



College Success Task Force

TO: Interested Parties

FROM: Dr. Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools and
Dr. James E. Lyons, Sr., Secretary of Higher Education
Co-Chairs College Success Task Force

DATE: September 2, 2009

SUBJECT: Hearing to Offer Recommendations to the College Success Task Force

National leaders have been drawing the American public's attention to the fact that the educational attainment of young people in the United States is less than that of the generation preceding them. Other developed countries have been increasing the percentage of their young, working populations with a college degree or certificate, while the United States has been slipping in the opposite direction. In a time when more jobs require postsecondary education and training, this trend points the way to economic decline. To reverse this shift, both higher education and preK-12 education must take seriously the challenge to prepare more students for college, to prepare students better than ever for college, and to ensure that once in college, students succeed in reaching their educational goals.

To address the set of challenges linked to a successful transition from high school to college, in the spring of 2009, the Governor's P-20 Leadership Council of Maryland created and charged a College Success Task Force. This task force is examining current K-12 and higher education policies and practices related to educational standards and then will develop recommendations for changes to policy and/or practice that raise standards and ensure that completion

requirements at the 12th grade are aligned with entrance expectations for postsecondary education. The task force is asked in particular to do the following:

1. Identify gaps in alignment with particular attention to reading, writing, and mathematics;
2. Identify national benchmark educational achievement standards; and
3. Make recommendations that assure a seamless transition from the 12th grade to the first year of college.

The College Success Task Force includes legislators, preK-12 school district leaders, principals, and State and campus higher education leaders. This broadly representative group of individuals will be working through the fall to prepare recommendations for Governor O'Malley and the P-20 Leadership Council. To fulfill our charge, it is important that the College Success Task Force hear from many different partners in the education community and in the broader

community of Marylanders. To facilitate the involvement of as many informed stakeholders as possible in this endeavor, a hearing has organized for **October 15, 9 am – 11:30 am**, to offer people the chance to share information or recommendations with the task force. The hearing will be held at the Maryland Higher Education Commission, 839 Bestgate Road, Annapolis.

We invite you to present your concerns and, especially, your recommendations for ensuring that more students successfully transition into college and achieve their educational goals. Presentations should not exceed 5 minutes if you are representing an organization and 3 minutes if you are speaking as an individual. Presenters are asked to submit their comments in advance. If offering recommendation(s) to the task force, each should be followed by a rationale (please limit your recommendations to 1 page *per* recommendation-rationale). These submissions will enable task force members to have your ideas at hand as they shape their final recommendations. Please also feel free to share this invitation with other interested parties who may want to submit comments.

If you wish to present oral remarks at the meeting, please e-mail your written material by **October 8, 2009**, to either ccaraco@mhec.state.md.us or jforan@msde.state.md.us. Include a phone number in your e-mail request. Every effort will be made to schedule everyone who requests a presentation slot. Again, presenters will be limited to **five minutes if they represent an organization and 3 minutes if they are speaking as an individual**. Presentations will be scheduled until the allotted time for the hearing is filled.

If you are interested in offering a recommendation but do not wish to make an oral presentation, you may still submit your ideas or recommendations and rationales in writing for consideration by the task force. These submissions are due by October 15, 2009.

For more information, please contact one of the task force staff members:

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