

Bard Baltimore

TESTIMONY FROM BARD COLLEGE AND BARD HIGH SCHOOL EARLY COLLEGE BALTIMORE ON HB 1372/SB 965

March 15, 2021

Good afternoon,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Clara Haskell Botstein, and I am the Associate Vice President of the [Bard Early College](#), a 20-year old national network of public early college high schools operated through a partnership between [Bard College](#), a nonprofit liberal arts institution, and public school systems. Our network includes a campus in Baltimore, [Bard High School Early College Baltimore](#), established in 2015 in partnership with Baltimore City Public Schools. Bard is very supportive of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future and HB 1372/SB 965; this testimony focuses on the college and career component of this legislation and our requested amendments.

For context, Bard Baltimore offers students across the City of Baltimore, the vast majority of whom are low-income and underrepresented in higher education, the opportunity to earn 60 transferable college credits and an associate's degree in liberal arts and sciences from Bard, alongside a high school diploma, completely free of charge. Students at Bard Baltimore have risen to meet the academic challenge of our program, with 93% of students graduating from high school with one year of college credit on average, and 54% earning an associate's degree in the Class of 2020. We are deeply grateful to the State of Maryland and the Maryland General Assembly for its support, which makes the tuition-free early college education possible.

Early college high schools, like Bard Baltimore, and other dual enrollment programs, are an evidence-based solution for improving college access and success. We applaud the Kirwan Commission and champions in the General Assembly for recognizing the benefits of early postsecondary pathways and including them in the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. The need to redesign high school and build a better bridge to college and careers is now greater than ever, as academic instruction and college exposure have been disrupted by COVID-19, and at-risk families have been disproportionately impacted by the resulting health, economic and education crises.

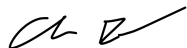
HB 1372/SB 965 presents an important opportunity to help students recover lost instructional time and stay on track for their next grade level and, for high school students, college and careers. To that end, we recommend that HB 1372/SB 965 include college and career readiness pathways (including dual enrollment) as part of the encouraged activities in summer school programs. This will help students, especially those facing academic disruption due to COVID-19, prepare for

postsecondary education through authentic college exposure and the opportunity to earn transferable credits. To facilitate this, we recommend that the summer program partners include “institutions of higher education” licensed in Maryland among the list of summer partner options. Without innovative, evidence-based opportunities for at-risk students in particular to accelerate, the widening achievement gap will not be narrowed.

The Blueprint clearly recognizes the importance of early postsecondary pathways that position students to thrive in life after high school. Incorporating these pathways into the summer school programs is an opportunity to begin expanding the opportunities at scale and ease an increasingly challenging transition for Maryland students to college and the workforce.

Thank you for your time and consideration and for your support of the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future and HB 1372/SB 965.

Sincerely,



Clara Haskell Botstein
Associate Vice President for the Bard Early College

BARD COLLEGE AMENDMENTS TO HB 1372/SB 965

These amendments seek to allow for the expansion of postsecondary pathway opportunities during summer school to help Maryland students, especially those disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, prepare for college and the workforce. We also seek to clarify that any institution of higher education licensed in the State, such as Bard, can be approved to offer early postsecondary pathway opportunities to Maryland students.

Our requested amendments are below in red.

Additions to Bill Text

Pages 31-32 of Senate Bill 965

SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

(a) (1) In calendar years 2021 and 2022, each county board of education, including Baltimore City, shall establish and implement a summer school program for public school students to address the effects of the COVID–19 pandemic on education that:

- (i) includes daily academic instruction in reading or math that is aligned with the county board’s curriculum. **For students in grades 11 and 12, instruction may include post-college and career readiness (CCR) pathway courses at no cost to the student or the student’s parents;**
- (ii) limits the number of students assigned to each teacher in the program;
- (iii) establishes partnerships with local government, which may include the local parks and recreation agency and library system, community and nonprofit organizations to provide student experiences other than academic instruction, **and institutions of higher education licensed in the State to provide post-CCR pathway courses;**

- (iv) may incorporate the county’s program for providing free and reduced price meals in the summer;
 - (v) may provide student transportation services;
 - (vi) may offer incentive pay for teachers, including higher compensation, loan forgiveness, or tuition assistance;
 - (vii) may offer incentive pay for students participating in the program who are employed or participating in career training through the partnership;
 - (viii) prioritizes enrollment for students with the greatest learning loss from the effects of the COVID–19 pandemic on education;
 - (ix) administers an educational assessment to each student in the program prior to beginning the program and on completion of the program; and
 - (x) evaluates the effectiveness of the summer school program at the conclusion of each year.
- (2) In establishing the summer school program under paragraph (1) of this subsection, a county board of education:
- (i) is encouraged to include project–based learning, hands–on learning, individualized instruction, ~~and~~ group or leadership activities, **and college and career experiences**; and
 - (ii) may not charge a fee to a student who is enrolled in the program to recover credits.

Additions to Dual Enrollment Definition

Page 25 of Senate Bill 965

A “dually enrolled student” means a student who is dually enrolled in: [(1)] (I) A secondary school in the State; and [(2)] (II) An institution of higher education **licensed** in the State. (2) “DUALY ENROLLED STUDENT” INCLUDES A STUDENT ENROLLED IN A CREDIT OR NONCREDIT CERTIFICATE OR LICENSE PROGRAM, COURSE, OR 14 SEQUENCE OF COURSES THAT LEADS TO CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE AT AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION **LICENSED** IN THE STATE.