

THE HOWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM
10910 Clarksville Pike
Ellicott City, Maryland 21042

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Chief of Staff

Policy Update

To: All Staff

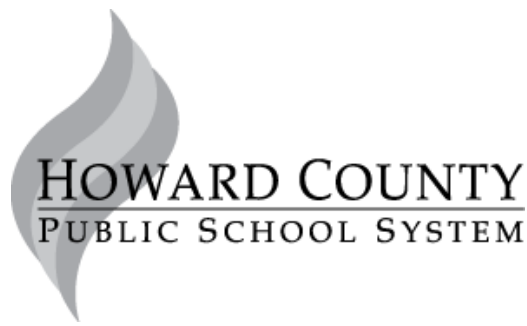
From: Susan C. Mascaro
Chief of Staff

On October 9, 2014, the Superintendent provided to the Board, as an information item, modified implementation procedures to Policy 8030 Graduation Requirements. The modifications can be found in section III.B.3 of the procedures.

The entire policy can be accessed on the HCPSS website at <http://www.hcpss.org/board/policies/>

Thank you for your attention to this update.

SCM/FA/KB
Attachment



POLICY 8030-PR
IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Effective: October 9, 2014

I. Enrollment

A. Course Load

Students are expected to enroll in a full schedule of courses each year that they are in attendance, with the exception that students in their fourth year of attendance may take less than a full schedule in order to work or attend college, provided they have prior permission of the principal.

B. Alternatives to 4-Year Enrollment Requirement

1. Early College Admission Program

In order to participate in the Early College Admission Program, students must be accepted for early admission to an accredited college before high school graduation and must have met all state assessment, student service learning, and career preparation requirements. A written request by the student and parent must be made to, and approved by, the Superintendent certifying the early admission acceptance, and the student's program for the first year of college must be approved by the Superintendent if the program is to be included toward the issuance of a diploma. At the conclusion of a full year of study, a written request for a diploma must be submitted to the Superintendent together with a transcript or letter from the college to the high school principal indicating that the student has successfully completed a year of college work.

2. Early Admission to Approved Vocational, Technical, or Other Postsecondary School Program

In order to participate in the Early College Admission Program, students must be accepted for early admission by an approved vocational, technical, or postsecondary school program before high school graduation and must have met all state assessment, student service learning, and career preparation requirements. A written request by the student and parent must be made to, and approved by, the Superintendent certifying the early admission acceptance, and the student's program for the first year of the postsecondary program must be approved by the Superintendent if the program is to be included toward the issuance of a diploma. At the conclusion of a full year of study, a written request for a diploma must be submitted to the Superintendent together with a transcript or letter from the postsecondary

school to the high school principal indicating that the student has successfully completed a year of postsecondary school work.

3. Other

Beyond those procedures specifically listed in policy, these procedures, or the Catalog of Approved High School Courses, the principal shall prescribe all rules and regulations for students involved in any exception to the four-year high school attendance requirement. This is especially true in respect to the procedures by which a student may enter and leave the building when the school is in session.

C. Early Graduation Option

1. Students have the option to graduate after three years of attendance provided all state assessment, credit, student service learning, and career preparation requirements have been met. A written request must be made to the principal along with a portfolio which contains:

- a. A resume
- b. A written statement of career plans which includes how early graduation will enhance career plans
- c. Four teacher recommendations
- d. A written request from parents stating their agreement with the student's request
- e. An academic package which includes transcript, test scores, and attendance

2. It is recommended, but not required, that this request be made during the fourth quarter of the sophomore year. Approval must be given by the Superintendent/designee. An approval process will be developed and published in the Catalog of Approved High School Courses. High school students shall be informed of this and other alternatives to the traditional high school graduation and attendance requirements as a normal part of the guidance program.

D. A student who enters Howard County Public Schools in the twelfth grade shall be granted a waiver from locally established graduation requirements unless the student chooses to fulfill the requirements.

E. Eligibility for Athletic and Extracurricular Activities

Senior students who have not waived the fourth year of attendance shall be entitled to participate in athletic and extracurricular activities subject to paragraph B.3 above and the eligibility policy.

II. Alternative Sources of Credit

A. Credit for High School Courses Taken in Middle School

High school courses which are offered at the middle school level and are eligible for credit under this provision will be brought to the Board of Education for approval. Grades earned under this provision will be recorded on the middle school report card and passing grades (as determined by Policy 8010) will be recorded as a “pass” on the high school transcript.

B. Credit for Courses Through Colleges or Other Accredited Institutions

1. One high school credit will be awarded for each college course successfully completed that is equivalent to (or beyond) a course in the Catalog of Approved High School Courses. Within the context of this policy and implementation procedures high school principals will make final decisions as to credits awarded.

In addition, students who wish to pursue a world language that is not offered at their high school or that does not appear in the Catalog of Approved High School Courses may do so by enrolling in an approved course at an accredited 2- or 4- year college, provided prior approval is obtained from their high school principal. One high school credit in the specific language will be awarded for each college course successfully completed.

Tuition for the college courses is the responsibility of the student. The credits awarded toward high school graduation will be recorded as transfer credits on the transcript.

2. One high school credit will be awarded for completion of each course offered through other accredited institutions, provided the course is substantially equivalent to a course in the Catalog of Approved High School Courses. Students must seek approval from the principal prior to taking the course and provide a course syllabus. The principal will make final decisions as to credits awarded after consultation with appropriate curriculum staff.

3. Students who are awarded credits in courses which are part of the Maryland State Assessment Program must still meet applicable Maryland State Assessment Requirements for those courses.

C. Credit by Exam

Courses for which credit by examination is available will be brought to the Board of Education for approval. Courses for which credit by examination is approved will be designated in the Catalog of Approved High School Courses.

III. Maryland High School Assessments

A. Appropriate Assistance Programs

1. Assistance programs may include:
 - a. Specifically designed programs offered by the school system as part of the school day during the regular school year
 - b. Specifically designed programs offered by the school system as an after school program
 - c. Summer school courses
 - d. Other programs offered outside of the school system, provided the programs have prior approval by the principal.
2. Cost
 - a. Tuition may be charged for programs offered outside the school day or beyond the school year.
 - b. In the event that this causes undue hardship, the principal may grant a waiver of tuition associated with any option offered by the school system.

B. Eligibility for Participating in the Bridge Plan for Academic Validation

A student may participate in the Bridge Plan for Academic Validation if the student has met all of the following conditions based on the requirements set forth by the MSDE:

1. The student has failed one or more High School Assessments at least twice and has received a passing grade and earned credit in the course(s) related to the assessment(s).
2. The student was not chronically absent as defined in Policy 9010, Attendance, in the most recent school year completed. A student who was

chronically absent may request a waiver of this provision for good cause from the Administrative Director.

3. The student has demonstrated satisfactory progress toward achieving high school diploma requirements by earning at least fourteen (14) credits. An administrator may request the Superintendent/Designee waive this provision for a student who is making adequate progress toward graduation but does not have 14 credits.
4. The student has received a passing grade in an appropriate assistance program, if applicable, or a letter of approval from the principal indicating successful completion of approved appropriate assistance.

IV. History

ADOPTED: October 26, 1989

REVIEWED:

MODIFIED: October 9, 2014

REVISED: June 27, 1996

March 13, 1997

May 26, 2005

June 27, 2005

April 10, 2008

December 10, 2009

EFFECTIVE: October 9, 2014