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St. Mary's College of Maryland

Testimony

March 2, 2015

Preparing High-Quality and Effective Teachers

Senate Budget & Taxation Committee
Subcommittee on Education, Business, and Administration

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House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Education and Economic Development



Charles C. Jackson, Vice President for Business and Finance
Larry E. Leak, Trustee

(This information may be found online at <http://www.smcm.edu/govtrelations/>)

Introduction – The Public Honors College

The St. Mary's College of Maryland Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program is a full-time, eleven-month, academically rigorous program in which students with a bachelor's degree can earn a master's degree in 11 months. The program places students in schools at the onset, which allows them to receive hands-on experience throughout the entirety of the program. Already well-prepared with a liberal arts degree that emphasizes critical thinking, written and oral expression, and information literacy, our graduates evolve from learners to teachers quickly and effectively.

Academic Program

St. Mary's College of Maryland offers a high performing teacher preparation program. Our graduates are routinely cited as being extraordinarily prepared upon entering the workforce. Our rigorous classroom program is broad and is one of few to require all students to take an English language learners course. Through our partnerships, students have in-classroom opportunities with schools locally, nationally, and abroad. SMCM graduate students typically perform over 120 hours of in-school training, far exceeding the state requirement of 100 hours.

School Principal

"St. Mary's Master of Arts in Teaching grads have some of the most fantastic lesson plans I have ever seen. SMCM does a fantastic job demonstrating how to write exemplary lessons."

Teacher Qualifications

St. Mary's College raised its entrance requirements to the MAT program and now requires an overall 3.0 undergraduate GPA. We are also implementing the Stanford Developed Teacher Licensure Testing and Performance Assessment (edTPA) program to ensure that our graduates are prepared to become highly performing teachers. The program will be piloted next year and required for the 2016 cohort. We would welcome a Maryland-wide consortium approach to maximize coordination and efficiencies.

Workforce Development

Graduates from our MAT program are highly successful finding careers in teaching. Over the past three years, 97% of our graduates currently employed as teachers. We perform surveys of our alumni and school principals to assess performance and to stay abreast of the constantly changing needs of the school systems.

