

March 11, 2026

M.C. Keegan-Ayer
President, MACo
Council Member, Frederick County

Michael Sanderson
Executive Director, MACo

Dear President Keegan-Ayer and Executive Director Sanderson,

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and State Board of Education write in response to your March 10th letter regarding invoices for the fiscal 2026 local share of funding for private prekindergarten. MSDE acknowledges that this delay presents challenges for county governments as they are finalizing fiscal 2027 budgets.

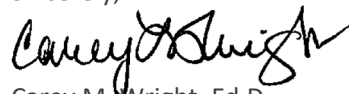
From October 2025 to February 2026, MSDE met with county budget directors and local education agency (LEA) budget directors, confirmed that each group's funding concern was valid, and proposed a solution that addressed both. During the same time period, the Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) and MSDE shared the proposed solution with the Department of Legislative Services (DLS), and MSDE has been engaged in extensive communication with DLS, compiling data, sharing information, and answering questions.

On February 13, 2026, at MACo's request, MSDE met with county budget directors to review and answer questions related to fiscal 2027 preliminary State Aid calculations and the fiscal 2026 local share of private prekindergarten funding. MSDE agreed to conduct a deeper analysis of private prekindergarten funding, the maintenance of effort calculations, and the intersection of both.

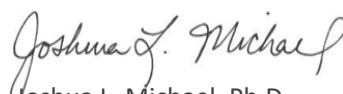
This morning on Wednesday, March 11th, DLS provided a final confirmation to MSDE that our collectively agreed-upon solution is appropriate. MSDE is glad to bring this matter to a resolution. We will provide, as requested, FY26 private prekindergarten invoices and supporting documentation no later than Friday, March 13th. The fiscal 2026 invoices will be due within 12 months of the date of the invoice, as was communicated on October 14, 2025.

MACo's support for the expansion of prekindergarten under the Blueprint for Maryland's Future is appreciated. MSDE welcomes continued dialogue on how the agency can provide county governments with necessary and timely budget information in the future.

Sincerely,



Carey M. Wright, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Schools



Joshua L. Michael, Ph.D.
State Board of Education President

c: The Honorable Wes Moore, Governor of Maryland
The Honorable Aruna Miller, Lieutenant Governor of Maryland
The Honorable Bill Ferguson, President, Maryland State Senate
The Honorable Joseline Peña-Melnyk, Speaker, Maryland House of Delegates