



200 W. Baltimore Street  
Baltimore, MD 21201  
Nancy S. Grasmick  
State Superintendent of Schools

# MARYLAND HIGH SCHOOL ASSESSMENTS

Fact Sheet

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*Revised January 2003*

## ***What are the Maryland High School Assessments (HSA)?***

The HSA are tests of a student's knowledge in core subject areas. Phase 1 of the HSA program includes the English I, government, algebra/data analysis, and biology assessments. Phase 2 of the HSA program includes the geometry assessment. More tests may be added in the future. The HSA are referred to as "end-of-course" tests because students take each test as they complete the appropriate courses. The HSA contain multiple-choice questions and questions requiring written responses. These questions are based on the content outlined in Maryland's Core Learning Goals. More information on the Core Learning Goals and sample test questions are available on the Web at [mdk12.org/mspp/high\\_school/](http://mdk12.org/mspp/high_school/).

## ***Must students pass the tests in order to graduate from high school?***

**Right now, *taking* the tests is required, but *passing* them is not.** All students—including middle school students taking high-school level courses—must take the HSA after they complete the appropriate courses. Eventually, students will have to pass the Phase 1 HSA as a graduation requirement. The State Board of Education still must establish passing scores and vote to make passing the tests a graduation requirement. The earliest group of students for whom passing the Phase 1 HSA might be required for graduation is those students entering grade 9 in fall 2003—the class of 2007. Once passing the HSA becomes a graduation requirement, students who do not pass a test the first time they take it will receive assistance from the local school system and may retake the test.

## ***Will students receive scores on the HSA?***

**All students will receive a score.** Scores will also be reported for schools, school systems, and the state.

**The state requires local school systems to print the Phase 1 HSA scores on transcripts for students who entered grade 9 in or after fall 2001.** Local school systems are not required to print scores on the transcripts of students preceding this group, but they may do so if they choose. Local school systems also are not required to print geometry scores on students' transcripts, but they may do so if they choose.

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### ***How will scores be reported?***

Because passing scores have not yet been established, scores from HSA taken during the 2001-2002 and 2002-2003 school years will be reported as percentile ranks. For example, if a student earns a percentile rank of 60 on the biology test, it means that he or she performed as well as or better than 60 percent of all Maryland students who took the biology test.

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### ***How do the HSA relate to the Maryland School Assessment?***

The Maryland School Assessment is the state's measure of students' reading, math, and science achievement in grades 3–8 and reading achievement in grade 10. The HSA and the Maryland School Assessment are based on the Maryland Content Standards, which outline what students should know and be able to do in grades preK through 12. Also, both tests contain a mixture of multiple-choice questions and questions requiring written responses.

Together, the two testing programs will provide schools, teachers, and parents a good picture of student performance, and will help identify students' strengths and areas for improvement. For more information on the Maryland School Assessment, visit the Maryland State Department of Education on the Web at [marylandpublicschools.org](http://marylandpublicschools.org).

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### ***How do the HSA relate to the Maryland Functional Tests?***

The Maryland Functional Tests were developed in the 1980s to ensure that Maryland's high school graduates were competent in basic skills. These tests were designed to measure basic skills and functional knowledge. The HSA are more challenging than the Maryland Functional Tests. As passing the HSA becomes a graduation requirement, the HSA will replace the Maryland Functional Tests. The HSA will better prepare students for the variety of challenges they will encounter in life and in their careers. It is important for students to take the HSA seriously because high school transcripts are used by businesses and colleges to make decisions about hiring and admissions.

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### ***How were the HSA developed?***

Teachers and other educators, parents, business leaders, community members, and educational and professional organizations and associations from across Maryland collaborated on the development of the HSA. Each test item undergoes a comprehensive review process before it is included in an assessment. Learn more about test development and scoring on the Web at [mdk12.org/mspp/high\\_school/](http://mdk12.org/mspp/high_school/).



# SERVICE-LEARNING

200 W. Baltimore Street • Baltimore MD 21201 • Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Revised October 2001*

## ***Why is it called service-learning instead of community service or volunteering?***

The term “community service” carries connotations of restitution for committing a non-violent crime. It does not address the vital learning that takes place as a result of participating in service-learning activities.

Volunteering refers to a person demonstrating good will by offering time and energy to address a need. This is not a structured learning experience.

## ***What is the service-learning graduation requirement?***

To receive a Maryland High School Diploma, students will complete one of the following:

- 75 hours of student service with preparation and reflection which, at the discretion of the local school system, may begin during the middle grades; or
- A locally designed program in student service that has been approved by the State Superintendent of Schools.

## ***What will my child get out of fulfilling the service-learning requirement?***

Students involved in service-learning typically demonstrate social, personal, and intellectual growth and development. They increase their teamwork, problem-solving, and leadership skills. Their self-respect increases as they see they can tackle tough problems and succeed. Service-learning also helps them see their roles as citizens and as active participants in solving community problems.

## ***Won't this requirement take class time away from the basics?***

Teaching students how to be involved citizens is a basic and has traditionally been one of the primary purposes of public schools. The State Board of Education passed the requirement in support of the “book learning” that occurs daily in our schools.

Service-learning is also a method for improving classroom learning. The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development has endorsed required service-learning. We know that many students learn best with a combination of lectures, seat work, and active, purposeful experiences. For instance, when students study chemistry, they can test a local stream for its acidic content. Based on their evaluation, they may decide how best to help clean up the stream or advocate for better water quality as a matter of public policy.

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***What kinds of projects are students actually doing?***

Each jurisdiction has developed its own service program. Some are making service a part of all social studies classes; others are developing projects in middle school which integrate English, science, math and social studies with service. Local school systems are best equipped to determine what is appropriate for their students. For example:

- Biology classes at C. Milton Wright High School, Harford County, grew submerged aquatic vegetation known as wild celery in their classrooms as part of the Grasses in Classes project sponsored by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Students then planted the grasses in the Bay to help improve the overall health of the Bay.
- Fairmount-Harford High School students in Baltimore City are all involved in renovating an abandoned community lot. This multidisciplinary project has students designing and maintaining the lot. So far they have mapped and cleared the lot, researched and planted appropriate vegetation, and built picnic tables and a gazebo.
- Stevensville Middle School students in Queen Anne's County engage in a project called Serving Seniors, a service-learning unit connected to math, science, social studies, and language arts/reading classes in partnership with the Department of Aging. Students define service-learning, study citizenship, and become aware of community needs, especially the changing physical and mental characteristics of aging. Students then develop relationships with elderly residents of their community who are living in nursing homes or are involved with a senior center.

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***How will students receiving special education services be affected by this requirement?***

Special education students have been performing all kinds of service, including planting trees, assisting the elderly, and making wooden toys for day care children. Students receiving special education services are expected to fulfill the graduation requirement, and the majority will do so. A student's Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) committee can, however, decide not to include service-learning in a student's individual education plan if service would be inappropriate due to the nature and severity of the student's disability.

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***Who will be responsible to make sure my child meets the requirement?***

Ultimately, your child is responsible for meeting the requirement. Each school system, however, will help by providing opportunities for students to engage in service in the school, through classroom-based projects, through school-sponsored extra-curricular activities, by accepting service performed at outside organizations, and by keeping a cumulative record of students' service.

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For more information, call 410-767-0358 (Baltimore area) or 1-800-489-8366 (toll free).

Visit the Maryland Student Service Alliance website at [www.mssa.sailorsite.net](http://www.mssa.sailorsite.net).

Maryland State Department of Education, 200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21201 ♦ [www.msde.state.md.us](http://www.msde.state.md.us)

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# SCHOOL RECONSTITUTION

## STATE INTERVENTION PROCEDURES FOR SCHOOLS NOT PROGRESSING TOWARD STATE STANDARDS

200 W. Baltimore Street • Baltimore, MD 21201 • Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Revised January 2003*

### ***What is reconstitution?***

Reconstitution is about creating better schools. All Maryland children deserve to attend schools that provide a quality education. It is part of an ongoing process to improve schools and opportunities for all Maryland children. Reconstitution is a multi-step process that enables the State Board of Education to intervene when individual schools are neither meeting satisfactory standards nor progressing toward meeting those standards. State reconstitution occurs only when a school has shown a continuous pattern of failure to educate its students over a number of years.

**Local Reconstitution** – Local reconstitution (formerly called reconstitution-eligible\*) is a probationary period when the school and local school system are given the opportunity to enact changes while being monitored by the State Board. During this time, the State also provides additional help and resources to these low-performing schools.

**State Reconstitution** – Direct state intervention, or State reconstitution, typically occurs only after the probationary efforts outlined above fail to help the school make satisfactory gains toward standards. A school moves from local reconstitution to state reconstitution status if the State Board deems it necessary to determine the programs and management of the school. The State Board may contract with outside companies or organizations to operate schools designated for state reconstitution. The State Board may also allow the local school system to secure a third party contractor and enter into a contract with that vendor. The State Board would closely monitor this arrangement through a quarterly benchmarking process and other mechanisms and measures.

### ***What are the criteria for identifying schools eligible for local reconstitution?***

Regulations specify a school may be identified for local reconstitution if:

- It does not meet all the standards and is “below satisfactory and declining” in meeting appropriate standards; or
- It does not meet all the standards and is not making “substantial and sustained” improvement through the implementation of the school improvement plan.

For elementary schools, local reconstitution is based on attendance rate and the results of the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP) tests in grades three and five.

For middle schools, local reconstitution is based on attendance rate, results of the functional tests (taken up through high school and reflected back to the appropriate middle school), and results of MSPAP tests in grade eight.

For high schools, local reconstitution is based on attendance and dropout rates and the composite results of functional tests at the end of grades nine and eleven.

(\* Reconstitution-eligible or reconstitution-eligibility is now termed local reconstitution.)

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***How many schools are under local reconstitution and thus under local school system authority to improve?***

The first schools to be placed under local reconstitution by the State Board were named in 1994. Since then, four schools have exited local reconstitution: Woodson Middle (Somerset County) in December 1999; Thomas S. Stone Elementary (Prince George's County) and Pimlico Elementary (Baltimore City) in December 2000; and City Springs Elementary (Baltimore City) in 2002.

In January 2002, the State Board identified the following nine schools for local reconstitution: Dickey Hill Elementary, Canton Middle, Harlem Park Community Center Middle and Robert Poole Middle in Baltimore City, and Arrowhead Elementary, Concord Elementary, John Eager Howard Elementary, Riverdale Elementary, and Andrew Jackson Middle in Prince George's County.

Currently, there are 106 schools under local reconstitution. One is in Anne Arundel County, one is in Baltimore County, 85 are in Baltimore City, and 19 are in Prince George's County.

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***How many schools are currently under state reconstitution?***

Four. At the January 2000 State Board meeting, the Board voted to reconstitute three Baltimore City elementary schools: Gilmore, Montebello, and Furman L. Templeton. These schools had previously been on the state's list of schools under local reconstitution for several years. They are currently being managed through a state contract with Edison Schools, Inc.

At the January 2001 State Board meeting, the Westport School in Baltimore City, which had been on the state's list of schools under local reconstitution for several years, was moved from local reconstitution to state reconstitution for failure to progress toward standards. While the school remains under state reconstitution, it is managed through Victory Schools, Inc., through a partnership with Baltimore City Public Schools.

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***Who decides when a school needs to be reconstituted?***

The State Board of Education makes this decision after consulting with the State Superintendent.

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***Where can I find more information?***

- Call MSDE's public information line at 410-767-0600 (Baltimore area) or toll-free 1-888-246-0016 (outside Baltimore area)
- Access MSDE's home page at [www.msde.state.md.us](http://www.msde.state.md.us)



# MARYLAND OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS: SPECIAL EDUCATION MEDIATION

200 W. Baltimore Street • Baltimore, MD 21201 • Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Revised May 2001*

## ***How can the Special Education Mediation Service help you?***

Mediation is an alternative method of resolving special education disputes. It attempts to help parents and school officials reach mutually agreeable solutions concerning the identification, evaluation, placement or provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to a student with a disability. Mediation is designed to avoid the cost of litigation and the adversarial relationship that can result between parents and school systems from prolonged due process proceedings.

## ***What types of issues can mediation address?***

All issues related to the identification, evaluation, placement, and provision of a free appropriate public education to a student with a disability may be mediated.

## ***How are the mediators selected?***

Mediators are administrative law judges, staff attorneys and other trained staff of the Office of Administrative Hearings selected on a rotating basis based on their availability. All mediators have received training in both mediation skills and special education law. They are not employees of either the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) or any local school system, and they are impartial.

## ***Must the parties abide by any decision reached by a mediator?***

A mediator has no power to make a decision concerning a dispute. Instead, the mediator's role is to listen to the views of each participant and assist them in arriving at a mutually agreeable solution to the problem.

## ***Can the parties still schedule a due process hearing as well as participate in mediation?***

Yes. Mediation may occur prior to or concurrent with a request for a due process hearing. Mediation cannot deny or delay a parent's right to procedural protections afforded under the law.

## ***Will the same administrative law judge preside over both the mediation session and the due process hearing if both take place?***

No. The administrative law judge assigned to hear your due process case will not be the same person that is assigned to conduct the mediation. Further, the mediation is confidential, so the person conducting the mediation will not discuss it with the administrative law judge assigned to hear the due process case.

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***If a parent requests a mediation session, are school officials involved in disputes required to attend and vice versa?***

No. Participation in mediation is voluntary for all parties.

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***May lawyers participate in the mediation session?***

Yes. Participants may have legal representation at a session although many people choose to represent themselves.

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***May others speak at the mediation session, such as doctors, experts, family members, etc.?***

Yes. Participants may bring other people who may help during the session, but to keep the session informal and manageable, the number of such additional persons should be kept to a minimum.

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***What type of preparation is desirable for a mediation session?***

Spend some time thinking about the dispute. Organize your thoughts as well as all relevant documents, etc. and come to the session with an open mind, willing to attempt to reach a mutually agreeable solution.

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***How much, if anything, will a mediation session cost?***

The mediation service is provided by MSDE through the Office of Administrative Hearings at no cost to either parents or local school systems. However, if any party chooses to bring counsel, doctors or other experts to a mediation, that party bears the cost of the experts' services.

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***Does an agreement have to be reached within the time allotted for a mediation session?***

No. The mediator may recess the session and reconvene at a later time if additional information is needed to help the participants reach an agreement.

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***May parties meet with the mediator privately?***

Yes. If necessary, the mediator may meet individually with each participant to further clarify their concerns.

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***How soon can a mediation hearing take place?***

Mediation will be held as promptly as possible and in all cases be held within 30 days following a request for mediation. Timelines may be extended by mutual agreement of the participants.

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***Can arrangements be made for special needs?***

Reasonable accommodations will be made for participants who have special needs because of a disability or foreign language.

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For more information, call the Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services 410-767-0238 (Baltimore area) or 1-888-246-0016 (toll free) or visit the MSDE website at [www.msde.state.md.us](http://www.msde.state.md.us)

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# THE MARYLAND PLAN FOR TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION

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*Revised May 2001*

## ***Why is technology important to education?***

Today's students live in a world filled with computers that have become a daily part of life. To be competitive as they enter the world of work, students must have the ability to use computers and other information technologies. There are documented results that show technology can have a positive impact on instruction and student learning.

## ***What strategy has the State of Maryland adopted to ensure that Maryland students enjoy the full benefits of technology in their education?***

The State Superintendent of Schools and the Maryland Business Roundtable for Education (MBRT) formed a Blue Ribbon Committee that first met in July 1992 to develop a vision of technology in Maryland education and a strategy to realize the vision. The committee's recommendations, contained in a report "The Maryland Plan for Technology in Education," are designed to ensure access to technology for all learners, provide ongoing staff support, incorporate the most effective and efficient technology in all aspects of the education process, ensure adequate funding, and assess the impact of technology on student achievement.

## ***How will Maryland realize these goals?***

Several specific programs and activities supported by state, federal, and local resources will help Maryland realize these goals. On the state level, the Governor and the Maryland General Assembly moved strongly in support of technology education by establishing "Maryland Connected for Learning" in the spring of 1996. The goal of this statewide initiative is to wire and equip schools, as well as to train school staff, so that all students and teachers have access to information and communication resources.

Components of this initiative are:

- Technology in Maryland Schools Program (TIMS), a six-year commitment by the State of close to \$173 million, is designed to build the technology infrastructure and capacity of approximately 1,225 Maryland public schools. Schools participating in this program receive a complete wiring distribution system throughout the school building for transmitting voice, video, and data and/or computer workstations and funds for software and staff training.
- The Maryland Technology Academy, established by the Maryland General Assembly in 1998, provides intensive learning opportunities each year for a cadre of teachers throughout Maryland to become leaders in their school/school system in the use of technology to significantly impact student learning and to promote school improvement. In 2000, \$1.6 million in supplementary funding supported a series of Maryland Technology Academy satellite programs focused on technology integration and allowed an additional 600 teachers from around the state to participate.

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***How will Maryland realize these goals?  
(continued)***

- Under a federal Technology Literacy Challenge Fund grant, Maryland provides supplemental funding through a competitive grant process to local school systems to help implement their district technology plans.
- With the adoption of the Universal Service Regulations by the Federal Communications Commission in 1997, schools can receive discounts of 20% to 90% on telecommunications services, including wiring, phone or data line services, and Internet provider costs.

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***How will Maryland monitor progress toward these goals?***

The MBRT Committee on Technology in Education was established to provide direction, support, and oversight for implementing the goals of the Maryland Plan for Technology. To gauge progress towards these goals, a baseline technology inventory was conducted in the fall of 1996 to determine what technology equipment was available in schools, what networks were in place, and what capabilities were supported by these systems. In 1999, this technology inventory was conducted online for the first time. This allowed the data to be compiled and summarized instantaneously, providing a more timely review and release of the data. State, district, and school level data can be viewed at the following website: <http://msde.aws.com>. The online inventory is updated annually.

Instructional staff of project schools participating in the Technology in Maryland Schools Program are required to complete a Teacher Technology Survey at the beginning of the program and two years later to measure teacher and student use of instructional technology and to determine teachers' knowledge and skill needs related to technology use.

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***What is the cost of implementing this initiative?***

The estimated cost for achieving all specified targets identified in the Maryland Plan for Technology in Education is \$400 million. This funding will come from multiple sources, including state, federal, local, business and other partnerships. Included in the \$400 million are costs to increase the number of personal computers and multimedia equipment to address technology disparities throughout the state, to upgrade and replace computers throughout the state, to add local and wide area networks to all schools, to provide staff training, and to maintain and operate equipment. This cost projection will be updated as progress is measured.

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***Have partnerships been formed to support the plan?***

A number of important partnerships are providing valuable resources and services in helping Maryland reach its goals. Higher Education offers e-mail accounts to teachers. Sailor, Maryland's Online Information Network, provides free Internet access to all citizens. The business community donates new and used computer equipment and other in-kind services to schools. Tech Corps Maryland is a volunteer initiative that supports the implementation of technology in Maryland schools. Tech Corps volunteers provide technical expertise in helping schools configure and set up equipment as well as train teachers and library media specialists in integrating technology into the curriculum.

For more information, call the Director of Instructional Technology, at 410-767-0382, the public information line at 410-767-0060 (Baltimore area), 1-888-246-0016 (toll free), or visit the MSDE website at [www.msde.state.md.us](http://www.msde.state.md.us)

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# SAILOR

## *Maryland's Online Public Information Network*

200 W. Baltimore Street ♦ Baltimore MD 21201 ♦ Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Revised April 2002*

### ***What is SAILOR?***

SAILOR is an online information system that connects Marylanders and their libraries to resources within the state and worldwide. It provides no-charge access to the internet and is Maryland's Public Library Information Network. SAILOR provides local access in all 23 Maryland counties and Baltimore City. It is a project of the Maryland library community.

### ***What is its purpose?***

SAILOR provides a statewide library data network with Internet access, featuring an interlibrary loan system. Library patrons can find information they need anytime of day from any location in Maryland. To ensure their customers find the information they need, Maryland Public Libraries use the SAILOR network to provide information resources and services, including a wealth of information stored in magazine, newspaper and encyclopedia databases to which the libraries subscribe through their SAILOR project.

The SAILOR web site provides access to the collections of libraries across the state using MARINA, the libraries' new interlibrary loan system. From Sailor's Project Gutenberg site Marylanders can download books that have been stored electronically.

### ***What's on it?***

**Educational Resources:** ERIC, MSPAP outcomes in all areas, science projects, U.S. Department of Education programs, educational software, full texts of important reports, occupational skills standard projects, technology in higher education, grants, and educational organizations.

**Libraries:** catalogs for public, school, special and academic libraries, including the Library of Congress and the National Library of Medicine.

**Government Data:** U.S. and state agency descriptions, Supreme Court decisions, county information, full text of U.S. legislation by key word or sponsor, economic statistics, National Institutes of Health databases, and Maryland General Assembly list of committee members.

**Just for You:** arts and entertainment sources, business data, children and youth family sources, genealogy, health and medicine, legal matters, news, nutrition, recipes, travel information, weather, sports, and more.

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***How do I get on SAILOR?***

SAILOR's URL is [www.sailor.lib.md.us](http://www.sailor.lib.md.us). Access it via your computer and internet service provider account in your home, school, or office and at any public library system in Maryland.

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***Can I use SAILOR from home?***

If you have a computer equipped with a modem, telecommunication software and/or a commercial internet account and access to a telephone line, you can dial into SAILOR for the price of a local phone call. The SAILOR Help Desk is available to assist with any access questions or problems. Call them at 410-396-4636.

**SAILOR Phone Numbers for the 24 Local Library Systems**

Allegany	301-777-3222
Anne Arundel	410-222-7100
Baltimore City	410-605-0500
Baltimore County	410-494-1199
Calvert	410-257-9263
Caroline	410-820-5773
Carroll	410-848-1230
Cecil	410-392-0909
Charles	301-645-2002
Dorchester	410-221-0066
Frederick	301-620-0055
Garrett	301-334-6515
Harford	410-638-5669
Howard	410-730-0707
Kent	410-778-9582
Montgomery	301-424-4200
Prince George's	301-925-2400
Queen Anne's	410-778-1500
St. Mary's	410-863-5291
Somerset	410-742-0500
Talbot	410-820-4411
Washington	310-739-7600
Wicomico	410-742-0500
Worcester	410-742-0500

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***Who is responsible for SAILOR?***

The Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Library Development and Services, initiated SAILOR and provided \$2.1 million to establish the telecommunications system and services throughout the State. SAILOR is currently supported with state per capita funding as a result of the passage of House Bill 601 in 1999. Oversight is provided by a SAILOR governance board appointed by MSDE's Division of Library Development and Services and the State Library Resource Center's Contract Oversight Committee. The SAILOR Operations Center is located at the State Library Resource Center/Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore. For more information, contact SAILOR manager at 410-545-6343 or the SAILOR Help Desk at 410-396-4636.

For more information, call 410-767-0600 (Baltimore area) or 1-888-246-0016 (toll free) or visit our website at [www.msde.state.md.us](http://www.msde.state.md.us)  
*Maryland State Department of Education, 200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21201*

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State Superintendent of Schools

# SCHOOL PERFORMANCE RECOGNITION AWARDS 2002

Fact Sheet  
**20a**

October 2002

## ***What is the School Performance Recognition Program?***

The School Performance Recognition Program recognizes and rewards elementary and middle schools that are making substantial and sustained progress toward achieving state standards for school performance. The award program, one of Governor Parris N. Glendening's education priorities, was approved by the Maryland General Assembly in 1996. The program provides an incentive for schools to continue to make improvements and gives public recognition for the work of teachers, principals, parents, and community members in bringing about positive change in student learning.

The School Performance Recognition Program is part of the Maryland School Performance Program (MSPP). MSPP supports the efforts of schools to improve teaching and learning. At the same time, MSPP holds schools accountable for improving the learning of all children. Recognition of improving schools complements the reconstitution of schools that are failing to progress.

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## ***How are schools selected?***

Each year the state releases information on how well schools have done in meeting standards of performance established by the State Board of Education. The standards represent high but reasonable levels of school performance measured in terms of student learning and participation in school. Schools are selected for recognition based on their demonstrated improvement in progressing toward the standards and not on their performance level relative to other schools. The criteria now include the performance of minority groups.

In September 2002, the State Board of Education revised the program for recognizing schools to receive awards based on the results of the 2000-2001 Maryland School Performance Report.

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## ***Do all schools have a chance to earn awards?***

All schools have a chance to earn awards because schools are measured by the change in their performance over time. Their performance is not compared to other schools. Low performing schools that demonstrate significant improvement have the same chance to earn an award as do high performing schools.

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***What awards  
are presented?***

- **School Improvement Award for Subgroup Progress**  
Presented to schools for showing at least a five-point gain in reading and/or mathematics scores of subgroups of students in grades 3, 5, and 8. A school is eligible for an award for each identified subgroup that shows the increase. Subgroups include racial and ethnic groups, students receiving special education services, limited English proficient students, and students who receive free and reduced-price meals.
- **School Improvement Award for Overall Progress**  
Presented to schools that receive an award for subgroup progress and also demonstrate significant gains in school performance index (SPI) for two to three years. The test scores and attendance rates are combined in a mathematical calculation that results in an SPI for each school. Schools with a multicultural population also must show a significant gain among all of their subgroups.

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***How many schools  
will earn a  
recognition award  
each year?***

The number will vary from year to year. In 2001, Maryland presented funding awards to 61 schools for showing significant and sustained improvement for two to three years. Another 293 schools received certificates for one year of substantial improvement. The change in the awards criteria will distribute the funds more broadly among schools and school systems.

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***What kind of  
monetary awards  
will schools  
receive?***

The state has allocated \$2.75 million for the program. The amount of each school's award depends on the number of schools qualifying for the awards and the number of awards each school has earned. Ninety percent of the funds are distributed to schools that earn School Improvement Awards for Subgroup Progress. Ten percent of funds are distributed equally to schools that also earn School Improvement Awards for Overall Progress.

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***How will schools  
use the School  
Performance  
Awards?***

The school improvement team in each school that receives an award determines the use of the funds. Many schools use the funds for instructional materials, computers or other technology, staff development, improvement planning, and similar purposes related to continuing the progress in student learning. The funds may not be used to give bonuses or extra pay to staff or to supplant or replace other federal, state, or local funds available to the school. In their use of the awards, schools must follow local school system policies and procedures.





# CHARACTER EDUCATION

200 W. Baltimore Street • Baltimore, MD 21201 • Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Revised May 2001*

## ***What is Character Education?***

Parents are children's primary moral educators. Character education helps schools support the home by fostering personal and civic virtues such as respect for self and empathy for others, a sense of self-discipline and responsibility, personal integrity and trust, fairness, courage and love of learning. Character education is not a quick fix program, nor does it teach views on religion, politics, current events or other ideologically charged issues. The program helps young people be the best they can be by creating a school environment where civic virtues are taught, expected, modeled, celebrated and continually practiced by both adults and students.

## ***What are the benefits of Character Education?***

Character education has proved to be a positive force in reducing disruptive behavior, alcohol and drug abuse, and teen pregnancy. It reasserts the responsibility of schools, parents, and community members to be as concerned with the development of character as we are with the education of the intellect. Character education contributes to parental and community involvement, safe orderly teaching and learning school environments, reduced discipline problems, greater academic achievement, and high student-staff morale.

## ***Who decides what virtues will be taught?***

In collaboration with parents, teachers, and community leaders, each school will tailor character education to meet the unique needs of the school and local community. In general, character education will focus on the core ethical values which form the foundation of a democratic society: respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, caring, justice and fairness, and citizenship.

## ***How will children learn about character in school?***

A comprehensive approach is the most effective process for implementing character education. This approach infuses character education into all aspects of the curriculum and extracurricular activities with all stakeholders involved. Some schools may develop their own character education materials, depending on the needs and goals of the community. Character education can be a natural extension of multicultural activities, school advisory councils, DARE training, and activities including students with special needs. Service learning opportunities are an important method of assisting students in developing responsibility, compassion and maturity. Conflict resolution, peer mediation, peer tutoring and mentoring activities also assist students in developing their character. Character education is not an add-on. Schools may implement activities through their school improvement plans using the components of Effective Schools research. In addition, the good character consistently modeled by teachers, principals, and other school staff members is among the most powerful means of developing good character in students.

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## ***Are all school systems participating?***

Since 1983 when Maryland's Values Education Commission defined character and citizenship goals that Marylanders wanted to see fostered in schools, all 24 local school systems have been integrating character education into the curriculum. In 1996, five school systems received funds to develop character education initiatives. Maryland's grant for \$958,027 from the U.S. Department of Education was distributed over four years to: Baltimore, Calvert, Frederick, and Prince George's counties and Baltimore City. These programs included a wide range of approaches to meet children's character education needs. The pilot allowed these systems to network and share ideas to find out what worked best in different communities.

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## ***How will the program expand to other school systems?***

Participation has already expanded to include all or part of the other 19 local school systems. Mini-grants have been awarded to 15 additional systems to help develop character education programs. Training and technical assistance have been provided across the state. Over 10,000 teachers have been trained impacting over 45,000 students. Lab schools have been established in the five original systems to showcase best practices in a comprehensive approach to character education. These sites represent urban, suburban and rural populations K-12. A network of LEA contacts has been established to disseminate information and further assist program development.

### **Lab Site Schools**

Baltimore City:	Forest Park High School, 410-396-0753
Baltimore County:	Milbrook Elementary School, 410-887-1225
Calvert County:	Calvert Career Center, 410-535-7450
Frederick County:	Windsor Knolls Middle School, 240-236-5000
Prince George's County:	Fort Foote Elementary School, 301-749-4230

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## ***How will the program be evaluated?***

The Character Education Office, along with MSDE, local school system coordinators, and an outside evaluator and monitor, developed an evaluation design that was multi-faceted. Data has been collected on behavior, attendance, drop-out and graduation rates, suspensions and office referrals, contributing to the information on program success. Achievement data from MSPAP and functional tests and an analysis of the School As a Caring Community Survey have been used to assess school progress in character education.

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## ***What were the results of the pilot program evaluation?***

- Schools need to have a high degree of independence and authority to develop a program that meets their own unique needs.
- School climates improved dramatically after character education was introduced and the improvement was maintained over the next three years.
- Secondary school suspension rates declined from 1998-2000.
- Key factors contributing to successful programs were identified as school safety, caring relationships, teacher ownership, strong administrative leadership, supportive parents, and student recognition.
- Success depends on yearly training, constant focus, and flexibility.



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# HOMELESS EDUCATION

200 W. Baltimore Street • Baltimore, MD 21201 • Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Revised May 2001*

## ***What is the Homeless Education Program?***

The Education for Homeless Children and Youth program was enacted in 1987 as Title VII, Subtitle B of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act. It was amended in 1990 and 1994.

The purpose of the program is to ensure that all homeless children and youth have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including public pre-school education, provided to other children and youth. The state and local school systems are required to develop, review, and revise policies to remove barriers to the enrollment, attendance, and success in school of homeless children and youth and provide them with opportunities to meet the same challenging State content and State student performance standards to which all students are held.

## ***How is the program funded?***

Under the McKinney Act, local school systems may be granted funds to provide programs for homeless children and youth. These programs have considerable flexibility and may use their funds to provide enriched supplemental instruction, transportation, professional development, and referral to health care and other services facilitating the enrollment and success in school of homeless children and youth. The Maryland State Department of Education distributes funds through a competitive grant process.

## ***What options are available to homeless children for school selection?***

When school age children become homeless or move among shelters, the McKinney Act provides homeless parents and students with options for school selection:

- Homeless children may continue at the “school of origin” for the remainder of the academic year or the school in which the child was enrolled prior to becoming homeless, or
- If the student becomes homeless between academic years, for the following academic year, or
- The student can transfer to the school nearest the temporary shelter or the school in which non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the homeless student is living are eligible to attend.

The McKinney Act requires school systems to base school placement decisions on the “best interest” of the child. The determination of what is in the best interest of the child must be made on a case-by-case basis. A local school system should take into account: (a) student’s age, (b) the school which the student’s siblings attend, (c) the student’s experiences at the school of origin, (d) the student’s academic needs, (e) the student’s emotional needs, (f) any

*(continued on the back page)*

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***What options  
are available...  
(continued)***

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***What rights do  
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To the extent feasible, a local school system shall comply with the request made by a parent or guardian regarding school placement. The choice regarding placement shall be made regardless of whether the child or youth lives with the parent(s) or is temporarily placed elsewhere by the parent(s).

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# Education That Is Multicultural

200 W. Baltimore Street • Baltimore, MD 21201 • Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Revised May 2001*

## ***What are the goals of Education That Is Multicultural in Maryland?***

Education That Is Multicultural is a process which involves schools and communities working to fulfill the following goals:

- To prepare students to live, learn, interact, work, and participate productively in our multicultural democratic society
- To promote student achievement through the use of resources and classroom practices that reflect the diversity and commonalities of students, cultural groups, and communities
- To provide pre-kindergarten through 12th grade curriculum and instruction that enable students to demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the contributions of cultural groups in Maryland and the United States
- To foster respect for individuals regardless of factors such as region, socio-economic status, race, disability, national origin, and gender.

## ***What are the responsibilities of local school systems in implementing Education That Is Multicultural?***

Each local school system in Maryland has developed a five-year planning cycle to address multicultural issues related to curriculum, instruction and staff development. Plans reflect the responsibilities outlined in Education That Is Multicultural Regulations adopted by the State Board of Education in 1994 (COMAR 13A.04.05). Local school systems submit annual progress reports on their plans to the Maryland State Department of Education.

## ***What types of programs are implemented in local school systems?***

Examples of school system programs include expanding curriculum guidelines to reflect a greater depth of information about the contributions of diverse groups, offering teacher training courses on multicultural education, establishing resource centers for use by educators, and providing educational activities to promote understanding and reduce prejudice.

---

***What resources and services does the Maryland State Department of Education provide?***

The Maryland State Department of Education maintains a reference collection of multicultural books and has published and distributed to all public schools “Multicultural Connections,” an annotated multicultural resource directory for educators. The Department also provides on-going assistance to local school systems in developing and implementing their five-year plans.

In fulfillment of the State regulations, the Maryland State Department of Education reports progress annually to the State Board of Education and promotes an inclusive multicultural focus in state assessments, publications, and school improvement initiatives.

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***Where can I get more information about Education That Is Multicultural?***

Contact the Equity Assurance and Compliance Branch at 410-767-0425 or call your local school system central office for the name of the individual responsible for coordinating the implementation of Education That Is Multicultural.



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# HOME INSTRUCTION FOR PARENTS OF PRESCHOOL YOUNGSTERS (HIPPY)

200 W. Baltimore Street • Baltimore MD 21201 • Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Revised March 2003*

## ***What is HIPPY?***

HIPPY is the Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters. The program recognizes that parents are their child's first and most important teacher and helps them work with their three-, four-, and five-year-olds at home. The program helps these children build their skills and confidence before starting school. HIPPY also provides parents with an enhanced sense of their own abilities and the satisfaction of teaching their own children.

HIPPY originated in Israel in 1969 as a program to serve parents with limited formal education. The program has grown to a world-wide movement and now serves more than 15,000 families across the United States. Maryland's HIPPY programs operate in public and community-based settings.

## ***How does the program help parents teach their children?***

The HIPPY program builds on the basic bond between parents and children. Supported by easy-to-use activity packets, home visits, and group meetings, parents learn how to prepare their children for success in school and beyond.

While their children are three to five years old, parents receive a progressive series of 90 weekly packets of daily activities. Parents practice these activities by role-playing them with paraprofessionals before helping their children complete them. Every other week, parents attend group meetings with other parents and HIPPY staff.

## ***What skills does HIPPY teach?***

HIPPY's structured curriculum combines learning and play to help parents encourage their children to recognize shapes and colors, tell stories, follow directions, solve logical problems, and acquire other school readiness skills. Instruction also includes nine story books per year and helps develop language skills. It generally takes parents and children 15-20 minutes a day to complete the activities.

## ***How is HIPPY funded?***

Maryland's HIPPY programs are funded through nonprofit and business partnerships as well as Federal Title 1, Even Start, State Compensatory Education, and Targeted Poverty Grant funds. Although no funds are allocated from the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), the Department supports the program by participating in a state cluster fee structure, which lowers the fees for all programs, and by coordinating HIPPY staff training and special events.

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***Where are  
Maryland's  
HIPPY programs?***

Maryland currently has seven HIPPY programs statewide that assist more than 500 families per year. The programs are:

**Baltimore City**

George G. Kelson Elementary School  
410-383-0288

Madison Avenue Outreach Center  
410-523-1828

**Baltimore County**

Baltimore County Public Schools  
410-887-4314

**Calvert County**

Calvert County Public Schools  
410-535-7264

**Caroline County**

Caroline County Public Schools  
410-479-3580

**Queen Anne's County**

Queen Anne's County Public Schools  
410-758-2403

**Worcester County**

Snow Hill Elementary School  
410-632-1155

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***Where can I learn  
more about HIPPY?***

To learn more about HIPPY, contact Barbara Scherr, Specialist, Program Planning and Special Projects, Maryland State Department of Education, 200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21201, or call 410-767-0291.

For more information, call 410-767-0600 (Baltimore area) or 1-888-246-0016 (toll free) or visit our website at

[www.marylandpublicschools.org](http://www.marylandpublicschools.org)

*Maryland State Department of Education, 200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21201*

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# MARYLAND'S PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOOLS

200 W. Baltimore Street • Baltimore, MD 21201 • Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Revised May 2001*

## ***What is a Professional Development School?***

Success for all learners is at the heart of a Professional Development School. Its mission is lifelong learning by providing a place where future teachers, practicing teachers and college/university faculties learn together along with their students. Future teachers participating in a Professional Development School may be undergraduate or graduate students, depending on their college/university's program. They take part in a year-long internship, arriving at school in August at the same time as the teachers and participating throughout the year in all aspects of a teacher's life in the school.

## ***Why establish a Professional Development School?***

Since the mid-1980's, national school reform efforts have focused on the Professional Development School concept as an innovation which will lead to greater success for all learners. In 1995, after statewide teams studied ways to better train future teachers and prepare students, the *Redesign of Teacher Education* was issued by the Maryland Higher Education Commission and the Maryland State Department of Education. It called for a strong academic foundation which would link changes in teacher education programs with school improvement efforts throughout Maryland. Because of its emphasis on learning by teachers as well as their students, the *Redesign* stresses the Professional Development School as the best structure for bringing together reforms for teaching and learning.

## ***Who starts a Professional Development School?***

A school or school system and a college/university can initiate a Professional Development School relationship. A key component of a Professional Development School is that it is a collaboration where all constituents work together to create a learning environment that meets the needs of all involved.

## ***What are the benefits of a Professional Development School?***

Students enrolled in Professional Development Schools benefit from being taught by teachers who are focused on teaching excellence. Also, Professional Development Schools have additional resources in terms of materials and the number of adults working with children. Future teachers participate in extended internships which enable them to truly experience all aspects of teaching.

Opportunities are provided for continued growth and development for current teachers and college and university faculty. Teacher education programs also benefit through having increased involvement in schools.

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### ***How are Professional Development Schools different from traditional schools?***

Similar in many ways to traditional schools, Professional Development Schools are unique in a number of ways. For example, a Professional Development School may be comprised of one or several schools which include the college/university as part of its structure. Each Professional Development School has a unique character and may have a special emphasis such as technology, career preparation, reading, special education or early childhood education.

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### ***How are Professional Development Schools funded?***

To date, 92 Professional Development Schools are part of a network which receives funds administered by the Maryland State Department of Education. Funding includes grants from the Maryland Higher Education Commission as well as grants from the U.S. Department of Education in the form of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Professional Development Activities Grants, Goals 2000 Grants, and a Title II Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant. Grants from the U.S. Departments of Education and Labor (Career Connections) have also supported Professional Development Schools. Participating schools, school systems, and colleges/universities also provide funding.

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### ***Where are Maryland's Professional Development Schools located?***

The Maryland State Department of Education sponsors a statewide network of Professional Development Schools which receive funding administered by the state. Participating institutions of higher education include Anne Arundel Community College, Bowie State University, College of Notre Dame, Coppin State College, Frostburg State University, Goucher College, Hood College, Johns Hopkins University, Loyola College, Morgan State University, Mount St. Mary's College, Salisbury State University, St. Mary's College, Towson University, University of Maryland College Park, University of Maryland Baltimore County, University of Maryland Eastern Shore, Villa Julie College, Washington College, and Western Maryland College.

Participating school districts which have Professional Development Schools in partnerships funded and administered by the state are Allegany, Anne Arundel, Baltimore City, Baltimore, Carroll, Cecil, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Kent, Montgomery, Prince George's, Queen Anne's, St. Mary's, and Wicomico.

Other sites are emerging on the Eastern Shore as well as in Garrett and Washington Counties in the western part of the state.

For more information, contact the Program Approval and Assessment Branch of the Certification and Accreditation Division at 410-767-0390.



# NATIONAL BOARD FOR PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS

200 W. Baltimore Street • Baltimore, MD 21201 • Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Revised May 2001*

## ***What is the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards?***

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) is an independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization governed by a 63-member Board of Directors comprised primarily of classroom teachers. Its purpose is to improve student learning in America's schools by developing a system of advanced, voluntary certification for elementary, middle, and high school teachers. The National Board is establishing rigorous standards and assessments for what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do.

## ***What is National Board Certification?***

National Board Certification is acknowledgment that a teacher is highly accomplished, having met challenging professional teaching standards as evidenced by performance-based assessments. At the present time, there are nearly 10,000 teachers nationwide who have achieved National Board Certification. Completion of the process is recognized as a valuable professional development experience.

## ***Who is eligible?***

At the time of application, a candidate must hold a baccalaureate degree, have taught successfully for a minimum of three years, and have held a valid professional state teaching certificate for those three years, or, where a certificate is not required, taught in schools recognized and approved to operate by the State.

## ***What are the National Board Certification areas?***

Currently, certification is being offered in the following areas:

- Early Childhood/Generalist (ages 3-8)
- Middle Childhood/Generalist (ages 7-12)
- Early Adolescence/Generalist (ages 11-15)
- Early Adolescence/English Language Arts (ages 11-15)
- Early Adolescence/Mathematics (ages 11-15)
- Early Adolescence/Social Studies-History (ages 11-15)
- Early Adolescence/Science (ages 11-15)
- Adolescence and Young Adulthood/English Language Arts (ages 14-18+)
- Adolescence and Young Adulthood/Mathematics (ages 14-18+)
- Adolescence and Young Adulthood/Social Studies-History (ages 14-18+)
- Adolescence and Young Adulthood/Science (ages 14-18+)
- Early Childhood and Middle Childhood/Art (ages 3-12)
- Early Childhood and Middle Childhood/Music (ages 3-12)
- Early Childhood and Middle Childhood/Physical Education (ages 3-12)
- Early Childhood and Middle Childhood/World Languages Other than English (ages 3-12)

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***What are the  
National Board  
Certification areas?  
(continued)***

Early Childhood and Middle Childhood/English as a New Language (ages 3-12)  
Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood/Art (ages 11-18+)  
Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood/Music (ages 11-18+)  
Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood/Physical Education (ages 11-18+)  
Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood/English as a New Language (ages 11-18+)  
Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood/World Languages Other than English (ages 11-18+)  
Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood/Career and Technical Education (ages 11-18+)  
Early Childhood through Young Adulthood/Exceptional Needs Specialist (ages birth-18+)  
Early Childhood through Young Adulthood/Library Media (ages 3-18+)

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***What is the assessment  
process for National  
Board Certification?***

The assessment process is two-tiered and consists of compiling a student-centered portfolio and completing assessment center exercises. Candidates submit four portfolio entries. Three of the entries are classroom-based and include two videos that document the candidate's teaching practice through student work. The fourth entry documents the candidate's work with students' families and community, and collaboration with the professional community. Analytical and reflective commentary accompanies all documentation.

The Assessment Center consists of six 30-minute prompts that require candidates to demonstrate their knowledge of subject matter content. These written assessments focus on teaching and content knowledge. Maryland Assessment Centers are located in Baltimore, Bethesda, College Park, Columbia, Lanham, Pikesville, Salisbury, and Towson.

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***What does National  
Certification Cost?***

The current assessment fee is \$2,300. Other expenses may include copying costs, videotapes, tape duplication, and postage.

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***What is Maryland doing  
to help teachers with  
National Board  
Certification?***

In 1999, the Maryland General Assembly established a permanent program of state and local aid to pay the fee for public school teachers seeking National Board Certification. Legislation enacted in 2001 increased the number of teachers for which funding is available from 300 to 500. In addition, MSDE, in collaboration with colleges/universities, business, and teachers' associations, sponsors the Maryland National Board Candidate Support Network. Candidates voluntarily attend monthly meetings on designated Saturdays at specified locations throughout the state. Maryland's National Board Certified Teachers facilitate the meetings. Through this network, candidates receive technical, intellectual, logistical and emotional support as they progress through the assessment process. Local school systems have identified a contact person for their respective school system.

For more information, call the Division of Certification and Accreditation at 410-767-0406, the public information line at 410-767-0600 (Baltimore area) or 1-888-246-0016 (toll free), or visit our website at [www.msde.state.md.us](http://www.msde.state.md.us)

*Maryland State Department of Education, 200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21201*

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# THE EXTENDED ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROGRAM

200 W. Baltimore Street • Baltimore MD 21201 • Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

Revised September 2001

## What is the Extended Elementary Education Program (EEEP)?

EEEP is a state-funded pre-kindergarten program for four-year-old children potentially at risk of failing in school. The goal is to provide learning experiences that help children develop and maintain the basic skills necessary for successful school performance by providing developmentally appropriate experiences that address the literacy, cognitive, social, emotional and physical needs of young children. Maryland has EEEP pre-kindergarten classrooms in 33% of all elementary schools.

Local school systems must develop policies and procedures for implementing pre-kindergarten programs that are in accordance with COMAR 13A.06.02. Under these regulations, an EEEP site operates one morning and one afternoon session five days a week for a minimum of 2.5 hours daily per session. Each classroom has 20 students and is staffed with one state-certified early childhood teacher and a qualified full-time assistant.

Each school system is required to review its program every three years in accordance with the *Standards for Implementing Quality Early Learning Programs*, which cover program management, the quality of early education in the classroom, staff development, and procedures for communication with kindergarten and first grade teachers as well as public/private partnership with child care programs.

## Who is eligible for EEEP?

Each local school system's enrollment policies and procedures determine the eligibility of four-year-old children in accordance with statewide student eligibility and selection criteria appearing in COMAR 13A.06.02.05. This ensures that those children with the greatest educational needs are being enrolled in the program. There are three types of eligibility:

- **Automatic Enrollment Criteria:** A local school system automatically enrolls four-year-old children residing in the attendance area into the program if any one of the following applies to the child: limited English proficiency and limited English proficient; homelessness, even if the capacity of 20 students per class is exceeded; or prior participation in a Head Start or Even Start program.
- **Prioritized Criteria:** A local school system gives priority for enrollment to children who reside in the attendance area for whom any of the following criteria apply: referral; emergency and health situations; or home and family circumstances. COMAR 13A.06.02.03 defines these prioritized criteria.

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### ***Who is eligible for EEEP?***

- Out-of-Attendance Area Criteria: If all available pre-kindergarten vacancies are not filled by using either the automatic enrollment criteria or the prioritized criteria for student eligibility and selection, a school may enroll those from outside its attendance area if the students are eligible, based on the automatic enrollment or prioritized criteria for student eligibility and selection.

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### ***What are the long-term effects of EEEP?***

An analysis on the long-term effects of EEEP pre-kindergarten programs indicates that enrollment in the program has a positive effect on the participants' school performance through elementary and middle school. The findings also suggest that participation in EEEP pre-kindergarten programs significantly reduced the number of children who were identified as having disabilities or for placement in special education.

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### ***How is EEEP funded?***

The state legislature approves funding for the program. Local school systems may combine EEEP, Title I, and State Compensatory Education funds as well as Targeted Poverty Grants and the Governor's Early Grade Initiative Funds to operate the pre-kindergarten programs.

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### ***How are schools selected to receive EEEP funds?***

According to COMAR 13A.06.02.04, before applying for EEEP funds, a local school system must rank its elementary schools according to the percentage of children eligible for free and reduced price meals. The system then determines priority for the need of pre-kindergarten programs using the following criteria, applying them equally across all of its elementary schools:

- The relationship of the EEEP pre-kindergarten program and school improvement
- Demographic factors such as school mobility and level of literacy proficiency
- The need for high quality early childhood education programs for each school's attendance area
- The need for public and private partnerships to link EEEP pre-kindergarten programs with child care, Head Start, and family education services.



# MARYLAND READING NETWORK

200 W. Baltimore Street ♦ Baltimore MD 21201 ♦ Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Revised April 2002*

## ***What is the Maryland Reading Network?***

The Maryland Reading Network is one of the activities of the Center for Reading Excellence, a collaboration with the Maryland State Department of Education, Johns Hopkins University and the Kennedy Krieger Institute. Together with local school systems in Maryland, the network is designed to disseminate and share research-based, best practices about reading for all audiences (classroom teachers, administrators, institutions of higher education and others) in the state. These educators are committed to developing and modeling effective reading programs for students in schools throughout the state.

## ***Why was the Maryland Reading Network established?***

The Maryland Reading Network was established to address a widespread concern about how to teach reading effectively. During the 1996-97 school year, a committee of classroom teachers and reading supervisors from local school systems, as well as representatives from institutions of higher education, met regularly for several months and decided that a network of professional educators from local school systems in Maryland should be formed. The purpose of the network is to extend understanding of how reading is learned and to provide models of effective reading programs.

## ***Who are the participants?***

Each local school system in Maryland is invited to select participants to form local network teams. There are school teams of early childhood/primary teacher, intermediate teachers, secondary teachers, and a higher education network. On the school teams, a staff development specialist in reading from the central office level, school level administrator and reading resource or other teachers from the same school comprise the local Maryland Reading Network team. In this way, both building level and system level reading is addressed.

## ***What are the Maryland Reading Network's goals?***

Each Maryland Reading Network team will create a plan to implement a balanced reading program at their school. Participating schools will become observation sites for exemplary reading instruction. School level administrators will provide training for all members of the school community (teachers, parents, other interested persons) regarding the reading program in the school. Central office representatives will provide system-wide staff development in reading and provide assistance and support in reading to teachers in participating schools. Teachers will work closely with other teachers to be sure the entire school has a comprehensive reading program. The other networks such as the Institutions of Higher Education Network will work to disseminate best practices with pre-service and experienced teachers.

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***How does it work?***

A network among participating team members is developed during the year, through summer institutes, briefings, symposiums and other events. Experts in the field of reading are invited to make presentations on topics of need or interest and participants then make plans for incorporating information from the presentations in their own local schools. Meetings following the summer institute address issues and help to solve problems the participants might encounter as they work to bring a balanced reading program to the school. In addition, participants work with educators from other local school systems to share ideas and strategies which have been effective in their own schools.

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***How can I learn more about the Maryland Reading Network?***

To learn more about the Maryland Reading Network and other reading initiatives, contact Specialist in Reading and Communication Skills, Maryland State Department of Education, 410-767-0721, or the Center for Reading Excellence, Johns Hopkins University, 410-261-3630.





# READING CONTENT REQUIREMENTS FOR CURRENT, FUTURE MARYLAND TEACHERS

200 W. Baltimore Street • Baltimore, MD 21201 • Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Revised June 2001*

## ***How will the regulatory changes affect Maryland teachers?***

The Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) was amended in 1998 to require all prospective and current Maryland teachers to take additional reading theory and methodology coursework for certification or recertification. Previously, the state had required early childhood and elementary school teaching candidates to take only one course in reading. Most middle and high school teachers were not required to take any reading courses.

## ***Why are additional reading courses necessary?***

Because reading is an essential skill across all content areas and all grade levels, every teacher is challenged to promote literacy. Lagging growth in eighth grade Maryland School Performance Assessment Program reading scores and poor performance on the National Assessment of Educational Progress reading test underscore our need to ensure that every teacher is equipped with the tools needed to diagnose reading problems and help students overcome this enormous obstacle to learning.

The reading coursework will provide formal training in such areas as language development, phonics, cognitive responses to reading, and analysis of student performance. The state works closely with the higher education community to ensure that the content is tailored to meet teachers' needs most effectively.

## ***What courses will teachers have to take?***

The State Task Force on Reading, formed in 1997, recommended 12 semester hours in the following content for regular and special education teachers at the early childhood and elementary levels:

1. **Processes and Acquisition of Reading**  
Explains the process of language development, including the impact of phonemic awareness, and how the brain responds to reading acquisition.
2. **Instruction of Reading**  
Shows teachers how to use a balanced program of phonics, semantics, and syntactics in teaching reading.
3. **Materials for Teaching Reading**  
Exposes teachers to a variety of texts to be used in their classes and explains strategies for selecting and evaluating materials.
4. **Assessment for Reading Instruction**  
Shows teachers how to use state, local, and classroom reading assessment data to make ongoing instructional modifications.

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**What courses will teachers have to take?**  
(continued)

Six semester hours in the following content were recommended for regular and special education teachers at the secondary level and N-12 or K-12 levels:

1. **Methods of Teaching Reading in the Secondary Content Area, Part I**

Outlines the essentials of the reading process. Introduces teachers to the purposes of reading; methods of assessing student reading; cognitive strategies in reading; methods of incorporating reading through student-centered instruction; and motivations for reading.

2. **Methods of Teaching Reading in the Secondary Content Area, Part II**

Expands on Part I, enabling teachers to apply theories, strategies, and practices in daily classroom instruction.

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**Can these reading requirements be waived?**

Local superintendents may request an exemption of these new requirements for certificated teachers who are at least 55 years old or who have been employed by public or approved nonpublic schools for at least 25 years.

The State Superintendent of Schools may also waive specific coursework requirements on an individual basis if he or she determines that the applicant's preparation or experience is adequate to justify the waiver.

Teachers must submit official documentation of the preparation or experience that will be used to satisfy the reading requirements, including approval of the request by the local superintendent.

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**Can teachers "test out" of the reading requirement?**

Yes, early childhood, elementary, and special education teachers at the early childhood and elementary levels may test out by achieving the qualifying score of 173 on the Praxis II assessment *Reading Across the Curriculum: Elementary*. Educational Testing Service is currently developing a test for the secondary level. Check the ETS web site at [www.teachingandlearning.org](http://www.teachingandlearning.org) for testing information.

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**How long will teachers have to satisfy the requirements?**

Current preservice teachers will be able to graduate by fulfilling the college or university program requirements under which they enrolled. Teachers will have to fulfill the additional reading coursework as part of the state's certification renewal requirements.

Current teachers will have at least a full certificate renewal period in which to complete the additional coursework. (Early childhood, elementary, and special education [birth-grade 3, grades 1-8] teachers will have at least two full renewal periods to satisfy all 12 semester hours.)

Students graduating from an out-of-state approved teacher preparation program and those last teaching out of state will not have to complete additional coursework prior to assuming teaching positions in Maryland. However, these teachers must satisfy the additional requirements to renew their certificates.

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MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



# READING CONTENT REQUIREMENTS: A TEACHER'S GUIDE

200 W. Baltimore Street ♦ Baltimore MD 21201 ♦ Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Reviewed June 2001*

Teacher	Age/Grade Level	Minimum Number of Semester Hours Required*	Time to Complete Credits
<b>Preservice Teacher in MD-Approved Program or Content Mastery Applicant</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Early Childhood Education</li> <li>•Elementary Education</li> <li>•Special Education: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Birth - Grade 3</li> <li>•Grades 1-8</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	12 Semester Hours	From time of enrollment in approved program to completion or by completion of content mastery requirements
<b>Preservice Teacher in MD-Approved Program or Content Mastery Applicant</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Secondary Education</li> <li>•Special Education: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Grades 6-12</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	6 Semester Hours	From time of enrollment in approved program to completion or by completion of content mastery requirements
<b>Preservice Teacher in MD-Approved Program or Content Mastery Applicant</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•N-12 Certificate</li> <li>•Teachers of English for Speakers of Other Languages</li> </ul>	6 Semester Hours	From time of enrollment in approved program to completion or by completion of content mastery requirements
<b>Teacher Seeking Certificate Renewal or Reinstatement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Early Childhood Education</li> <li>•Elementary Education</li> <li>•Special Education: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Birth - Grade 3</li> <li>•Grades 1-8</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	12 Semester Hours	2 Renewal Periods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•6 credits within 1st renewal period</li> <li>•6 credits within 2nd renewal period</li> </ul>
<b>Teacher Seeking Certificate Renewal or Reinstatement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Secondary Education</li> <li>•Special Education: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Grades 6-12</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	6 Semester Hours	1 Renewal Period
<b>Teacher Seeking Certificate Renewal or Reinstatement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•N-12 Certificate</li> <li>•Teachers of English for Speakers of Other Languages</li> </ul>	6 Semester Hours	1 Renewal Period
<b>Resident Teacher</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Elementary Education</li> </ul>	12 Semester Hours	By expiration of Resident Teacher Certificate (renewable for 3rd year)
<b>Resident Teacher</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Secondary Education</li> </ul>	6 Semester Hours	By expiration of Resident Teacher Certificate (renewable for 2nd year)

\* Teachers who have already taken comparable courses will be able to substitute those courses for the requirements.

*For more information, call 410-767-0600 (Baltimore area) Toll-Free 1-888-246-0016*



# EARLY IDENTIFICATION AND INTERVENTION PROGRAM (EIIP)

200 W. Baltimore Street ♦ Baltimore MD 21201 ♦ Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Reviewed April 2002*

## ***What is the Early Identification and Intervention Program (EIIP)?***

The Early Identification and Intervention Program (EIIP) was developed in response to a bill enacted in 1973 by the Maryland General Assembly requiring that each student entering the first year in any primary grade in any public school be evaluated for the purpose of identifying learning disabilities.

In addition to ensuring that children are screened, the EIIP involves referral, review and evaluation, as well as intervention services for students whose screening results indicate areas of educational concern. School-based review and evaluation teams, working with parents or other appropriate family members, make decisions involving the provision of these services for students.

## ***What is the history of the EIIP?***

In response to the General Assembly's mandate, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) developed an "observational screening instrument," a tool that helps identify potential learning disabilities so that children can receive the assistance they need to achieve their maximum potential. This instrument was used in all local school systems and was revised in 1981. In 1996, the State Board of Education approved a measure allowing local superintendents to use alternative screening and assessment methods to identify learning disabilities.

## ***How do local school systems comply with the EIIP?***

In 1997, MSDE created guidelines and criteria to assist local school systems in developing EIIP plans. These local plans guide the identification, referral, review and evaluation, and intervention services for those students who may have educational needs or disabilities. Students who may have a disability are referred for special education screening.

## ***How does the EIIP relate to special education and other school programs?***

Special Education staff must be part of the EIIP process to ensure that sound decisions are made regarding the referral of students to special education. Special Education is a partner and source of support in the EIIP process. In addition, all public school programs, such as Title I and student counseling, support the EIIP by participating in the review process and by providing intervention services if needed.

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## ***What are the six components of the EIIP?***

The six components of the EIIP, required in all local school system plans, include:

- **Goals Alignment:** Local school systems are required to align their goals for successful school performance with statewide EIIP goals.
- **Screening and Assessment:** Each school system must have a procedure for identifying children who show signs of potential learning problems and must conduct a comprehensive evaluation of those children's abilities to succeed in the school's instructional program.
- **Referral:** School staff or family members bring concerns about students to the attention of a school-based team which determines the need for intervention and/or further evaluation.
- **Review and Evaluation:** Documented issues of concern about a student's developmental level and/or ability to meet the expectations of the school's instructional program are carefully considered and decisions about the need for intervention, further referral, or further evaluation are made. A plan of action is developed for students with confirmed needs. These decisions are made by a school-based team which includes professionals and family members.
- **Intervention Services:** Modifications and supports both within and outside the classroom are designed to promote student success. These services are tailored to meet children's individual needs.
- **Accountability:** Each local school system must have a plan to evaluate the effectiveness of its EIIP in identifying and assisting students with learning disabilities.

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## ***How do students benefit from the EIIP?***

Through EIIP, children are screened early in their school careers. This allows children with identified learning disabilities to receive the help they need through instructional interventions or help in the classroom, and, if necessary, support from specialized school programs. All of this is done while children are young so that they can immediately get the support they require to learn the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed for long-lasting success in school. Students in kindergarten and grades one through three benefit from EIIP by receiving support for the early foundations of learning that will maximize their potential for academic success.

For more information about EIIP, contact Early Intervention and Prevention Specialist, Maryland State Department of Education, 410-767-7037.

For more information, call 410-767-0600 (Baltimore area) or 1-888-246-0016 (toll free) or visit our website at [www.msde.state.md.us](http://www.msde.state.md.us)  
*Maryland State Department of Education, 200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21201*

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# SCHOOL ENTRY AGE

200 W. Baltimore Street • Baltimore, MD 21201 • Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Revised February 2003*

## ***At what age are children required to start school?***

Effective July 1 2002, the age of eligibility for enrolling prekindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade students changed. The State Board of Education has adopted September 1 as the cut-off date for the age of entrance to school according to the plan outlined in COMAR 13A.08.02 Age for School Attendance for phasing in the new date at the rate of one month per year as follows:

**Prekindergarten:** Beginning with the 2002-03 school year through the 2005-06 school year, a child admitted to the prekindergarten program in the public schools shall be 4 years old or older on:

- October 31, 2003, if the child applies for entrance for the 2003-04 school year, or
- September 30, 2004, if the child applies for entrance for the 2004-05 school year.

Beginning with the 2005-06 school year and each school year thereafter, a child admitted to the prekindergarten program in the public schools shall be 4 years old or older on September 1 of the school year in which the child applies for entrance.

**Kindergarten:** Beginning with the 2003-04 school year through the 2006-07 school year, a child admitted to the kindergarten program in the public schools shall be 5 years old or older on:

- November 30, 2003, if the child applies for entrance for the 2003-04 school year,
- October 31, 2004, if the child applies for entrance for the 2004-05 school year or
- September 30, 2005, if the child applies for entrance for the 2005-06 school year.

Beginning with the 2006-07 school year and each school year thereafter, a child admitted to the kindergarten program in the public schools shall be 5 years old or older on September 1 of the school year in which the child applies for entrance.

**First Grade:** Beginning with the 2004-05 school year through the 2007-08 school year, a child admitted to the first grade in the public schools shall be at least 6 years old on or before:

- November 30, 2004, if the child applies for entrance for the 2004-05 school year,
- October 31, 2005, if the child applies for entrance for the 2005-06 school year or
- September 30, 2006, if the child applies for entrance for the 2006-07 school year.

Beginning with the 2007-08 school year and each school year thereafter, children admitted to first grade shall be at least 6 years old on or before September 1 of the school year in which they apply for entrance. The local board of education may adopt a regulation permitting a 5-year-old child, upon request of the parent/guardian, to be admitted to first grade if the local superintendent or superintendent's designee determines that the child has demonstrated capabilities warranting early admission.

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***Is enrollment in kindergarten mandatory?***

Yes. Every age-eligible child must be enrolled in kindergarten in either a public school or a nonpublic school approved by MSDE, or enrolled in a licensed child care or family child care program before enrolling in first grade.

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***Can entrance to kindergarten be delayed?***

Yes. State Board of Education regulations allow parents or legal guardians to submit a one-year level of maturity waiver for a kindergarten-age child if they believe that a delay in kindergarten attendance is in the best interest of the child. The child, however, must attend kindergarten the next year. For more information, see Maryland State Department of Education Fact Sheet 49, Level of Maturity Waivers.

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***May children begin prekindergarten, kindergarten or first grade early?***

According to COMAR 13A.08.02 Age for School Attendance, local school systems may adopt a regulation allowing for the early entrance of a student to prekindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade:

√ *Prekindergarten:* The local board of education may adopt a policy permitting a 3-year-old child, upon request by the parent or guardian, to be admitted to prekindergarten if the local superintendent of schools or the superintendent's designee determines that the child has demonstrated capabilities warranting early admission.

√ *Kindergarten:* The local board of education may adopt a policy permitting a 4-year-old child, upon request by the parent or guardian, to be admitted to kindergarten if the local superintendent of schools or the superintendent's designee determines that the child has demonstrated capabilities warranting early admission.

√ *First Grade:* The local board of education may adopt a policy permitting a 5-year-old child, upon request by the parent or guardian, to be admitted to the first grade if the local superintendent of schools or the superintendent's designee determines that the child has demonstrated capabilities warranting early admission.

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***What happens if children are overwhelmed by kindergarten?***

Since kindergarten is the first school experience for most children, there will always be children, regardless of their age, who have difficulty adjusting to the school routine. In this case, close communication between the child's family and the child's teacher is crucial for supporting the developmental growth of the child. Under certain circumstances, the teacher may provide or arrange for specific intervention services to address the child's needs immediately and effectively.

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***How can I learn more?***

To learn more about your child's entrance into school, contact the Early Learning Office at MSDE at 410-767-0335 or write to the Maryland State Department of Education, Early Learning Office, 200 W. Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21201.



# SCHOOL MEALS PROGRAMS

200 W. Baltimore Street • Baltimore, MD 21201 • Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Revised May 2001*

## ***What are the School Meals programs?***

The School Breakfast and National School Lunch Programs (NSLP) offer nutritious meals for students in public and private nonprofit schools across the country. After-school snacks are also available through NSLP. In Fiscal 2000, schools in Maryland served more than 80 million meals and nearly 740,000 snacks to students.

## ***How did the programs get started?***

Congress created the National School Lunch Program in 1946 after discovering that many young war recruits were in poor physical condition. Congress saw the program as a national readiness measure because poor nutrition had endangered our war effort. Congress authorized the School Breakfast Program when it passed the Child Nutrition Act of 1966. On the federal level, the programs are administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and in Maryland, they are administered by the Maryland State Department of Education.

## ***Does my child's school serve breakfast?***

Most public schools in Maryland offer breakfast for students daily. Call your school and ask if breakfast is served. If it is not, let the principal know you would like school breakfast to be an option for your child.

## ***Is the food nutritious?***

Definitely. All schools participating in the school lunch and school breakfast programs are required by federal law to comply with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Dietary Guidelines for Americans and Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA). Over a week's time, school lunches must provide 33.3% of a student's RDA for protein, calcium, iron, vitamin A and vitamin C. School breakfast must provide 25%. Also, the week's meals are to include no more than 30% of calories from fat. Sodium and fiber are also monitored.

## ***Is good taste important?***

Absolutely. As food and nutrition service personnel take steps to cut fat, sodium and sugar, they're also working to prepare food kids will eat. They're attending hands-on workshops with chefs to learn creative ways to prepare and flavor foods. They're holding taste tests so children and parents can have a say in what's served in the school dining room. They're expanding the number of options available to children each day.

It's much easier to get a kid to try a greasy, high-fat burger than one made with turkey and lowfat cheese. But School Meals professionals are making inroads. Students are eating turkey burgers and enjoying kiwi. They're getting comfortable with lowfat dip for carrot sticks. They're exploring salad bars and making healthful choices. School Meals professionals are enthusiastic about continuing to make menu changes and encouraging students to try new foods.



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***Why all this emphasis on nutrition?***

Because it makes sense. Research has shown that children who eat well do better in the classroom and perform better on standardized tests.

Researchers from Harvard University and Massachusetts General Hospital are evaluating a pilot program that provides breakfast for students in their classroom each morning. Breakfast is free to all students, regardless of family income. The researchers have found that the program has a positive impact on academics and behavior. A National Health Education Consortium study confirmed “a specific link between nutrition and learning in children.” And the American Dietetic Association found that children who eat well perform better in school because of “increased problem-solving ability and better memory, verbal fluency and creativity.”

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***How much do School Meals cost?***

Each school system sets its own prices for School Breakfast and School Lunch. Call your child’s school for prices.

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***Can I prepay for my child’s meals?***

Nearly every school has a system in place to accept advance payment for School Meals. Some schools offer a discount for prepaid meals. If you would like details, call your child’s school.

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***What if I can’t afford School Meals?***

One of the objectives of the program is to make School Meals available at an affordable price. The federal government and the State of Maryland subsidize meals for students whose family income falls within certain guidelines. Some students receive reduced-price meals, while others receive their meals free.

At the beginning of each school year, your child’s school will send home an Application for Free and Reduced-Price Meals. You may also call your child’s school to request an application. Once you have the form, all you need to do is fill it out and return it. The school will let you know whether or not your child qualifies. If you receive food stamps or Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA), you may receive a letter telling you that you have been directly certified. If you receive such a letter, you do not need to fill out an application because your child is already approved for free meals.

For more information, call the Nutrition and Transportation Services Branch at 410-767-0199.



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# THE MARYLAND CONTENT STANDARDS

200 W. Baltimore Street • Baltimore, MD 21201 • Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Revised May 2001*

## ***What are the Maryland Content Standards?***

The Maryland Content Standards specify the essential knowledge and skills that all students are expected to learn by the end of specific grades. These standards help to clarify for teachers, students, and parents what students should master in reading, writing, mathematics, and other core academic areas. Local school systems will use Maryland's Content Standards to guide their own curricula.

## ***How will content standards further statewide school reform?***

Specifying the essential academic content and knowledge that all students need to learn helps ensure that each student, regardless of wealth, social background, or geographic location, has an equal opportunity to study a challenging curriculum. The Maryland Content Standards support components of the Pre-K-12 Academic Intervention Plan, the Middle Learning Years Task Force Report, and the Maryland State Department of Education Strategic Plan.

Maryland's clearly defined, measurable content standards help ensure that students statewide will be held to challenging expectations and have access to rigorous coursework. They also bring an increased focus and coherence to Maryland's public school system, driving statewide school reform efforts in curriculum, assessment, professional development, and accountability. The common vision provided by these content standards is the logical next step in statewide school reform, setting the stage for even greater increases in student achievement.

## ***Who developed the Maryland Content Standards?***

The development of the Maryland Content Standards took over a year and a half and involved more than 200 teachers, administrators, and education experts from Maryland's 24 local school systems; the Maryland State Department of Education; and two national organizations with standards development expertise, the Council for Basic Education and Standards Work. The standards have undergone a rigorous review process, during which they were compared to widely respected state and national organization standards and examined by more than 40 experts. *Quality Counts 2001*, published by **Education Week**, awarded Maryland an A for standards and accountability.

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***How will the standards affect state assessments such as MSPAP and the new high school assessments?***

The Maryland Content Standards were used to update the Maryland Learning Outcomes, which drive the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP), the state's K-8 assessment program. In 2002, MSPAP will be aligned with the new content standards. The high school assessments will test the Core Learning Goals that are embedded in the Maryland Content Standards.

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***Where can I get more information about the Maryland Content Standards?***

The Maryland Content Standards are available on the School Improvement website at [www.mdk12.org](http://www.mdk12.org). For more information about the Maryland Content Standards, call the Division of Instruction, Maryland State Department of Education, at 410-767-0316.



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# MARYLAND MODEL FOR SCHOOL READINESS

200 W. Baltimore Street • Baltimore, MD 21201 • Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Revised May 2001*

## ***What is the Maryland Model for School Readiness?***

The Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR) is a framework for teachers to help them instruct and assess young children in the skills they need to be ready for school. In order to implement the MMSR effectively, teachers of young children receive intensive staff development that currently includes the following elements:

- ♦ Maryland's definition of "school readiness"
- ♦ Vision and belief statement for primary level assessment
- ♦ End of kindergarten expectations
- ♦ Primary Assessment Planning Guide, which aligns local curriculum, instruction, and assessment for early childhood education programs
- ♦ Systematic assessment method which matches classroom instruction with the Work Sampling System™\* (WSS) or compatible assessment systems
- ♦ Focus on assessment, instruction, family communication, and articulation among early childhood programs.

## ***How does the MMSR define children's readiness for school?***

MMSR defines school readiness as the state of early development that enables a child to engage in and benefit from primary learning experiences. As a result of family nurturing and interactions with others, a young child in this stage has reached certain levels of physical well-being and motor development, social and emotional development, language development, cognition and general knowledge. School readiness acknowledges individual approaches toward learning as well as unique experiences and backgrounds of each child.

## ***How does the Work Sampling System (WSS) relate to the MMSR?***

The MMSR includes the WSS that is nationally and internationally considered a state-of-the-art assessment system for early learning. The WSS helps teachers document and assess children's skills, knowledge, behavior, and academic accomplishment across a variety of developmental and curricular areas. Through observation, recording, and evaluating everyday classroom experiences and activities, teachers gain a better understanding of what students know, are able to do, and what they still need to work on. Thus, the WSS is not a conventional readiness test. It is designed to support the learning of each student toward consistent expectations across seven developmental and curricular domains:

- |                                   |                         |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| ♦ Social and Personal Development | ♦ Language and Literacy |
| ♦ Mathematical Thinking           | ♦ Scientific Thinking   |
| ♦ Social Studies                  | ♦ The Arts              |
| ♦ Physical Development            |                         |

Some local school systems and early childhood providers are using compatible assessment systems that reflect the curricular domains of the WSS.

(\*™ Trademark for Rebus, Inc at [www.rebusinc.com](http://www.rebusinc.com) or 1-800-435-3085)



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***How does the MMSR work in the classroom?***

Teachers and providers implement MMSR by:

- ♦ Planning instruction that aligns curriculum, assessment and instruction
- ♦ Observing and documenting students' performance
- ♦ Modifying instruction to meet each student's strengths and needs as a result of ongoing documentation of students' performance in the classroom
- ♦ Communicating readiness expectations and students' learning profiles with families so that they can support their children's learning at home
- ♦ Articulating students' progress with receiving teachers and instructional specialists. Early care providers articulate children's progress with public schools.

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***What are the benefits for teachers and students?***

Teachers gain an in-depth understanding of children's learning which allows them to probe more deeply into the learning potential of every child in their classrooms. Children benefit from teachers who are intent on understanding their individual strengths and needs. They also gain from the communication between their teachers and their families who work together so that early school years are a positive experience.

---

***Who is participating?***

As of school year 2000-01, 1300 kindergarten teachers from all 24 local school systems received MMSR staff development. Most of the school systems also include prekindergarten teachers in the staff development program. In addition, early childhood special educators have participated in the MMSR staff development. MSDE also offers MMSR Institutes on Mathematics, Science, and Early Literacy to teachers who have had at least one year of basic MMSR training. MMSR staff development is also being implemented in the Head Start and child care programs across the state.

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***How does the use of WSS relate to readiness baseline information?***

For the first time in school year 2000-01, kindergarten teachers from all local school systems used WSS to generate information on student readiness for every county. The information includes the teachers' assessment of students on selected WSS performance indicators across the seven WSS domains. The information is reported out for three categories reflecting the full range of skills that young children bring to kindergarten. Children who are "fully ready" demonstrate the skills and behaviors which are needed to meet typical kindergarten expectations. Students "approaching" readiness inconsistently demonstrate these skills and require targeted support. Those students who are rated "developing" need considerable instructional support.

---

***How can the WSS baseline information be used?***

Baseline information on entering kindergartners is primarily used to assist teachers, providers, and policymakers to:

- ♦ Develop community needs assessment regarding the skill levels of children entering kindergarten
- ♦ Target federal, state, and local funds for early childhood programs and support services
- ♦ Develop forums for building partnerships
- ♦ Enhance curricular and intervention for young children.



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# SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAMS

200 W. Baltimore Street ♦ Baltimore MD 21201 ♦ Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Reviewed April 2002*

## ***What is a School Improvement Team?***

A School Improvement Team (SIT) is a group of individuals from the school community who meet to ensure that activities outlined in the School Improvement Plan are completed and are helping students achieve all they can. In some school systems, a SIT may have other or additional responsibilities. Membership on this team usually represents the entire school community, including parents, older students, teachers, administrators, and business partners. Typically, a SIT meets twice a month to discuss how the school plan is working and if it is achieving the desired results. Most school systems have developed their own School Improvement Team guidelines for membership and responsibilities. The state expects a School Improvement Team to follow local school system guidelines.

## ***Why is there a need for a School Improvement Team?***

A School Improvement Team is part of Maryland's approach to improving schools. It is based on national research that shows the best schools are those which involve all of the school's stakeholders in making important decisions about school improvement.

## ***What is a School Improvement Plan?***

A School Improvement Plan is an outline of how each school will work to meet state standards that have not been reached. The School Improvement Plan represents the school's plan to address the students' most pressing needs through long-term goals and short-term objectives. It includes a yearly focus, timelines, persons responsible for managing activities, and a plan for measuring how well the activities are helping students improve.

Every public school in Maryland is required to have a School Improvement Plan (COMAR 13A.01.04.06).

Since the population of every school is different, each school's plan is unique. It usually follows a format adopted by the local school system. What is important is that it represents the focus and aim for the many members of the school community. It is a blueprint created by members of the school community to improve their school and help all students meet state standards.

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***How does someone  
become a member  
of the School  
Improvement Team?***

Membership on SIT varies in each system and may vary in each school. Usually a member represents a larger group (e.g., parents), a grade level or team, or a school committee (e.g., reading improvement). Additionally, the school's principal usually serves on the SIT. What is important about a SIT's membership is that there is representation of all interested members of the school community. This group can then help communicate important information or decisions to the rest of the school community. If interested in becoming a member, call the principal of your local school.

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***How is a School  
Improvement Plan  
developed?***

Through the analysis of student achievement scores, goal setting, monitoring, and evaluation of how the school-based programs are meeting the needs of students, a SIT can help students achieve satisfactory or excellent standards. School members, including administrators, teachers, parents, older students, and community partners, usually participate in the development and revision of the School Improvement Plan. Most school systems have adopted their own process and time frame for this. Contact your local school for more specific information.



# MSDE ON THE INTERNET:

MSDE HOME PAGE      SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT IN MARYLAND  
 MARYLAND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE DATA

200 W. Baltimore Street ♦ Baltimore MD 21201 ♦ Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Revised March 2002*

## ***Does MSDE offer information via the Internet?***

The Maryland State Department of Education maintains three web sites, providing abundant facts and statistics about public education in Maryland. These sites were designed to accommodate a wide spectrum of users with varying purposes and computer skills. Students, parents, educators, and other stakeholders in public education will find a wealth of information on these pages.

- ♦ MSDE Home Page: **[www.msde.state.md.us](http://www.msde.state.md.us)**
- ♦ School Improvement in Maryland: **[www.mdk12.org](http://www.mdk12.org)**
- ♦ Maryland School Performance Report: **[www.msp.msde.state.md.us](http://www.msp.msde.state.md.us)**

## ***What information does the MSDE Home Page contain?***

The MSDE Home Page contains links to updated information, including:

- ♦ Educational activities, legislation, programs, scholarships, and statistics
- ♦ Two MSDE publications: MSDE Bulletin and Maryland Classroom
- ♦ Maryland State Board of Education information, including agendas, policies, and member biographies
- ♦ A search engine
- ♦ An MSDE organizational chart and employee directory
- ♦ Links to other State resources.

## ***What information does the Maryland School Performance web site contain?***

This web site offers detailed information about student performance, including:

- ♦ MSPAP data at state, system and school levels
- ♦ Disaggregated MSPAP data
- ♦ Frequently requested MSPAP trend data
- ♦ Maryland Functional Test data at state, system and school levels
- ♦ Statistics such as attendance and dropout rates
- ♦ Data files you can download.

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***What information  
does the  
School Improvement  
in Maryland  
web site contain?***

The School Improvement in Maryland site was funded by a U.S. Department of Education grant from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement. It is designed to help School Improvement Teams examine assessment data and identify the best instructional practices to improve student performance. Although this site was designed primarily for educators, many parents, students, and other education stakeholders will benefit from this perspective on Maryland's sustained school improvement process.

This site provides valuable resources, including:

- ♦ MSPAP background information
- ♦ A history of education reform in Maryland
- ♦ How to organize a School Improvement Team
- ♦ Tips on writing a school improvement plan
- ♦ Tools for collecting and analyzing data
- ♦ How to identify short- and long-term school improvement goals
- ♦ Recommendations about creating a school profile
- ♦ MSDE's 10-step school improvement process
- ♦ General and content-specific instructional strategies that promote student success
- ♦ Interactive opportunities such as "Ask the Expert"
- ♦ Links to useful school improvement resources.

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***What if I do not  
have Internet access  
or cannot find  
the information I need  
on these web sites?***

You do not need a computer at home to access the Internet. You can visit your local library and use a computer equipped with SAILOR, Maryland's online public information network, to access the Internet. See Fact Sheet #18 for a full discussion of SAILOR.

If your local library does not have SAILOR, or if you would prefer to speak with someone directly, call the Maryland State Department of Education locally at 410-767-0600 or toll-free at 1-888-246-0016.



# THE PRAXIS SERIES: MARYLAND TEACHER CERTIFICATION ASSESSMENTS

200 W. Baltimore Street • Baltimore, MD 21201 • Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Revised May 2001*

## ***What are the assessments?***

The Praxis Series area assessments for teacher candidates are administered by a company called Educational Testing Service (ETS). The number of assessments required depends on the content area in which a candidate will teach. Praxis I assesses basic reading, writing, and mathematics skills and is required for all candidates. Praxis II assesses subject matter and pedagogy skills in content areas. In content areas without an assessment, the teacher candidates only need to pass Praxis I. The State Board of Education approved Praxis qualifying scores in February 1999 and plans to review Maryland candidate performance in two years to consider raising the qualifying scores.

## ***Who takes these assessments?***

Any teacher candidate applying for an initial teacher certificate in Maryland must pass the appropriate Praxis assessments. These assessments replace the National Teachers Examination (NTE) previously required by MSDE.

## ***What is the schedule for transition from the NTE to the Praxis Series?***

- Praxis I and II qualifying scores are now being accepted from certification candidates.
- Qualifying scores from NTE examinations taken prior to June 30, 2000 will be accepted from certification candidates.

## ***At what point do teacher candidates take the assessments?***

Many teacher preparation programs require that students take the Praxis I as an entrance requirement, generally at the end of the sophomore year. Praxis II is usually taken near the end of course work and student teaching. Candidates from states that do not require these assessments must take them to become certified in Maryland. Out-of-state candidates who have already taken the exams must meet Maryland's qualifying scores.

## ***Where and when can candidates take the assessments?***

ETS administers the assessments six Saturdays per year, usually in September, October, December, February, March, and May, at 15 test sites in Maryland located within two- and four-year institutions of higher education. This assessment schedule is also offered in all 50 states and in a number of foreign countries. Test sites and dates are listed in ETS's free annual publication, the *Registration Bulletin* or on the website at [www.teachingandlearning.org](http://www.teachingandlearning.org).



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## ***How much do the assessments cost?***

**Praxis I:** Candidates can take Praxis I by pencil and paper or by computer. The paper version of Praxis I, called the PreProfessional Skills Test (PPST), costs \$25 per section plus a \$35 registration fee per test date. This version is given six times per year at the 15 Maryland test sites. The computer version of Praxis I, called the Computer Based Test (CBT), is given year-round by appointment at select Sylvan Learning Centers and costs \$80 for one section, \$105 for two, and \$130 for three sections. In either version of the Praxis I, candidates may take all of the test sections at one sitting or at several separate sessions.

**Praxis II:** The cost for Praxis II varies depending on the number of tests, ranging from one to three, required for each subject area, and on the type of test items. For example, a one-hour multiple choice subject assessment is \$55, while the one-hour constructed-response subject assessment is \$70. The total cost for Praxis II depends on your content area and the number of requested tests. Check the ETS website.

Fees are subject to change without notice. Contact ETS for a current fee schedule.

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## ***What type of financial assistance is available for students taking the Praxis?***

If students are receiving financial aid and are enrolled in undergraduate or graduate school, they may qualify for a fee waiver covering the registration fee and one test fee. To be considered for a waiver, students must submit a completed Fee Waiver Request Form which must be received by ETS by the appropriate deadline, and they must register for tests required by an authorized score recipient such as a state department of education or a university. This form and further information are available in the ETS *Registration Bulletin*. Students holding doctorate or master's degrees cannot qualify for the waiver.

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## ***Where do I get more information?***

Forms and additional information on registration procedures, fees and testing are included in the annual *Registration Bulletin* available at teacher education offices, test centers, or from ETS. Non-standard testing accommodations are available for test takers with disabilities who meet ETS requirements. Contact ETS by mail at The Praxis Series, Educational Testing Service, P.O. Box 6051, Princeton, NJ 08541-6051, by phone at 609-771-7395 or by e-mail at [www.teachingandlearning.org](http://www.teachingandlearning.org).

To obtain more information about becoming a teacher in Maryland, contact the MSDE, Division of Certification and Accreditation at 410-767-0412 or check our website at [www.msde.state.md.us/certification/index.html](http://www.msde.state.md.us/certification/index.html).



# GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION

200 W. Baltimore Street ♦ Baltimore MD 21201 ♦ Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Revised September 2001*

## ***What is a gifted and talented student?***

The Annotated Code of Maryland § 8-201-8-204 outlines provisions for gifted and talented education in the state. Maryland defines a gifted and talented student as “an elementary or secondary student who is identified by a professionally qualified individual as having outstanding abilities in the area of: general intellectual capabilities; specific academic aptitudes; or the creative, visual, or performing arts.”

## ***What is the structure of gifted and talented programs in Maryland?***

Gifted and talented education is under the direction of each local school system’s board of education. Services are selected for appropriateness in helping students develop their gifts and talents in a variety of ways, and are provided through differentiated curriculum, differentiated instruction, advanced-level classes, enrichment activities, mentoring, Saturday classes, and summer opportunities. Contact your local school principal, counselor, or your local board of education’s coordinator of gifted and talented education for specific program information.

## ***How are students identified for gifted and talented education services?***

All school systems use multiple ways to identify students in order to include as many as possible. Procedures may include a combination of academic achievement, original solutions to real problems, auditions, portfolios, interviews, achievement or aptitude tests, or classroom observation.

## ***How are services funded?***

Funding is provided primarily through the local board of education. Each school system is eligible to apply to the Maryland State Department of Education for a Program Development Grant to supplement local funds. They may also apply for incentive grants to help develop or maintain innovative programs for gifted and talented students and for competitive grants to conduct one of many Maryland Summer Centers that are located throughout the state.

## ***What kind of assistance is available to local school systems from MSDE?***

MSDE offers technical support to educators of gifted and talented students, both on-site and in other settings. MSDE administers:

- Program Development Grants, a formula grant that is awarded to all local school systems
  - Governor’s Excellence in Education Incentive Grants
  - Maryland Summer Centers Program of summer enrichment
- Maryland Summer Center applications are available from school guidance personnel, the local coordinator of gifted and talented education, or MSDE’s website at [www.msde.state.md.us](http://www.msde.state.md.us).

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***What is being done  
to assure  
continued growth  
and development  
of gifted and talented  
education in Maryland?***

Coordinators of gifted and talented education are being trained to utilize the Pre-K – Grade 12 Gifted Program Standards published by the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) in 1998. These standards embody the Criteria for Excellence document developed in Maryland in 1983 and align closely with the recommendations made by Maryland educators in 1994 for achieving world class standards in educating gifted and talented students. The Governor's Commission on Gifted and Talented Education on Maryland, along with the State Advisory Committee and the Maryland Coalition for Gifted and Talented Education (MCGATE), is examining services to students across the state and will soon recommend strategies for addressing the barriers jeopardizing gifted and talented education in Maryland.

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***How can parents  
become involved?***

Ask your local board of education if there is a local parents advocacy group you can join. MCGATE, the statewide advocacy group, is active in gifted and talented education issues and welcomes new members. The association sponsors the annual Maryland Gifted and Talented Education conference in October, where participants learn more about gifted and talented education and share ideas with other parents. Become directly involved with your children at home and participate in enrichment experiences at your child's school. Work with your school PTA and serve on school-based and board of education committees working on gifted and talented issues. Volunteer to share with students your experiences in your special area of expertise as part of your school's enrichment program for students.



# ASSURING TEACHER QUALITY IN MARYLAND

200 W. Baltimore Street ♦ Baltimore MD 21201 ♦ Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Revised April 2002*

## ***What is Maryland doing to strengthen teacher certification?***

In July 2000, Maryland began requiring high qualifying scores on the Praxis basic skills, content, and teaching skills assessments for initial teacher certification. Maryland set basic skills qualifying scores of 177 in math and reading, second highest in the country, and a score of 173 in writing, fourth highest nationally. As of July 1, 2002, candidates may meet each of these qualifying scores or the composite score of 527. The State continually reviews Maryland candidate performance to consider raising the qualifying scores. Teacher candidates from states that do not require the Praxis assessments must take them to become certified in Maryland, and out-of-state candidates who have already taken the exams must meet Maryland's qualifying scores. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and the deans and directors of teacher education in two- and four-year institutions are working together to develop an array of supports for candidates preparing for the basic skills assessments.

## ***Does Maryland encourage teachers to obtain National Board Certification?***

Maryland recognizes the completion of the certification process for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards as a valuable professional development experience. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, an independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, has established rigorous standards and assessments for what accomplished teachers should know. The certification is acknowledgment that a teacher is highly accomplished, having met challenging professional teacher standards as evidenced by performance-based assessments. Certification is offered in many teaching areas. Maryland awards certificate renewal credit for completing the process and earning the certification. The Maryland General Assembly has enacted a Fee Incentive Program to support teachers seeking National Board Certification and matches local school system financial incentives up to \$2000.

## ***How does Maryland certification help assure teacher quality?***

For entry to teaching, the Maryland certification system requires teacher candidates to meet state qualifying scores in basic skills, content knowledge, and teaching skills assessments. Teacher candidates completing Maryland approved certification programs in the State's colleges and universities meet state and state-recognized national standards.

The Maryland certification system requires satisfactory classroom performance and career-long professional development for teachers. Teachers are required to renew their certification periodically at various stages in their career. Either during their preparation to enter teaching or during their professional development, candidates and teachers must complete state required reading courses.

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### ***How is Maryland changing the way students prepare for careers in teaching?***

The State Superintendent of Schools, the Secretary of MHEC, and the Chancellor of the University System of Maryland co-chair Maryland's Partnership in Teaching and Learning K-16. This partnership has developed a plan to create 240 professional development schools in the state, allowing every teacher candidate to do an extensive internship in one of these specially designed locations. Interns will be assessed through a developmental portfolio review process. A monitoring and assessment team will ensure that exit portfolio requirements are fully met before recommending initial teacher certification in Maryland. Additionally, teacher candidates must demonstrate technology skills according to the Maryland Technology Standards.

The State Department of Education and MHEC have worked together to redesign the way public colleges and universities in Maryland prepare students to teach. The recommendations of the joint task force being implemented include:

- a solid foundation in academic disciplines for all teacher candidates
- multiple paths to teacher certification
- school-based professional training
- opportunities for teacher candidates to teach children with diverse backgrounds in culturally diverse settings
- systemic linkage between teacher education redesign and school improvement efforts
- accountability and assessment throughout teacher education programs
- a view of learning to teach as a career-long process and the importance of each teacher having a professional development plan which supports his/her growth, and
- diversity of ethnicity, gender and age in Maryland's teacher population.

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### ***How is Maryland addressing the shortage of teachers?***

Maryland is taking an aggressive multi-faceted approach to ensure that schools have the number of teachers necessary to provide a quality education for all students. Two scholarship programs are available to teacher candidates: the Christa McAuliffe Memorial Teacher Education Award for candidates preparing to teach in a critical shortage area and the Maryland HOPE Teacher Scholarship. Maryland passed legislation supporting mentoring programs for newly hired teachers, re-employment of retired teachers and principals, tax credits to reduce the financial burden of graduate work, stipends for teachers who achieve national certification, and signing bonuses for new teachers.

The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) has approved an Associate of Arts in Teaching degree for community college students for a complete transfer into Maryland four-year teacher education institutions. This early-decision approach will increase the number of teacher candidates being prepared in Maryland institutions. In 2001, MSDE initiated the Maryland Initiative for New Teachers (MINT) as a retention strategy.



# REGIONAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORKS

200 W. Baltimore Street ♦ Baltimore MD 21201 ♦ Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Revised March 2001*

## ***What are the Regional Professional Development Networks (RPDNs)?***

Regional Professional Development Networks were initiated in 1991 by the Maryland State Department of Education and expanded to include all 24 local school systems in eight networks in 1998. Each network includes local school systems that have similar student populations and needs. The primary focus of the network is to support instructional improvement and to coordinate resources for maximum efficiency and effectiveness.

## ***What are the purposes of the RPDNs?***

The networks serve the following purposes:

- \* Provide high quality and effective professional development that supports school improvement at both system and school level
- \* Support the implementation of the Core Learning Goals/Skills for Success at the high school level and improve instruction K-8
- \* Address the learning needs of staff at both system and school levels in regular education, special education, at-risk students, career-based education, and other special populations.

## ***How are the RPDNs structured?***

Each network has a steering committee that includes representatives of the local school systems, higher education, MSDE, and business and community members. The committee helps develop the network's annual grant proposal which is submitted to MSDE for continued funding and helps implement the activities, coordinate the resources, and evaluate the network's programs in terms of student achievement.

## ***Are there standards for the RPDNs?***

The networks follow the Standards for Staff Development defined by the National Staff Development Council and approved by the State Board of Education in October 1996. MSDE uses the national standards as the basis for funding staff development initiatives and for implementing staff development programs.

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***How do the  
RPDNs improve  
instruction and  
student learning?***

The networks support on-going, high quality staff development programs that result in documented improvement of instruction and improved student learning. The networks are collaborative ventures involving local school systems and MSDE. Members of the network share professional development plans, materials, evaluation design and results, and lessons learned. Each school system within the network is accountable for collecting appropriate data which demonstrates change in classroom instruction and student achievement.

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***How are the  
RPDNs funded?***

Funding is provided through grants from the Maryland State Department of Education and are awarded based on the degree to which the proposal reflects the national standards. This helps ensure that networks offer quality professional development that improves instruction and student learning.

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***Where do I get  
additional  
information?***

For additional information, contact Chief, Staff Development Branch, Division of Professional and Strategic Development, Maryland State Department of Education at 410-767-0381.



# MANDATORY KINDERGARTEN ATTENDANCE

## LEVEL OF MATURITY WAIVERS

200 W. Baltimore Street ♦ Baltimore, MD 21201 ♦ Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Reviewed May 2001*

***Can the parents or legal guardians of a child who is age-eligible for kindergarten delay the child's entrance into kindergarten if they believe the child is not mature enough to attend?***

Yes. State Board of Education regulations allow parents or legal guardians to submit a one-year level of maturity waiver for a kindergarten-age child if they believe that a delay in kindergarten attendance is in the best interest of their child. The child, however, must attend kindergarten the next year.

***What must parents or legal guardians do to defer a child's kindergarten attendance for one year?***

If a child's parents or legal guardians wish that kindergarten attendance be deferred for one year due to the child's level of maturity, they must do the following:

- ♦ File a written request with the local Superintendent of Schools before the opening of the school year in which the child becomes five years old, asking that enrollment be delayed due to the child's level of maturity; and
- ♦ Register the child for enrollment in kindergarten the following school year.



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***If parents or legal guardians decide that it is in the best interest of their child who is already enrolled in kindergarten to be withdrawn from the program, what must they do?***

If parents or legal guardians feel that it is in the best interest of their child to be withdrawn from kindergarten, they must do the following:

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# QUALITY TEACHER INCENTIVES

200 W. Baltimore Street ♦ Baltimore MD 21201 ♦ Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Revised September 2001*

Maryland has several exciting incentive programs to recruit and retain quality teachers for Maryland classrooms. Below are brief descriptions of incentives and contact information. The recruitment of high quality teachers is just one facet of Maryland's comprehensive school reform effort.

## ***Stipends***

These stipends were made law with Education Article §6-306 of the Annotated Code of Maryland. For more information, contact the local school system's human resources office.

### **National Board Certification**

A \$2,000 stipend is available as a dollar-for-dollar match to local school systems for teachers who earn certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). For more information about NBPTS, visit their website at <http://www.nbpts.org>.

### **Local or State Reconstitution/Challenge School Stipend**

A \$2,000 stipend is available for classroom teachers who hold an Advanced Professional Certificate and work in schools identified by the State Board of Education as challenged, locally reconstituted or reconstituted at the state level. Teachers must also have a satisfactory performance rating.

## ***Signing Bonus***

A \$1,000 signing bonus is available to classroom teachers who graduate in the top 10% of their class and work as a classroom teacher. Teachers must remain employed as a classroom teacher and work in the same district for a minimum of three consecutive years. For more information, contact the local school system's human resources office.

## ***Tuition Tax Credit***

All Maryland teachers are eligible for an annual \$1,500 tuition tax credit designed to offset graduate tuition expenses necessary to maintain teaching certification. This tax credit was made law with tax article §10-717 of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

## ***Reemployment of Retired Teachers and Principals***

Retired teachers may be exempt from an earnings limitation if they are reemployed as classroom teachers, substitute teachers, or teacher mentors in a locally reconstituted school, a local school system declared a geographic shortage area, or in a subject which has been declared a critical shortage area. Also, retired principals may be exempt from an earnings limitation if they are reemployed as principals in a locally reconstituted school or in a local school system declared a geographic shortage area. The legislation enabling this reemployment took effect July 1, 1999 and sunsets on June 30, 2004.

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## **Scholarships**

### **Distinguished Scholar Teacher Education Program**

This merit-based award program, available only to Distinguished Scholar Award recipients, is designed to provide additional financial incentives to attract highly-able students to Maryland's teacher preparation programs. Each Distinguished Scholar Award recipient receives \$3,000 and the Distinguished Scholar Teacher Education Program increases the total award by an additional \$3,000. For more information, contact the State Scholarship Administration at 410-260-4565 or 1-800-974-1024 or visit the Maryland Higher Education Commission website at [www.mhec.state.md.us](http://www.mhec.state.md.us).

### **Maryland HOPE Scholarship for Teachers**

This scholarship provides awards to graduating high school seniors, undergraduate students and graduate students who seek to become classroom teachers. Students at two-year colleges are eligible for \$2,000 annually, and students at four-year colleges are eligible for \$5,000 annually. To qualify for the Maryland HOPE Teacher Scholarship, applicants must: hold a cumulative 3.0 GPA; be a Maryland resident; be a full-time student in an eligible teacher education program; and work as a full-time certified teacher in Maryland one year for each year of assistance received (or pay back the scholarship money with interest). For more information or to request an application, contact the State Scholarship Administration at 410-260-4565 or 1-800-974-1024 or visit the Maryland Higher Education Commission website at [www.mhec.state.md.us](http://www.mhec.state.md.us).

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## **Mentoring**

Local school systems can apply to receive grants to establish or expand mentoring programs that support new teachers. These funds can be used for mentor salaries, mentor and mentee training and professional development for new and beginning teachers. Contact the local school system to find out what teacher mentoring programs it provides or contact Division of Instruction, Maryland State Department of Education at 410-767-0381.

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## **Homeownership Opportunities for Teachers**

Home Incentives for Teachers (HIT), developed by NRT Mid-Atlantic Relocation exclusively for O'Connor, Piper & Flynn ERA and Pardoe Real Estate ERA, saves you money every time you buy or sell a home. Benefits of this program include cash bonuses, discounts on mortgages, titles, insurance and movement of household goods. *This is not a Maryland State Department of Education or State of Maryland authorized or administered program.*

Another initiative sets aside funding for low-interest mortgage rates through the Department of Housing and Community Development's bond-funded homeownership program. For more information, call 410-514-7530 or 1-800-638-7781.



# MARYLAND EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

200 W. Baltimore Street ♦ Baltimore MD 21201 ♦ Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Revised August 2001*

## ***What is the major goal of the Maryland Educational Leadership Initiative?***

The Maryland Educational Leadership Initiative provides comprehensive, job-embedded and sustained professional development for new, aspiring and veteran principals in order that they will ensure high quality education for all students. Today's school leaders need to understand how to create school cultures and climates that stimulate collaboration and problem-solving skills among teachers, with improved student achievement and performance as their measure of success. School improvement and state reform expectations demand that school-based administrators have leadership skills in four domains: instructional, organizational, political, and strategic.

The Maryland Educational Leadership Initiative, using standards from the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium and the National Staff Development Council, is responding to the need for professional preparation and training for Maryland's leaders. The need to recruit and retain qualified and visionary Maryland school leaders undergirds the goals of the Division of Professional and Strategic Development.

## ***What MSDE publications provide a framework for this initiative?***

The report of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship and *Every Child Achieving: A Plan for Meeting the Needs of the Individual Learner*, both adopted by the Maryland State Board of Education, serve as the impetus for immediate change in the delivery of statewide, on-going professional development for administrators.

The task force on the principalship addressed the need to increase the quantity and quality of Maryland's school administrators and agreed there are three major issues facing the principalship today:

- The changing role of the principal and the structure of the principalship
- Professional preparation and development provided to prospective and current administrators
- Compensation/incentives accorded to principals in keeping with the accountability demanded of them.

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***What MSDE publications provide a framework for this initiative?***

The State Board of Education adopted two reports presented in March 2001 from work groups of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship. These reports included specific recommendations for MSDE and local school systems.

In addition, *Every Child Achieving* addresses the need to strengthen teachers' skills and administrators' leadership by improving educator capacity. This focus is the result of Maryland's 10-year school reform program and the need to ensure that each child is given equal access to quality opportunities for learning.

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***What professional development opportunities will be provided for veteran principals?***

Veteran principals will participate in learning and training experiences through workshops, forums, and institutes, which include a summer residential component. Maryland educational leaders who have expertise in staff development training and knowledge of best instructional practices will facilitate these professional growth opportunities. Additionally, MSDE collaborates with business partners, higher education institutions, and education associations in order to provide research-based knowledge and understanding.

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***What professional development opportunities will be provided for new and aspiring principals?***

New and aspiring principals will receive a continuum of services designed with the same tenets as the training for veteran principals. These educators will receive training in the school improvement process through the Principals' Academy, a residential delivery system with post-academy work sessions.

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***How will the leadership training impact teachers and students?***

The principal must direct the establishment of measurable goals for teachers and students, and the principal must reinforce and recognize the growth of teachers and the achievement of students. This leadership training for principals will enable them to set and to sustain goals that focus on attaining state standards.

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***Who has the primary responsibility for implementing the Maryland Educational Leadership Initiative?***

The Division of Professional and Strategic Development is responsible for the design and implementation of this initiative for Maryland's educators. Members of the division's leadership team have served as principals and have a rich and deep understanding of results-focused, school-based leadership and the components of systemic educational reform. The division will focus on standards-based professional development for aspiring, new, and veteran principals in order to prepare all students to meet high academic standards in Maryland's schools.



# STATE APPROVAL OF EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS

200 W. Baltimore Street ♦ Baltimore MD 21201 ♦ Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Revised August 2001*

## ***What is state program approval?***

Maryland has regulatory authority over the professional educator preparation programs offered by Maryland colleges and universities. This assures citizens that those who are prepared, certified, and employed in Maryland have completed an educator preparation program that meets state and national standards. Preparation programs offered include early childhood education, elementary education, special education, specific secondary content areas, educational administration, school counseling, reading specialist, school psychology, and educational media.

## ***What kinds of things does the state look for when it reviews programs?***

When state teams evaluate college and university programs, they look for these things:

- ♦ adherence to state and national standards
- ♦ strong academic foundation
- ♦ extensive internships, preferably in professional development schools
- ♦ performance assessment throughout programs
- ♦ links to K-12 priorities.

## ***How often do preparation programs face state review?***

On-site program approval reviews are conducted every five years. When institutions seek accreditation by the National Council for Accreditation, as required by state law, the Maryland State Department of Education works in partnership to evaluate the program simultaneously for state approval purposes.

## ***What are the outcome options following a state review?***

The outcomes may be of three types: full approval, probation, or denial:

- ♦ ***Full approval*** lasts for five years. This recommendation may specify that one or more issues need to be addressed in a given period of time, such as inclusion of certain important information in the college catalog or adequate implementation of a required plan.
- ♦ ***Probation*** is a form of approval that is limited to one or two years with state monitoring. During probation, the institution and its students receive the benefits of state approval, such as interstate reciprocity. To conclude the probationary status and restore full five-year approval, the State Superintendent of Schools must determine that the conditions of probation have been met. If these conditions are not met, the State Superintendent terminates state approval.
- ♦ ***Denial*** means that the program is no longer approved by the state.





# ASSIGNMENT: MEDIA LITERACY

200 W. Baltimore Street • Baltimore MD 21201 • Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

August 2001

## What is Assignment: Media Literacy?

Assignment: Media Literacy was created by Dr. Renee Hobbs, one of the nation's leading authorities on media education, as part of a unique public/private partnership between Discovery Communications, Inc. and the Maryland State Department of Education to assist schools and school systems in the wake of high-profile national school safety incidents. Through this partnership, Maryland was the first state to establish a comprehensive, statewide initiative in media literacy that crosses several academic disciplines.

*Assignment: Media Literacy* is **primarily** a comprehensive media literacy curriculum resource designed to: help students build critical thinking and communication skills as they analyze messages in the media, and **secondarily**, to support state standards in language arts, social studies, and health at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Family consumer science teachers, media specialists, and guidance counselors who teach classroom lessons can also utilize these materials.

## What is Media Literacy?

Media Literacy is a set of skills that enables students to access, analyze, and critically evaluate all forms of media messages from printed text to television, film and video, computer games and the Internet.

## What are the key concepts of media literacy?

- All messages are "constructions," which means that they are assembled, edited, selected and designed.
- Messages are representations, and therefore, do not always portray an accurate picture of reality.
- Messages have economic purposes.
- Individuals interpret messages differently.
- Media have unique characteristics.

## How does Assignment: Media Literacy benefit Maryland students?

*Assignment: Media Literacy* engages and motivates student interest by utilizing topics and media they use on a daily basis. It builds critical thinking and communication skills by allowing students to not only decode messages but also to analyze and compose them. It also bridges the gap between the classroom and the culture by bringing relevance to the student's learning.

## What are the special features of this project?

- Aligned with MSDE State Content Standards
- Interdisciplinary learning activities to connect themes in health, language arts, social studies, fine and performing arts, and family and consumer science
- Print literacy emphasis which strengthens reading and writing skills
- 18 creative production activities with assessment rubrics
- Character Education connections
- Home – school connections to support family communication and exploration of community resources

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***How many people  
have been trained?***

To date, 1,436 educators from 20 local school systems, 20 public librarians from the Enoch Pratt Library, and 10 staff from MSDE have been trained in the *Assignment: Media Literacy* curriculum.

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***Where can I find  
more information?***

To obtain more information about the *Assignment: Media Literacy* program, including upcoming training dates, please contact Lynn R. Widdowson, Staff Specialist, at (410) 767-0277 or e-mail [lwiddowson@msde.state.md.us](mailto:lwiddowson@msde.state.md.us). You may also visit the *Assignment: Media Literacy* website at [www.assignmentmedialit.com](http://www.assignmentmedialit.com).



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August 2001

## What is Assignment: Media Literacy?

Assignment: Media Literacy was created by Dr. Renee Hobbs, one of the nation's leading authorities on media education, as part of a unique public/private partnership between Discovery Communications, Inc. and the Maryland State Department of Education to assist schools and school systems in the wake of high-profile national school safety incidents. Through this partnership, Maryland was the first state to establish a comprehensive, statewide initiative in media literacy that crosses several academic disciplines.

*Assignment: Media Literacy* is **primarily** a comprehensive media literacy curriculum resource designed to: help students build critical thinking and communication skills as they analyze messages in the media, and **secondarily**, to support state standards in language arts, social studies, and health at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Family consumer science teachers, media specialists, and guidance counselors who teach classroom lessons can also utilize these materials.

## What is Media Literacy?

Media Literacy is a set of skills that enables students to access, analyze, and critically evaluate all forms of media messages from printed text to television, film and video, computer games and the Internet.

## What are the key concepts of media literacy?

- All messages are "constructions," which means that they are assembled, edited, selected and designed.
- Messages are representations, and therefore, do not always portray an accurate picture of reality.
- Messages have economic purposes.
- Individuals interpret messages differently.
- Media have unique characteristics.

## How does Assignment: Media Literacy benefit Maryland students?

*Assignment: Media Literacy* engages and motivates student interest by utilizing topics and media they use on a daily basis. It builds critical thinking and communication skills by allowing students to not only decode messages but also to analyze and compose them. It also bridges the gap between the classroom and the culture by bringing relevance to the student's learning.

## What are the special features of this project?

- Aligned with MSDE State Content Standards
- Interdisciplinary learning activities to connect themes in health, language arts, social studies, fine and performing arts, and family and consumer science
- Print literacy emphasis which strengthens reading and writing skills
- 18 creative production activities with assessment rubrics
- Character Education connections
- Home – school connections to support family communication and exploration of community resources

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***How many people  
have been trained?***

To date, 1,436 educators from 20 local school systems, 20 public librarians from the Enoch Pratt Library, and 10 staff from MSDE have been trained in the *Assignment: Media Literacy* curriculum.

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***Where can I find  
more information?***

To obtain more information about the *Assignment: Media Literacy* program, including upcoming training dates, please contact Lynn R. Widdowson, Staff Specialist, at (410) 767-0277 or e-mail [lwiddowson@msde.state.md.us](mailto:lwiddowson@msde.state.md.us). You may also visit the *Assignment: Media Literacy* website at [www.assignmentmedialit.com](http://www.assignmentmedialit.com).



# TEACHER OF THE YEAR PROGRAM

200 W. Baltimore Street • Baltimore MD 21201 • Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Revised January 2003*

## ***What is the Teacher of the Year Program?***

The Maryland and National Teacher of the Year Programs recognize and honor exemplary elementary, middle, and high school teachers that are excellent instructors and education leaders in their schools and communities. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) oversees this program with all twenty-four local school systems participating. Annually, each local school system selects its top candidate for Maryland Teacher of the Year and submits the teacher=s comprehensive packet to the MSDE which selects finalists and then the Maryland Teacher of the Year. The State winner is entered in the competition for National Teacher of the Year, an esteemed position. The National Teacher spends the year in speaking engagements nationally and internationally.

## ***What are the selection criteria?***

Teachers fill out an application describing their professional interests, community involvement, and philosophy of teaching. They also answer questions about education issues and trends and the teaching profession. Local selection criteria vary. Contact local school systems for that information.

## ***What is the selection process?***

Teachers must first be selected as state candidates by their local school systems and should contact their specific central office for applications. Twenty-four school systems submit their local Teacher of the Year candidate to MSDE. Written applications are judged and finalists are interviewed at the state level by a panel of education and community leaders. The panel consists of representatives of education, community, and corporate organizations.

## ***How can a teacher be recommended for this award?***

School systems are always searching for recommendations for this and other teacher awards. Contact your local public school system and ask to speak to its Teacher of the Year Coordinator. You can also contact the Maryland State Department of Education=s Office of Partnerships at 410-767-0370.

## ***What Maryland Teacher of the Year celebrations and events take place?***

Maryland=s twenty-four Teachers of the Year are celebrated in many ways by their local school systems. They are honored by the Maryland Board of Education at a State Board Meeting and Honors Luncheon. The Maryland Teacher of the Year and all of the local Teachers of the Year are honored on the Governor=s yacht, by the Maryland General Assembly, and by the Baltimore Orioles.

An Oscar=s style event, the Maryland Teacher of the Year Gala, is held in the fall of each year.

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## ***What do Teachers of the Year receive?***

Teachers of the Year win tremendous respect as one of the nation's best teachers. This reputation means prestige in the community and in the State. The Maryland Teacher of the Year also receives a brand new car as a gift (not a lease) from Maryland's New Car & Truck Dealers' Association. In addition, the Maryland winner receives a cash award, a \$10,000 Smart Board, an I-Book computer, and numerous other prizes. They are featured in video and television productions as well as in newspapers across the State.

The Maryland Teacher of the Year travels the state, speaking at numerous conferences, dinners, and other events. The teacher participates in National Space Camp in Huntsville, Alabama, and is invited to U.S. Department of Education programs including an opportunity to meet the President of the United States. Teachers of the Year also participate in an annual national meeting in Dallas, Texas, sponsored by the Council of Chief State School Officers and Scholastic, Inc.

The Maryland Teacher of the Year attends important state functions in Annapolis and acts as advisor to the Maryland State Department of Education. While Maryland Teachers of the Year continue to teach during their appointed year, often they are given *partner teachers*, enabling them to participate in speaking engagements throughout the state. The National Teacher of the Year leaves the classroom for one full year to serve as a national education ambassador.

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## ***Who are the sponsors and partners?***

The Maryland Teacher of the Year Program is made possible by the generosity of its major sponsors:

### **Presenting Sponsors**

Maryland New Car & Truck Dealers' Association  
McDonald's Family of Greater Baltimore

### **Platinum Sponsors**

Bank of America  
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# THE MILKEN NATIONAL EDUCATOR AWARDS

200 W. Baltimore Street • Baltimore MD 21201 • Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

August 2001

## ***What is the Milken National Educator Awards Program?***

This program, established by Lowell and Michael Milken, recognizes the important contributions of exemplary educators, particularly teachers. Its purpose is to reward these individuals while calling national attention to their important contributions. Each year, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) recommends outstanding educators for these awards. Those who are selected for the award receive a non-restricted cash award of \$25,000. Although teachers are the primary recipients, principals and assistant principals are also eligible. Elementary and secondary school educators are selected in alternating years. Elementary educators will be recommended for 2002.

## ***What are the selection criteria?***

Educators cannot apply for this award themselves; they must be identified and recommended by others. They must be early to mid-career professionals with 5 to 15 years experience in teaching or less than 20 years as administrators. Selection is based on contributions to education, demonstrated leadership, innovative approaches to teaching, and dedication to the field.

## ***What is the selection process?***

Recommended educators are entered in the Maryland State Department of Education's *Talent Bank*. Each year, local school systems are asked to identify worthy teachers and administrators for the Talent Bank. These candidates, along with previously identified talent, are reviewed by a *select panel* established by the State Department of Education and the Milken Family Foundation. The review at the state level considers (1) written material supporting each candidate and (2) oral testimony from peers, parents, community members, and education administrators. Top educator choices are then recommended to the Milken Family Foundation which is responsible for making final decisions. Milken winners are not notified of their selection for this prestigious award until a *surprise* announcement of their selection is made. Such announcements are made at special ceremonies held throughout the state.

## ***How can a teacher, principal or assistant principal be recommended for this award?***

School systems are always searching for recommendations for this and other teacher awards. Contact your local public school system and ask to speak to the Superintendent's assistant responsible for the process of identifying potential Milken honorees. You can also contact the Office of Partnerships, Maryland State Department of Education, at 410-767-0370.

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## ***What do Milken winners receive?***

Milken National Educators win a non-restricted \$25,000 cash award. They are recognized at a state conference and a luncheon banquet. In June of each year, they are special guests at an extravagant education conference held in Century City, California, and hosted by the Milken Foundation. Typically, Hollywood celebrities join nationally renowned corporate executives and elected officials for three days of learning, entertainment, and celebration. Honorees also receive a fourteen-carat gold pin and become part of a state and national network of outstanding educators involved in advising education policy.





# The Blue Ribbon Schools Program

200 W. Baltimore Street • Baltimore MD 21201 • Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

Revised February 2003

## What is the No Child Left Behind/Blue Ribbon Schools Program?

The No Child Left Behind/Blue Ribbon Schools Program is a national and state program that recognizes and honors elementary, middle, and high schools that exhibit high performance and/or significant improvement in student achievement. Elementary and secondary schools are selected each year on an alternating basis. The national program is administered by the U.S. Department of Education. The Maryland program, administered by the Maryland State Department of Education, selects and recognizes outstanding schools and also submits them for national recognition.

## What are the selection criteria?

- ✓ Schools in the top 10% statewide compared against all schools at the specific level (elementary, middle, high), as measured by Maryland assessments and/or
- ✓ Schools with at least 40% economically disadvantaged students (free and reduced price meals) that demonstrate dramatic improvement on state assessments over at least the past three years.

## What is the selection process?

Schools meeting the above criteria established by the U.S. Department of Education are identified by the Maryland State Department of Education. These schools are honored as Maryland No Child Left Behind/Blue Ribbon Schools and are nominated for national awards. A panel from the U.S. Department of Education makes final decisions on national awards.

## What do Blue Ribbon Schools receive?

A No Child Left Behind/Blue Ribbon School is recognized as a highly effective school in Maryland and in the nation. This recognition means significant prestige in the community and the state and often results in increased values in neighborhood housing.

Maryland No Child Left Behind/Blue Ribbon Schools are honored by the Maryland State Department of Education and the General Assembly at a dinner in Annapolis followed by a General Assembly tribute. Winners receive a Governor’s Proclamation, State Department of Education citations, General Assembly honors, and Maryland’s Blue Ribbon Flag of Excellence.

National Blue Ribbon Schools attend a two-day awards program in Washington hosted by the U.S. Secretary of Education and the President. They receive the No Child Left Behind/Blue Ribbon flag and a U.S. Department of Education plaque.

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***How many schools  
can be selected and  
how can they apply?***

Revisions in the program no longer allow schools to apply for recognition. Up to six Maryland schools can be identified as No Child Left Behind/Blue Ribbon Schools by the Maryland State Department of Education on the basis of state assessment data. These six schools then complete the national applications for recognition by the U.S. Department of Education.

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***Who are the  
supporting partners  
in this program?***

The Maryland State Department of Education directs this program with support from the following corporations and government agencies:  
Comcast Cablevision  
Coldwell Banker Real Estate  
State Farm Insurance  
Verizon, Maryland

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***What happens after  
Blue Ribbon Schools  
win their awards?***

Blue Ribbon Schools are held in high regard in Maryland and in the nation. They are given significant media attention, featured in newspapers and on television. They are more likely to win additional national awards and are considered strong contenders for state and national grant programs.



# MARYLAND K-12 ONLINE

200 W. Baltimore Street ♦ Baltimore MD 21201 ♦ Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

April 2002

## ***What is the purpose of mdk12online.org?***

The web site at [www.mdk12online.org](http://www.mdk12online.org) is part of the Maryland State Department of Education's plan to bring Internet-based learning, including credit courses, to students and teachers around the state. The web site provides information about using online courses for students and staff in Maryland public education K-12. Local school systems use the site to receive information, advice, support, and resource information about web-delivered courses. MSDE provides leadership and coordination in the effort to make courses and a variety of educational tools available via the worldwide web.

## ***What information is available on the site?***

The site includes the following information:

- An introduction to the project and its mission
- An overview of distance learning and related links
- Guidelines for local school systems or schools to consider in planning for, implementing, and evaluating distance learning initiatives
- Available online courses for student and the URL of the provider
- Summaries of the reviews of the courses that MSDE has reviewed in collaboration with teachers from local school systems.

## ***Who can benefit from information provided on this site?***

Anyone interested in using online courses with students or staff can benefit from the information available on this site. This includes staff members from schools and school systems, students, parents, and course providers.

## ***How can I learn more about the project?***

For more information, contact the Coordinator for Web-based Learning Initiative, Maryland State Department of Education, at 410-767-0734.



# THE MARYLAND NETWORK OF PARTNERSHIP SCHOOLS

200 W. Baltimore Street ♦ Baltimore MD 21201 ♦ Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

*Revised February 2002*

## ***What is the Maryland Network of Partnership Schools?***

Maryland is a partner in the National Network of Partnership Schools at Johns Hopkins University. Through this affiliation, the Maryland State Department of Education encourages schools and school systems to join the Network of Partnership Schools in developing and maintaining strong programs of school, family, and community partnerships.

## ***What does the network offer?***

The Maryland Network of Partnership Schools offers a research-based framework and strategies that enable all schools and school systems to organize productive school-family-community partnerships to help students succeed.

## ***How are partnerships developed?***

Good partnerships are based on a comprehensive program that includes the following six types of family and community involvement to increase student success:

- ♦ **Parenting** -- Assisting families with parenting skills and setting home conditions to support children as students; assisting schools in understanding families.
- ♦ **Communicating** -- Conducting effective communications from school to home and home to school about school programs and student progress.
- ♦ **Volunteering** -- Organizing volunteers and audiences to support schools and students; providing volunteer opportunities in various locations and at various times.
- ♦ **Learning at Home** -- Involving families with their children on homework and other curriculum-related activities and decisions.
- ♦ **Decision Making** -- Including families as participants in school decisions; developing parent leaders and representatives.
- ♦ **Collaborating with the Community** -- Coordinating resources and services from the community for families, students, and the school; providing services to the community.

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### ***What does it mean to be a member?***

Members receive assistance in the development of their partnership program. For school systems and each school within the school system, the National Network does the following:

- Supplies a handbook to guide the development of programs
- Issues a certificate of membership
- Conducts biannual training workshops
- Distributes the Network's semi-annual newsletter *Partnership Practices*
- Provides technical assistance by telephone, e-mail, and web site
- Offers optional research and evaluation opportunities.

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### ***Who can join?***

Membership is open to all schools that agree to use the framework of the six types of involvement and complete an annual update report. For more information, contact Maria Schaeffer, Specialist, Family, School and Community Involvement, MSDE, at 410-767-0296.

To join the Network, there is a processing fee of \$100 for schools and \$200 for counties and organizations. Annual renewal fees are \$100 for schools and \$200 for counties and organizations. Renewal fees are waived for all members who return the annual update survey.



# FEDERAL PERKINS LOAN PROGRAM

200 W. Baltimore Street ♦ Baltimore MD 21201 ♦ Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

March 2002

## ***What is the Federal Perkins Loan Program?***

The Federal Perkins Loan Program, formerly called the National Defense Student Loan Program, was authorized under the National Education Act (1958). It is America's oldest federally subsidized student loan initiative. The program is named after Carl Perkins, a former delegate to the House of Representatives from West Virginia who also served as chairperson of the House Education Workforce Committee. Approximately 2,000 colleges and universities offer Perkins Loans.

## ***How does a teacher benefit from participating in the Perkins Loan Program?***

A percentage of a teacher's student loan will be cancelled for every year of teaching in a "low income" school. To determine if a place of employment is classified as a "low income" school, consult the U.S. Department of Education's web site at <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/Students/repayment/teachers/perkins.html>. The site lists places of employment that are currently classified as "low income" schools.

## ***What are the requirements for eligibility?***

There are three ways to qualify for eligibility:

- ♦ The borrower received a Perkins Loan on or after July 1, 1987, and teaches full time at a designated "low income" school. This "low income" school must be located within a school district that is currently receiving federal funds under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965. The school must have more than 30% of its students in the Free or Reduced Price Meals (FARMS) program.
- ♦ The borrower received a Perkins Loan on or after July 23, 1992, and teaches a subject in which there is a statewide shortage of instructors as identified by the Maryland State Department of Education. Subject areas identified for school year 2001-2002 are: computer science, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), mathematics, chemistry, earth science, space science, physical science, physics, technology education, and special education. The loan participant may teach in either an elementary or a secondary school.
- ♦ The borrower received a Perkins Loan on or after July 1, 1987, and teaches disabled students at a public or private elementary or secondary school.

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***What is the loan  
cancellation rate  
for a teacher  
who qualifies?***

The following applies to a teacher who meets the eligibility requirements:

- 15% of the loan cancelled after completing the first year of teaching
- 15% of the loan cancelled after completing the second year of teaching
- 20% of the loan cancelled after completing the third year of teaching
- 20% of the loan cancelled after completing the fourth year of teaching
- 30% of the loan cancelled after completing the fifth year of teaching.

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***How does a  
person apply  
for teacher loan  
cancellation benefits?***

To apply for loan cancellation, the applicant must request two documents from the Student Loan Office where the college credit was earned. The first document, a *Postponement/Request Form*, must be submitted to the college or university at the beginning of the teacher's upcoming academic year. The second document, a *Cancellation Request Form*, must be submitted to the above mentioned college or university at the end of the borrower's next year of teaching. The college or university can approve or deny entrance to the loan cancellation program.

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***Where can I get  
more information?***

For more information, contact:

Dr. Craig Heller, Specialist  
Program Improvement and Family Support Branch  
Division of Student and School Services  
Maryland State Department of Education  
200 W. Baltimore Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201  
Telephone: 410-767-0282  
E-Mail: [cheller@msde.state.md.us](mailto:cheller@msde.state.md.us)



# DEALING WITH TRAUMA

200 W. Baltimore Street ♦ Baltimore MD 21201 ♦ Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

August 2002

## ***What is trauma and what types of events can lead to trauma?***

Trauma is defined as a disordered psychological or behavioral state resulting from mental or emotional stress or physical injury. Examples of traumatic events include car accidents, physical or sexual assaults, crimes, natural disasters, and/or death. In the aftermath of a traumatic event, it is common for an individual to experience psychological stress. This is a normal part of coping with tragedy and is necessary in order to move on to healing.

As our nation approaches the anniversary of events such as those of September 11, 2001, caretakers and professionals must be extra sensitive to the needs of youth as they cope with thoughts and feelings related to the tragic events of that day. The magnitude of the events and the approaching anniversary will undoubtedly reactivate a certain level of stress in many Americans including our youth.

## ***What are some of the signs of someone experiencing trauma?***

Reactions to trauma may be immediate or may not appear until weeks later. No two individuals may react in the same manner to trauma and the signs may differ depending on the age of the individual. For example, pre-school age children may cling excessively to adults, experience nightmares and/or sleeplessness, or show unusual emotional reactions such as crying or overreacting to normal situations. Elementary school age children may develop a school phobia (fear of attending school), display a lack of interest in school, experience difficulty concentrating, or develop a lack of trust for adults. Older youth may react by abusing substances, becoming aggressive, or engaging in isolating and other high-risk behaviors. Adults may react to traumatic events and display a variety of emotions to include strained interpersonal relationships, lack of engagement, or the development of physical symptoms.

With the help of parents, teachers, counselors, and friends, youth usually return to normal functioning with little or no difficulty. When symptoms last for more than a month and continue to affect normal functioning, it is recommended that professional help be sought.

For a more comprehensive explanation of reactions to trauma, please see *Reflections of September 11: A Guide for Parents and Teachers* at [www.msde.state.md.us](http://www.msde.state.md.us).



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***What can parents/  
guardians do to help  
children deal with  
trauma?***

Parents can help their children deal with trauma by spending more time with them and allowing them to talk about what they are thinking and feeling. Help them understand that such thoughts and feelings are normal by validating them. Reassure your children that they are safe, cared for, and protected. Hugging a child helps to provide a feeling of security and protection. Parents can also read books and stories with their children that include characters who have faced similar traumatic situations. Playing with children can also relieve the tension and stress brought on by traumatic experiences. Restricting access to repetitive media coverage of the traumatic event can also lessen the effects of the trauma.

For additional information on helping children deal with traumatic events and the media, see *Assignment: Media Literacy* at [www.msde.state.md.us/assignmentmedialit/home.html](http://www.msde.state.md.us/assignmentmedialit/home.html).

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***What can schools do  
to help children deal  
with trauma?***

Schools can help by conducting sessions with entire classes, small groups, or individual students that allow them to voice their thoughts and feelings. Instructional activities (i.e. blood drives, writing letters, and fund raising) may be used to help students appropriately express their feelings in a positive manner. Schools can also help students refocus their thoughts by actively engaging them in the development of strategies that can be used by the school to help students increase their feelings of safety and security. School counselors, nurses, psychologists, social workers, and pupil personnel workers are also available in schools to assist youth in coping with the effects of trauma.

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***Who can I contact  
for additional  
information?***

Contact the principal of your child's school to determine who is available to help your child deal with the aftermath of a traumatic event. Your child's teacher, school counselor, and nurse are wonderful resources in providing effective ways to aid in minimizing the effects of the stress caused by traumatic events.

All 24 of Maryland's local school systems (LSSs) have trauma teams to assist school staff in dealing with the effects of traumatic events that affect the school and community. Contact your local Director of Student Services for more information about these trauma teams.

For information about resources available at the Maryland State Department of Education, please contact Ms. Marcia Lathroum, Guidance Specialist, at (410) 767-0307 or e-mail [mlathroum@msde.state.md.us](mailto:mlathroum@msde.state.md.us).

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MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



# JUVENILE JUSTICE ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PILOT PROGRAM

200 W. Baltimore Street ♦ Baltimore MD 21201 ♦ Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

July 2002

## ***What is the Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Pilot Program (JJAEP)?***

The Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Pilot Program is designed to serve high school students who exhibit chronic, escalating patterns of misbehavior that may ultimately result in expulsion from school and/or involvement with the court system. The school is located in Prince George's County and will open in January 2003.

## ***What population will be served by the program?***

High school students enrolled in Prince George's County Public Schools who meet the following criteria may be enrolled in the program:

- Students with a history of misbehavior as evidenced by frequent office referrals and repeated suspensions or expulsions
- Students referred by the Circuit Court Division, Prince George's County
- Students who have been unsuccessful in changing their patterns of misbehavior after previous interventions on the part of school officials
- Students with a history of poor attendance, low academic achievement, disruptive behavior, frequent involvement in conflicts, substance abuse, and those placed on probation by the Department of Juvenile Justice.

## ***What is the goal of the program?***

The goal of the alternative pilot program is to help students develop the social skills and educational expertise to become successful in the next phase of their education or in the work place. The pilot program will be rigorously evaluated in order to facilitate replication in other areas of Maryland.

## ***Who is involved in the administration of the JJAEP?***

As a result of a competitive process, Prince George's County Public Schools was selected to host the pilot program. Several community agencies will partner with PGCPSS in running this innovative program. These agencies include the 7th Judicial Circuit Court of Maryland, the Maryland Department of Juvenile Justice, the Prince George's County Health Department, the Prince George's County Department of Social Services, and the Prince George's County Career Connections®. The Maryland State Department of Education will provide assistance in the form of resources and technical expertise.

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***What are the  
unique features  
of the program?***

- Through the development of individualized instructional and behavioral management plans, students will set goals and come to appreciate the cause/effect relationship between responsible behavior and goal achievement.
- When students exit the program, a transition coordinator will monitor their progress for at least one year. Students will be paired with an adult mentor who will remain with them during enrollment in the pilot program and when the student returns to the home school.
- Upon completion of the program and return to the home school, a transition plan will be developed in conjunction with professionals at the student's home school. A transition coordinator will extensively monitor the student's progress for a least one year.
- The use of computers as an integral part of the instructional program.
- The ability to earn privileges for excellent attendance, work accomplishments, and assuming responsibility for actions.
- A very low teacher to student ratio.

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***Who should I contact  
for more information  
about the program?***

Prince George's County:

Ms. Kaye Stumb, Director of Student Support Programs  
301-408-5513  
e-mail [kstumb@pgcps.org](mailto:kstumb@pgcps.org)

Maryland State Department of Education:

Mr. Chuck Buckler, Specialist in Alternative Programs  
410-767-0292  
e-mail [cbucker@msde.state.md.us](mailto:cbucker@msde.state.md.us)



# BRIDGE TO EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS ACT

200 W. Baltimore Street • Baltimore MD 21201 • Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

January 2003

## ***What is the Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act?***

The Commission on Education Finance, Equity, and Excellence (also known as the Thornton Commission after its chair, Dr. Alvin Thornton) examined Maryland's school finance system and found the state's method of calculating and distributing funds to local school systems unnecessarily complex, administratively burdensome, and not appropriately related to the needs of students or the ability of local school systems to meet those needs. The study also found a gap between the amount of money schools actually received and the amount estimated that they would need to help students meet the state's academic standards.

The Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act (Senate Bill 856) is legislation passed by the Maryland General Assembly during its 2002 session. The Act addressed the Commission's findings by restructuring Maryland's public school finance system and increasing state aid to public schools by \$1.3 billion over six fiscal years (FY 2003 through FY 2008).

## ***How does the Act work?***

The Act created a new finance structure and funding formula, which links resources to students' needs and distributes 74 percent of state aid inverse to local wealth, so poorer school systems receive relatively more state aid than wealthier school systems. (But no school system will receive less state aid than it did under the old formula.) The Act also contains strong accountability provisions. Under the Act, the state will set academic performance standards, provide schools and students adequate resources to meet the standards, and then hold schools and school systems accountable for student performance. Local school systems will have flexibility in spending, but they must submit annual plans that detail their strategies for improving academic achievement for all students, and they must show progress in meeting state performance standards.

## ***What is the new finance structure?***

### ***More money and flexibility***

Maryland has 24 public school systems, one system for each of the 23 counties and one for Baltimore City. Each school system is funded locally through the county (or city) budget and through the state. The Bridge to Excellence Act increases the amount of money the state gives to local school systems to educate children. It also collapses 27 existing state funding programs into four programs, giving school systems more flexibility in spending.

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## ***What is the new finance structure?***

### ***New method of distributing money***

The Act establishes a new formula for calculating how much money each school system will receive from the state. Under the new formula, school systems will receive a minimum amount per student, plus additional funds based on the numbers of students who receive special education services, have limited English proficiency, or qualify for free or reduced-price meals, an indicator of poverty. Because it costs more to educate a child in some areas of the state than others, a geographic cost of education index must be developed and applied to the state's education finance formula by fiscal year 2005. The Act calls for the Department to contract with a private entity to develop the geographic cost of education index.

### ***Additional provisions of the Act***

- The Act gives additional money to low-wealth districts that provide more local funding than required. This serves as an incentive for counties to invest as much as possible in public education.
- State money for student transportation will increase for 15 school systems to recognize enrollment increases, and grants for students who require special transportation services will increase from \$500 to \$1,000 per rider over the six-year period.

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## ***Are there restrictions on how school systems spend the money?***

School systems can decide how to spend the money, as long as the system demonstrates improvement in student achievement and develops a satisfactory "master plan." The Act does require that each school system:

- Implement full-day kindergarten by fiscal year 2008.
- Offer pre-kindergarten programs to all at-risk students by fiscal year 2008. (The Act defines at-risk students as students who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals.)
- Submit to the state (by October 1, 2003) a five-year master plan that documents the school system's goals and strategies for improving achievement among *all* students.

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## ***What is a master plan?***

By October 1, 2003 each school system must submit to the state a five-year master plan documenting its goals and strategies for improving achievement among *all* groups of students, including students receiving special education services, students with limited English proficiency, students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals, and other groups as defined by the State Superintendent of Schools.

Plans must include goals that are aligned with state standards, implementation strategies with timelines, and methods for measuring progress toward meeting goals. If any segment of the student population fails to show progress toward meeting performance standards, the State Superintendent must review the master plan and may require the school system to make changes to its plan. The State Board of Education has the authority to review and approve the allocation of resources in school systems that fail to improve student performance *and* fail to develop a satisfactory master plan.