

Oct 1, 2026

Governor's Intergovernmental Commission for Agriculture

Labor, Education, & Development Subcommittee Meeting

October 1, 2026

Maryland Department of Agriculture

Attendees: Garry Aime, Allie Cavanagh, Jo-Ann Chason, Charlotte Davis, Marquita Friday, Hannah Fuchs, Andrew Garrison, Anupa Geevarghese, Phylicia Henry, Madeline Houck, Joseph Milone, Harrison Palmer, Wendy Powers, Martin Proulx, Susanne Richards, Leslie Sessom-Parks, Nicole Sherry

Agenda  GICA - LED Sub. - Agenda - 10.1.26

Slide Deck  GICA - LED Sub. Meeting - 10.1.26.pptx

Meeting records

 (Virtual) GICA Labor, Education, & Development Subcommittee - 2026/10/0...

Summary

Apprenticeship updates and career and technology education redesign initiatives discussed for agricultural development.

Apprenticeship Grants and Updates

Agricultural apprenticeships advanced via accelerator grants and new employer partnerships. Program classifications clarified through labor department coordination.

CTE Program Redesign

Career and technology education programs restructured to align with key industries. New pathways introduced for mechanics, resources, equine care, and agribusiness.

Implementation and Scheduling

Local industry engagement and adjunct staffing emphasized for program implementation success. Full commission meeting rescheduled to November 30th.

Next steps

- ☐ [Anupa Geevarghese] Compile Apprenticeship Registry: Pull the list of registered agricultural apprenticeships and clarify the distinction between adult and youth-level programs.
 - ☐ [The group] Recommend Coordinator Candidates: Submit referrals for potential apprenticeship coordinator candidates to Susanne Richards.
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Detailed Notes

- **Approval of July 2026 Subcommittee Meeting Minutes:** Jo-Ann Chason moved to approve the July meeting minutes, which was seconded by Susanne Richards and unanimously approved by the commission
- **Apprenticeships**
 - Overview of High School Apprenticeships and Blueprint Goals: Susanne Richards presented on the context of agricultural apprenticeships under the Blueprint for Maryland's future, which set a goal for 45% of college and career ready students to complete an internship or industry-recognized credential by the 2031 school year. To support this, schools utilize career coaches and personal career exploration plans, prioritizing high-school-level registered apprenticeships for juniors and seniors aged 16 and older. These require at least 250 hours of paid work

experience, 144 hours of classroom instruction, progressive wage increases, and formal registration approved by the Department of Labor or the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Council.

- MAEF Apprenticeship Accelerator Grant and Employer Partnerships: Addressing the challenge of scaling customized apprenticeships, Susanne Richards announced that the Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation (MAEF) received an apprenticeship accelerator grant from the Maryland Department of Labor to hire a dedicated coordinator, with resumes accepted through October 15th. To fulfill grant requirements, MAEF partnered with Antietam Tractor in Hagerstown, Maryland, and Stauffer's Butcher Barn in Mechanicsville, Maryland, focusing initial apprenticeship packages on agricultural equipment service and repair and retail butchery. These packages will serve as templates for future statewide expansion.
- Rural Development and Community College Apprenticeships: Charlotte L Davis -MDA- shared updates from the Rural Maryland Council, noting an application for a fiscal year 2027 grant to pilot an apprenticeship program in Frederick County through Innovation Maryland, utilizing \$100,000 from the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund to place 10 to 20 community college students. Charlotte L Davis -MDA- highlighted past successful funding for municipal and small wastewater operators via the Maryland Rural Water Association and community health worker programs, while noting that the biggest ongoing challenge is identifying employers willing to commit to full-time placement after the apprenticeship concludes. Susanne Richards and Charlotte L Davis -MDA- also discussed agricultural-specific challenges, such as farm seasonality and a lack of standardized skill progressions compared to healthcare or water operations.
- Apprenticeship Classification and Department of Labor Clarification: Joseph Milone -COMMERCE- raised questions regarding whether presented lists referred to youth or adult registered apprenticeships, prompting Marquita Friday -MSDE- to clarify that lists from the Department of Education can encompass both youth and adult registered apprenticeships approved by the Maryland Department of Labor. In response, Anupa Geevarghese -LABOR- offered to pull labor's registered apprenticeship list and help delineate programs intended for

adults versus high school students, a request that Allie Cavanagh -MDA- accepted to share with members post-meeting.

- **Updated CTE Standards**

- Redesigned Career and Technology Education Program Structure: Marquita Friday -MSDE- presented the Maryland State Department of Education's redesign of career and technology education under the federal Carl D. Perkins Act, introducing a "two core flex model" where students take two required foundational courses followed by flexibility in third or fourth courses, advanced placement, dual enrollment, or career-connected learning. Marquita Friday -MSDE- detailed that these offerings align with Maryland's key industries—generating approximately 89,000 jobs and \$20 billion in total economic revenue—and span 50 programs of study and 162 course standards. The standards development process incorporates business reviews, educator reviews, two rounds of public comment, review by the state board education policy committee, and final adoption by the state board targeted for the end of the month.
- Agriculture Mechanics and Natural Resource Management CTE Programs: Marquita Friday -MSDE- outlined the proposed agriculture mechanics program, which prepares students to design, operate, maintain, and repair agricultural technology and mechanical systems, targeting credentials such as the Agricultural Education Service and Technology certification requested by the Maryland Farm Bureau, OSHA 30, and ICB small engine technology. Additionally, Marquita Friday -MSDE- explained that natural resource management was separated into its own distinct program of study following initial industry feedback that blended standards contained too much agricultural overlap, and noted that its curriculum focuses on ecological monitoring and conservation, backed by Ducks Unlimited and Natural Resources Specialist certifications.
- Equine Care and Agribusiness Economics CTE Pathways: Marquita Friday -MSDE- introduced two new program pathways integrated into existing offerings: equine care and agribusiness economics. The equine care pathway focuses on health, nutrition, disease prevention, and facility management, aligning with the Alanco Fundamentals of Animal Science credential. The agribusiness economics pathway applies business, financial, and entrepreneurial principles to agriculture

enterprises—focusing on business planning, financial analysis, marketing, and agritourism—and aligns with the Entrepreneurship and Small Business certification via Certaport.

- CTE Program Implementation, Industry Engagement, and Teacher Staffing: Discussing industry engagement in CTE implementation, Marquita Friday -MSDE- urged stakeholders to connect with local school system CTE directors and participate in local advisory councils or program advisory committees, emphasizing that career-connected learning like capstone projects and school-based enterprises require local industry collaboration. Susanne Richards underscored the importance of district autonomy and grassroots efforts like forming school horse clubs to drive student enrollment. To address teacher shortages where industry professionals can earn more outside education, Marquita Friday -MSDE- highlighted the availability of utilizing adjunct faculty at the secondary level.
- **Upcoming Meeting Dates:** Allie Cavanagh -MDA- announced that due to space availability challenges, the final full commission GICA meeting of the year has been rescheduled to November 30, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Maryland Department of Agriculture headquarters in Annapolis, with a virtual option available.

Meeting notes were supported by Gemini and edited for accuracy by Allie Cavanagh - MDA-.