

(8) Continuing professional development for teachers and administrators requires constant access to the latest advancements in technology to keep teachers and administrators excited and knowledgeable about the unfolding opportunities for the classroom; and

(9) The increasing use of new technologies and telecommunications systems in business has increased the gap between schooling and workforce preparation.

7-903.

It is the purpose of this subtitle:

(1) To offer incentives and opportunities for creative public and private partnerships within the marketplace to develop state-of-the-art educational technology products AND SERVICES that promote the use of advanced technologies in the classroom; [and]

(2) To avoid duplication and the development of incompatible systems by strengthening and building upon existing telecommunications infrastructure dedicated to educational purposes;

(3) TO PROVIDE MARYLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP A STRONG ACADEMIC FOUNDATION;

(4) TO FACILITATE EXPANDED EDUCATIONAL CHOICES NOT OTHERWISE AVAILABLE TO MARYLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS THROUGH ON-LINE COURSES AND SERVICES; AND

(5) TO EXPAND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE TO EDUCATIONAL STAFF IN MARYLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS THROUGH ON-LINE COURSES AND SERVICES.

7-904.

The State Superintendent may:

(1) [Support development of] 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) [Support development of] PROCURE AND DEVELOP long-term comprehensive instructional programming and associated support resources that ensure maximum access by all educational institutions; [and]

(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; AND