



Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC) 2025 Legislative Agenda

As Endorsed by MACC Board of Directors on October 30, 2024

Operating Request

Maryland's community colleges are united in advocating for restoring the Cade Funding Formula back to 29% funding per full-time equivalent student (FTES) by 2029. This level of funding is essential for the equitable support of community colleges and for ensuring that our state remains committed to the success and accessibility of higher education for all Marylanders. The Baltimore City Community College (BCCC) funding formula, currently set at 68.5% per FTES, must also be preserved as it plays a critical role in sustaining the unique needs of students in Baltimore City.

The Cade and BCCC formulas are critical not just for maintaining operational budgets but also for upholding Maryland's commitment to equity in education. These formulas ensure that resources are allocated fairly across higher education institutions, allowing community colleges to serve as accessible gateways to economic opportunity for Maryland's diverse student population.

At a time when the demand for affordable and accessible education is more significant than ever, reducing community college funding undermines the principles of fairness and opportunity. The 2024 rebasing of the Cade formula to 27.2% widens the equity gap between community colleges and four-year institutions, deepening existing divides. Restoring the funding to 29% by 2029 is not just a financial necessity – it is a moral imperative to ensure that every student, regardless of their background, can achieve educational and professional success.

In consultation with MACC, the Joint Chairman's Report (JCR) has charged the Department of Legislative Services (DLS) with re-evaluating the Cade formula. Maryland's community colleges are resolute in restoring the formula to 29%. Anything less would shift an even greater financial burden onto those who can least afford it, exacerbating disparities rather than closing them.

As Maryland continues to look to community colleges to meet the demands of a dynamic and evolving economy, there must be recognition that these institutions are serving students who are the backbone of our communities. From expanding essential services to students and staff to pioneering innovative programs that go well beyond the original scope of the funding formulas, community colleges are doing more than ever. The State must recognize that fully restoring Cade funding to 29% by 2029 is the only way to ensure that Maryland lives up to its promise of equitable, accessible higher education for all.

Capital Request

MACC seeks full funding of the FY '26 MACC Capital Prioritization List for a total of \$87,763,000 for 14 projects across 10 colleges. This list has been fully vetted through a collaborative process before being submitted to the state in priority order. *(This list is also provided as an Attachment)*

Maryland Association of Community Colleges Tentative Prioritization: FY 2026

Aggregate Weight	Community College	Project Name	Project Phase	Project Cost	Running Total
1	Anne Arundel Community College	Florestano Renovation	Completion	\$ 8,020,000	\$ 8,020,000
2	Howard Community College	Workforce Development & Trades Center	Construction	11,916,000	19,936,000
3	Community College of Baltimore County	Student Services Center Partial Renovation, Expansion, and Associated Site Work - Catonsville	Construction	12,179,000	32,115,000
<i>Above Projects Include Preauthorized Funds from FY 2025 and Additional Requests for FY 2026 Funding Totaling:</i>				\$ 32,115,000	\$ 32,115,000
4	Allegany College of Maryland	Workforce Training and Development Center	Design	543,000	32,658,000
5	Chesapeake College	Queen Anne's Tech Project - Phase 1	Design	2,858,000	35,516,000
6	Hagerstown Community College	Advanced Technology Center	Construction	8,311,000	43,827,000
7	Montgomery College	Library Renovation	Construction	11,171,000	54,998,000
8	Wor-Wic Community College	Maintenance Building Expansion	Design+	1,650,000	56,648,000
9	College of Southern Maryland	HT Renovation Funding	Construction	150,000	56,798,000
10	Anne Arundel Community College	Dragun Building Renovation	Design+	6,987,000	63,785,000
11	Prince George's Community College	Dukes Student Center	Construction	15,288,000	79,073,000
12	Community College of Baltimore County	Primary Electric Switchgear & Distribution Replacement - Essex	Design+	1,768,000	80,841,000
13	College of Southern Maryland	Leonardtown A Building Renovation	Design	764,000	81,605,000
14	Montgomery College	Germantown Student Services Center	Design+	6,158,000	87,763,000
FY 2026 Total Request				\$ 87,763,000	\$ 87,763,000

Note: Community College Completion Projects that are Priority 1 and are ranked above design and completion projects in order of aggregate weight.

Note: Baltimore City Community College does not receive capital funding through the Community College Capital Grant Program.

Baltimore City Community College, a state entity, submits its capital budget request separately and is asking for funding for six projects totaling \$31,917,098 and \$33,012,000 in deferred maintenance costs, for an overall total of \$64,929,098.

Baltimore City Community College Capital Budget Request: FY 2026

PROJECT NAME	PHASE	AMOUNT
CENTER FOR INNOVATION AT THE HARBOR	Design	\$ 8,623,333
LEARNING COMMONS RENOVATION & ADDITION	Construction+	8,954,750
NURSING BUILDING RENOVATION & ADDITION	Design	1,575,000
WELLNESS CENTER	Design	4,060,000
NORTH PAVILION DEMOLITION	Design	156,015
ACQUISITION OF UNIDENTIFIED PROPERTIES	NA	8,548,000

Cyber Workforce Shortage

MACC is requesting sustainment funding to expand and implement new cybersecurity training opportunities by scaling best practices already in practice at specific community colleges. With the growing demand for cybersecurity professionals, community colleges have a crucial role in addressing the entry-level and middle-skill needs of this vital workforce. These programs will help fill high-paying jobs and strengthen Maryland's cybersecurity sector by closing the skills gap.

These training and education programs are directly aligned with industry-driven needs, ensuring graduates are equipped with the skills employers demand. To continue this work, community colleges are seeking sustainment funding in the governor's budget, enabling Maryland to remain a leader in cybersecurity education and workforce development.

Need-Based Financial Aid

Maryland's community colleges are advocating for a more equitable distribution of State need-based financial aid within the Howard P. Rawlings Education Excellence Awards Program to better support community college students. The primary goal is to create a fairer system that ensures community college students have the financial resources they need to succeed in their educational pursuits. To achieve this, MACC would take two potential approaches: reallocating \$5 million to the Maryland Promise Scholarship Program from the existing Educational Excellence Awards Program or establishing a pre-determined funding split between the Education Assistance (EA) Grant and the Guaranteed Access (GA) Grant.

Currently, both the EA and GA grants draw from the same state-appropriated funds, creating disparities in how financial aid is distributed. GA recipients, who are primarily enrolled at four-year institutions, receive funding first, leaving EA grants – which are critical to community college students – with few remaining resources. Recent changes in GA verification have further shifted funding towards GA recipients, undermining the accessibility and affordability of postsecondary education for community college students.

Prior to these recent changes in the GA award, the State Higher Education Executive Officers Association (SHEEO) state that Maryland community college students receive 22% less financial aid on average than their counterparts at four-year institutions. To address these growing inequities, MACC proposes prioritizing one of the presented strategic options to ensure that Maryland's financial aid system better supports students at all higher education institutions, fostering greater equity in access.

SNAP Benefits Expansion

Food Insecurity among community college students is a growing concern, with national figures indicating that as many as 39% of community college students struggle to find enough food. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) has long been a critical resource for millions of Americans, providing essential food assistance to those in need. Expanding SNAP benefits to community college students would be a significant step toward addressing food insecurity on campuses, directly supporting students' educational attainment by ensuring they have the resources to focus on their studies without the distraction of hunger.

Including community college students in SNAP eligibility not only addresses immediate food insecurity but also promotes long-term stability. Ensuring that students can complete their education goals without the added burden of hunger can lead to higher graduation rates and, in turn, reduce the need for future public assistance as graduates move into higher-paying roles. Expanding SNAP to community college students also aligns with the broader efforts to promote equity in education by providing more comprehensive support to students from low-income backgrounds, helping to level the playing field and give all students a better chance at academic success.

Student Financial Aid – Revoke the Bill

In 2023, House Bill 913, the Maryland Student Loan Borrower Protection Act, passed the general assembly. This bill requires “student financing companies” to register with the Officer of the Financial Regulation (OFR) and submit annual reports. While it was initially assumed higher education institutions would not be under the bill's purview, OFR found through legal guidance that they are indeed included. The legislation unintentionally imposes new severe regulatory burdens on community colleges.

MACC is advocating for the explicit removal of higher education institutions from the scope of this law. Community colleges are not traditional student loan services and should not be subject to these regulations. Legislative action is necessary to amend the statute and ensure higher education institutions remain focused on providing accessible and affordable education without the encumbrance of unnecessary regulatory oversight.

Tuition Waivers

It is important to note that MACC recognizes the intent of waivers for their role in supporting underserved populations; however, MACC opposes these initiatives to avoid placing an undue burden on other enrolled students. Unfunded tuition waivers increase the cost of tuition for others, making higher education less affordable overall. This is not a sustainable policy for ensuring access or inclusion, and it places unnecessary strain on community colleges already working with severely limited funding resources.

This challenge is particularly acute when the Cade Funding is not fully funded at 29%, as is currently the case. The financial impact of unfunded waivers is even more pronounced, further hindering community colleges' ability to provide accessible and affordable higher education opportunities. Without sufficient state funding to backfill the lost tuition revenue, community colleges are forced to absorb these costs, which can limit their ability to serve all students effectively and sustainably.