

**I. Policy Statement**

The Board of Education recognizes its responsibility to provide appropriate educational programs for pregnant students in accordance with state regulations and Title IX requirements. The Board further recognizes the Howard County Public School System's (HCPSS) responsibility to support parenting students and encourage them to continue their education.

**II. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide direction regarding educational programs for pregnant and parenting students.

**III. Definitions**

Within the context of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- A. Compulsory School Age – Age required by the state for which a student must be enrolled in and attending public school or an equivalent approved education program.
- B. Educational Programs – Activities that provide instruction to students.
- C. Parent – Any one of the following, recognized as the adult(s) legally responsible for the student:
  - 1. Biological Parent – A natural parent whose parental rights have not been terminated.
  - 2. Adoptive Parent – A person who has legally adopted the student and whose parental rights have not been terminated.
  - 3. Custodian – A person or an agency appointed by the court as the legal custodian of the student and granted parental rights and responsibilities.
  - 4. Guardian – A person who has been placed by the court in charge of the affairs of the student and granted parental rights and responsibilities.
  - 5. Caregiver – An adult resident of Howard County who exercises care, custody or control over the student but who is neither the biological parent nor legal guardian,

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as long as the person satisfies the requirements of the Education Article, §7-101 (c) (Informal Kinship Care).

6. Foster Parent – An adult approved to care for a child who has been placed in their home by a state agency or a licensed child placement agency as provided by the Family Law Article, §5-507.

D. Parenting Student – A student who is a parent of a child.

#### **IV. Standards**

A. In accordance with Title IX, HCPSS will not discriminate against an enrolled student in academic or non-academic activities because of pregnancy, birth of a child, miscarriage, or termination of pregnancy.

B. Pregnant Student Over the Compulsory School Age

1. A student over the compulsory school age who has not completed a high school education may elect to remain in the regular school program and may not be involuntarily excluded from any part of the program or withdrawn from school.
2. Any decision to modify the program or provide the student an appropriate alternative educational program as described in section IV.D. below, will be reached in joint consultation with the student, appropriate educational and medical personnel, and the student's parent(s), if the student elects to include the parent(s).

C. Pregnant Student Under Compulsory School Age

1. A pregnant student who is under compulsory school age, may voluntarily withdraw from the regular school program, provided that the student enrolls in an appropriate educational program planned for that student, as described in section IV.D. below.
2. The decision concerning an appropriate educational program will be reached in joint consultation with the student, the student's parent(s), and appropriate educational and medical personnel.

D. Appropriate educational programs for pregnant students offered through the HCPSS include, but are not limited to:

1. Continuation of the regular school program (modified based on individual needs).
2. Regional program for parenting students.
3. Home and hospital teaching.
4. Alternative education programs.
5. Remote learning through electronic means.
6. Combination of the above programs.

- E. It is the responsibility of the HCPSS working with the home to cooperate with other state and local agencies, such as health, welfare, and juvenile services and with private physicians or agencies to assure that the pregnant student receives proper medical, psychological, and social services during and following the pregnancy as needed.
- F. Parenting students may elect to remain in the regular school program and will not be excluded from any part of their educational program.

## **V. Responsibilities**

The Office of Student Services will ensure that pregnant and parenting students are informed of their educational rights under this policy.

## **VI. Delegation of Authority**

The Superintendent is authorized to develop appropriate procedures for the implementation of this policy.

## **VII. References**

- A. Legal
  - Federal Family Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), as amended – 20 U.S.C. §1232g, and its Regulations – 34 CFR Part 99
  - Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)
  - Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
  - The Annotated Code of Maryland, Health-General Article, section 4-301, *et seq.* - The Confidentiality of Medical Records Act
  - The Annotated Code of Maryland, Health-General Article, section 20-102
  - COMAR 13A.08.01.06, Educational Programs for Pregnant Girls
  - COMAR 13A.08.02, Student Records
- B. Other Board Policies
  - Policy 1030 Child Abuse and Neglect
  - Policy 9000 Student Residency, Eligibility, Enrollment and Assignment
  - Policy 9010 Attendance
  - Policy 9050 Student Records
- C. Relevant Data Sources
- D. Other

## **VIII. History**

ADOPTED: August 3, 1971

REVIEWED:

MODIFIED:

REVISED: September 13, 1990  
January 10, 2008  
January 12, 2017  
EFFECTIVE: July 1, 2017

**EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR**  
**PREGNANT AND PARENTING STUDENTS**

Effective: July 1, 2017

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**I. Confidentiality and Disclosure**

- A. Under The Annotated Code of Maryland, Health-General Article, section 20-102, a minor has the same capacity as an adult to consent to treatment for, or advice about pregnancy.

This treatment or advice is confidential and may not be disclosed without the student's consent.

- B. If a student is pregnant, employees should consider whether child abuse is an issue. If so, Policy 1030 Child Abuse and Neglect, must be followed, including all reporting requirements.
- C. When a student seeks counseling regarding pregnancy concerns, the first goal is to encourage the student to involve the family. Staff members working with the pregnant student will provide information regarding community resources available to them.

**II. Educational Decision-Making**

- A. The school counselor and nurse will work collaboratively with pregnant or parenting students (or students who reportedly may be pregnant) to:
1. Communicate student rights under this policy.
  2. Ensure that the student is aware of possible program modifications or alternative educational programs.
  3. Outline types of support available through the school system and associated eligibility guidelines.
  4. Provide appropriate community resource information.
  5. Provide assistance in accessing programs and resources.
- B. Modification of the educational program for minor pregnant or parenting students requires parental permission and prior approval of the principal/designee.

**III. Other Support Services**

- A. The nurse, in consultation with the school counselor, will consider the following when developing a support plan for the pregnant student:

1. The student's age and developmental level.
  2. Whether child/sexual abuse or criminal assault is involved.
  3. The student's parent(s) awareness of the pregnancy and their level of support.
  4. The student's access to health care.
- B. Health staff will provide in-school support as appropriate.
- C. Referrals for appropriate services to the local agencies may be made, particularly if the student has no access to health care, by health staff.
- D. Student services staff will cooperate as appropriate with other state and local agencies, such as health, welfare, and juvenile services and with private physicians or agencies to assure that the pregnant student receives proper medical, psychological, and social services during and following the pregnancy.

#### **IV. Educational Programs**

- A. Pregnant and parenting students will be made aware that a regional center and outreach services are available.
- B. Outreach services are available in their home school for all pregnant and parenting students.
- C. High school students seeking to enroll in the regional program for parenting students will be referred to the program facilitator. Parental consent is required for minor students.
- D. School counselors will inform students of all possible alternative pathways to graduation.
- E. Students requesting Home and Hospital services before or after delivery will be referred to the Home and Hospital Teaching Office.

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