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A centralized administration of the Maryland public schools was attempted in 1865, but the General Assembly did not establish the State Board of Education until 1870 (Ch. 311, Acts of 1870). The Board, composed of nine members appointed by the Governor for staggered five-year terms, makes policy for the public school system and passes the bylaws and regulations that govern it (Code Education Article, secs. 2-101 through 2-205).

The State Board of Education appoints the State Superintendent of Schools for a four-year term. He directs the State Department of Education and executes the policy and enforces the regulations adopted by the Board (Code Education Article, secs. 2-301 through 2-303). The State Department of Education consists of the State Superintendent of Schools and the professional staff employed by the Board to assist him. The State Committee on the School Bus Formula, created by Chapter 873, Acts of 1977, advises the State Board on reimbursement elements in the school bus reimbursement formula. The organization of the Department is as follows:

DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION

The Division of Administration is responsible for the development and implementation of MSDE policies, procedures, and systems relative to administrative operations in such areas as Personnel Services, Information Systems, Grants and Contracts Administration, and General Services, as well as the operational activities of pupil transportation and school food services.

DIVISION OF CERTIFICATION AND ACCREDITATION

The Division of Certification and Accreditation is responsible for both regulatory and administra-

tive functions relating to the certification of teachers and the accreditation of nonpublic schools.

The Division issues certificates to teachers in the public, nonpublic, and independent schools and various other institutions of the state. It has the responsibility for the initial certification, renewal, and upgrading of certificates for educational personnel at all levels, kindergarten through grade 12. In addition, the Division interprets certification standards and administers interstate reciprocity in certification of teachers. The Division also provides an advisory and consultative service on school staffing.

The Division evaluates teacher education programs offered by the colleges and universities in the State and provides consultative services for the improvement of such programs.

The Division interprets and implements State statute and State Board of Education bylaws relating to the approval of all levels of nonpublic education from nursery school through secondary school. Certificates of approval are issued to approved schools.

The Division administers the testing program that leads to the attainment of the Maryland High School Diploma. The Division processes applications, arranges for test sites, test administration, scoring, reports of test results, and issuance of diplomas to successful candidates.

DIVISION OF COMPENSATORY, URBAN, AND SUPPLEMENTARY PROGRAMS

The Division of Compensatory, Urban, and Supplementary Programs is responsible for the administration and supervision of federal and state programs concerned with improving the educational development of economically and socially deprived children. The primary function of the Division is to coordinate the state leadership and administrative responsibilities of these programs so as to provide maximum support and supplementary services to the local school systems of the State of Maryland.

The array of federal educational programs necessitates coordination at the State Department level to insure that these supplementary services may achieve the purposes of the legislation and benefit to the greatest degree the school children of Maryland.