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Senate Bill 1092 requires the State Department of Education, in collaboration with certain entities, to establish a certain outreach program; establishing the Maryland Early Literacy Initiative in the Department; establishing the Learning in Extended Academic Programs (LEAP) grant program; altering certain eligibility requirements for the Teaching Fellows for Maryland scholarship program; establishing a Career and Technology Education Innovation Grant; extending the final report date for the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education; etc.

PSSAM fully **supports** Senate Bill 1092.

PSSAM has been actively following the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education (Kirwan Commission) for over a year now. We have had a superintendent actively participate as a member of the Commission. Much of the Commission's time has been spent focusing on education policy. We fully support the Commission's work continuing to address the funding needs of every Maryland local school system and we look forward to continuing to lead this important discussion. We realize this legislation is just an initial installment of the Commission's work and appreciate the areas that this legislation is focusing on such as teacher recruitment and marketing of the profession.

Historically, Maryland has had a shortage of qualified teachers in certain content areas. Maryland has long been an import state, hiring a significant number of teachers prepared in other states. Early-career attrition, flat teacher preparation program completion rates, and teacher retirements all contribute to shortages. Maryland has instituted state scholarships in all workforce shortage areas including those in education, and has implemented certain strategies to attract and retain teachers.

Despite various programs and financial incentives to address the issue, Maryland still faces critical shortages in the following areas as reported for 2017-18: Career and Technology areas, Computer Science, Business Education, English, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Mathematics, Middle School Education, Science, Special Education, World Language, and the Arts.

PSSAM appreciates the sponsors' focus on Maryland's need to expand statewide teacher recruitment efforts. Local superintendents understand the urgency of this issue and have expanded local school system recruitment efforts. However, we recognize the fact that more needs to be done to solve the problem. We believe offering Teacher fellows and scholarship funding will greatly help to alleviate the shortage in the years ahead.

Early learning literacy has long been a priority for PSSAM. We appreciate the development of a grant program to assist county school systems with early learning literacy programs. We look forward to working with the Maryland State Department of Education and other educational partners to develop and expand opportunities for our younger students who are falling behind.

Preschool expansion is PSSAM's top priority and we are looking forward to a time when universal pre-school can be offered to all of our 4 year old students and low income at risk three year olds. We appreciate this initial work on continuing to expand these opportunities for our youngest children.

Currently our high schools are focusing on college and career readiness for all graduating students. Career Technology Programs (CTE) have been expanding during the 21st Century and we know there are many students that will not be entering college after graduation. Apprenticeship programs offering students the opportunity to earn certifications and/or a specific license in certain career areas is also a laudable goal to attain prior to graduation. We support any efforts and funding to help us expand CTE in Maryland.

Finally, PSSAM thanks the Kirwan Commission for their diligent outstanding work and their preliminary report. We realize that there is still much work to be done, but we applaud the sponsors of Senate Bill 1092 for legislating the initial steps and funding to assist with implementation. In conclusion, PSSAM fully **supports** Senate Bill 1092 and urges a favorable committee report.