TESTIMONY TO THE
Maryland General Assembly

PRESENTED BY
Mortimer Neufville, Ph.D.
President

FEBRUARY 2015
MOVING COPPIN FORWARD
### 2014 COPPIN QUICK LOOK

#### STUDENTS
- Non African-American: 8%
- Maryland Resident: 90%
- Out of State/International: 10%
- Average SAT (Freshmen): 880
- Average H.S. GPA: 2.6
- Average GPA (transfers): 2.8
- 1st Generation: 61%
- Living on Campus: 584
- Nurse Licensure Pass Rate: 93%
- PRAXIS II Pass Rate: 100%

#### FALL 2014 UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT
- Male: 741
- Female: 1,943
- Total: 2,684

#### FALL 2014 GRADUATE ENROLLMENT
- Male: 111
- Female: 338
- Total: 449

#### Total Enrollment: **3,133** (Undergraduate & Graduate)

#### FALL 2014 NEW STUDENTS
- First-time: 297
- Transfer/Others: 310
- Graduate: 102
- Total: 709

#### FACULTY
- Total Faculty: 287
- Student/teacher ratio: 14:1
- Full-time (51%): 146
- Part-time (49%): 141

#### FINANCIAL AID (2013-14)
- Pell Grant Recipients: 2,110
- Recipients of Aid: 85%

#### COST TO ATTEND
- MD Residents: $6,252
- Out-of-State: $11,186
- Room & Board: $9,236

#### CAMPUS (MAIN CAMPUS)
- Acres: 65
- Buildings: 12
- Avg. Age: 31 years
- Oldest: 1958

#### PROGRAMS
- Bachelor’s: 33
- Master’s: 11
- Doctoral: 1*
  *Doctoral program initiated spring 2015

#### FALL 2014 NEW STUDENTS

#### DEGREES AWARDED (2013-14)
- Bachelor’s: 478
- Master’s: 83
- Total: 561

#### FOUR COLLEGES
- Business
- Health Professions
- Arts & Sciences and Education
- Behavioral and Social Sciences

#### CARNEGIE CLASSIFICATION
- Master’s S: Master’s Colleges and Universities (Smaller Programs)
Dear Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the faculty, staff, students and alumni, I am pleased to report on Coppin State University. I remain grateful for the continued support we have received from the Maryland General Assembly. I thank the Governor and the General Assembly for their steadfast support of higher education and for recognizing the important role that the University System of Maryland (USM) plays in fueling the State’s economy and workforce while enhancing the quality of life for all Maryland citizens.

Mortimer Neufville, Ph.D.
President
During 2014, the leadership of Coppin along with the entire campus community began executing a deliberate set of actions to stabilize Coppin State University (CSU) and secure its future. These 50-actions, referred to as The CSU Implementation Plan are fueling Coppin’s transformation and paving the way forward with significant improvements in three critical areas:

1. Increasing student retention and graduation rates [FIGURE 1];
2. Strengthening academic programs and faculty; and
3. Improving administrative operations and financial stability.

**FIG. 1 Second-Year Retention & Six-Year Graduation Rates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2nd-yr Retention</th>
<th>6-yr Graduation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY 2013</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2014</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2015</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2016</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2017</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2018</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2019</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The current second-year retention rate for the fall 2013 cohort of 69% is an increase of nine percentage points over previous year’s rate.

**Plan Completion and Key Accomplishments**

Positive headway is occurring in the form of increased student retention and graduation rates. Coppin's six-year graduation rate increased from 13% to 16% between FY 2013-2014, and second year retention rates have increased nine percent, from 60% to 69% during the same period. These are the key indicators that shape the lens through which Coppin is viewed. In addition to modest retention and graduation rate improvements, other tangible outcomes and accomplishments include:

- **Fiscal accountability and stability** have been restored to Coppin.
- **Greater efficiencies and effectiveness** have been achieved through the reorganization of academic programs and personnel down-sizing.
- **Customer Service improvements** have occurred to ensure better support for students and more effective coordination between student support departments.
- **Policies and operating procedures** have been updated and implemented across campus.
- **Enrollment growth, image enhancement and reputation management initiatives** have been launched and are generating results.
Coppin State University has adopted a set of key metrics to measure and evaluate institutional performance. Coppin, along with all Maryland institutions of higher education, are required to annually report core data to various state and federal agencies including the Maryland Higher Education Commission, Middle States Commission on Higher Education, the University System of Maryland and the US Department of Education.

Consistent with other Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) nationally, Coppin enrolls a large proportion of part-time, transfer, low-income students as well as those who enter and stop out of college due to life circumstances. Therefore, standard core metrics used in general reporting do not accurately capture and assess Coppin’s performance relative to its mission and largely non-traditional student profile. To address this disparity, (10) indicators were selected by the University’s leadership to measure Coppin’s overall success and institutional performance. The metrics outlined below comply with traditional measures used in state and federal reporting, align with the University’s 2013-2020 Strategic Plan, and will serve as benchmarks for moving Coppin forward.

**FIG. 2 Graduation Rates of Transfer Students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Transfers</th>
<th>All Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY 2014</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2015</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2016</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2017</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2018</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2019</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2020</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FIG. 3 Number of Graduates / Three Year Average**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Graduates</th>
<th>3-yr. Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY 2011</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2012</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>486</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2013</td>
<td>481</td>
<td>486</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2014</td>
<td>559</td>
<td>519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 2015</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>523</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Last year, Coppin had its largest graduating class ever. This data includes first-time, transfer and returning students.
Aggressive fundraising efforts have yielded a three percent increase in alumni giving. Today’s rate is 10% and is expected to increase during FY 2016.

The average age of a Coppin student is 30, largely non-traditional, first generation to attend college. Seventy-five percent of the student population have children or other dependents.
The number of undergraduate students who work while in school full-time continues to be significant at Coppin. Fifty-five percent of students indicated that they are working part-time jobs; some even full-time, while attending undergraduate courses.
**MOVING COPPIN FORWARD**

Significant Coppin Accomplishments

Helping Maryland Achieve its 55% Educational Attainment Goal

Coppin’s May 2014 graduating class was the largest in the history of the University. Graduation and second year retention rates for FY15 are moving in the right direction with increases of three and nine percent, respectively. This underscores the significant role that CSU, with a student population in which 55% are working adults with young families, plays in providing access and opportunity for a growing segment of Marylanders. The ability of working adult learners to achieve degree completion is essential to USM’s “Powering Maryland Forward”—55% state-wide college completion goal. Coppin ensures that a pathway to higher education is available to every citizen.

“Our House” Mentoring Program: A New Progress to Degree Initiative

Fifty incoming CSU freshman are taking part in the community mentoring project entitled, “Our House,” an intensive mentoring program aimed at increasing student retention and graduation rates. Our House supports the academic and extra-curricular focus of CSU’s First Year Experience program by creating a symbolic home where students in the program are paired with up to six mentors, each focusing on a different need or area of support for the mentees.

**Goals for the program include increasing:**

1. Student Social Involvement  
2. Access to Adult and Peer Mentoring  
3. Career Opportunities  
4. Academic and Non-Academic Skills  
5. Academic Advising  
6. Motivation for Academic Success and Graduation

Support for the first five (5) houses in the “Our House” pilot program is provided by sponsors who commit $10,000 and other in-kind services. The following organizations are providing house sponsorship in year one of the program: M&T Bank Foundation, Baltimore Teachers Union, Bon Secours Hospital, St. Paul Insurance, and Bethel AME Church.
Supporting Maryland’s Workforce Demands in Health Care

Regarded as one of Maryland’s premier nursing programs, Coppin’s renowned Helene Fuld School of Nursing celebrated a forty year milestone in 2014. The first class, consisting of 49 students, was admitted to the School of Nursing in September 1974. Soon after the inaugural class, the School of Nursing rapidly expanded and so did its reputation for excellence in preparing students for professional nursing careers.

Today, Coppin’s Helene Fuld School of Nursing maintains its status as an essential contributor to Maryland’s nursing community. The School offers the baccalaureate degree, RN to BSN and a graduate program which offers the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) and a Post-Masters Certification Track with a Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) concentration. Graduates of Coppin's Nursing program continue to achieve high passage rates on state licensure exams and are among the most sought after nurses by hospitals and health care institutions throughout the region, thereby helping to meet Maryland’s workforce demand for health care professionals.
Coppin’s New Logo Is Unveiled
As a compliment to the forward momentum underway at Coppin, the University has launched a marketing campaign to tell the Coppin story and rebrand its image. Coppin’s new logo was unveiled in 2014 along with a new TV commercial, outdoor advertising, updated student recruitment materials and a reinvigorated “Coppin Proud” energy that now flows throughout the campus.
Coppin has seen many accomplishments in the past year. Much has happened to initiate the culture change required to stabilize and transform Coppin. The process that is underway to re-tool personnel, grow enrollment, strengthen community college transfers and increase retention and graduation rates will continue to yield results.

As we move through 2015, the University will complete construction on its new science and technology building to enhance STEM academic programs and services. Promising collaborations with neighboring institutions are in the making. Strengthening academic programs and creating innovative partnerships will not only support student success, but also enhance institutional growth.

With the continued support of the Governor, The Maryland General Assembly and the University System of Maryland, we will remain focused on our mission while contributing to the economy of Maryland and the community which we have served for the last 114 years.
Chairman King, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on the Governor’s FY 2016 budget recommendations for Coppin State University. I am joined today by members of my Cabinet including, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Sadie Gregory, and Interim Vice President for Administration and Finance Ms. Julie Phelps.

Without question, this is a challenging time in Maryland. With a new Governor and Administration, new members in the General Assembly and a sizeable state budget deficit we are prepared to do our part to help the state address its budget difficulties. There are also leadership changes underway within Maryland’s Higher Education community, and on a personal note, I want to express my appreciation to the members of this committee for your support of Coppin State University as this is my last appearance before you as my term as Coppin’s president ends on June 30, 2015.

I intend to be brief in my testimony today. We have provided written testimony which includes a comprehensive overview of key highlights and accomplishments for Coppin over the past 12 months as well as addressing the specific questions raised in the analysis provided for today’s committee hearing. Several recent noteworthy accomplishments for Coppin include, increases in both our graduation and retention rates between FY13 and FY14. May 2014 was the largest graduating class in the 115 year history of Coppin; and in the fall of 2014 we celebrated the 40th anniversary of Coppin’s Helene Fuld School of Nursing which has a reputation for excellence in providing health professionals to meet workforce needs in Maryland. Overall, Coppin is moving forward and contributing to USM’s critical role in achieving the state’s economic development goals.

Turning to the FY 16 budget analysis for Coppin, last year we appeared before this committee to defend our FY 15 budget and today I am here to defend our FY16 budget. Although prior years data are important to illustrate trends, the analysts chose to reference data going back as early as 2006 instead of focusing on more recent data which show stronger student performance and fiscal accountability for Coppin State University.
Responses to Questions Raised in the FY 16 Budget Analysis:

Throughout the CSU FY16 Analysis, (6) questions were raised with respect to the following:

1. Tracking Student Progress
2. Determining institutional priorities for the purpose of budget reduction decisions
3&4. On the topic of need-based financial aid
5. What is Coppin doing as outreach to our students around financial literacy?
6. The Chancellor is asked to comment on the CSU Implementation Plan and next steps.

Detailed Responses:

1. The President should comment if CSU currently tracks the progress of all students, and if so, provide data on the progress of its students and how data is used to focus its efforts to improve student performance.

Coppin State is largely non-traditional, but currently being measured on traditional indicators. As part of its normal business functions, the University regularly monitors core data on all of its students and tracks progress towards the completion of educational goals. Those elements include the most recent USM data which show an increase in six-year graduation and second-year retention rates from 13% to 16% and from 60% to 69% respectively.

In an effort to capture additional data and to more appropriately evaluate success, Coppin State University adopted a set of 10 key metrics to measure institutional performance and its impact on student success. The 10-metrics are included in the supporting testimony to the General Assembly. Last year, the metrics were reviewed and favorably approved by the Chancellor and as a result, have become a part of the regular core data collection process at Coppin. In addition to reviewing outcomes from its new metrics, the University continues to submit required data and reports to several agencies including Federal and State offices such as Middles States Commission on Higher Education, the Maryland Higher Education Commission, and the University System of Maryland. Selected metrics are also being used to inform the budget process of programs that enhance student success.

Coppin continues to participate in the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) and pays a System wide participation fee annually. A related collection system known as Student Achievement Measures (SAM) also provides additional insight beyond core measures defined by the State and the University System of Maryland. Due to staffing shortages, the campus did not submit the voluntary data, however, plans to submit within the next available cycle. SAM is a new component and initiative introduced by the US Department of Education. Using data from VSA, SAM, institutional metrics, and program-level data, Coppin will continue to build a more comprehensive system of data on student success.
2. **The President should comment on the institutional priorities when determining how the budget reductions will be allocated over the program areas and in particular minimizing the impact on financial aid.**

In any current, and or future budget reductions we will hold harmless for student financial aid. Through the shared governance process there are continuing reviews of underperforming programs for elimination as well as strengthening high demand programs which could aid in our projected enrollment growth. We will also work towards the institutional priorities identified in our 2020 Strategic Plan and the CSU Implementation Plan.

3. **Since CSU did not use its fiscal 2014 appropriation as specified in the supplement budget, DLS recommends restricting the use of $378,000 of its general fund appropriation to be used only for institutional need-based aid awards.**

The University agrees that the supplemental budget of $378,000 should have been “restricted” to need-based aid. Although the full amount was expended in FY 2014 as student financial aid in support of STEM student recruitment, Community College transfer students, and Bridge Programs, we cannot state with assurance that 100% of the awards were need-based; however, we can state that 100% were awarded. After researching this matter, we found that the FAIS Code in our Financial Aid System had not been set properly to assure all awards would be need-based.

4. **The President should comment on the decreased spending on need-based aid in fiscal 2015 and on the use of funds provided specifically for need-based aid being used for athletic scholarships.**

The amount of need-based aid has not decreased from FY 2014 to FY 2015. The Financial Aid Report that the Analyst apparently used to arrive at her conclusion included expenditures from the supplemental appropriation of $378,000 in the “FY 2014 Actual” column but did not include the $378,000 in the “FY 2015 Working Budget” column. A correct presentation would have shown a planned increase of 10.3% in need-based aid.

To the extent that positive and negative budget variances are treated as fungible at the end of each year, it is true that any under-expenditure in need-based aid could be seen as covering an over-expenditure in athletic scholarships. In order to avoid this possibility going forward, we will end the current practice of co-mingling need-based aid budget variances with other scholarship, waiver, and merit aid at the end of each year.

5. **The President should comment on if financial literacy or other programs are offered to students to educate them about options and implications of using various methods to finance their college education.**

Recognizing the long term implications of student loan debt once a borrower leaves school, a three prong approach will be used to increase awareness and to educate students about the importance of borrowing based on need, versus eligibility.

The presentations will be offered prior to the student matriculating, during the student’s freshman year, and prior to graduation. In addition to the in person programs, a FA Newsletter, will be published 2-3 times a year with quick “CSU Money Matters” tips.
The first presentation was made to students at Open House, prior to matriculation. The workshop focused on encouraging students to apply for financial aid early, explained the types of funding available and how grant, loan and work assistance impacts the cost to attend the university. For students (families) that must borrow, the different programs (Federal and non-Federal) were discussed and compared to help students make an informed decision.

Financial aid workshops will be conducted for admitted students. The first iteration scheduled for 2/21/15 was cancelled due to inclement weather. The workshop is rescheduled for March 28th.

Financial aid presentations will be offered to students enrolled in Freshman Seminar and Advanced College Reading, prior to the early registration period which begins April 1st. This will give students an opportunity to prepare for the fall enrollment period early with a clear understanding of the resources that will be available to finance the next academic year and eligibility requirements to maximize grant assistance. Students will receive credit for their participation.

6. The Chancellor should comment on the extent to which the implementation plan can truly be a transformational one and, if so, how and how long the State should tolerate the underperformance and financial struggles at CSU before USM implements more fundamental changes.

By way of brief background, the CSU Implementation Plan was developed in response to a special Coppin Review Committee that was formed by the USM Board of Regents (BOR) following the departure of the previous President in January, 2013. The Coppin Review Committee issued a report in May of 2013 which outlined specific recommendations which formed the basis of the CSU Implementation Plan. The plan identified a set of 50-deliberate actions to stabilize and pave the way for institutional change to advance Coppin. The expectation was that the 50-action items would be implemented and to the extent possible completed over an 18-month period, with measurable outcomes as deliverables. USM staff worked collaboratively with CSU to achieve significant results which have been documented in a portfolio of 6-month reports to the USM/BOR and members of the Joint Education Sub-Committees of the Maryland General Assembly. It is worth noting that on several occasions during the span of this CSU Implementation Plan, members and staff of the Joint Committee visited Coppin for progress briefings and tours to observe firsthand, the changes underway at Coppin.

Finally, for the record, Coppin State respectfully disagrees with the statement made in the FY16 analysis that the accomplishments of the CSU Implementation Plan are small, and that nothing has been done to eliminate low enrolled programs, and that there has been no discussion to explore collaborations between Coppin, Baltimore City Community College and University of Baltimore.

The accomplishments of the CSU Implementation Plan are small. While the reference to “small” is somewhat subjective, we stand by the key accomplishments that have been realized as significant relative to stabilizing and positioning CSU for transformational growth.

**Plan Completion and Key Accomplishments:**

- **Fiscal accountability and stability** have been restored to the operations of Coppin State University.
• **Greater efficiencies and effectiveness** have been achieved through the reorganization of academic programs and personnel down-sizing.

• **Customer Service improvements** have occurred to ensure better support for students and more effective coordination between student support departments.

• **Policies and operating procedures** have been updated, communicated and implemented across campus.

• **Enrollment growth has been stalled; however, image enhancement and reputation management initiatives** have been launched and are beginning to generate results. The employment of an Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management and an aggressive enrollment management plan should enable us to achieve our growth potential.

• **Hard decisions have not been made** “such as eliminating low-performing programs to shift resources to build up other programs.

  Over the past 18 months CSU’s Academic Affairs Division has right-sized the academic enterprise which includes: the consolidation of 6-schools into 4-Colleges, the elimination of 14 (low-enrolled) academic programs, the reduction of (2) Deans and (5) Depart. Chairs


• **Collaborations with other institutions (BCCC, UB have not occurred.**

  In response to Sen. Madeleno’s request during the 2014 Legislative Session, a Joint Chairs Report on Collaborations between BCCC, CSU and UB was worked on over the summer and submitted by USM in Oct. ’14. The report outlined past, current and future opportunities for collaboration and launched an on-going series of meetings with new Presidents at BCCC and UB, along with their respective Provosts. There are (3) specific examples of collaborations currently in process between CSU & UB.

  1. Intercampus joint Masters Program in Human Services Administration between UB and CSU as an ongoing program (both professors leading the program will receive the 2015 BOR Excellence in Teaching Award from USM/BOR

  2. Collaboration on a Human Services Program which will be located at UM-Shady Grove

  3. Student exchange to allow UB students to take general science courses at CSU starting fall ’15 (UB does not have an academic science program & CSU’s new Science and Technology Building will open for classes fall-15)

**Recommended Actions and Closing Remarks:**

With regard to the recommendation language will be added to place certain provisions on the unrestricted fund appropriation for the purpose of increasing expenditures on institutional need-based financial aid above the fiscal 2015 level, we comply with the recommendation and have taken steps in compliance with this action. Need based financial resources have been transferred from academic departments and units to the Director of Financial aid. Previously, these funds were awarded to community college transfers, new STEM recruits and seniors about to graduate who are in need of additional resources to complete the registration process.
Madame Chair and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you and present our case for supporting Coppin’s budget and provide updates on our actions and positive outcomes to move the institution forward.

At this time I will take any questions you may have.