

Investing in Youth Workforce Development in Maryland

American Rescue Plan Community Profile

December 2023 | Youth



American Rescue Plan Funding

Total Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief funds granted to Maryland: \$2.07 billion¹

Amount of Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief funds featured in this profile: \$12.2 million

Summary

Building on Maryland's long-standing dedication to foster youth apprenticeship pathways, the state in June 2023 allocated \$12.2 million of Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief funds to expand its Apprenticeship Maryland Program (AMP). AMP is an ongoing joint effort between the Maryland State Department of Education and the Maryland Department of Labor.² The initiative, which the state piloted during the 2016–2017 school year, is part of the state's career and technical education program that prepares youth for a wide range of high-demand careers. AMP offers high school juniors and seniors valuable skill development and career prospects through a structured combination of classroom instruction and a minimum of 450 hours of guided and paid workplace experiences.³ Its goal is to provide students with meaningful opportunities for skill development and future career success.

The Maryland State Department of Education used the allocated Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief funds to provide grants to six local education agencies and three intermediaries via the Maryland Works program.⁴ Maryland Works aims to build upon AMP and respond to local labor market demand by creating and maintaining high-quality college and career pathways for youth.⁵ The ultimate objective is to establish permanent pathways to

sustain industry-aligned apprenticeships for Maryland's public schools and businesses after program funds and federal relief funds expire.⁶ Grant recipients will use at least one of two high-leverage strategies when implementing programs and services:

1. Design and develop an infrastructure to expand the quality and proliferation of apprenticeship programs.
2. Launch an innovative apprenticeship intermediary for local education agencies and industry at regional and statewide levels.⁷

Under Maryland Works, grant recipients are dedicated to upholding the implementation of systems to advance and maintain youth apprenticeship opportunities, especially for historically underserved students such as those from low-income backgrounds and/or students who identify as Black/African American or Latino.⁸ Each of the recipients' proposed plans address the ongoing persistent accessibility gaps for underserved students participation in apprenticeship programs and outlines how it will measure impact.⁹ In their plans, recipients also describe the planned activities that will complement the high-leverage strategy they pick, the services they will offer, and the anticipated effects the effort will have on Maryland's youth apprenticeship programs.¹⁰

Age Group Served

Youth ages 16–18 years

Funding Stream Used

Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief funds

Key Partners

- Maryland Department of Labor
- Maryland State Department of Education
- Local education agencies
- Local industries and businesses
- Baltimore's Promise
- Institute for American Apprenticeships
- Maryland Center for Construction Education & Innovation

Local Perspective

Maryland Works offers a clear example of the impactful progress made in bridging education and industry through initiatives like AMP. In 2018, the Maryland departments of Labor, Commerce, and Education laid the groundwork to expand youth apprenticeships statewide with the common goal to gradually increase participation in AMP by introducing two to four new school systems annually.¹¹ By the 2021–2022 academic year, the program encompassed 368 participating employers, 186 youth apprentices, and 17 local public school systems.¹² In the ongoing 2023–2024 school year, the program continues to flourish, engaging 423 youth apprentices spanning across 20 diverse industry sectors.¹³ Currently, 22 out of Maryland's 24 local public school systems participate in AMP.¹⁴

The AMP program is anticipated to continue through increased annual education funding under the *Blueprint for Maryland's Future*, which will increase funds by more than \$3.8 billion within the next decade.¹⁵ Furthermore, Maryland Works is projected to generate more than 3,000 new apprenticeship opportunities and more than 400 new business collaborations, essentially tripling the number of participating students within the next couple of years.¹⁶ Its growth can be tracked in the Maryland State Department of Education's [career and technical education data dashboards](#) that detail "student enrollment, performance outcomes, earned industry credentials, and participation in work-based learning experiences disaggregated by race, gender, and student service group."¹⁷

Lessons Learned

The Maryland State Department of Education outlined barriers to increasing AMP participation in its August 2022 report [Blueprint for Maryland's Future: College and Career Readiness](#). Notably, transportation issues hinder participation across the state for youth

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Community Statistics

Community Size

Total population (2022): 6,164,660

Racial Demographics

- White 57.3%
- Black or African American 31.7%
- American Indian and Alaska Native 0.7%
- Asian 7.1%
- Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander 0.1%
- Two or More Races 3.2%
- Hispanic or Latino 11.5%
- White alone, not Hispanic or Latino 48.3%

Socioeconomic Status

- Median household income (2021): \$91,431
- Children living in poverty (2021): 14%

Sources: "QuickFacts: Maryland." United States Census Bureau, accessed August 30, 2023, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/MD/POP060210> and "Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates: Maryland," United States Census Bureau, accessed August 30, 2023, https://www.census.gov/data-tools/demo/saipe/#/?map_geoSelector=u18_c&s_measures=u18&s_year=2020&s_state=24&s_county=24510.

apprentices.¹⁸ Challenges range from lacking driver's licenses to the cost, proximity, routes, and reliability of public transportation.¹⁹ The Maryland Department of Labor is working on solutions, such as providing grant funding for driver education, but access to a car and car insurance remains an issue.²⁰

As districts prepare to implement the Maryland Works grant, it is crucial to consider and address potential challenges the state encountered with AMP's implementation. Drawing from AMP, Maryland public schools and other communities thinking of implementing similar programs should consider the following suggestions to ensure the success of their youth apprenticeship initiatives:

- **Transportation solutions:** Communities should collaborate with local transportation authorities

to improve access to public transit routes and schedules that align with students' school and work commitments.

- **Driver education support:** Consider securing grant funding for driver education to assist students who lack a driver's license, enhancing their ability to participate in the apprenticeship program.
- **Flexible work hours:** Coordinate with employers offering apprenticeships to allow for flexible work hours, enabling students to align their work schedules with public transportation options or carpooling arrangements. This flexibility can help mitigate challenges arising from incompatible transportation schedules.
- **Financial support:** Recognizing the financial burden of car ownership, consider offering financial assistance or subsidies for car insurance costs for students who require personal vehicles for their apprenticeships. This support can make car ownership more attainable for some students.
- **Community partnerships:** Forge partnerships with local community organizations, nonprofits, and businesses to establish mentoring programs or community-driven transportation solutions. Community involvement can help address transportation challenges from a holistic perspective and offer tailored support.
- **Virtual apprenticeships:** Consider incorporating virtual apprenticeship components to certain industries or job roles. This approach can help minimize transportation issues by allowing students to participate in remote work experiences, broadening opportunities for those facing transportation obstacles. Districts should consciously consider potential connectivity challenges students may encounter due to financial constraints or accessibility limitations.
- **Localize apprenticeship opportunities:** Prioritize the placement of apprenticeships within proximity to students' schools or residences whenever possible. This can reduce the reliance on extensive commutes and ease transportation burdens.

Featured photo by Allison Shelley/The Verbatim Agency for EDUimages

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Endnotes

- ¹ "Maryland ESSER Transparency," Maryland State Department of Education, accessed September 7, 2023, <https://www.marylandpublicschools.org/about/Pages/OFPOS/ESSER/index.aspx>.
- ² Maryland State Department of Education, *Blueprint for Maryland's Future: College and Career Readiness* (Baltimore, MD: Maryland State Department of Education, 2022), <https://marylandpublicschools.org/Blueprint/Documents/CCRReportSummer2022.pdf>.
- ³ Ibid.
- ⁴ Maryland State Department of Education, "MSDE Makes More than \$12 Million Investment through Maryland Works Grant Aimed to Bolster Infrastructure for Sustainable Pipeline toward Industry-Aligned Apprenticeship Programs," news release, June 28, 2023, <https://news.maryland.gov/msde/maryland-works-investment>.
- ⁵ Ibid.
- ⁶ Ibid.
- ⁷ Ibid.
- ⁸ Ibid.
- ⁹ Ibid.
- ¹⁰ Ibid.
- ¹¹ Maryland Department of Labor, *Youth Apprenticeship Advisory Committee Annual Report 2022*, (Baltimore, MD: Maryland Department of Labor, 2022), <https://www.dllr.state.md.us/employment/appr/youthapprannrep2022.pdf>.
- ¹² Ibid.
- ¹³ Ibid.
- ¹⁴ Maryland Department of Labor, *Youth Apprenticeship Advisory Committee Annual Report 2022*.
- ¹⁵ Maryland State Department of Education, *Blueprint for Maryland's Future*.
- ¹⁶ ———, "MSDE Makes More than \$12 Million Investment."
- ¹⁷ ———, *Blueprint for Maryland's Future*.
- ¹⁸ Ibid.
- ¹⁹ Ibid.
- ²⁰ Ibid.

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