



Letter of Concern

House Ways and Means Committee *HB 807 (Lehman)*

Education – Teacher Preparation Programs – English Language Learner Teacher Competency Requirements

Matt Power, President
mpower@micua.org
February 25, 2026

On behalf of Maryland's eleven independent colleges and universities with approved Maryland Educator Preparation Programs, thank you for the opportunity to provide a letter of concern regarding [HB 807 \(Lehman\) Education - Teacher Preparation Programs - English Language Learner Teacher Competency Requirements](#). This bill would require a teacher preparation program to include certain training in English language learner-related teacher competencies and include English language learner-related teacher competencies in other courses throughout the curriculum; and require a teacher preparation program to include a certain course in teaching English language learners beginning in the 2028-2029 academic year.

Maryland Independent College and University Association (MICUA) member institutions with educator preparation programs recognize the importance of preparing their students to teach English Language Learners. Some MICUA institutions include a distinct course for teaching English Language Learners, while several others integrate the required content and competencies throughout the curriculum. Within the competencies required by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), the programs include understanding language development, providing equitable literacy opportunities, and working with multilingual learners. Furthermore, accreditors for some of the institutions require competencies that:

- Utilize knowledge of the diverse and intersecting aspects of human identity to support learner growth and development;
- Facilitate and support language development, language acquisition, and literacy development for all learners;
- Communicate and foster relationships with families, guardians, and/or caregivers, and engage with the wider school community; and
- Enact culturally responsive and sustain educational practices with diverse learners in diverse cultural and socioeconomic community contexts.

The total credit count for traditional undergraduate programs ranges from 120-128. There are already many courses required to complete education majors, leaving little, if any, space to add a new course requirement for students in educator preparation programs. Though the number of credits varies by

specific program, education majors often require 51-63 education course credits, not including math, science, social science, and English courses, or other institutional core requirements.

Similarly, there are high credit counts for Master of Art in Teaching (MAT) programs. Addition of another required three-credit course will add time and cost to complete the degree. Adding requirements to teacher preparation programs when there is an effort to streamline requirements to accelerate the pipeline of new teachers is contradictory.

As part of [COMAR 13A.12.02.06](#), for teachers to renew or maintain their professional licensure, they need to earn professional development credits in the teaching of English as a Second Language, Sheltered English, or Bilingual Education.

Another concern is how the course requirement would be applied to Maryland teachers who complete their course requirements outside of the State. It is not clear whether they would need to satisfy the English Language Learner coursework requirement to obtain certification in Maryland.

MICUA institutions fully support measures that ensure their programs maintain high standards in the preparation of teachers to effectively serve all students, including English Language Learners. HB 807 does not allow educator preparation programs the flexibility of determining how best to accomplish that goal, either by incorporating the competencies into their curriculum, or by adding a new specific credit course, likely preventing some students from graduating on time.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of our institutions regarding House Bill 807. If you have any questions, please contact Angela Sherman, Vice President for Academic Affairs, asherman@micua.org.