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## **MSDE Distributes Bonuses to Education Support Professionals in Maryland Public Schools**

*Current State Budget and New State Law Provide Bonuses for Non-Certified Support Professionals This Fiscal Year and Next*

**BALTIMORE, MD** (October 21, 2022) – The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) announced new bonuses for professional education support staff in Maryland public schools. Education Support Professionals are often the lowest paid staff in a local education agency (LEA), and yet they are deeply important to the work of LEAs and service to children and families. The FY 2023 budget includes \$8 million for bonuses for Education Support Professionals. In addition, Chapter 532 of 2021 authorizes additional Education Support Professional bonuses in Fiscal Year 2024.

Non-certified support professionals are eligible for the bonuses. MSDE is collecting the eligible counts of employees from each jurisdiction to calculate the exact, per-employee amount for this Fiscal Year so that LEAs can begin distributing payments as early as November, 2022.

“While this legislation provides an opportunity to recognize the major contributions of Education Support Professionals, we must find a long-term solution to elevate and ensure competitive pay for their critical work in our school communities,” said State Superintendent of Schools Mohammed Choudhury. “As we continue to focus on accelerating academic achievement of all students, education support staff will continue to have a critical role in enhancing student learning, as well as the physical, social and emotional wellbeing of students.

“Education Support Professionals are critical to the success of our public schools. We are proud to work with the General Assembly for ways to provide some compensation to these underpaid employees. We look forward to working with MSDE and local school systems to ensure this bonus and other resources reach these valued educators,” said Maryland State Education Association (MSEA) President Cheryl Bost.

“Maryland’s professional education support staff are essential to the success of every school day. But for far too long they have not received the respect nor the recognition they deserve. This modest bonus is a thank you to the thousands of hard-working support staff that play a pivotal role in the daily education of Maryland’s students. This legislation is an important step in addressing the low pay for Maryland’s public education support staff. SEIU Local 500 will continue to advocate for our members ensuring that Maryland leads the way in retaining and attracting quality educators at every level,” said Pia Morrison, President of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 500.

MSDE will disburse funding to LEAs, which will issue the bonuses to Education Support Professionals.

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