

MOTION
GOVERNOR'S INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMISSION FOR AGRICULTURE
Agricultural Education in the Schools
6/25/12

Background

Last year, the Governor's Intergovernmental Commission for Agriculture conducted a study to look at what kinds of agricultural education programs existed and the barriers that prevented more from being done. One of the issues GICA found was that formal agricultural education was done through the Career and Technology program (formally called Vocational Education), it was not incorporated into the school science curriculum, and does not show up on a student's transcript. The concern is the perception that agriculture is somehow more geared to vocational education and not considered a "career" like other kinds of science and technology careers.

Recently, the General Assembly passed a bill, HB 680, "Education – Task Force to Explore Incorporating the Subject of Agriculture in Existing Curriculum Areas." The bill requires the State Board of Education and the University of Maryland Extension, after consultation with local boards of education, agriculture groups and other organizations that promote education about agriculture, to create a task force by December 31, 2014 to explore options for incorporating agriculture into existing curricular areas. This may be an opportunity to address some of the issues, but the task force will not get underway for more than two years.

In the meantime, the Maryland State Board of Education has appointed Dr. Lillian Lowery as the new Maryland State Superintendent, who has begun a series of public meetings with various stakeholders. She will begin in Maryland on July 1, 2012.

MOTION: Request that the Secretary of Agriculture, and any appropriate agricultural leaders, meet with the new State Superintendent to request greater incorporation of agricultural education into the school curriculum.