



**YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP**  
Advisory Committee  
*Annual Report*  
**2024**

MSAR # 10965  
Citation # LE § 11-409(e) SB 92/Ch. 343, 2016

July 2025

The Honorable Wes Moore, Governor  
State House, 100 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Aruna Miller, Lieutenant Governor  
State House, 100 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Bill Ferguson, President  
Senate of Maryland  
State House, H-107  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Adrienne A. Jones, Speaker  
Maryland House of Delegates  
State House, H-107  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Governor Moore, Lieutenant Governor Miller, President Ferguson, and Speaker Jones:

Beginning in 2015, Maryland's Youth Apprenticeship Advisory Committee (YAAC) was tasked with providing recommendations on how to create high school apprenticeship opportunities for Maryland's young people. The initial recommendations and activities of the YAAC led to the creation of the Apprenticeship Maryland Program (AMP) and considerable expansion of youth apprenticeship opportunities state-wide.

With the passage of Registered Apprenticeship Investments for a Stronger Economy (RAISE) Act of 2025, Maryland is entering a new chapter of youth apprenticeship, one enabled by renewed investments, new partnerships, and a new direction focused on building an apprenticeship system that will support Maryland's economy and workers. The RAISE Act formally ends the YAAC, transitioning its functions to other councils and advisory bodies who will take over the critical role of informing the continued expansion of youth apprenticeship.

The Maryland Department of Labor is pleased to present this final report of the Committee's activities and recommendations for youth apprenticeship.

Sincerely,



Portia Wu  
Secretary

## Background

Chapter 646 of the Acts of 2014 established the Youth Apprenticeship Advisory Committee within the Maryland Department of Labor's (MD Labor) Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning (DWDAL). The Committee's initial purpose was to study and report on ways to foster youth apprenticeship opportunities for Maryland high school students. The early work of the Committee led to a series of recommendations which informed the creation of the Apprenticeship Maryland Program (AMP), Maryland's first coordinated statewide initiative for high school apprenticeship.

While sections of the original legislation have since abrogated, AMP continues to grow and expand, creating thousands of opportunities for high school apprentices. Additionally, the Youth Apprenticeship Advisory Committee continues to convene stakeholders and experts to inform and advise on the development of policy and programming to support youth apprenticeship. Specifically, the Maryland Annotated Code, Labor and Employment Article §11-409 (e) states:

*"On or before December 1 of each year, the (Youth Apprenticeship Advisory) Committee shall submit a report, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, to the General Assembly regarding any recommended legislation to promote high school youth apprenticeship programs in the State."*

The following report outlines recommendations for legislation and policy development to further advance high school youth apprenticeship programs in Maryland. These recommendations are aligned not only to the original purpose of the Youth Apprenticeship Advisory Committee, but to new policy and program priorities established by The Blueprint for Maryland's Future, the sweeping education reform law codified in 2021.

## Youth Apprenticeship in Maryland

The interest in expanding youth apprenticeship opportunities in Maryland was driven by the success and impact of Registered Apprenticeship, a nationally standardized system of rigorous on-the-job training and technical instruction which leads to strong wage and employment outcomes for workers and employers. For decades, Registered Apprenticeship has allowed youth as young as 16 to begin working and gaining skills through hands-on occupation-specific training, yet youth enrollment in Registered Apprenticeship has declined steadily since the 1980s in favor of other forms of training and post-secondary education.

AMP was established as a companion program for Registered Apprenticeship, drawing off of its rigorous standardization and occupational focus, while also creating new connections directly to students, public school systems, and Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. AMP serves as a bridge between secondary education and workforce development, helping provide paid introductory career experiences, course credit, industry-standard on-the-job training, and an accessible on-ramp for Registered Apprenticeship programs for both students and employers.

While “youth apprenticeship” in Maryland is most often used to refer to the AMP program, high school students can and do enroll in full Registered Apprenticeship programs while in high school, many being dually enrolled in both AMP and a traditional Registered Apprenticeship. Additionally, many Registered Apprenticeship programs position AMP as a feeder program, using it to train and cultivate students who will continue on into Registered Apprenticeship upon graduation. As such, “high school youth apprenticeship” has often collectively encompassed both programs since the launch of AMP in 2016.

<b>Registered Apprenticeship</b>	<b>Apprenticeship Maryland Program (AMP)</b>
Open to workers aged 16 and over	Open to Maryland high school students
At least one full year of paid on the job training, with most programs requiring 3+ years of training	At least 450 hours of paid on the job training completed prior high school graduation
At least 144 hours of occupation-related instruction delivered for every calendar year of training	At least one course credit of occupation-related instruction completed prior to graduation
Administered by training centers, employers, industry groups, colleges, labor organizations, or other third parties	Administered directly by Local Education Agencies (school systems) in partnership with employers
Results in full qualification for the target occupation, confers a nationally recognized credential	Results in high school graduation, portable work experience, may include credentials and other credit
Often continues after graduation, may be started after graduation	Concludes with high school graduation

## **Realignment: The Blueprint for Maryland’s Future**

MD Annotated Code, Education Article, Section §21–204 requires the CTE Committee of the Governor’s Workforce Development Board to establish goals related to Career and Technical Education (CTE) attainment under the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future. The section requires that the Committee set “inclusive, statewide goals that reach 45% by the 2030–2031 school year, for the percentage of high school students who, prior to graduation, complete *the high school level of a registered apprenticeship* or another industry–recognized occupational credential”

In 2024, the CTE Committee issued its [Apprenticeship policy](#), which realigned the Blueprint’s “*high school level of Registered Apprenticeship*” goals to mean completion of a minimum number of hours of a full Registered Apprenticeship program prior to high school graduation. Whereas AMP opportunities are largely not formal Registered Apprenticeships, the CTE Committee guidance narrows the terminology associated with high school apprenticeship in Maryland. The guidance reframes AMP as a vehicle for attainment of an industry recognized credential or a pathway into a Registered Apprenticeship program, rather than a standalone apprenticeship

program.

In alignment with the CTE Committee policy and the ongoing implementation of the Blueprint, recommendations in this report focus primarily on expanding Registered Apprenticeship opportunities for high school students in Maryland. However, these recommendations also make considerations for strengths of the AMP program, its continuation, and its perpetuation and connection to Registered Apprenticeship.

## **Priorities for Youth Apprenticeship**

In support of the Blueprint's apprenticeship goals and the Moore-Miller Administration's commitment to Registered Apprenticeship as a top strategy for workforce development and economic growth, the Committee has identified several priorities which seek to further the growth of high school apprenticeship opportunities.

**Increase the number of Registered Apprenticeship opportunities for high school students by furthering the growth and industry diversification of Registered Apprenticeship.**

Despite being an effective and time-tested strategy for workforce development, Registered Apprentices still make up a minority of employed workers both in Maryland and nationally. Existing Registered Apprenticeship programs also remain heavily concentrated in construction, manufacturing, and the building trades, putting them out of step with Maryland's fastest growing industries.

Additionally, where Registered Apprenticeship opportunities do exist, high school students and younger workers still make up a minority of overall apprentices, with many programs requiring apprentices to be at least 18 years old, despite provisions that allow them to employ apprentices beginning at age 16.

Supporting actions and goals for this priority include:

- A. Promoting and developing Apprenticeship in industries where Maryland benefits from an economic advantage – healthcare, education, aerospace, information technology and cybersecurity, and the public sector.
- B. Encouraging the employment of high school students and younger workers in Registered Apprenticeship through employer incentives, education and awareness campaigns, and partnership building.
- C. Supporting and incentivizing group Registered Apprenticeship programs that can provide employers and industries with scalable and sustainable apprenticeship opportunities.

**Strengthen connections between the Registered Apprenticeship system, Local Education Agencies, and higher education.**

While high school apprenticeship opportunities, particularly through the AMP program, have grown significantly since 2016, Registered Apprenticeship sponsors, employers, Local Education Agencies (LEAs), and community colleges and universities are still working to develop cohesive relationships that can create replicable and clear career pathways that maximize student opportunities. Registered Apprenticeship sometimes is positioned as *an alternative* to college or higher education, when in reality, Apprenticeship *is both comparable to and compatible with* traditional college degree tracks. This has been demonstrated through the creation of model degree apprenticeship programs, dual credit AMP opportunities, and the approval of new occupations and programs that include or award college-level course credit.

Supporting actions and goals for this priority include:

- A. Continuing to embed Registered Apprenticeship within the secondary Career and Technical Education (CTE) system, by connecting employers and Registered Apprenticeship sponsors to the coursework offered through Maryland's LEAs.
- B. Clarifying and simplifying Apprenticeship terminology, processes, and goals to ensure alignment between sponsors, employers, LEAs, training providers, colleges/universities, and other system stakeholders.

**Ensure Registered Apprenticeship opportunities for high schoolers are accessible to all students, regardless of geographic location or demographic information.**

Registered Apprenticeship is a proven pathway to the middle class for workers from all backgrounds, providing access to rigorous training, family sustaining wages, and opportunities for career advancement. Still, opportunities have not always been equally distributed, as many groups remain underrepresented or underserved by Registered Apprenticeship programs.

The AMP Program helped to embed concerted apprenticeship development activities in all 24 of Maryland's LEAs, and AMP enrollment of young women and apprentices from rural and minority communities have exceeded the rates of Registered Apprentices. Still, transportation, access to courses and training, classroom capacity, and local economic conditions continue to impact apprenticeship opportunities, leading to disparities and unequal access across the state.

Supporting actions and goals for this priority include:

- A. Capitalizing on the community connections and natural diversity of public school systems to help advance the growth of Registered Apprenticeship.
- B. Creating or leveraging supportive services to ensure that apprentices have the resources they need to access opportunities and be successful on the job.

## **Policies to Support Youth Apprenticeship**

In pursuit of the priorities identified above, the Committee has also assembled recommendations for policy and administrative changes to support Youth Apprenticeship.

**Align the Youth Apprenticeship Policy (Apprenticeship Maryland Program) with the CTE Committee Apprenticeship Policy and the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.**

The AMP Program is governed by MPI-2022-12, a joint policy issued by MD Labor's DWDAL and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) on December 19, 2022. With the issuance of the CTE Committee's Apprenticeship policy and the ongoing implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, the initial AMP policy requires revisions and updates to ensure that the AMP program is positioned to be effective under the changing priorities and definitions of Youth Apprenticeship.

In particular, it is necessary for DWDAL, MSDE, LEAs and other system stakeholders to reevaluate the baseline requirements, definitions, and processes of the AMP program to ensure that they effectively serve students and employers, and do not create barriers or confusion that could hamper the needed expansion of youth opportunities. This could include examining the role of Industry Recognized Credentials, on-the-job training requirements, industry alignment, and how AMP programs are structured to connect to Registered Apprenticeship programs.

**Pass the Registered Apprenticeship Investments for a Stronger Economy (RAISE) Act.**

The Registered Apprenticeship Investments for a Stronger Economy (RAISE) Act was a Moore-Miller administration bill aimed at promoting investment and reforms that will further enable the growth of Registered Apprenticeship and youth

apprenticeship in Maryland. The RAISE Act, passed during the 2025 legislative session, contains several legislative priorities that address priorities identified in this report.

**Modernized Systems and Processes** – Registered Apprenticeship in Maryland is administered by MD Labor DWDAL with advisory input from the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Council (MATC). Both entities work together to develop, approve, and monitor high quality Registered Apprenticeship programs that are compliant with state and federal regulations.

The RAISE Act ensures that DWDAL and MATC can continually improve their efficiency in the oversight and registration of Registered Apprenticeships. This is enabled by committing state resources to modernizing data systems and sharing, increasing and streamlining administrative capacity, and creating responsive occupational standards that better align to non-traditional industries.

Specifically, RAISE authorizes MATC to grant additional supervision and on-the-job training flexibility for non-hazardous occupations, a move that could help expand Registered Apprenticeship opportunities in growing sectors like information, finance, and professional services.

**Focus on Program Development** – Within MD Labor DWDAL, the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Program (MATP) has served as the operational unit responsible for developing new programs and delivering assistance services. The RAISE Act codified the necessity of Registered Apprenticeship development services as a function of the State, establishing a Maryland Office of Registered Apprenticeship Development (MORAD) which is consistent with services delivered by MATP.

**Incentives and Investments** – Despite the long term return on investment of Registered Apprenticeship programs, the start up and administrative costs to employers can prove prohibitive to developing or expanding programs. Maryland, like many states, has offered a number of grants and incentives to help offset the costs of Registered Apprenticeship for employers and training providers.

Despite the success and popularity of many of these incentive and support programs, most were federally funded, discretionary, one-time, or temporary programs. Without consistent and reliable program offerings, MD Labor, LEAs, sponsors, and other system partners have been unable to effectively and sustainably market and target new growth systematically.

The RAISE Act formally establishes state programs which can be used to incentivize employers and grow new Registered Apprenticeship opportunities. By investing state funds in incentive programs the provision alleviates reliance on federal funds, creating stability and marketability that can be used to grow the system using effective programs.

**Pursue Alignment of Federal Programs and Investments that can support Registered Apprenticeship.**

There are a number of federal laws and programs which directly and indirectly touch the Registered Apprenticeship system in Maryland. When coordinated, these programs can complement state investments and help create sustainability by spreading resources to partners at many different levels. Further, leveraging federal programs for Apprenticeship can be done by *integrating* programs and priorities across LEAs, colleges and universities, State agencies, and local entities, *without* forcing major cuts, changes, reallocations.

While guidance has been issued at the federal and state level clarifying how programs can be leveraged together, the biggest hurdle often stems from a general lack of alignment and understanding among administrative agencies of how the programs can connect and mutually enhance one another.

**Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)** – Signed into law on July 22, 2014, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act authorizes the single largest federal investment in workforce development nationally. WIOA funds support the delivery of a myriad of training, education, employment, and labor market services that are delivered to thousands of job seekers and employers through state and local-level providers across Maryland.

**WIOA Youth Formula Program** – States and Local Workforce Development Areas receive WIOA formula funds specifically intended to serve eligible youth, ages 14-24, who face barriers to education, training, and employment. While Local Areas are required to use 75% of their WIOA youth funds to serve out-of-school youth, WIOA funds provide an avenue for Local Areas to support high school aged youth apprentices, particularly those with barriers to employment and training.

Significant work has been done to improve the utilization of WIOA dollars for Registered Apprenticeship and all of Maryland's thirteen Local Workforce Areas have relationships with their Local Education Agencies. Still, stronger coordination and additional local and state level planning could increase WIOA and Registered

Apprenticeship co-enrollment.

Maryland also continues to work with national organizations such as the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) to push for congressional reauthorization of WIOA and additional flexibilities that will support further integration between WIOA and Registered Apprenticeship.

**Strengthening Career and Technical Education (CTE) for the 21st Century**

**Act** – The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act was signed into law on July 31, 2018 and is better known as “Perkins” or “Perkins V.” Perkins funds are focused on providing federal support for CTE programs. Perkins forms the basis for Maryland’s CTE programs, helping educate thousands of students and adult learners statewide and providing access to high quality secondary and postsecondary training programs.

Perkins funds have been essential to the growth and development of Youth Apprenticeship in Maryland, helping fund a significant portion of the Related Instruction delivered to Youth Apprentices through Maryland’s LEAs, as well as supporting the administration of local AMP programs at the LEA level. Maryland has worked to align Perkins goals and metrics with Youth Apprenticeship, the Blueprint, and the State’s broader career and workforce development goals.

With the issuance of the CTE Committee’s Apprenticeship Policy and the shifting focus on high school Registered Apprenticeship opportunities, MSDE, MD Labor, and LEAs must collaborate to evaluate how Perkins resources align with the new definitions. Perkins funds will likely remain an essential resource supporting students and adult learners with access to Related Instruction and industry recognized credentials.

**Higher Education Act of 1965; Title IV** – Passed in 1965, the Higher Education Act (HEA) established the foundation of the federal government’s investment in US higher education. Title IV of the HEA lays out student assistance programs such as the Pell Grant, Federal Work Study, and federal student loans which offer students assistance and access to institutions of higher education.

As Maryland's economy has evolved, and continues to shift towards services and emerging technologies, higher education has played a growing role in preparing the workforce. As a result many new and “non-traditional” apprenticeship occupations include or are paired with degrees and credit-bearing coursework. To date, a small minority of Registered and Youth Apprentices are also pursuing degrees in conjunction with a paid Apprenticeship program.

The US Department of Education [has issued guidance](#) to Title IV eligible institutions clarifying that Title IV HEA funds can be used to support both coursework and on- the-job training for approved Registered Apprenticeship programs, creating significant opportunities for employers, sponsors, colleges, and universities to expand opportunities for students and workers. Additional coordination between providers, partners, and administrative agencies is required to establish these partnerships and access Title IV funds for Apprenticeship.

## Conclusion

The expansion and development of Youth Apprenticeship programs in Maryland remain critical to the state's economic and workforce development goals. AMP has successfully provided high school students with early career experiences, serving as an important bridge to Registered Apprenticeship and industry-recognized credentials. However, as the landscape evolves with the implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future and the CTE Committee's Apprenticeship Policy, further alignment is necessary to ensure that AMP continues to serve as a valuable pathway into high-demand occupations. By strengthening collaboration between educational institutions, employers, and workforce agencies, Maryland can build a more integrated system that prepares students for long-term success.

The recommendations outlined in this report underscore the importance of expanding Registered Apprenticeship opportunities for high school students while maintaining the strengths of existing programming and investments. Increasing employer engagement, developing Apprenticeship opportunities in nontraditional industries, and clarifying policies will help ensure that Apprenticeship remains a viable and accessible career pathway for all students. Additionally, strategic investments, such as those proposed in the RAISE Act, will provide the necessary infrastructure, incentives, and policy reforms to support long-term Apprenticeship growth. By embedding Apprenticeship more deeply within secondary education and workforce training programs, Maryland can enhance career readiness while meeting the demands of a changing economy.

Looking ahead, the continued success of Youth Apprenticeship in Maryland will depend on strong policy alignment, sustainable funding, and active collaboration across stakeholders. Leveraging federal and state workforce programs, strengthening partnerships with postsecondary institutions, and ensuring equitable access to Apprenticeship opportunities will be key to meeting the state's ambitious workforce goals. Through deliberate investment and strategic policy development, Maryland can position itself as a national leader in Apprenticeship innovation, offering high school students clear, structured, and rewarding pathways to well-paying careers.