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Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) Announces Innovative New Grant Program – Maryland Works - That Will Accelerate Industry-Aligned Youth Apprenticeship Programs

MSDE to Award up to \$12 million to Local Education Agencies and Partnering Organizations for Apprenticeship Infrastructure Investments

BALTIMORE, MD (December 13, 2022) – The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is proud to announce the launch of Maryland Works, a grant opportunity that will leverage American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Relief Funds (ESSER III) to make an unprecedented investment in establishing an industry-aligned youth apprenticeship infrastructure for Maryland schools and business sectors. Through this initiative, Maryland continues to move toward a more equitable future and meet the Blueprint for Maryland's Future goals of graduating 45% of high-school students having completed an apprenticeship and earning an industry-recognized credential.

“In the 21st century, the path to a credential, a stable income and a gateway to wealth-building is through youth apprenticeships. Right now, the numbers are not there - in 2021, only about 7% of Maryland graduates completed an apprenticeship and earned an industry-recognized credential. The critical path for Maryland to increase this number is to invest in the infrastructure necessary to support school districts and industry as they launch and scale apprenticeships,” said State Superintendent of Schools Mohammed Choudhury. “Maryland Works will help school districts create permanent structures, systems, processes, and support mechanisms to ensure that all students, especially those from historically underserved communities, have access to the career paths they need to reach their full potential.”

U.S. Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh, echoed the sentiment, saying, “The Maryland Works grant program is a great example of how creative American Rescue Plan investments in education will help lift our schools out of the pandemic and sustain progress for years to come. Youth apprenticeship programs are pivotal to creating and sustaining robust workforce pipelines that align with industry needs and drive economic success. This program is a model for the nation and will undoubtedly have a lasting impact on Maryland's pandemic recovery and the future of Maryland's students.”

Under the program, up to \$12 million in grants will be awarded for work focused on two high-leverage strategies: Designing and Developing an Infrastructure to Expand the Quality and Proliferation of Apprenticeship Programs; and Launching an Innovative Apprenticeship Intermediary for LEAs and Industry at Regional and Statewide Levels. Through this program, the MSDE is committed to creating Blueprint for Maryland's Future-aligned, equitable and accessible pathway to college and career opportunities for all Maryland students.

For further information about Maryland Works, please visit the Maryland State Department of Education website (<https://marylandpublicschools.org/MDWorks>).

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