

June 18, 2024

Mr. William Barnes  
Acting Superintendent  
Howard County Public Schools  
10910 Clarksville Pike  
Ellicott City, MD 21042

Dear Mr. Barnes:

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services (DEI/SES) is required by the United States Department of Education (USDE), Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) to make determinations annually regarding the performance of students with disabilities for each local preschool and special education program using one of the following four determination categories: "Meets Requirements," "Needs Assistance," "Needs Intervention," or "Needs Substantial Intervention" [34 CFR §§300.600 and 300.604]. The MSDE, DEI/SES uses a results-based rubric for given indicators to evaluate the performance of each Local Education Agency (LEA) in meeting the State's identified targets. For Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2022 determinations, Howard County has achieved the determination status of **Needs Assistance - Year 4**.

Attached please find supporting documents:

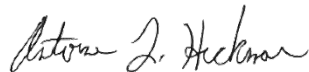
- *FFY 2022 Determination Overview* (identifies the Part B Indicators used to assign a local determination status on page two – please note that fiscal and complaints/due process hearing data continues to be used);
- *FFY 2022 Local Determination Scoring Criteria* (provides a graduated results-driven accountability plan used to make a local determination by year);
- *FFY 2022 Annual Report Card on State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Reports (APR) Part B Indicators* (provides a three-year local data analysis and required actions for students with disabilities ages three through 21); and
- *DEI/SES Differentiated Framework: Tiers of Supervision and Support* (provides the framework used by the DEI/SES to guide the level of monitoring and corresponding level of performance support provided to LEAs).

To support Maryland's commitment to narrow the opportunity and achievement gaps for students with disabilities and their families, the implementation of the *DEI/SES Strategic Plan: Moving Maryland Forward* provides a statewide differentiated framework for general supervision and performance support. Based upon comprehensive data analysis (including the SPP/APR local determination status), Howard County has been assigned the **Focused** tier for the delivery of the DEI/SES technical assistance model for results. Please see the *DEI/SES Differentiated Framework: Tiers of Supervision* for more information.

Each LEA is strongly encouraged to work closely with their local Special Education Citizens Advisory Committee (SECAC) and Family Support Center to analyze local data and infrastructure for the implementation of specially designed instruction. The analysis should guide the development of strategies for data-informed decision-making, increased parent partnerships, strategic collaboration, and the use of evidence-based practices with fidelity to improve the results for children and youth with disabilities and their families. As we continue this shift in focus to results-driven accountability, the MSDE, DEI/SES will provide State and local professional learning opportunities with coaching.

Thank you for your hard work and commitment to excellence, equity, and efficiency. The MSDE is committed to supporting the efforts of Howard County to improve results for children and youth with disabilities and their families. If you have any questions or wish to request technical assistance, please do not hesitate to call me at 410-767-0238.

Sincerely,



Antoine Hickman, Ed.D.  
Assistant State Superintendent  
Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services

#### Attachments

- c: Dr. Carey Wright, State Superintendent of Schools
- Dr. Deann Collins, Deputy State Superintendent
- Dr. Terri Savage, Executive Director of Special Education
- MSDE DEI/SES Branch/Section Chiefs