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State Superintendent of Schools

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TO: Members of the Maryland State Board of Education
FROM: Nancy S. Grasmick *Nancy Grasmick*
DATE: September 23, 2008
SUBJECT: Division of Early Childhood Development - Overview

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this item is to provide an overview of the scope and responsibilities of the Division of Early Childhood Development (DECD) (ATTACHMENT.)

BACKGROUND:

The Division was created by statute in 2005 in response to HB932 which outlined the transfer of the Child Care Administration (CCA), housed at the Department of Human Resources (DHR) and several contracts to MSDE. The Division is headed by Dr. Rolf Grafwallner, who previously was the Coordinator of the Early Learning Branch within the Division of Instruction.

The major charge of the Division is to coordinate the early childhood programs and related resources to improve the school readiness skills of incoming kindergarteners as measured annually by the kindergarten assessment of the Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR.) The Division's work is guided by a three-year strategic plan which the State Board reviewed and approved in December 2006.

The enclosed primer provides an overview of DECD's function within MSDE, its initiatives, specific responsibilities, and budget. It also includes an organizational chart describing the new governance structure of early care and education within MSDE and specific information about its budget for FY08 and FY09.

ACTION:

For information only.

Attachment



**Maryland State Board of Education Meeting
September 2008
Overview of the Division of Early Childhood Development**

Maryland has a strong reputation for promoting high-quality early childhood programs. Its public school prekindergarten program has been acknowledged as one of the best in terms of rigorous standards. Despite this early leadership, however, a systemic approach to early learning was not broached until the late 1990s when Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), for the first time, articulated the importance of school readiness as an essential component of school success. In its report, *Every Child Achieving: A Plan for Meeting the Needs of the Individual Learner*, MSDE outlined several recommendations for improving school readiness.

During the 1999 legislative session the Joint Committee on Children, Youth, and Families charged MSDE to find a statewide assessment to measure the result area *Children Entering School Ready to Learn*. Building on what had already been established as a pilot project in Maryland, this project was taken to full state implementation in 2001. Since that time all Maryland kindergarten teachers and students have been involved in the Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR) Kindergarten Assessment, which uses a customized version of the Work Sampling System™ (WSS). Subsequently, the General Assembly supported, over an eight year span, full-day kindergarten in all elementary schools, an expansion of prekindergarten, the Judith P. Hoyer Early Care and Education Enhancement Program, and the Early Childhood Mental Health Project.

In 2000, MSDE made school readiness a key piece of its strategic plan for improving student achievement. The Department's emphasis on high-quality and standards-based early childhood education was driven, in large part, by three developments:

- Research on brain development suggested a great – and largely untapped – potential for accelerated early learning.
- The State government moved to outcomes-based decision-making, whereby accountability for results began driving policy and budget decisions for all public sectors.
- Affording young children access to a high quality early education programs as the major remedy to the achievement gap which is rooted in disparate learning opportunities for children before they come to school.

Since 2000, other early childhood initiatives have been on-going:

- In 2000, MSDE established the Early Childhood Accreditation Project to enable public and non-public early childhood programs in Maryland to obtain voluntary state or national accreditation.
- In December 2001, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Subcabinet for Children, Youth, and Families, and the Council for Excellence in Government convened a group of 40 leaders in State and local government, and from advocacy and service-providing organizations to form the Leadership in Action Program (LAP). Through its deliberations, LAP members have developed a 5-Year School Readiness Action Agenda that provides a roadmap to achieving the result that all children in Maryland enter school ready to learn. “All” children, in this case, refers to children birth through age 5 of all

socio-economic, ethnic and racial backgrounds, including those with disabilities, special needs and diverse abilities.

- With the enactment of the Judith P. Hoyer Early Care and Education Enhancement Program in 2001, early childhood stakeholders were charged with establishing an early childhood accountability system designed to improve school readiness among Maryland's youngest children.
- In 2003 the Head Start Collaboration Office was transferred to MSDE to align their early education programs with those from the local school systems.
- By 2004, MSDE had developed the Voluntary State Curriculum for prekindergarten through grade 8, identifying content standards for what students should know and be able to do at the end of each level/grade. All local school systems are held accountable for implementing these standards, indicators, and objectives in their instructional programs. These content standards also appear in the Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR) Framework and Standards for prekindergarten and for kindergarten. DECD created a comprehensive professional development program to support not only the MMSR assessment component but also the content standards and curricular objectives of the MMSR/VSC for kindergarten and prekindergarten.
- Judith P. Hoyer Early Care and Family Education Centers (Judy Centers) were designed to eliminate the achievement gap, specifically at Title I schools. The Judy Centers were established as models of excellence in early care and education. It has become part of an informal network of similar programs in Europe and other parts of the U.S.
- Working closely with MSDE, Ready At Five, the Maryland Committee for Children (MCC), Friends of the Family, among others, have been exploring innovative models and promote promising practices aimed at improving the school readiness of children birth to age 5 by developing tools and resources that support community leaders, early educators, and parents. Such resources include *Getting Ready* kits for local stakeholders to analyze local kindergarten assessment data to design more effective early learning programs. In addition, a *Countdown to Kindergarten* public awareness campaign touts the benefits of early education. And, the early childhood community mostly concerned with services for children, birth to three, recently issued a business plan to support infant and toddler care in Maryland.

In 2005, the General Assembly transferred the oversight of child care and other programs to MSDE. The legislation (HB932) called for the creation of a Division of Early Childhood Development (DECD) within MSDE. The new Division was established as the lead in coordinating all early care and early childhood services within MSDE and with child serving agencies in Maryland (ATTACHMENT A).

- The Division's Office of Child Care licenses and monitors child care centers and family child care providers, issues contracts and grants to providers to improve early care quality, and administers the State's Child Care Credentialing System. The move has helped MSDE to provide a single governance structure for early education programs, better coordinate programs and resources, and offer more training and support for child care providers.
- Maryland's Family Support Center Network provides twenty-six support centers throughout the state to provide comprehensive support services for families with children, birth to age 3. Operated by Friends of the Family, Inc., which is under contract with

MSDE, services are provided including parenting classes, job skills training, adult education, and child care. This agency works closely with Judy Centers and local Head Start programs.

- Under the leadership of MSDE, Maryland's Child Care Resource and Referral Network is operated by the Maryland Committee for Children (MCC). Under its contract with MSDE, MCC operates Child Care LOCATE, which provides information to families searching for high-quality child care and for programs offering specialized services.
- The Early Childhood Mental Health Steering Committee is co-chaired with MSDE and focuses on building a system of care for young children with mental health needs. Each jurisdiction in Maryland has developed early childhood mental health consultation services to assist child care centers and family day care providers to successfully maintain children with significant behavioral needs in daycare settings.
- Oversight for non-public nursery schools was transferred within MSDE to DECD, which issues licenses and certificates of approval for nursery schools.

Specific Responsibilities of the Division of Early Childhood Development

1. Support for all early learning programs in LEA's
 - Voluntary State Curriculum – alignment of standards, outcomes and indicators for prekindergarten and kindergarten
 - Accreditation of early learning prekindergarten and kindergarten programs
 - Review of all LEA Master Plan updates to ensure early learning accountability for the MMSR assessment and the scaling up of the provision of prekindergarten services for all low income and homeless children under the Bridge to Excellence mandate.
 - Preschool for All – looking ahead to the possible expansion of prekindergarten
2. Authority and Accountability over child care in Maryland
 - Regulations
 - Licensing enforcement
 - Quality improvement
 - Training, professional development
 - Credentialing for child care providers
 - Project development
 - Accreditation
3. Early Childhood Development Support Systems
 - Support for families (i.e. Family Support Centers, child care subsidy, resource and referral agencies)
 - Close support to and collaboration with Early Intervention and Prevention Services
 - Continued coordination with Preschool Special Education and the Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program (i.e., inclusive child care)
 - Continued coordination with the state's Child and Adult Food Program, library services, and family literacy programs
 - Development of an infrastructure for early childhood mental health services

- Coordination with Head Start services and state support for the most recent Head Start reauthorization
- Judy Centers and local capacity building for models of excellence
- Development and maintenance of program standards and State Program Accreditation

4. Accountability for Results (*Children Entering School Ready to Learn*) at the state level and within each local jurisdiction

- Assistance to early education programs in the planning process using Results Based Accountability (RBA)
- Maryland Leadership in Action Program (LAP) promoting local initiatives in Baltimore City, Southern Maryland, Montgomery County, and Anne Arundel County
- Judy Centers – development of results based evaluations and program improvement at 24 sites in 21 jurisdictions
- MMSR Kindergarten Assessment
 - data trends
 - advocacy (policy development)
 - action at the local level
- Legislative action, task force work, committee work at the local level

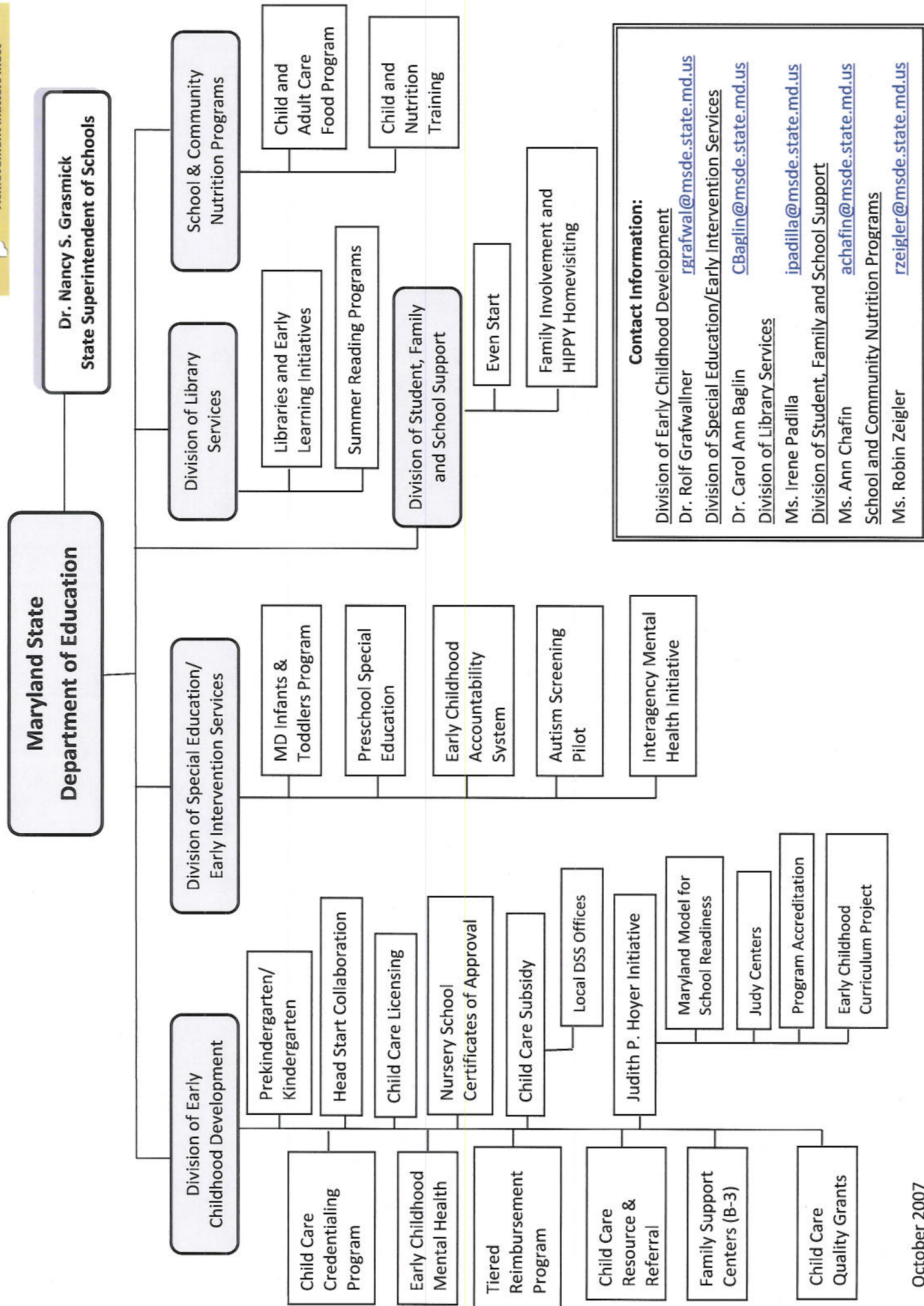
DECD Budget and Resources

The Division has 195.5 Full-time Equivalency (FTE) and one (1) contractual position, 35 of which are based at the Nancy S. Grasmick State Education Building and 161.5 FTEs are working out of 12 regional licensing offices across the state. Headquarters (HQ) funding totals \$40.3 million is about equally split between Federal and State funds. The budget containments for FY09 reduce the HQ budget by \$1.7 million or 4 percent (ATTACHMENT B).

Included in the HQ funds are contracts for the State's network of family support centers and the State's child care resource and referral agencies. In addition, it includes funds for improving the quality of child care such as the State's Child Care Credentialing Program and initiatives to support inclusive child care, child care training, and curriculum resources for child care programs.

The State's Child Care Subsidy Program (formerly Purchase of Care) remains the largest aid to education budget item. While the State funding for the program remained steady at \$37.5 million, the Federal share increased for FY09 due to unspent Federal funds from previous years, when the program just recovered from a three year moratorium on new applications for low income families. The item, Transitional Education School Readiness includes the outlays for Judy Centers, Judy Hoyer Enhancement Funds, including funds for program accreditation and the Preschool Services Grant as well as professional development activities of the Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR). For almost 10 years, the State supplements the Federal Head Start funds, including Early Head Start, for the 19 grantees in the State. The Head Start supplemental funds focus on program expansion and quality improvement efforts (e.g., curriculum implementation, professional development).

MARYLAND'S GOVERNANCE OF EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION



Division of Early Childhood Development

Staffing Per FY 2009 Budget: 194.5 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Regular Positions and 1.0 FTE Contractual Position

Budget Information - Funding by Program

| Program | FY 2008 Actual | | | FY 2009 Appropriation | | |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| | General | Federal | Total | General | Federal | Total |
| Headquarters | | | | | | |
| A0110 Div of Early Childhood Development | 20,203,715 | 20,097,311 | 40,301,026 | 18,480,865 | 20,183,654 | 38,664,519 |
| Headquarters Subtotal | 20,203,715 | 20,097,311 | 40,301,026 | 18,480,865 | 20,183,654 | 38,664,519 |
| Aid to Education | | | | | | |
| A0257 Transitional Education School Readiness | 10,569,037 | | 10,569,037 | 10,575,000 | | 10,575,000 |
| A0258 Head Start | 2,926,439 | | 2,926,439 | 3,000,000 | | 3,000,000 |
| A0259 Child Care Subsidy Program | 37,530,000 | 61,488,831 | 99,018,831 | 37,530,000 | 73,370,000 | 110,900,000 |
| Aid to Education Subtotal | 51,025,476 | 61,488,831 | 112,514,307 | 51,105,000 | 73,370,000 | 124,475,000 |
| Total Funding - Early Childhood Programs | 71,229,191 | 81,586,142 | 152,815,333 | 69,585,865 | 93,553,654 | 163,139,519 |

Budget Information - Headquarters* Funding by Object of Expenditure

| Object | FY 2008 Actual | | | FY 2009 Appropriation | | |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | General | Federal | Total | General | Federal | Total |
| 01 Salaries and Wages | 6,737,457 | 6,292,761 | 13,030,218 | 4,986,358 | 8,041,577 | 13,027,935 |
| 02 Technical and Special Fees | 108,645 | 549,836 | 658,481 | 51,262 | 56,945 | 108,207 |
| 03 Communications | 58,865 | 195,419 | 254,284 | 60,327 | 339,740 | 400,067 |
| 04 Travel | 33,545 | 156,454 | 189,999 | 8,752 | 145,300 | 154,052 |
| 06 Fuel and Utilities | | 9,859 | 9,859 | | | |
| 07 State Vehicles | 36,477 | 23,803 | 60,280 | 97,811 | 118,802 | 216,613 |
| 08 Contractual Services | 10,870,314 | 4,994,858 | 15,865,172 | 10,468,305 | 4,713,533 | 15,181,838 |
| 09 Supplies and Materials | 27,218 | 72,205 | 99,423 | 10,788 | 94,183 | 104,971 |
| 10 Equipment - Replacement | | 2,061 | 2,061 | | | |
| 11 Equipment - Additional | 2,027 | 51,900 | 53,927 | | | |
| 12 Grants, Subsidies and Contributions | 1,931,949 | 7,263,609 | 9,195,558 | 2,454,063 | 6,140,446 | 8,594,509 |
| 13 Fixed Charges | 397,218 | 473,770 | 870,988 | 343,199 | 533,128 | 876,327 |
| 14 Land and Structures | | 10,776 | 10,776 | | | |
| Total Headquarters Funding | 20,203,715 | 20,097,311 | 40,301,026 | 18,480,865 | 20,183,654 | 38,664,519 |

* Note: All Aid to Education funding is paid through Object 12, Grants, Subsidies & Contributions
 FY 2009 Headquarters amounts are shown net of cost containment of \$211,861, posted 9/5/08.