



August 9, 2017

Dr. Karen Salmon, Superintendent
Andrew Smarick, President, State Board of Education
Maryland State Department of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201
Re: MSEA public comment on Maryland's ESSA Plan

Superintendent Salmon and President Smarick:

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) says that each state plan must be developed in consultation with a number of stakeholders, including, "teachers... specialized instructional support personnel, paraprofessionals... other staff" (1111 (a)(1)(A)). Prince Georges' Educators' Association represents more than 10,000 educators who serve the public in those positions—by far the second largest county association for teachers and certified educators in the State—we hope that you will seriously consider our concerns with your current draft of Maryland's consolidated State ESSA plan. We stand in support of the recommendations concerning the plans put forth by the Maryland State Education Association and the Maryland Coalition for Community Schools.

We are committed to seeing the defined application of a Community Schools model that will address schools with need for improvement to include a dedicated Site Coordinator and other community schools elements including restorative justice programs and parental engagement. Our children need a pathway clear of the School to Prison Pipeline that keeps them in school learning. It is also critical that we provide meaningful supports that address issues of teacher workload in hard to staff schools with appropriate funding. Having a Site Coordinator in every school dedicated to determining the needs of that school specifically, are germane to school improvement.

The ability for educator evaluations to be based on professional practice and not rely heavily on student growth factors that are outside of an educators control, are also at issue. Educators should be evaluated on Professional Practice. Studies have shown that when educators are allowed to develop appropriate educational environments and have the support of mentor teachers, they are successful in the classroom. Planning time must be sacrosanct in any program to allow teachers to be fully prepared to share concept and clear educational outcomes.

We are committed to continue working with the Maryland State Department of Education on this document on a continuing basis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Theresa Mitchell Dudley".

Theresa Mitchell Dudley
tdudley@pgcea.org