

(4) "Maryland School Performance Program" means an outcome based education accountability program that concentrates on accountability through school improvement in the public schools.

(b) (1) There may be a School Improvement Research Project administered and directed by the Department.

(2) A Schools for Success Fund may be established for challenge grants to implement school improvement.

(3) The Department, with the concurrence of county boards, shall select the public schools to receive challenge grants. The recipient schools shall have the following characteristics, as applicable, derived from data-based information:

(i) Low percentage of average daily attendance;

(ii) High percentage of dropouts;

(iii) Low percentage of students passing the Maryland Functional Tests on the first administration;

(iv) Poor performance on the criterion referenced tests; and

(v) Other mutually acceptable factors.

(4) Any challenge grant funds provided under this section shall be used to effect systemic changes in the recipient schools, including interagency activities, computer labs, salary incentive programs, staffing, total quality management, and other purposes approved by the Department.

(5) Each public school that is a recipient of a challenge grant shall have a school improvement team constituted according to guidelines established by the Department.

(6) [In Fiscal Year 1993, each] EACH school improvement team shall establish outcomes, measures for the outcomes, and timelines for its school to show improvement in the data-based areas in accordance with guidelines established by the Department. [Full implementation of changes to the instructional program shall occur in Fiscal Year 1994.]

(7) Selection of school administrative leadership shall be a decision by the local school superintendent with the concurrence of the State Superintendent.

(8) Nothing in this section shall require that any particular school system be required to accept a grant from or otherwise participate in the Schools for Success Challenge Grant Program.

(c) The Department shall collect and, in accordance with § 2-1218 of the State Government Article, report to the General Assembly by [October 1, 1995] JANUARY 15, 2002 a final accountability report on each school that receives a challenge grant, with interim annual reports submitted by [December 31 of 1992, 1993, and 1994] JANUARY 15 OF 1999, 2000, AND 2001 based upon progress toward outcome attainment.