

Preamble

The General Assembly finds and declares that:

(1) The Goals 2000: Educate America Act and the federal School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1992 include commitments to the education and preparation of individuals with disabilities for adult life; and

(2) Approximately 300 students with developmental disabilities leave the public school system at the age of 21 each year; and

(3) These transitioning students require an array of services, including day training, habilitation, employment training, supported employment, postsecondary education, adult services, and skills for independent living and community participation; and

(4) State and federal education and rehabilitation laws require interagency collaboration and planning for students with disabilities in transition from public school to adult life to begin not later than the age of 16, and by the age of 14, if needed; and

(5) Investing in transitioning students with disabilities through collaborative interagency planning and service efforts at the State and local level is cost effective and contributes to the lifelong development and inclusion in society of individuals with disabilities; and

(6) The positive impact of planning and services continuation for transitioning students has been successfully demonstrated by a cooperative service delivery model and an interagency agreement for certain students with developmental disabilities among the divisions of special education and rehabilitation services of the State Department of Education, the Developmental Disabilities Administration of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, and the Department of Economic and Employment Development; and

(7) This cooperative service needs to be expanded to include all students with disabilities; now, therefore,

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

Article - Education

1-101.

(a) In this article, unless the context requires otherwise, the following words have the meanings indicated.

(f) "Department" means the State Department of Education.

21-303.1.

(A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED.