WHEREAS, Just providing technological hardware to schools is not sufficient to ensure the integration of computers into the lessons taught in the classroom, teachers must be trained in order to achieve technological integration with their curriculum; and

WHEREAS, Maryland has the opportunity to create a pilot program within designated elementary schools, in certain areas of the State, designed to introduce students to computer technology and train teachers to integrate such technology into their curriculum; and

WHEREAS, A computer technology pilot program will add to the increased performance of the State's elementary school students participating in the program and provide performance indicators that illustrate how teachers' familiarity with technology and teaching resources within the program have increased; now, therefore,

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Education

7–904.

(A) The State Superintendent may:

(1) Procure and develop curriculum–based learning resources using state–of–the–art technologies and techniques designed to increase the achievement levels of all students in all subject areas;

(2) Procure and develop long–term comprehensive instructional programming and associated support resources that ensure maximum access by all educational institutions;

(3) Develop standards for teachers and other school system employees for the offering of courses or services on the Internet or through other developing technologies;

(4) Review courses and courseware to assure quality and alignment with the Maryland content standards and other appropriate standards;

(5) Track and issue periodic reports on the type and frequency of courses or services utilized by teachers and other professionals under this section; and

(6) Award grants to eligible private or public consortia to enable eligible consortia to develop state–of–the–art technology–enhanced instructional products, resources, and services for use in the classroom, including:

(i) The development, production, and distribution of instructional programming for students;

(ii) Staff development programming for teachers; and

(iii) Incorporation of creative state–of–the–art applications of technology–enhanced learning resources, such as: