number of worthwhile attempts have been made to provide financial incentives to recruit and retain teachers. It is essential that a centralized, comprehensive system be in place to include scholarships, loan forgiveness, and other financial incentives to attract and retain quality teachers.

- 4. It is recommended that MSDE develop and fund collaborative consortia of local school systems and two-year and four-year institutions of higher education, that will improve student learning by providing educator career preparation and professional development that are highly relevant to local school system needs.**

Rationale:

The purpose of the consortia is to provide an efficient and effective mechanism for all stakeholders in the educational process to ensure the quality of incoming teachers and improve the quality of practicing teachers and administrators. Consortium members would be composed of local school systems, higher education institutions (public and private, two-year and four-year, including Arts and Sciences faculty), Maryland state educational agencies, and education and community professional organizations. Each consortium would develop a leadership mechanism that includes representatives of all constituents to draft operating principles based on the need to recruit and retain quality teachers and administrators, while focusing on the identified needs of participating local school systems and higher education institutions.

Consortium members would provide content and pedagogy coursework and other professional opportunities, such as action research, study groups, and mentoring support to meet the needs of practicing teachers and administrators, including provisional teachers seeking full certification. Multi-level mentoring opportunities to support both faculty and administrators would be an integral component of consortium efforts. Whenever possible, professional development would be offered in a variety of venues and times, including school-based offered during the school day and web-based. This would require a restructuring of the school day and/or school year since teachers and administrators are more likely to take advantage of professional development if it is offered at a convenient location and time.

MSDE should develop a state organizational structure with representation of each consortium to ensure state-wide dissemination of successful professional practices to reach each consortium and all local school systems.

- 5. It is recommended that MSDE conduct a statewide review of the school-based responsibilities of teachers in an effort to eliminate non-instructional requirements and duties that are not related to enhancing student achievement and may impact teacher retention.**

Rationale:

This review would determine the essential responsibilities of the teacher in order to reduce and/or eliminate extraneous non-instructional duties and in turn increase the instructional time promoting student achievement. Many local school systems receive feedback from teachers of their concerns and job dissatisfaction due to paperwork, meetings, and non-teaching duties. In order to eliminate non-essential duties, this review should consider the local, state, and national requirements. This review would be

modeled after the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship and establish a “clearing the plate” for teachers.

- 6. It is recommended that MSBE work with the State Superintendent to lead the Board of Trustees of the State Retirement and Pension System of Maryland to undertake a comprehensive reform that will significantly improve the retirement and pension system available to public school educators.**

Rationale:

Maryland’s pension system for school employees is recognized as being inadequate when compared to other pension systems for teachers across the nation. The improvement to the pension system would aid in both the recruitment and retention of highly qualified teachers.

IV. General Recommendation

- 1. It is recommended that the State Superintendent reconvene 5-7 of the original work group members annually over a three year period after acceptance of this report by the Maryland State Board of Education for the purposes of:**
 - 1a. Producing a progress report by appropriate MSDE staff and/or other persons on the implementation of this report's recommendations.**
 - 1b. Up-dating the report to guarantee state progress by revisions, adaptations, eliminations, or declarations of completion of recommendations to the MSBE as deemed necessary.**

Conclusion

This report identifies ways to ensure high quality teachers in Maryland's schools, to staff content areas of critical teacher shortage, and to develop effective recruitment and retention strategies. The report offers recommendations at the individual teacher, school, school system, and state level. Implementing these recommendations should be the shared responsibility of higher education and local school systems through the leadership of the Maryland State Board of Education. Throughout the process of developing recommendations, the Quality Teacher Work Group has been cognizant of the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act, particularly in relation to issues concerning highly qualified teachers. These recommendations are consistent with the requirements of No Child Left Behind. To provide the highest quality teachers for all P-12 students statewide, these recommendations range from providing support for current effective practices to developing and implementing new strategies. Some recommendations can be acted upon immediately, while others will require additional planning and implementation time. Maryland must create long-term, comprehensive solutions to the challenges of recruitment and retention of highly qualified teachers for all content areas.

Appendix A

TESTIMONY

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