



MSPA Response to the General Assembly Letter Delaying the Implementation of Kirwan Commission Recommendations

December 19, 2018

The Maryland School Psychologists' Association (MSPA) is disheartened to read that Senate President Mike Miller and House Speaker Michael Busch plan to delay legislation that would implement recommendations from the Maryland Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education ("Kirwan Commission") during the 2019 General Assembly Session.

Every year that we delay overhauling our funding system for education is another \$2.9 billion that Maryland school systems are lacking¹.

While the Kirwan Commission process has been arduous, the Commission is working diligently to ensure final policy and funding recommendations are ready for the 2019 session. Timely consideration of the Commission's recommendations is imperative, as legislation could be enacted during the upcoming session that would allow Maryland to take steps towards:

- providing high quality universal pre-kindergarten for every four year old;
- recruiting and supporting a diverse teaching staff that reflects the increasingly diverse population of our state;
- ensuring Maryland educator salaries are commensurate with their education and training;
- increasing mental health staff and supports to meet the growing need for mental health services and address ongoing school safety concerns; and
- targeting additional funding to areas of our state where students, families and communities need the most support.

Poverty in Maryland has doubled since we last assessed our funding formula. What may have worked in 2002 is no longer adequate. Maryland students cannot wait another year for promised funding. MSPA calls on our elected representatives to put the needs of Maryland students first and commit to ensuring the policy framework and funding formula can be debated and voted on during the 2019 legislative session.

¹ <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/pubs/commfworkgrp/2016-innovation-excellence-in-education-commission-2016-12-08.pdf>