



November 2, 2018

Dr. Karen Salmon, superintendent
Maryland State Department of Education
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CHERYL BOST
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Executive Director

Dear Karen:

At the recent Maryland State Education Association Representative Assembly, educators voiced concerns regarding the critical shortage of teachers for students who are visually impaired. MSDE also notes this as a critical shortage area in its 2016-2018 Staffing Report and I imagine the upcoming report will again include teachers of the visually impaired.

In a March 2018 article in the *Baltimore Watchdog*, it was noted that Harford, Howard, Kent, and Montgomery are experiencing shortages and contracted services through the Maryland School for the Blind are provided to several other counties. The article also noted that in Baltimore County five of the seven vision teachers are over 63. I realize this shortage is both a state and a national problem that greatly impacts our students.

On behalf of educators, I am urging MSDE to develop and implement a national recruitment campaign to increase the availability of teachers of students who are visually impaired. If MSDE has already begun to embark on a national recruitment campaign, I would very much like to learn more about it and all the efforts MSDE is undertaking to help address this critical shortage area.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at 443/433-3677 or cbost@mseanea.org to discuss this further or if you have any questions. Many thanks for your time and attention to this concern.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Bost
President