



Northeastern  
Maryland



## **TU in Northeastern Maryland, Harford County Public Schools partner to meet demands of educator workforce**

*Partnership will create pathway for paraeducators aiming to become certified teachers*

Towson, Maryland (Jan. 29, 2025) - Towson University in Northeastern Maryland (TUNE) and Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) have partnered to develop the Pathway for Paraeducators, a program that provides part-time, hybrid courses, on-the-job training and dual certification to current paraeducators in Harford County. The first cohort began the program in January, projected to graduate with a four-year degree in the spring of 2027. Fully funded through a combination of tuition reimbursement and [Talent Pathways by HCPS](#), program graduates commit to teaching at least three years in Harford County upon graduation.

“I am so pleased to partner with HCPS to create more opportunity for people interested in and excited about teaching to earn their certifications and become full-time teachers,” says Laurie Mullen, dean of the College of Education at TU. “Providing a flexible pathway for people already dedicated to the profession will help fill the teacher pipeline.”

The classes at TUNE for the Pathway for Paraeducators will be offered in the evenings and online to accommodate working professionals. Throughout the program, students will gain their field experience within HCPS, directly applying their coursework in real classroom settings. Also, TUNE offers dual certification so students can graduate with elementary education and special education certifications.

“The investment we’re making in the education of paraeducators directly benefits our community, helping to build a stable and dedicated workforce of educators who are deeply connected to our schools and students,” says Dr. Sean Bulson, superintendent of HCPS.

All students in the program are required to have spent at least one year of full-time employment at HCPS and have also applied to and been accepted to Towson University. Throughout the academic year, including minimester and summer, students will supplement their required coursework with classroom experiences.

“I’m thrilled we have the opportunity to support teacher-in-training growth, development and application-based practice,” says Toni Guidi, program coordinator at TUNE and clinical instructor in the College of Education. “My hope is that this new program will

encourage more people to gain their teaching certifications so we can continue filling schools in Harford County with passionate, qualified educators.”

For media inquiries, please [email Jamie Abell](#).

For program inquiries, please [email Toni Guidi](#).

### **About Towson University & TUNE**

Towson University is Maryland’s university of opportunities. With more than 150 years of experience pushing possibilities, TU is a nationally recognized leader in inclusive excellence, social mobility, research, and discovery. As the largest university in greater Baltimore, TU’s momentum is always accelerating, with nearly 20,000 students and 200 bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degree programs in the liberal arts and sciences and applied professional fields. Located amid one of the East Coast’s cultural and economic epicenters, TU is a beacon and powerful catalyst in the Mid-Atlantic, partnering with hundreds of businesses and organizations, impacting communities and fueling change. TU meets the holistic needs of each student to achieve success, a result of a deeply inclusive culture with a focus on equity among all students, faculty, and staff.

### **About Harford County Public Schools**

Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) serves approximately 38,000 students across 54 schools, including 33 elementary schools, nine middle schools, ten high schools, Harford Academy, and Swan Creek School, a K-12 virtual option. As Maryland’s eighth-largest school system, HCPS employs over 5,000 dedicated professionals to deliver comprehensive educational programs that meet the diverse needs of its students. Offering full-day kindergarten, prekindergarten programs, and tailored support for students with unique abilities, HCPS is committed to fostering academic excellence and personal growth in a safe and caring environment.