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TO: Members of the State Board of Education
FROM: Nancy S. Grasmick *Nancy*
DATE: January 27-28, 2009
SUBJECT: MGT Final Report

PURPOSE:

To present the final independent evaluation report on the Bridge to Excellence program: *An Evaluation of the Effect of Increased State Aid to Local School Systems Through the Bridge to Excellence Act.*

BACKGROUND:

In 2002, Maryland made a commitment to education reform by enacting the Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act (BTE). This landmark legislation restructured Maryland's public school finance system, increasing funding by \$1.3 billion over previous formulas for the next six fiscal years (FY 2003-2008) and afforded local flexibility in allocating funds. The legislation also held school systems accountable by requiring the development and implementation of a five-year comprehensive master plan designed to increase achievement for all students and eliminate achievement gaps among subgroups of students.

Maryland law required an external, independent evaluation of the BTE program and on January 7, MGT of America, Inc. released its final evaluation report: *An Evaluation of the Effect of Increased State Aid to Local School Systems Through the Bridge to Excellence Act.* This is the final report of a 3-year evaluation designed to determine whether Maryland's BTE program has helped to increase achievement for all students and close achievement gaps. The final report builds upon the information presented in the initial and interim reports and includes case studies of best practices taking place in schools throughout Maryland.

The Executive Summary and both volumes of the final report can be downloaded at: http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/Bridge_to_Excellence/ under *Reports*. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Chuck Buckler at 410-767-0292 or e-mail cbuckler@msde.state.md.us.

ACTION:

For information and discussion only. No action is required.

Attachments

NSG:WJS