

subtitle "Nonpublic Education Scholarship Program," to provide for a state scholarship program for children attending approved non-public schools, and for the administration thereof; and to add new Section 41A to Article 77 of said Code, subtitle "County Boards of Education," to follow immediately after Section 41 of said article, to provide for shared time arrangements and the administration thereof.

SECTION 1. *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Maryland,* That new Sections 213 to 220, inclusive, be and they are hereby added to Article 77 of the Annotated Code of Maryland (1969 Replacement Volume), title "Public Education," to follow immediately after Section 212 of said article, and to be under the new subtitle "Nonpublic Education Scholarship Program," and to read as follows:

NONPUBLIC EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

213. Legislative Findings.

The General Assembly, based upon the Report and Recommendations of the Governor's Commission to Study State Aid to Nonpublic Education, and upon its own investigation hereby finds and declares as the public policy of the State of Maryland that:

- (a) Nonpublic schools have historically played an important role in the education of Maryland youth;
- (b) By reason of increased costs, many of the nonpublic schools are in great financial difficulty, and have been required to increase tuition and other charges to the extent that many families, and in particular low income families, are not able to send their children to such schools;
- (c) All indications are that the problem will increase, and as a result will force a curtailment of nonpublic education and the closing of nonpublic schools;
- (d) Any such curtailment will adversely affect the welfare of the State by denying to parents a choice in how their children are to be educated and by increasing the burden on the public schools, many of which are already overcrowded;
- (e) By the provisions of state assistance, as authorized in this Act, nonpublic schools can continue the important role they have played, and make available to more families, especially low income families, the choice in education which they could not otherwise afford.