

## **Part L**

### **Education**

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#### **Education – Primary and Secondary**

##### **Phase-in of New Education Funding Formulas Begins**

Fiscal 2004 marks the first year of the phase-in schedule for the new education finance structure that was established by the Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act of 2002 (Chapter 288). Full funding for the first year was included in the Governor’s proposed fiscal 2004 budget and represented a \$238 million (7.6 percent) increase in State aid for education. Budget actions adopted by the General Assembly reduce the increase to \$206 million (6.6 percent) but preserve the integrity of the new financing structure, a substantial accomplishment given the State’s fiscal situation. In total, the State will provide more than \$3.3 billion in primary and secondary education aid in fiscal 2004.

The new structure consolidates funding from approximately 30 State aid programs and bases the majority of State education aid on the wealth, student enrollment, and student needs of each jurisdiction. In addition, a large share of State aid is unrestricted, allowing school systems to customize educational programming to the needs of local student populations. **Exhibit L-1** shows the estimated fiscal 2004 allocation of State funding for each local school system.

The Bridge to Excellence Act was the culmination of two years’ worth of study by the Commission on Education Finance, Equity, and Excellence (Thornton Commission), which analyzed the State’s education finance system from 1999 to 2001 and reported its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly in January 2002. The Thornton Commission recommended that a rational link be established between the revenues that are available to a school system and what is expected of the students and schools in the system. Based on this theory of education finance, the State should support a funding structure that enables each local school system to acquire the resources that are needed to reasonably expect that students and schools in the system can meet the State’s high academic standards. Formulas founded on this concept of “adequate” funding were designed by the Thornton Commission and enacted in the Bridge to Excellence legislation.

**Exhibit L-1**  
**Fiscal 2003 and 2004 State Aid for Education**  
(\$ in Thousands)

<u>County</u>	<u>Direct Aid</u>			<u>Total Aid</u>		
	<u>FY 2003</u>	<u>FY 2004</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>FY 2003</u>	<u>FY 2004</u>	<u>Change</u>
Allegany	\$46,394	\$47,864	\$1,469	\$50,178	\$51,940	\$1,762
Anne Arundel	184,618	188,233	3,615	213,737	219,653	5,916
Baltimore City	567,416	582,022	14,606	607,609	625,669	18,059
Baltimore	286,023	306,615	20,593	331,284	354,855	23,571
Calvert	49,289	54,828	5,539	55,552	61,816	6,265
Caroline	24,716	26,494	1,778	26,779	28,717	1,938
Carroll	86,498	91,804	5,305	96,574	102,687	6,113
Cecil	56,408	59,699	3,291	62,454	66,170	3,716
Charles	78,638	87,006	8,368	87,544	96,669	9,124
Dorchester	18,379	19,870	1,491	20,412	21,902	1,489
Frederick	110,715	119,204	8,489	125,328	134,057	8,729
Garrett	19,048	18,924	-125	21,053	21,029	-23
Harford	122,711	132,736	10,025	137,234	148,352	11,118
Howard	103,784	117,086	13,301	124,599	140,367	15,767
Kent	8,213	7,865	-348	9,418	9,189	-229
Montgomery	231,618	253,705	22,087	302,432	330,997	28,565
Prince George's	526,179	556,417	30,238	574,657	609,434	34,777
Queen Anne's	19,279	20,378	1,099	22,016	23,366	1,351
St. Mary's	50,773	55,823	5,050	56,451	62,066	5,615
Somerset	14,000	14,629	630	15,316	16,001	685
Talbot	5,466	8,367	2,901	7,337	10,392	3,055
Washington	65,949	71,994	6,045	73,671	80,217	6,545
Wicomico	53,033	58,307	5,274	58,949	64,502	5,553
Worcester	9,295	12,504	3,209	12,401	15,896	3,494

<u>County</u>	<u>Direct Aid</u>			<u>Total Aid</u>		
	<u>FY 2003</u>	<u>FY 2004</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>FY 2003</u>	<u>FY 2004</u>	<u>Change</u>
Unallocated	20,697	23,693	2,997	20,697	23,693	2,997
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,759,137</b>	<b>\$2,936,065</b>	<b>\$176,928</b>	<b>\$3,113,681</b>	<b>\$3,319,632</b>	<b>\$205,951</b>

Note: Total aid includes payments made by the State on behalf of the school systems for teacher retirement.

If State revenues are available to proceed with full implementation of the Act, the new formulas will be phased in completely by fiscal 2008. However, due to concerns about the State's ability to fully fund the legislation, the Bridge to Excellence Act requires the General Assembly to examine the State's fiscal condition during the 2004 legislative session. If the State is able to afford the fiscal 2005 increases in education aid proposed by the Act (an estimated \$390 million), the General Assembly must pass a joint resolution by the fiftieth day of the session stating that full implementation of the new structure will proceed as scheduled. If the joint resolution is not passed, increases in State education aid from fiscal 2005 to 2008 will be scaled back considerably.

### **Maintenance of Effort**

The Bridge to Excellence Act of 2002 and the fiscal 2003 State budget included a requirement that certain jurisdictions expend a portion of State disparity grant funds for public education in fiscal 2003. The budget bill also exempted these funds from the calculation of the maintenance of effort requirement for local education funding in fiscal 2004. However, the Attorney General's Office concluded that statutory legislation was required to implement the budget provision. Therefore, *House Bill 935 (passed)*, the Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act of 2003, exempts State disparity grant funds in fiscal 2003 from the maintenance of effort calculation in fiscal 2004.

### **Task Force to Study Public School Facilities**

In addition to the creation of new funding formulas that determine State aid for school operating budgets, the Bridge to Excellence Act of 2002 established a Task Force to Study Public School Facilities. The task force was charged with assessing the adequacy and equity of the State's school facilities and examining the Aging Schools Program, which provides operating aid to school systems for use in making minor improvements to existing school facilities. The task force was appointed and began its work during the summer of 2002 and submitted an interim report in December 2002. The interim report contained several recommendations, including an extension of the task force's charge for one additional year. The interim recommendations are contained in *Senate Bill 498 (passed)*. The bill encompasses four main issues: (1) the Aging Schools Program; (2) comprehensive master plans that local boards of education are required to prepare; (3) the special funding arrangement for public school construction in Baltimore City; and (4) the extension and expansion of the task force's charge.

### **Aging School Program**

The Aging School Program provides \$10.4 million annually to local school systems for school repairs that are not covered by the capital school construction program but are necessary to maintain older public schools. Each local school system's share of the total funding is generally consistent with its share of school building square footage constructed prior to 1960. However, the current distribution includes a minimum funding level for local school systems and a funding cap for Baltimore City.

State funding for the program was originally set to terminate after fiscal 2002 but was extended for one additional fiscal year in each of the last two legislative sessions. *Senate Bill 498* repeals the termination date on the Aging School Program altogether and continues the current funding distribution beyond fiscal 2004.

### **Comprehensive Master Plans**

One of the requirements of the Bridge to Excellence Act is the development, adoption, and implementation of a comprehensive master plan by each local board of education. The plans will describe the goals, objectives, and strategies that will be used to improve student achievement across all segments of the student population. The initial plans must be submitted to the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) by October 1, 2003, and must be updated annually. As recommended by the Task Force to Study Public School Facilities, *Senate Bill 498* expands the scope of the comprehensive master plans to require local school systems to consider capital improvements that may be needed to implement the plans and the impact that strategies articulated in the plans will have on public school facilities.

### **School Construction Funding for Baltimore City**

In general, the State and local shares of eligible school construction costs for each jurisdiction are based on local wealth and are set by rules and regulations adopted by the Board of Public Works. The board adopted a rule on May 7, 1997, that increased the State's share of school construction funding for Baltimore City from 75 to 90 percent for the first \$10 million in public school construction funding allocated by the State to Baltimore City. The change in the rule, which was scheduled to terminate following fiscal 2002, was a result of the 1996 consent decree entered in the cases that settled the school finance litigation between the State and Baltimore City. The enhanced State share for Baltimore City was later extended in State law through fiscal 2004. *Senate Bill 498* extends the rule one additional year, through fiscal 2005, so the Task Force to Study Public School Facilities can continue its examination of the State's school construction funding structure without changing existing practices. The bill also requires Baltimore City to provide at least \$16 million locally in fiscal 2004 and 2005 for public school construction.

### **Extension and Expansion of the Task Force Charge**

*Senate Bill 498* increases the membership on the Task Force to Study Public School Facilities from 21 to 23 members with the two additional members being an individual with

experience as a director of a state school construction program and the Secretary of Planning or the Secretary's designee. The task force's final reporting date is extended until December 31, 2003, and its termination date is extended until May 1, 2004. The bill also expands the scope of the task force to include consideration of (1) a modification to the current allocation of Aging School Program funding; and (2) the provision of a greater State share of eligible school construction costs for schools with 50 percent or more of the students eligible for free and reduced price meals, small schools constructed or renovated in a priority funding area, or schools in qualified distressed counties. The items in (2) were initially added to the task force's charge by House Bill 937 of 2002, which was vetoed by the Governor for policy reasons other than the task force charge.

### **Qualified Zone Academy Bonds**

The U.S. Congress established Qualified Zone Academy Bonds (QZABs) in 1997 as a mechanism to provide funding to local school systems for repairs at older school buildings. Maryland's allocation under the federal program has totaled \$18.1 million. Chapter 322 of 2000 and Chapter 139 of 2001 provided for the issuance of interest-free QZAB bonds by the State for the program. *Senate Bill 7 (passed)* authorizes the issuance of \$9.043 million in additional QZAB bonds allocated to Maryland. The proceeds of the bonds will be granted to the Interagency Committee on School Construction to be used for the Aging School Program.

### **Charter Schools**

After several years in which the two chambers were unable to reach agreement on the best way to craft State charter school legislation, the General Assembly passed the Public Charter School Act of 2003. *Senate Bill 75 (passed)* establishes a Maryland Public Charter School Program with primary chartering authority granted to local boards of education. Secondary chartering authority is granted to the State Board of Education in its capacity to review appeals of a local board's decision to deny a charter or as the chartering authority for a restructured school. An application to establish a public charter school must be submitted to the local board of education in the jurisdiction in which the charter school will be located. If the local board of education denies the application, the applicant can appeal the decision to the State board.

*Senate Bill 75* allows public school staff, parents or guardians of public school students, nonsectarian nonprofit entities, or nonsectarian institutions of higher education in the State to apply to establish a public charter school. Private, parochial, and home schools are not eligible to become public charter schools. Charter schools must be nonsectarian and open to all students on a space-available basis. In addition, the schools must comply with all applicable health and safety laws and may not discriminate in their enrollment policies or charge tuition to students. Public charter schools must comply with the provisions of law and regulation that govern other public schools. They may, however, seek a waiver of the requirements through an appeal to the State board. The State board may not grant a waiver relating to audit requirements; student assessments; or health, safety, and civil rights.

Like their counterparts in regular public schools, *Senate Bill 75* requires the professional staff members of a public charter school to hold the appropriate Maryland certification. Public charter school employees remain public school employees. If a collective bargaining agreement is already in existence in the county where a public charter school is located, the employee organization and the public charter school may mutually agree to negotiate amendments to the existing agreement to address the needs of a particular public charter school.

*Senate Bill 75* requires MSDE to establish and disseminate to local boards of education model public charter school policy language that can be used to create local public charter school policies. Each local board must submit its public charter school policy to the State Board of Education by November 1, 2003. The State board must submit an evaluation report of the public charter school program by October 1, 2006. The report must include recommendations for the continuation, modification, expansion, or termination of the program.

The bill requires a local board of education to provide to a public charter school an amount of county, State, and federal money for elementary, middle, and secondary students that is commensurate with the amount provided to other public schools in the school system. The State Board of Education or the local board may give surplus educational materials, supplies, furniture, and other equipment to a public charter school. In addition, enactment of this bill will allow charter schools in Maryland to compete for federal funding. Federal funds are available for charter schools on a competitive basis. These funds are only available if a specific state statute authorizes the granting of charters to schools.

## **Children Living Away from Home**

### **Charles H. Hickey, Jr. School**

Several education bills passed by the General Assembly address issues relating to children who live away from their parents and guardians due to different circumstances. *House Bill 860 (passed)*, proposed by the Administration, transfers responsibility for the educational program at Charles H. Hickey, Jr. School from the Department of Juvenile Justice to MSDE if funds for the initiative are provided in the fiscal 2005 State budget. The Charles Hickey School holds children who have been placed in secure confinement by the Department of Juvenile Justice and is the largest secure juvenile facility in Maryland. A 2001 performance audit of the school reported severe deficiencies in the educational programming. To help remedy the shortcomings, the administration included \$7.5 million for MSDE takeover in the proposed fiscal 2004 State budget. The General Assembly, however, removed the funding, and amended *House Bill 860* to delay the takeover by six months and make the transfer contingent on the provision of funding for the initiative in fiscal 2005. For a more detailed discussion of this bill, see Part E – Crimes, Corrections, and Public Safety of this *90 Day Report*.

### **Kinship Care**

*Senate Bill 32 (passed)* requires a county school superintendent to allow a student whose parent or guardian resides in another school district to attend the local school system if the student is living with a relative within the school district due to a serious family hardship. The

student's relative must be providing informal kinship care to the student and must sign a sworn affidavit that includes the student's old and new addresses and defines the family hardship. The affidavit must be filed annually, and if a change in the care of the student occurs, the relative must notify the local school system. Unless a court appoints a different guardian for the student, the student's relative providing informal kinship care makes educational decisions for the student.

To recognize the potential fiscal implications of the bill, *Senate Bill 32* also provides a local funding mechanism to cover the costs of providing educational services to children in kinship care when a system's liability exceeds 0.1 percent of its total operating budget. Local boards of education must also report to MSDE by September 1, 2003, regarding family hardship waivers granted during the preceding two school years. MSDE must compile the reports and submit a comprehensive report to the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee and House Ways and Means Committee by December 31, 2003.

### **Residential Child Care Programs**

*Senate Bill 178/House Bill 245 (both passed)* require the licensed operator of a residential child care program to expeditiously obtain the academic records of children in the program if the program receives State funding and has legal custody or care and control of school-age children. The records must be obtained from the children's transferring schools and must be sent to the schools that children will be attending while they are in the program. Children must be enrolled in the local school system where the residential child care program is located, and the licensed operator must meet with each child's teacher at the time of enrollment and at any other time the school or teacher requests. The operator must also sign each student's report card and return it to the school, and a copy of each student's report card must be included in the child's case record. The State agency that licenses the operator must notify the operator of these requirements.

### **Adopted Children**

Finally, *House Bill 9 (passed)* exempts an out-of-state agency that arranges for a child's placement for adoption in Maryland from paying the educational costs associated with the child. When an out-of-state agency places a child into an adoptive home in Maryland, the adoption arrangement is often not finalized for another 6 to 12 months. The delay is necessary for the out-of-state agency to ensure that the adoptive home meets safety standards and that proper financial and medical resources are available to the adoptive child. During this period, the adoptive home is considered a foster care home, and a local school system can charge tuition to the out-of-state agency for the educational costs associated with the child. This practice has discouraged some states from placing children in adoptive homes in Maryland. *House Bill 9* relieves out-of-state agencies of this disincentive.

### **Maryland School for the Blind**

The Maryland School for the Blind was established in 1853 and is a private, nonprofit school that serves blind, visually impaired, and multiply disabled students from Maryland's local

school systems. The school is supported with a combination of federal, State, and local funding. ***Senate Bill 619/House Bill 948 (both passed)*** enhance funding for the Maryland School for the Blind by increasing the per student local contribution from \$200 to the local share of the basic cost. The local share of the basic cost for each of the 24 local school systems is calculated annually by MSDE and represents the average amount spent from local sources for the public education of a student without disabilities, not including funding that is used to support programs for disadvantaged children. The bill also shifts responsibility for the payment of the local contribution from the local government to the local board of education. However, students who are sent by a local school system to the Maryland School for the Blind will be included in the maintenance of effort count used to calculate the minimum local appropriation for the board of education.

### **Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Pilot Program**

The Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Pilot Program was established by Chapter 685 of 2001 and opened in Prince George's County in February 2003. The pilot program provides an educational setting for public school students who have been suspended, expelled, or identified as candidates for suspension or expulsion. The Prince George's County public school system has primary responsibility for the operations of the pilot program. According to the school system, the program offers a variety of services from a number of outside agencies in addition to educational services that are tailored to the needs of students who have experienced difficulties in traditional school settings. The physical capacity and staffing levels of the program can support up to 120 students.

***House Bill 490 (passed)*** repeals the program's June 30, 2005, termination date and alters the administration of the program beginning July 1, 2005. At that time, the State Board of Education, with the advice of a program advisory board established in the legislation, will be required to select a private agency to administer the program. MSDE will oversee the Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program, and the juvenile court will be authorized to order children to attend the program as a condition of probation. Also beginning July 1, 2005, ***House Bill 490*** requires a local board of education to pay the basic current expenses per pupil for each student transferred from the local school system to the alternative education program.

### **Local Boards of Education**

***Senate Bill 464/House Bill 596 (both passed)*** change the Dorchester County Board of Education from a six-member appointed board to a five-member elected board. Three members will be elected at the 2004 general election, and two members will be elected at the 2006 general election. Each of the five members will be selected from one of the five councilmanic districts in the county. ***Senate Bill 518/House Bill 576 (both passed)*** require voters in Cecil County to decide if the selection process for the county's board of education will be changed from appointment to election. If the majority of the county's voters opt for an elected board at the 2004 general election, three board members will be selected at the 2006 general election and two board members will be selected at the 2008 general election. Each of the five members would be elected from one of five county commissioner districts in Cecil County.



**House Bill 243 (passed)** requires the Howard County Board of Education to carry out executive functions at open meetings and provides that only actions authorized in the State Open Meetings Act may be taken at closed meetings. The Howard County Board of Education has been criticized recently for its use of meetings that are not open to the public. A complaint on this issue from the Howard County Parent-Teacher Association was recently heard by Maryland’s Open Meeting Compliance Board, and the board ruled that the board of education did not violate the State Open Meeting Act. There is also a lawsuit pending against the Howard County Board of Education in which the complainant alleges that the board has violated State open meetings requirements. **House Bill 243** sunsets September 30, 2005.

## **Higher Education**

After experiencing cost containment reductions in fiscal 2003, public colleges and universities emerged from the 2003 General Assembly relatively unscathed. In January 2003, fiscal 2003 State support for public four-year institutions, private colleges and universities, and community colleges was reduced by the Board of Public Works on average by 8 percent. The four public historically black institutions and Baltimore City Community College experienced reductions in fiscal 2003 of 4 percent.

The General Assembly took no action to reduce fiscal 2004 appropriations for the Senator John A. Cade formula for community colleges or to Baltimore City Community College, both of which increased according to their respective formulas. The General Assembly reduced State support for University System of Maryland and Morgan State by only 0.6 percent, or a total of \$5 million, compared to fiscal 2003 after cost containment. The reduction to St. Mary’s College was \$100,000, leaving an increase of about \$363,000 compared to fiscal 2003. Aid to private institutions would have increased to \$43.7 million in fiscal 2004 according to the Joseph A. Sellinger formula, but the General Assembly made a one-time reduction of \$11 million, or 25 percent.

In addition to regular State support, the four public historically black institutions will receive \$5.5 million in enhancement funds related to the State’s partnership agreement with the Office for Civil Rights and \$3.1 million through the Private Donation Incentive grant program. Fiscal 2003 and 2004 funding levels for institutions of higher education are shown in **Exhibit L-2**.

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**Exhibit L-2**  
**Fiscal 2003 and 2004 Funding for Maryland Institutions of Higher Education**  
(\$ in Thousands)

	<b><u>Fiscal 2003</u></b> <b><u>After Cost</u></b> <b><u>Containment</u></b>	<b><u>Fiscal 2004</u></b> <b><u>Allowance</u></b>	<b><u>Fiscal 2004</u></b> <b><u>Legislative</u></b> <b><u>Appropriation</u></b>	<b><u>Legislative</u></b> <b><u>Reduction</u></b>
University System of Maryland	\$800,877	\$800,877	\$796,177	<1%
Morgan State University	51,088	51,088	50,788	<1%
St. Mary's College	13,853	14,316	14,216	<1%
Cade/Community Colleges	182,607	184,651	184,651	0%
Balt. City Community College	29,904	31,433	31,433	0%
Sellinger/Private Institutions	42,599	43,749	32,749	25%

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**Resident Tuition Charges for Immigrant Students and U.S. Military Personnel and Dependents**

Laws aimed at allowing undocumented immigrants to pay in-state tuition rates at public institutions of higher education have been enacted over the last two years in California, New York, Texas, and Utah. In addition, bills with similar intentions have been introduced in at least eight other states. Public elementary and secondary schools are required by federal law to accept undocumented immigrants, and students are accepted at institutions of higher education regardless of their residency status. However, a federal immigration law passed in 1996 prohibits undocumented immigrants from obtaining a postsecondary education benefit that U.S. citizens cannot obtain, including in-state tuition rates. States that have enacted laws allowing undocumented immigrants to receive in-state tuition rates have been able to craft legislation that bases eligibility for in-state tuition rates on where a student went to high school, not residency status. *House Bill 253 (passed)* uses the same approach to allow certain undocumented immigrants to pay in-state tuition rates at public institutions of higher education. The bill also addresses tuition rates for military personnel and honorably discharged veterans.

**Undocumented Immigrants**

*House Bill 253* exempts an undocumented immigrant from paying nonresident tuition at a public institution of higher education in Maryland if the individual (1) attended a secondary

school in Maryland for at least three years; (2) graduated from a high school in the State or received the equivalent of a high school diploma in the State; (3) registers as an entering student at the institution no earlier than the 2003 fall semester; (4) provides an affidavit stating that the individual will file for permanent U.S. residency within 30 days after becoming eligible to do so; and (5) makes application to the institution not later than five years after graduating from high school or receiving the equivalent of a high school diploma. However, a public institution of higher education may not award a degree to an individual who qualifies for resident tuition under the bill until the individual files the required affidavit or pays the difference between nonresident and resident tuition charges.

### **Military Personnel**

*House Bill 253* also exempts an active duty member of the U.S. armed forces, the spouse and the financially dependent children of an active duty member of the U.S. armed forces, and an honorably discharged veteran of the U.S. armed forces within one year of discharge from paying nonresident tuition charges at a public institution of higher education in the State. Active duty members, their spouses, and their financially dependent children qualify for resident tuition charges if the active duty member (1) is stationed in the State; (2) resides in the State; or (3) is domiciled in the State. Honorably discharged veterans must either reside or be domiciled in the State and produce evidence that the veteran attended a public or private secondary school in the State for at least three years and graduated from a public or private secondary school in the State or received the equivalent of a high school diploma in the State to qualify for resident tuition charges.

### **Funding for Educational Excellence Awards**

The Educational Excellence Awards Program is the primary source of need-based financial aid offered by the State. The program is comprised of two separate types of awards, the Guaranteed Access Grant and the Educational Assistance Grant. The College Readiness for Disadvantaged and Capable Students Act of 2002 (Chapters 315 and 429) provided for the decentralization of a portion of Educational Excellence Awards if State funds are available for the initiative. Decentralization allows institutions of higher education, rather than the Office of Student Financial Assistance, to distribute a portion of the Educational Excellence Awards to students who apply for financial aid after the deadline. *Senate Bill 568/House Bill 774 (both passed)* require the Maryland Higher Education Commission to transfer at least \$2 million from the scholarship funds that are unspent and retained by the commission each year to Maryland institutions of higher education. The institutions must use the funds to provide Educational Excellence Awards to students who otherwise meet the requirements for the awards but apply after the deadline or have other extenuating circumstances.

### **College Savings Plans of Maryland**

*Senate Bill 499/House Bill 30 (both passed)* change the name of the Maryland Higher Education Investment Board to the College Savings Plans of Maryland Board and establish the title of College Savings Plans of Maryland for the two programs that are administered by the

board. The Chancellor of the University System of Maryland is added to the board, and the five ex officio members of the board are authorized to designate staff members to act as their representatives on the board. The bills also clarify that tuition charges covered by the program include only the actual tuition and mandatory fees assessed to all students as a condition of enrollment. The bills allow the board to combine the required annual audits and reports for the Maryland Prepaid College Trust and the Maryland College Investment Plan and make other technical changes in order to align the administration of the two programs.

### **Joseph A. Sellinger Formula**

The Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act, *House Bill 935*, alters the Sellinger formula to require an institution to be accredited, rather than awaiting accreditation, in order to receive State aid through the formula. However, the bill allows the George Meany Center, which is awaiting accreditation, to receive aid as scheduled in fiscal 2004. The George Meany Center has until September 1, 2004, to receive accreditation before it loses its eligibility for Sellinger funding.

### **Community Colleges**

*House Bill 171 (failed)* would have established a pilot program at the Harford Community College that would award limited baccalaureate degrees in areas that address the State's workforce needs. The degrees awarded would have included a bachelor of applied science in selected fields, bachelor of technology, and bachelor of technical and professional studies. The community college would have been required to maintain its essential mission, policies, and purpose of a Maryland community college and maintain a distinction between the baccalaureate programs and the other programs consistent with the authority of the community college.