# *Evaluation of the Effect of Increased State Aid to Local School Systems through the Bridge to Excellence Act*
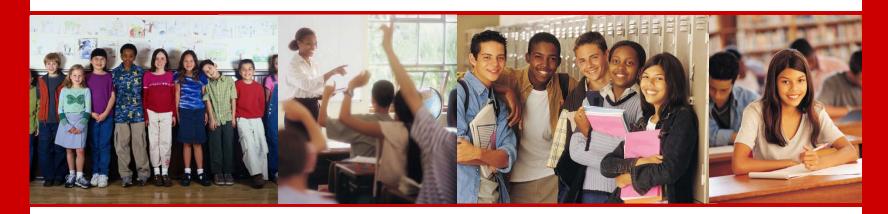
*Final Report Highlights*

**MGT**
OF AMERICA, INC.

**January 2009**

# PREFACE: *Relevant Update Since the Production of the December 2008 MGT Final Report*

- On January 7, 2009, the nation's leading education publication ranked Maryland's state education system as the best.

- Maryland's ranking is based on student performance and state education policies that reflect more than a decade of well-coordinated initiatives by MSDE and local school systems on a consistent preK-12 curriculum; state accountability and standards; and emphasis on school readiness, high school reform, and college/workplace preparation.

- MGT commends MSDE for its outstanding work building an exemplary state education system and for providing valuable assistance to us and encouraging local school systems to do likewise as we conducted this independent 3 year evaluation.

# New Information in the Final Report

- Comparative analyses of the most recent student achievement trend data for all students and for NCLB subgroups

- Statewide survey results on educational best practices in schools and school systems reported by 16,432 educators

- Case studies detailing implementation of educational best practices in a variety of schools and school systems

- Analyses of the relationship between high quality personnel and improvements in student achievement

- Statistical analyses linking additional funding to improvements in student proficiency levels after controlling for demographic and best practice variables

# Key Findings - Return on Investment

For an average school,* the analysis suggests that every $1,000 in  total new expenditures per student is associated with a:

- 4% student proficiency gap closure for elementary school reading and math

- 8% student proficiency gap closure for middle school reading and middle math
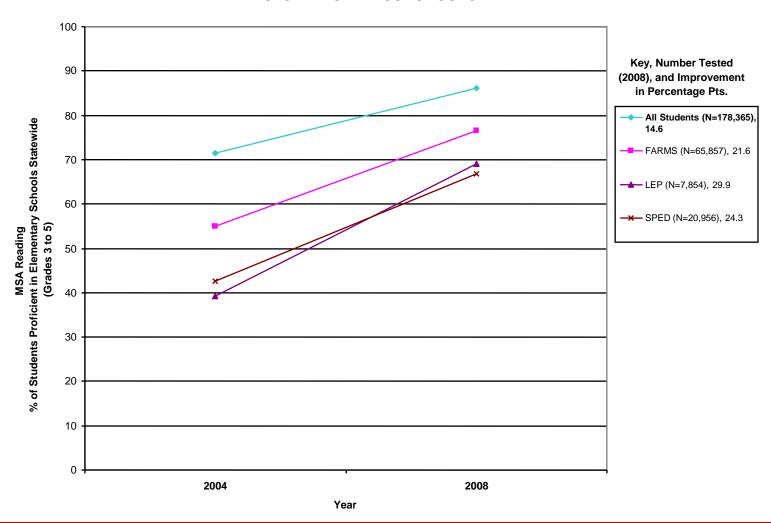
* Average school = having the average % of FARMS, LEP, minority students,  average % of classes taught by highly qualified teachers, average number of best practices, and average effectiveness rating for its leadership.

# Key Findings – Improved Student Performance

➢ **From 2004 to 2008, student proficiency levels increased substantially. The gap in the percentage of students who needed to demonstrate proficiency to meet the NCLB goal of 100% proficiency by 2014 was closed by:**
  **51% in reading and 49% in math in elementary schools**
  **36% in reading and 39% in math in middle schools**

➢ **All race/ethnic groups and all groups receiving special services improved in reading and math proficiency levels**
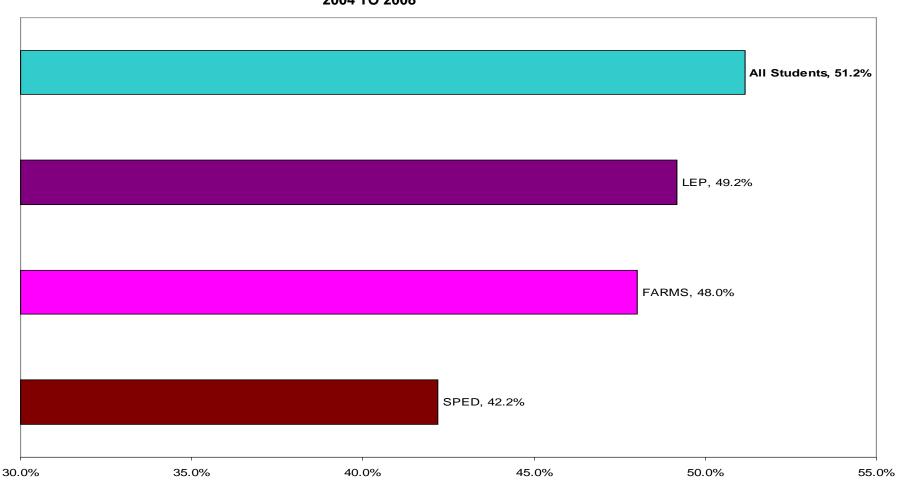
# Statewide Trends in Student Achievement (Example)

**PERCENTAGE OF ELEMENTARY GRADE STUDENTS STATEWIDE DEMONSTRATING PROFICIENCY IN MSA READING
ALL STUDENTS AND SUBGROUPS**

# Statewide Trends in Student Achievement (Example)

**PERCENTAGE OF PROFICIENCY GAP CLOSURE IN MSA READING**
**ALL ELEMENTARY GRADE STUDENTS AND SUBGROUPS**
**2004 TO 2008**



| Group | Percentage |
|---|---|
| All Students | 51.2% |
| LEP | 49.2% |
| FARMS | 48.0% |
| SPED | 42.2% |

# Key Findings - Statewide Financial Trends

**Funding changes in the six years following BTE implementation:**

➢ **Total funding from all sources increased $3.4 billion,  from $7.0 to $10.4 billion**

➢ **State funding increased by $2.0 billion, an 80% increase or $2,438 per pupil**

➢ **Local funding increased by $1.3 billion, a 34% increase, or $1,621 per pupil**

➢ **There were large ranges in state and local per pupil funding increases among the 24 local school systems:**
   ▪ **State funding increases ranged from 35 to 126 percent**
   ▪ **Local funding increases ranged from 6 to 54 percent**

# Statewide Financial Trends

**LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM REVENUES**
**2001-02 (PRE-BTE) AND BUDGETED 2007-08**

|  | 2001-02 | | 2007-08 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | **$ Amount** | **% of Total** | **$ Amount** | **% of Total** |
| **Total Revenues** | **6,997,299,309** | **100.00%** | **10,399,746,840** | **100.00%** |
| State Appropriations | 2,525,743,663 | 36.20% | 4,555,644,188 | 43.82% |
| Local Appropriations | 3,851,119,054 | 55.31% | 5,172,138,038 | 49.75% |
| Federal Revenues | 529,946,907 | 7.56% | 540,007,482 | 5.19% |
| Other Revenues | 90,439,685 | 1.29% | 133,319,989 | 1.28% |

# Key Findings - Statewide Financial Trends (Cont'd.)

Use of increased funding in the six years following BTE implementation:

➢ Systemic shift in focus to individual student achievement and NCLB subgroups; BTE funding has been and continues to be instrumental in assisting Maryland schools during this transition

➢ 86% of the <u>additional</u> funding was spent on improvements or enhancements to educational programs and the educational process, including increases to salaries and benefits to maintain competitive positions in hiring and retaining highly qualified teachers and staff

➢ Less than one percent of the <u>additional</u> funding was spent on professional development; a significant amount was devoted to professional development before BTE enactment and new educational programs came with embedded professional development

➢ LSSs employed staff in over 10,900 additional positions, nearly 8,300 (80%) were teaching positions

# Statewide Financial Trends

**TOTAL <u>INCREASE</u> IN EXPENDITURES IN COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN CONTENT ANALYSIS CATEGORIES**

| Strategy | Increase in Expenditures | % of Total |
|---|---|---|
| Education Programs | 380,543,101 | 11.2% |
| Instructional Processes | 2,536,982,859 | 74.6% |
| Professional Development | 28,288,555 | 0.8% |
| Accountability Measures | 18,495,126 | 0.5% |
| Use of Technology and Data Analysis | 84,775,921 | 2.5% |
| Other | 350,661,279 | 10.3% |
| **Total** | **$3,399,746,841** | **100.0%** |

# Key Findings - Statewide Financial Trends (Cont'd.)

➢ **Increases in expenditures for substantial education enhancements:**

- **Highly Qualified Teachers:** **$2,145,233,815**
- **Data Utilization and Analysis:** **180,025,069**
- **Research-based Programs:** **163,755,839**
- **Academic Intervention/Acceleration:** **119,208,396**
- **Differentiated Instruction:** **104,058,857**
- **Professional Development:** **28,288,555**

# Populations Targeted by Enhancements

### Classification of Targeted Populations for Enhancements

| Substantial Educational Enhancements | FARMS | LEP | SPED | GenEd | Level |
|---|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| Expanded Pre-K Programs | | | ● | ● | E |
| Hiring Additional Special Ed Teachers | | | ● | | E, M |
| Hiring Additional ESOL Teachers | | ● | | | E, M |
| College Preparation Programs | | | | ● | H |
| Positive Behavior Intervention Systems | | | | ● | E, M, H |
| AVID | ● | | | | H |
| Open Court Reading | | | | ● | E |
| Harcourt Math | | | | ● | E |
| Extended Day/Year | ● | | | | E |
| **Processes** | | | | | |
| Hiring Additional Pupil Personnel Workers | ● | | | | M, H |
| Hiring Highly Qualified Staff | | | | ● | E, M, H |
| Family Involvement Activities | | | | ● | E, M, H |
| Revise Instructional Materials | ● | ● | | | E, M, H |
| Maintain Small Class Size | | | | ● | E |
| Mentoring New Teachers | | | | ● | E, M, H |
| Reduce Class Size | | | | ● | M, H |
| VSC Alignment | | | | ● | E, M, H |
| Revise Instructional Methods | ● | ● | ● | | E, M, H |
| Academic Progress Monitoring | ● | ● | ● | | E, M, H |
| Provide for Safe and Drug-Free Schools | | | | ● | E, M, H |

# Populations Targeted by Enhancements (Cont'd.)

**Classification of Targeted Populations for Enhancements**

| Substantial Educational Enhancements | FARMS | LEP | SPED | Gen Ed | Level |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Professional Development** | | | | | |
| Instructional Strategies for ESOL | | ● | | | E, M, H |
| Instructional Strategies for SPED | | | ● | | E, M, H |
| Instructional Strategies for Core Subjects | ● | ● | ● | | E, M, H |
| **Accountability and Assessment** | | | | | |
| ESOL Assessments | | ● | | | E, M, H |
| Formative Assessments | ● | ● | | | E, M, H |
| MSA/HSA Preparation | ● | ● | ● | | M. H |
| **Technology and Data Analysis** | | | | | |
| Purchase subject area software to enhance instruction | ● | ● | ● | | E, M, H |
| Electronic IEPs (Individual Education Plans) | | | ● | | E, M, H |

# Statewide Survey of Educational Best Practices

## MGT conducted a statewide survey inviting participation of:

➢ **Principals and Assistant/Vice Principals**

➢ **Regular classroom teachers**

➢ **Staff development specialists/Teachers coaches; Content area specialists/Coordinators; Special education teachers/Coordinators; Self-contained classroom special education teachers; LEP teachers**

| | Participated | Did not participate | Response rate |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Principals** | **958** | **451** | **68%** |
| **Assistant Principals** | **615** | **n/a** | **n/a** |
| **Teachers (core)** | **14,859** | **n/a** | **40%*** |
| **TOTAL EDUCATORS** | **16,432** | **n/a** | **n/a** |
| **MD Schools** | **1,201** | **208** | **85%** |

**\* Estimated**

# Key Findings - Educational Best Practices Survey

➤ **Best practices are implemented in a large majority of schools throughout the state.**

➤ **The intensity of best practice implementation varies across schools of all levels and across local school systems.**

➤ **More best practices are implemented in elementary and middle schools than in high schools.**

➤ **Teachers indicated the need for:**

- ▪ **more time for team planning and data analysis**

- ▪ **smaller classes to enable individualization of instruction**

- ▪ **more resources to provide interventions to all students in need**

# Site Visits and Case Studies

2007 site visits to all 24 local school systems (LSS):

- ➢ Gathered input from LSS central office personnel
- ➢ Visited a total of 150 schools
- ➢ Identified a list of potential best practices, including six "systemic potential best practices" and six "school-based potential best practices"

2008 site visits to selected schools and LSSs to develop case studies:

- ➢ LSS central administrations of four high performing and diverse LSSs (Worcester, Allegany, Calvert, and St. Mary's)
- ➢ Two schools within each of these four LSSs
- ➢ 12 schools in three other LSSs (Baltimore City, Prince George's, and Montgomery)

# Key Findings – Best Practices

➢ **The list of preliminary best practices derived from visits to 150 schools in 2007 and addressed in the spring 2008 statewide survey was uniformly endorsed and validated by educators during our 2008 site visits.**

➢ **Best practices can be grouped into three distinct categories that are deeply interrelated:**

- **Planning and support system with emphasis on weekly (or more frequent) meetings of teacher teams to plan and discuss student-level data and instructional processes**

- **Aligned, individualized, and inclusive instructional process that includes systematic assessments and adjustment of instructional delivery**

- **Supportive and positive school environment maintained through effective school leadership**

# Best Practices - Predictors of Improved Student Achievement

➢ **Statistical analyses revealed that having a theoretically supported combination of intensively used planning and support practices in place is significantly related to improved student achievement.**

➢ **Teachers' perceptions of the quality of leadership provided by their principal was the most important individual factor influencing the extent to which schools closed their students' proficiency gaps in both reading and mathematics.**

➢ **Best practices (i.e., leadership, combination of planning and support practices, and differentiated instruction) were more powerful predictors of proficiency gap closure for schools with higher percentages of economically disadvantaged students (FARMS) than for schools with lower percentages of FARMS.**

# Concluding Comments/Invitation for Questions

➢ **This independent evaluation followed by Maryland's ranking as the best state education system in the country provide strong evidence that Maryland is a model for other states to emulate.**

➢ **MGT recommends continued state and local aid for Maryland's public school systems to ensure that per-pupil funding is maintained at the increased levels that BTE helped to provide.**

➢ **The seamless connection of highly successful initiatives between MSDE and Maryland's local school systems could not be done without the dedicated work and leadership of MSDE personnel. The state should ensure that MSDE has the resources it needs to help schools and schools systems to take full advantage of the information in this report and to adapt the identified best practices to their meet their specific needs.**