

Preamble

WHEREAS, Recent brain research confirms that the most rapid brain growth occurs in the first three years of life; and

WHEREAS, A stimulating environment is essential to brain development and has a major impact on a child's language and cognitive and emotional development; and

WHEREAS, The overwhelming evidence suggests that it is best to capitalize on the brain's elasticity before age 5, the age at which public education is guaranteed; and

WHEREAS, High quality early care and education programs make a significant contribution to the development of skills required by young children to succeed in school; and

WHEREAS, Not all Maryland children have access to quality early care and education programs; and

WHEREAS, There is an imperative need to improve access to quality early care and education programs through collaborative partnerships; and

WHEREAS, Judith P. Hoyer dedicated her life to the education and care of young children and their families; now, therefore,

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

Article - Education

5-213.

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

(2) "ACCREDITATION" MEANS THE DETERMINATION THAT A PROGRAM MEETS QUALITY STANDARDS DEFINED BY THE ACCREDITING AGENCY BEYOND STATE CHILD CARE REGULATIONS.

(3) "ACCREDITING AGENCY" MEANS A ~~NATIONAL OR~~ STATE AGENCY OR NATIONAL ORGANIZATION THAT HAS DEVELOPED A RECOGNIZED ACCREDITING PROCESS.

(4) "CREDENTIALING" MEANS THE PROCESS ~~IN~~ THROUGH WHICH AN INDIVIDUAL IS AWARDED A PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE BASED ON EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE.

(5) "EARLY CHILD CARE AND EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT GRANT" MEANS A GRANT THAT IS DISTRIBUTED UNDER SUBSECTION (E) OF THIS SECTION.

(6) (6) "FULL DAY" MEANS A PERIOD OF TIME DURING THE DAY THAT:

(I) MEETS THE NEEDS OF ~~WORKING~~ FAMILIES; AND