



## SMOB October 2023 Newsletter

Hello Maryland Students!



My name is Abisola, and I am the Student Member of the Board of the Maryland State Board of Education. My primary objective is to enhance communication between students and the **State Board**. Therefore, I am delighted to present my monthly student update.

You may have noticed significant shifts in Maryland's educational landscape, all aligned with **Maryland's Blueprint for the Future**. To put it simply, the Blueprint is a comprehensive, multi-year plan designed to ensure **equitable education** for all students across the state. This Blueprint holds a multitude of advantages for you and your fellow students. Notably, for high school students, it introduces **free** Advanced Placement exams, community college courses, and career and technical education opportunities. Access to these valuable college and career pathways is dependent on achieving college and career readiness (**CCR**). Currently, the CCR standard is solely based on MCAP test scores. However, I'm pleased to share that the State Board is actively working to expand the criteria. One potential avenue is to incorporate GPA into the standard, a change that would greatly broaden the pool of students eligible for free college and career pathways. If you wish to contribute your thoughts on this matter, please participate in our **survey** at this link: [https://msde.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_8wykCZth0XJFoSW](https://msde.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8wykCZth0XJFoSW) Furthermore, you are invited to attend our public hearing on **November 9th at 5:00 pm**, either in person at the State Department of Education or virtually.

Just as the State School Board is instrumental to our education system, we also have a State Superintendent. This month, we extend a warm welcome to our Interim Superintendent, Dr. Carey Wright. She will serve in this role until June 30th, which marks the end of the current term. Starting on July 1st, a new four-year term begins, and the State Board's search committee is actively considering potential candidates to serve through 2028.

In my capacity as State SMOB, I have the privilege of participating in a wide range of engagement opportunities. At the start of this month, I had the honor of attending the annual conference for the Maryland Association of Boards of Education. During this event, I moderated a student panel featuring several of your local student members. We collaborated on strategies to better support students across the state. You are represented by remarkable individuals, and they genuinely value your input. More recently, I had the pleasure of attending the Teacher of the Year Gala. At this event, we celebrated twenty-four outstanding teachers from across the state and crowned our State Teacher of the Year, Mrs. Connerton from Anne Arundel County. It was a truly remarkable experience, celebrating the tireless dedication of our teachers, and we were honored to receive a captivating address from Governor Moore.

Thank you for reading my monthly newsletter! If you would like to stay updated on what is happening at the State Department of Education, you can follow [@mdpublicschools](#) and [@statesmob](#) on Instagram. Additionally, I have compiled a collection of valuable resources for students on my Link tree page, available at [www.linktr.ee/abisolaayoola](http://www.linktr.ee/abisolaayoola). Stay tuned for next month's update!

Sincerely,  
Abisola Ayoola