



University System of Maryland
FY 2024 Higher Education Overview
Response to Department of Legislative Services Analysis
USM Chancellor Jay A. Perman

Maryland House Appropriations Committee

Delegate Benjamin S. Barnes, Chair

Subcommittee on Education and Economic Development

Delegate Stephanie Smith, Chair

February 1, 2023

Maryland Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

Senator Guy Guzzone, Chair

Subcommittee on Education, Business and Administration

Senator Nancy J. King, Chair

February 2, 2023

- 1. The Chancellor of USM, presidents of MSU and SMCM, and the Maryland Independent College and University Association (MICUA) should comment on programs and initiatives targeting low-income students to help ensure they succeed and earn a degree.**

The USM has multiple efforts underway designed to support strategic recruitment and retention of Maryland students, with special emphasis on transfer students, underrepresented populations, and Baltimore City residents.

The USM presidents have identified retention strategies, including comprehensive student services—academic support, advising services, financial aid—to help attract students underrepresented in higher education and prepare them for college-level work.

The chancellor and his senior staff meet quarterly with leadership at four USM enrollment-challenged universities to assure that new strategies for recruitment and retention are in place, and are producing intended results.

Many universities have implemented more intrusive advising practices to support students as they begin their terms of study, or have increased their advising requirements based on students' academic performance and their progress toward degree completion. Our universities use data analytics to assess current-term outcomes to inform advising and tutoring practices.

Financial Aid offices across the USM are making financial aid offers earlier for prospective students *and* for returning students. This early engagement reduces new-student “melt” between college acceptance and registration. And prompt admissions decisions, combined with financial aid packages, allow students and their families to better plan for college.

2. The Chancellor of USM and the presidents of MSU, SMCM, and MICUA should comment on efforts to address disparities in enrollment and particularly college degree attainment.

Maryland produces more than 60,000 high school graduates each year—more than sufficient to meet all enrollment goals. The USM enrolls about 14,000 recent high school graduates annually, while, together, Maryland's two-year and non-USM four-year colleges enroll 16,000-plus students. About 15,000 high school graduates never enroll in college, while another 15,000–18,000 migrate out of state.

If Maryland had 100 percent college participation after high school, and/or if we significantly decreased the number of high school graduates who leave the state for college, our institutions wouldn't be able to accommodate the volume of postsecondary students.

USM universities have implemented—or are implementing—plans to grow enrollment. For example, many are building stronger relationships with underrepresented student communities, specifically Hispanic students.

They're strengthening the preK–12 pipeline to inculcate a “college-going culture,” especially in subpopulations with lower college participation rates.

All of our universities are improving transfer pathway pipelines, especially the robust pipeline from Maryland's community colleges to the USM. Plans to modernize and rebrand existing programs or offer new academic programs that meet workforce demands will improve new student enrollment, as will increasing course modality with flexible delivery options.

The USM strategic plan prioritizes creating a student-centered culture that holistically supports students to enrollment, retention, and degree completion. This includes addressing the academic, social/emotional, and economic challenges that affect performance and persistence.

Finally, most of our universities have begun using sophisticated data analytics to broaden and sustain enrollment—from recruitment through graduation.

3. The Chancellor of USM and the Executive Director of MACC should provide and update on the work of the committee toward developing apprenticeships program in teaching and nursing.

Little has changed with regard to apprenticeship development since the submission of our interim update to the Joint Chairs on Nov. 30.

TEACHING

Insofar as teaching is concerned, we continue our work, exploring career ladder apprenticeships, early career apprenticeships, and post-baccalaureate apprenticeships.

What we want to work toward is the successful recruitment of students into the teacher education pathway at the baccalaureate level. And we want to support these students as they embark on teaching internships—generally, at the end of their third year, after they’ve mastered the core material.

Right now, no payment is provided for these interns—the students who have *already* demonstrated a desire to teach, and a commitment to teaching.

Similarly, we think it makes abundant sense to support non-certified licensed paraprofessionals who want to earn their teaching degree.

It’s laudable to give high school students a taste of the teaching profession—even to pay them for the experience—but not before paying those students and employees who have made a demonstrable commitment to the education profession and are *already* teaching Maryland’s school children.

NURSING

Of course, nursing provides its own apprenticeship-like structure through multiple “earn and learn” models. That is, certified nursing assistants are employed while pursuing education to become a licensed practical nurse (LPN). LPNs are employed while pursuing registered nurse (RN) certification. RNs are employed while pursuing a bachelor’s of science in nursing (BSN). BSNs are employed while pursuing a master’s degree.

This “apprenticeship” model used be housed in hospitals. It was pulled out to higher education in order to ensure consistent standards across institutions, and to assure their quality through accreditation by national professional organizations.

While this on-the-job model doesn’t meet the definition of a Maryland Department of Labor registered apprenticeship, it *does* provide us a way of supporting nursing students at each stage of their professional development, allowing them to complete their career path on their terms, at their pace, and at their own stage of career readiness.

4. The USM Chancellor, presidents of MSU and SMCM, MICUA, and the Executive Director of MACC should comment on efforts to increase enrollment in teacher preparation programs and the number of completers.

In 2022, the USM graduated more than 1,500 students with a teaching degree.

There is fellowship money housed at MHEC for students pursuing education programs, but it's difficult for us to ensure that students are accessing that money when there's no connection between it and the programs in which these students are enrolling. Aligning financial support for education majors with the universities they plan to attend will make it easier for students—especially first-generation students—to take advantage of the fellowship funding.

Of course, the USM is hopeful that the implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future—its focus on elevating the teaching profession and the significant amount of money tied to it—will make a difference.

It's worth noting that a career ladder within teaching could also make a difference. As it stands, once a new teacher is tenured, the only way to move up the ranks is to go into administration. We need, instead, opportunities for highly talented, highly motivated teachers to become mentor-teachers but remain in the classroom, where they're needed the most. This aligns with the National Board Certification process designed to develop, retain, and recognize accomplished teachers and generate ongoing improvement in the nation's schools.