

Maryland General Assembly
Joint Committee on Children, Youth, and Families
2011 Interim
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THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401-1991

December 22, 2011

The Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr., Co-Chairman
The Honorable Michael E. Busch, Co-Chairman
Members of the Legislative Policy Committee

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Joint Committee on Children, Youth, and Families respectfully submits the following summary of its 2011 interim activities.

The joint committee met three times during the interim to consider children and youth issues, including presentations on dropout prevention, middle school performance, and home visiting. The joint committee also had presentations on the National Conference of State Legislatures' (NCSL) Task Force on School Dropout Prevention and Recovery report and legislative objectives and issues relating to dropout prevention. The meetings were held as follows:

- June 22 – Hearing: Introduction of Interim State Superintendent of Schools and Update on Dropout Prevention;
- July 21 – Hearing: Middle School Performance; and
- September 21 – Hearing: Home Visiting and NCSL Task Force on School Dropout Prevention and Recovery Report.

On June 22, 2011, the Maryland State Department of Education updated the joint committee on dropout prevention efforts in the State. The agency presentation was followed by a presentation by Mr. Cheye Calvo, Mayor of Berwyn Heights, on legislative objectives and issues relating to dropout prevention. The presentations were preceded by an introduction of Dr. Bernard J. Sadusky, Interim State Superintendent of Schools.

On July 21, 2011, the Children's Cabinet agencies, specifically the Department of Disabilities, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the Department of Human Resources, the Department of Juvenile Services, the Maryland State Department of Education, and the Governor's Office for Children, briefed the joint committee on middle school performance. The presentation included the middle school report, TurnAround Schools, bullying

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of students with disabilities, juvenile services, students in foster care, and student health and mental health issues.

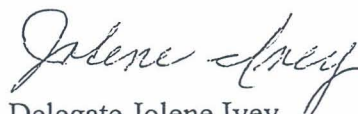
On September 21, 2011, the Children's Cabinet as well as the Zanvyl and Isabelle Krieger Fund, Pew Center on the States, and local service providers updated the joint committee on their work with children and families throughout the State as part of the home visiting program in Maryland. The presentation was followed by a presentation from Ms. Sunny Deye of the National Conference of State Legislatures on the findings of NCSL's Task Force on School Dropout Prevention and Recovery.

The joint committee also provided a letter of support of the application of the Maryland State Department of Education for the federal Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant. (see attached) The joint committee has no current plans to hold further meetings prior to next interim, but should departmental legislation pertaining to matters within the subject jurisdiction of the joint committee be introduced during the 2012 legislative session, the committee may elect to meet to determine whether to express its opinion on such legislation.

The Joint Committee on Children, Youth, and Families wishes to thank those individuals who contributed their time and talent during the 2011 interim to inform and advise the joint committee.

Respectfully submitted,


Senator Nancy J. King
Presiding Chair


Delegate Jolene Ivey
Co-Chair

NJK:JI/YWS/vin

Enclosure

cc: Members, Joint Committee on Children, Youth, and Families
Ms. Lynne B. Porter
Mr. Karl S. Aro
Mr. Warren G. Deschenaux



THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401-1991

September 27, 2011

Dr. Bernard J. Sadusky, Ed.D
Interim State Superintendent of Schools
Maryland State Department of Education
200 W. Baltimore Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Dear Dr. Sadusky:

The Joint Committee on Children, Youth, and Families, representing legislators from the Maryland Senate and the House of Delegates, strongly supports the application of the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) for the Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge grant (RTT-ELC). The joint committee introduced legislation in 2010, requiring MSDE to submit an Early Learning Challenge Fund application. House Bill 350 was signed into law by the Governor in May 2010. The legislation expressed the political will of the Maryland General Assembly and the Governor that early childhood education is the foundation of our K-12 education system and that any reform in our schools must be accompanied by reforms in early childhood education.

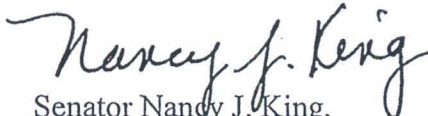
Maryland's early childhood system has an outstanding track record. Each year, the Governor's Children's Cabinet reports on the result area, *Children Entering School Ready to Learn*. The steady increase of our young children's school readiness from 49% being fully ready in 2001 to 81% being ready in 2010-11 is a clear indication that our early childhood system is working and that Maryland is ready to take it to the next level.


The joint committee is committed to work with the Maryland State Advisory Council of Early Care and Education and MSDE, as the lead agency, to support policies that will codify the effective components of the system so that they will be sustained past the grant period, which ends in 2015.

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We hope that Maryland is one of the successful recipients of the RTT-ELC grant which will enable us to establish a Race to the Top foundation for the existing education reform currently underway in Maryland.

Sincerely,


Senator Nancy J. King,
Presiding Senate Co-Chair


Delegate Jolene M. S. Ivey
House Co-Chair

NJK:JMSI/SDM/vin

cc: Members, Joint Committee of Children, Youth, and Families
Speaker Michael E. Bush
President Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr.
Mr. Karl S. Aro
Mr. Warren G. Deschenaux