



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

SPONSOR TESTIMONY

HB 888 - Education - Initial Teacher Certification - Qualifications

The Honorable Vanessa E. Atterbeary, Chair
Ways and Means Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 131
Annapolis, MD 21401

Chair Atterbeary, Vice-Chair Wilkins, and Esteemed Members of the Ways and Means Committee:

HB 888 is a one-line bill that removes costly duplicative assessments from our state's initial teacher certification process and recognizes that our state's institutions of higher education have world-class teacher training programs with appropriate assessments "in-house" to evaluate our state's newest teachers.

Under current law, after July 1 2025, to qualify for an initial teaching certificate an individual must:

- Pass subject-specific examinations, and an exam of mastery of reading instruction and content for the desired grade level to be taught
- Pass a nationally recognized, portfolio-based assessment of teaching ability or complete a local school system teacher induction program
- Meet certain competency requirements like holding a degree with a certain GPA, passing a literacy skills assessment, or three years of effective evaluations
- Meet other requirements as established by the State Board

The bill simply adds that if a nationally accredited teacher preparation program utilizes a portfolio-based assessment to evaluate the performance of teachers-in-training, then those teachers-to-be can use that assessment to meet the initial certification requirements instead of having to take an additional, redundant, and costly external test. In other words, if an institution of higher education uses a portfolio-based assessment as part of its teacher training curriculum, then this legislation allows successful completion of that assessment to count for one of the initial certification requirements.

This change enables teachers-in-training at qualifying institutions to complete their coursework and be ready to teach on a faster timeline and at the same level of excellence as those teachers-in-training whose coursework does not include a portfolio based assessment. HB 888 thus removes a roadblock for initially certifying new teachers at a time when our state faces a significant teacher shortage, and helps some of our most necessary state employees avoid redundancy and cost barriers as they work to educate our students.

For these reasons, I urge your support for House Bill 888 and respectfully request a favorable report.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kris Fair". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "K" and "F".

Delegate Kris Fair
District 3, Frederick County