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State Superintendent of Schools

**Broadening Options and Opportunities for Students Today (BOOST)
Advisory Board Meeting – June 21, 2018
Summary of Decisions**

1) Applications for 2018-2019:

- a. The Board asked staff from the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to provide additional information on 2018-2019 application data at the next meeting to support their decision-making on award amounts by category. Specifically, the Board asked for scenarios that show the aggregate cost of possible award amount increases. It was noted that, per the BOOST law for 2018-2019, at least \$600,000 of the funds must be used for higher award amounts for special education students.
- b. The Board agreed that, moving forward, it may need to consider whether there are schools with a specific tuition rate for special education students, and whether this tuition rate would need to be separated from the general program tuition rate as far as the school's qualification for the Nonpublic Textbook Program. To qualify for the Textbook Program, a school's tuition rate must be equal to or less than the statewide average per pupil expenditure by Local Education Agencies from the second prior fiscal year.
- c. The Board Chair identified the need to discuss at another time the fact that there were fewer applications received for 2018-2019 than for 2017-2018.

2) Schools' student handbooks and the non-discrimination requirements:

- a. The Board considered the requests for reconsideration from two schools that had been deemed ineligible based on the non-discrimination requirements of the BOOST law related to student admissions. The two schools are Broadfording Christian Academy-Hagerstown and Grace Academy-Hagerstown. Based on new advice from legal counsel, the Board unanimously decided that Broadfording Christian Academy is eligible. Grace Academy-Hagerstown submitted a student handbook with revised admissions policies in May 2018, and the Board unanimously decided that the new handbook complies with the non-discrimination requirements and the school is eligible to participate in the next available window, to be determined administratively by MSDE.
- b. Also, the Board discussed the status of two schools still under review as far as compliance with the non-discrimination requirements related to student admissions. Based on new advice from legal counsel, the Board unanimously decided that both schools are not

eligible; the schools are Bethel Christian Academy-Savage and Woodstream Christian Academy-Mitchellville.

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