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State Superintendent of Schools

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October 1, 2017

The Honorable Larry Hogan
State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Thomas V. Miller
H-107 State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Michael E. Busch
H-101 State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dr. William (Brit) Kirwan
Commission on Innovation & Excellence in
Education
90 State Circle, Room 226
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Report of the Workgroup on Future Comprehensive Master Plans (MSAR #10739)

Dear Governor Hogan, President Miller, and Speaker Busch:

In 2016, Governor Hogan signed House Bill 999 (Chapter 702) into law which established a workgroup for the State's comprehensive master plan process. Under the provisions of Chapter 702, the workgroup was directed to review the current statutory and regulatory requirements of the master plan process, the new requirements of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, and consider making recommendations for future comprehensive master plans.

The workgroup met four times over the duration of eight months to discuss and develop recommendations for future comprehensive master plans. Meetings were held in the months of January, March, July, and August 2017 at the Maryland State Department of Education. Findings and recommendations of the workgroup were reported to the State Board of Education on September 19, 2017.

If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact Mary Gable, Assistant State Superintendent of the Division of Student, Family, and School Support/Academic Policy at mary.gable@maryland.gov or by phone at (410) 767-0472. Thank you for your continued support and interest in maintaining the highest quality of education for all students in Maryland public schools.

Best Regards,

Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

KBS:mg

cc: Andrew Smarick, State Board President
Sarah Albert, DLS Library (5 copies)

**Report to the Maryland State Department of Education and the
Maryland General Assembly
of the Workgroup on Future Comprehensive Master Plans under
House Bill 999, the Commission on Innovation and
Excellence in Education**

**Presented by the
Maryland State Department of Education**

October 1, 2017

**Larry Hogan
Governor**

**Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Schools**



Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

Andrew R. Smarick
President, Maryland State Board of Education

Larry Hogan
Governor

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Comprehensive Planning Specialist
Division of Student, Family, and School Support

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Acknowledgements

This 2017 final report of the Maryland State Department of Education Master Plan Workgroup is the result of hard work, valuable input, and commitment from individuals from Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and the Maryland State Department of Education (see the appendix for a full list of the Master Plan Workgroup). Each Workgroup member was exceptionally generous with their time and supportive feedback. Their participation on the Master Plan Workgroup, along with feedback, suggestions, and recommendations were invaluable for the final report. The completion, timeless, and comprehensiveness of this report would not been possible without their active participation and dedication.

Executive Summary

In 2016, Governor Hogan signed House Bill 999 (Chapter 702) into law which established a Workgroup for the comprehensive master plan process. Under the provision of Chapter 702, the Workgroup was directed to make recommendations and reporting for future comprehensive master plans. Findings and recommendations of the Workgroup were to be reported to the State Board of Education and the General Assembly by October 1, 2017.

In response to Chapter 702, the Workgroup met four times over the duration of eight months to discuss and develop recommendations for future comprehensive master plans. The meetings were held in the months of January, March, July, and August, 2017 at the Maryland State Department of Education.

As a result of the meetings, the following recommendations were made:

Workgroup Recommendations: What Should Future Master Plans Include?

Recommendation #1

- The Workgroup recommends that the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) consider components of future comprehensive master plans to mirror the reporting requirements for the Every Student Succeed Act (ESSA) Local Consolidated Plan, and that the plan should be forward facing to provide a view of the upcoming school year. The recommendation would be in alignment with ESSA's requirement of LEAs to develop a local comprehensive plan, and Section 5-401 of the Education Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland that requires LEAs to develop a comprehensive master plan. This recommendation eliminates duplication potentially created by the federal and State mandates.

Recommendation #2

- The Workgroup recommends that the MSDE consider including in future comprehensive master plans components of LEAs' strategic plan (e.g., goals, objectives, strategies, timelines, progress monitoring, etc.). This recommendation preserves the strategic nature of the local plan and allows LEAs to maintain its local

strategic planning structure (e.g. goals, strategies, and timelines). As part of this process, members of the Workgroup reviewed local strategic plans and compared them to the current master plan statute.

Recommendation #3

- The Workgroup recommends that the MSDE consider revising the annual submission date of October 15th as stated in Section 5-401(b)(2)(ii) of the Education Article, Annotated Code to a January or February submission date. This recommendation may lessen the amount of time between data collection and the year for which the current-year master plan is developed. Graduation and dropout rates are examples of data that are released later in the year, typically after the current master plan is due.

Workgroup Recommendations: Should Master Plans be in a Digital Format that can be Periodically Updated?

Recommendation #1

- The Workgroup recommends that the MSDE consider developing a master plan digital reporting portal to be added to the Department's website.
 - a. Provide LEAs with individual access codes to enter data analysis results and reporting requirements based on the data. The digital format portal would allow LEAs to enter data and reports in segments, and to return to the saved components.
 - b. Develop a platform within the portal to provide narrative to include challenges and evidence-based practices, programs or products to ensure student progress. The narrative would be based on data analysis to include goals, objectives, and strategies to promote academic excellence among all students.

Recommendation #2

- The Workgroup recommends that the MSDE consider a digital reporting portal that will include the ability for LEAs to upload:
 - a. Strategic plans, Federal funding program reports, State grant applications, and additional documents to support the comprehensive master plan of the LEA.

This recommendation would allow LEAs to upload the entire comprehensive master plan into a digital portal over several sessions, and then submit the completed plan to the MSDE for approval.

Report from the Maryland State Department of Education Master Plan Workgroup

Introduction and Background

In 2002, the Maryland General Assembly enacted the *Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act*, which restructured Maryland's public school finance system and increased State aid to public schools by an estimated \$1.3 billion over six fiscal years (2003-2008). As a result of this legislation, Maryland adopted a standards-based approach to public school financing.

In 2003, the Bridge to Excellence legislation required LEAs to develop a comprehensive master plan that outlined strategies for improving student achievement and eliminating achievement gaps. Based on the unprecedented increases in State aid and given the unrestricted nature of these funds, the Maryland General Assembly enacted the *Fiscal Accountability and Oversight Act* the following year (2004), which, among other fiscal measures, expanded the scope of the Master Plan Annual Updates to include a detailed summary of how each local board of education's current year budget and increases in expenditures over the prior year were consistent with the goals, objectives, and strategies detailed in the master plan.

On December 8, 2015, the State Board discussed the need to improve the alignment of local budgets with master plan goals and objectives, and the connection of these goals with student achievement and alignment with the ESSA. Subsequently, the MSDE respectfully requested that the General Assembly consider granting the MSDE, and LEAs a one-year waiver from the master plan reporting requirements outlined in Section 5-401(b)(3)(ii) of the Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland.

The MSDE requested the time to collaborate with LEAs, and other workgroups to enhance the master plan process and account for the changes in Maryland's education accountability system. At that time, the changes in Maryland's accountability system have been impacted by the following:

- Maryland adopted new standards: The Maryland College and Career Ready Standards (MCCRS) in 2013-2014.
- Maryland implemented new assessments aligned with the MCCRS in 2015.
- The Elementary and Secondary Education Act was reauthorized in 2015 with President Obama signing the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

In response, the Maryland General Assembly passed House Bill (HB) 999, Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education in 2016. The HB 999 directed the State Department of

Education to convene a Workgroup to make recommendations for future comprehensive master plans.

In order to accomplish this, the Workgroup was asked to complete the following activities:

1. Review the current statutory and regulatory requirements of the master plan and the new requirements of the federal ESSA.
2. On or before October 1, 2017, make recommendations to the State Board and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly, regarding:
 - a) What information future comprehensive master plans should include; and
 - b) Whether future comprehensive master plans should be completed in a digital format that can be updated periodically.

In response to Chapter 702, the Workgroup met four times over the duration of eight months to discuss and reach consensus on recommendations for future comprehensive master plans. Meetings occurred on January 13, 2017, March 2, 2017, July 20, 2017, and August 17, 2017.

Organization of the Report

Chapter 702 required the Master Plan Workgroup to review the current statutory and regulatory requirements of the master plan and the new requirements of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, and consider making recommendations for future comprehensive master plans. Workgroup members reviewed current statute and the draft ESSA State Consolidated Plan in preparation for the each master plan meeting. The following section includes a summary of the current master plan statute, and the recommendations of the Workgroup regarding components of the master plan and whether future comprehensive master plans should be completed in a digital format that can be updated periodically.

Summary of Current Master Plan Statute: § 5-401 Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland

In the § 5-401 Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland, it is noted that each local school board shall develop and implement a comprehensive master plan that describes their goals, objectives, and strategies to improve student achievement and meet State performance. The description should include:

- A detailed summary that includes implementation of strategies for meeting goals and objectives;
- Methods for measuring progress towards meeting goals and objectives;
- Timelines for implementation of strategies for meeting goals and objectives;
- Timelines for meeting goals and objectives;

- Description of alignment of budget with goals, objectives, and strategies for improving student achievement; and
- Any other information required by the State Superintendent.

The reporting of the goals and objectives shall include the following students groups:

- Students requiring special education, as defined in § 5-209;
- Student requiring limited English proficiency, as defined in § 5-208
- Prekindergarten students;
- Kindergarten students;
- Gifted and talented students, as defined by § 8-201;
- Students enrolled in career and technology courses;
- Students failing to meet, or failing to make progress towards meeting State performance standards, including any segment of the student population that is, on average, performing at a lower achievement level than the student population as a whole; and
- Any other segment of the student population identified by the State Superintendent.

The current master plan statute requires LEAs to report on strategies to address disparities with regards to students failing to meet, or failing to make progress towards meeting, State performance standards. In addition, each comprehensive master plan should be updated annually and submitted to the Department, on or before October 15th for review and approval.

Workgroup Recommendations: What Should Future Master Plans Include?

Recommendation #1

- The Workgroup recommends that the MSDE consider ensuring that components of future comprehensive master plans mirror the reporting requirements for the ESSA Local Consolidated Plan, and that the plan should be forward facing to provide a view of the upcoming school year. The recommendation would be in alignment with ESSA's requirement of Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to develop a local comprehensive plan, and Section 5-401 of the Education Article, Annotated Code that requires LEAs to develop a comprehensive master plan. This recommendation eliminates duplication potentially created by the federal and State mandates.

Recommendation #2

- The Workgroup recommends that the MSDE consider including in future comprehensive master plans components of LEAs' strategic plan (e.g., goals, objectives, strategies, timelines, progress monitoring, etc.). This recommendation preserves the strategic nature of the local plan and allows LEAs to maintain its local strategic planning structure (e.g. goals, strategies, and timelines). As part of this process, members of the workgroup reviewed local strategic plans and compared them with the local master plans.

Recommendation #3

- The Workgroup recommends that the MSDE consider revising the current annual submission date of October 15th as stated in Section 5-401(b)(2)(ii) of the Education Article, Annotated Code to a January or February submission date. The recommended change would allow LEAs to have a complete set of data to develop the master plan for the upcoming year with the most current data. This may also lessen the amount of lag time between the data collection and the year for which the master plan is developed. Graduation and dropout rates are examples of data that are released later in the year, typically after the master plan is due.

These Workgroup recommendations represent revising the current master plan statute which requires LEAs to report goal, objectives, and strategies for the student groups listed on page 5.

Workgroup Recommendations: Should Master Plans be in a Digital Format that can be Periodically Updated?

The Workgroup was tasked to make recommendations on whether future comprehensive master plans should be completed in a digital format that can be updated periodically.

Recommendation #1

- The Workgroup recommends that the MSDE consider developing a master plan digital reporting portal to be added to the Department's website, as appropriate.
 - a. Provide LEAs with individual access codes to enter data analysis results and reporting requirements based on the data. The digital format portal would allow LEAs to enter data and reports in segments, and to return to the saved components. Develop a platform within the portal to input narrative to include challenges and evidence-based practices, programs, or products to ensure student progress. The narrative would be based on data analysis to include goals, objectives, and strategies to promote academic excellence for all students.

Recommendation #2

- The Workgroup recommends that the MSDE consider a digital reporting portal that will include the ability for LEAs to upload:
 - a. Strategic plans, Federal grant program reports and State grant applications, and additional documents to support the comprehensive master plan of the LEA.






This recommendation would allow LEAs to upload the entire comprehensive master plan into a digital portal over several sessions, and then submit the completed plan to the MSDE for approval.

Outline of Meeting Timeline of Activities

The Master Plan Workgroup meetings were held in January, March, July and August 2017. Below is an outline of the timeline and activities.

Meeting Timeline

Activities

 A dark grey rectangular box with a 3D effect, containing the text "January 2017" in white. A grey arrow points to the right from the right side of the box.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Reviewed and discussed the background of House Bill (HB) 999;· Reviewed the current statutory and regulatory requirements of the Bridge to Excellence Master Plan;· Discussed the new requirements of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA); and· Discussed and conducted small group activity to identify and prioritize components of future master plans.
 A grey rectangular box with a 3D effect, containing the text "March 2017" in white. A grey arrow points to the right from the right side of the box.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Reviewed January meeting outcomes and finalized recommended master plan components;· Discussed components of Local Education Agency strategic plans and conducted cross-walk requirements of LEAs strategic plans and Section Education Article §5-401;· Discussed State Template for Consolidated Plan (ESSA);· Discussed, reviewed, and conducted cross-walk of LEA strategic plans and master plan requirements;· Discussed and reviewed results of cross walk activity; and· Discussed suggestions to address digital format that can be updated periodically.
 A light grey rectangular box with a 3D effect, containing the text "July 2017" in white. A grey arrow points to the right from the right side of the box.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Conducted cross walk activity between State Consolidated Plan and proposed components of the Local Consolidated Plan;· Made recommendations for components the proposed Local Consolidated Plan based on the draft State Consolidated Plan;· Developed, reviewed, and discussed outline of Local Consolidated Plan components; and· Developed survey to determine due dates for each component of the Local Consolidated Plan.
 A grey rectangular box with a 3D effect, containing the text "August 2017" in white. A grey arrow points to the right from the right side of the box.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Analyzed survey result for recommendations regarding due dates for components of the Local Consolidated Plan;· Made recommendations for components for future master plans;· Explored demonstration of digital format for reporting requirements; and· Reached consensus on digital format of future Master Plans.
 A gold-colored rectangular box with a 3D effect, containing the text "Final Report October 2017" in white. A gold arrow points to the right from the right side of the box.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· The Master Plan Workgroup reached consensus on recommendations addressing the requirements of HB999:· Information future comprehensive master plans should include; and· Whether future comprehensive master plans should be completed in a digital format that can be updated periodically.

Conclusion

The Master Plan Workgroup recommendations propose an approach to facilitate evaluation and monitoring of future master plans and to improve alignment of local budgets with goals, objectives, strategies, and the connection of these goals to improving student outcomes.

The recommendations for the digital format propose reporting, monitoring, and evaluating interventions, products, and programs for use with specific sets of indicators. The recommendations should be implemented consistently by each LEA.

The strategic planning component will ensure that each LEA addresses individual student group challenges and has the opportunity to identify needs for technical assistance. In addition, each LEA may provide a detailed report on successes regarding accomplishments anchored in local annual milestones.

Appendix – Members of the Workgroup

Members of the Workgroup

The Master Plan Workgroup was comprised of nineteen members from LEAs and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). In fall 2016, Dr. Karen Salmon, State Superintendent of Schools, forwarded a request to local superintendents to provide staff representation to participate on the Master Plan Workgroup. Twenty-one local staff members represented twelve LEAs on the Workgroup. Nine staff members were from the MSDE. The list of members of the Workgroup is below:

Name	Title	LEA or MSDE
Doreen Bass	Coordinator of Grants	Frederick County
Greg Bricca	Local Accountability Coordinator (LAC)	Carroll County
Russell Brown	Chief Accountability and Performance Management Officer	Baltimore County
Raymond Brown	Chief Finance Officer	Prince George' County
William Burke	Chief Organizational Effectiveness	Baltimore County
Kara Calder	Director, Research and Strategic Planning	Baltimore County
Michelle Daley	Comprehensive Planning Specialist	MSDE
Richard Edwards	Director of Education Services	Cecil County
Bonnie Ennis	Supervisor for School Improvement, Accountability and Strategic	Wicomico County
Nancy Fitzgerald	Executive Director, Special Education and Student Services	Howard County
Mary Gable	Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Academic Policy and Innovation and Division of Student, Family, and School Support	MSDE
Natalie Gay	Coordinator, Data Analysis & Research	Frederick County
Donna Gunning	Program Manager	MSDE
Tracey Hiebel	Secondary Accountability Officer	St. Mary's County
Sheila McEwan	Sr. Manager, Strategic Initiatives	Anne Arundel County
Christine Koth	Director, Office of Research	Baltimore County
Jeffrey Maher	Chief Strategic Officer	St. Mary's County
Leigh Mann	Sr. Manager/LAC, Testing Office	Anne Arundel County
Tina McKnight	Director, Program Improvements for Family Support	MSDE
Kristi Michel	Chief Operating Office, Office of the Deputy Finance Administration	MSDE
James Orr	Administrative Assistant	Caroline County
Karen Peters	Coordinator of Testing	Charles County
Shannon Pugh	Manager, Academics & Strategic Initiatives & Assessments	Anne Arundel County
Walter Sallee	Director, Strategic Planning and Student Services	MSDE
Alice Smith	Coordinator of Research and Planning	Carroll County
Danielle Susskind	Education Policy Specialist	MSDE
Christy Thompson	Executive Director	MSDE
Joan Withers	Acting Director of Secondary Education	Charles County
Judy Walker	Early Learning Branch Chief	MSDE

Renee Villareal	Coordinator of School Improvement and Intervention	Harford County
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