

POLICY

SOMERSET COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Date Submitted:

January 18, 1980

Date Reviewed:

December 20, 2004

March 20, 2007

January 20, 2009

February 19, 2019

Number:

500-25

Subject:**Date Approved:**

January 18, 1980

April 17, 2007

February 17, 2009

March 19, 2019

Date Revised:

November 30, 2004

March 20, 2007

December 16, 2008

February 2, 2019

Date Effective:

January 18, 1980

April 17, 2007

February 17, 2009

March 19, 2019

1. **PURPOSE**

To establish guidelines for high school students pursuing alternate routes to high school graduation.

2. **BACKGROUND**

The Somerset County Board of Education has a responsibility for providing the best educational opportunities possible for the youth of this county. It further feels that education is a personal responsibility which is shared by the student, his/her parent/guardian and the school the student attends.

High school graduation has long been a goal sought by young people. The state and the county are concerned that this goal be achieved in a most meaningful manner.

In order to assist students achieve the goal of high school graduation, the Somerset County Board of Education is willing and desirous of implementing alternate routes to graduation, in compliance with the Graduation Requirements for Public High Schools in Maryland.

3. Alternatives to 4-Year Enrollment in a Public High School. In recognition of the fact that 4-year enrollment in a public high school may not serve the best interests of some students, the following alternatives shall be made available:

A. Early Admission to a College Program, Approved Vocational or Technical Program, or other Postsecondary School Program (COMAR:

13A.03.02.10) A student may receive a Maryland High School diploma after completion of grade 11 through acceptance in an early admission program of a college, approved vocational or technical program, or other postsecondary school program, provided that:

- (1) The student is accepted for early admission to an accredited college (2 year or 4 year) vocational or technical program, or postsecondary school program before high school graduation
- (2) All Maryland High School Assessments and student service requirements have been met.
- (3) A written request by the student and parent or guardian is made to and approved by the local superintendent of schools, asking the waiver of the 4th year attendance requirement and certifying the early admission acceptance;
- (4) The student's program for the first year of college or postsecondary program is approved by the local superintendent of schools if this program is included towards the issuance of a diploma; and
- (5) At the conclusion of a full year of study, a written request for the Maryland high school diploma is submitted to the superintendent together with a transcript or letter from the college or postsecondary school to the high school principal indicating that the student has successfully completed a year of college work or postsecondary school work.

B. **Alternatives for Structuring Programs** (COMAR: 13A.03.02.11).

- (6) The student is accepted for early admission to an accredited college (4 year or 2 year) before high school graduation **NOTE: This is not in COMAR but could be a local component if we think it needs to be included.**
- (7) An alternative plan may be developed to include a waiver of the fourth year enrollment requirement if all credit, assessments, and student service requirements are met and if the local superintendent of schools or designee determines that the waiver is in the best interest of the student.
- (8) The plan must include (at a minimum) the development of a curricular plan which assures that the content of the specified credits is included and the standards of graduation are met. The plan must contain a program description, performance requirements, and evaluation procedure; and
- (9) The local Superintendent of schools is responsible for approving any plan and shall notify the State Superintendent of schools once approval has been given.

D. **General Educational Development Testing Program.** A Maryland High School Diploma may be awarded for satisfactory performance on approved general educational development tests provided that the student meets those requirements as defined in Education Article §7-205, Annotated Code of Maryland.

- E. **Maryland Adult External High School Diploma Program.** A Maryland High School Diploma may be awarded for demonstrating competencies in general life skills and individual skills on applied performance tests provided that the student meets those requirements as defined in COMAR 13A.03.03.02.
- 4. **Alternatives for Earning High School Credit.** All alternative credits must be pre-approved by the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee.
 - A. An alternative method to earn high school credit may include independent study. Apprenticeships and Career Technical Course work. Credits earned may go toward fulfilling the "completing a state approved career and technology program" or counted as an elective. Attendance in any alternative setting will be regularly monitored by the Superintendent's designee.
 - B. College-Courses outside of graduation requirements may be taken for elective credit.
 - C. The course(s) in question must be listed in the Somerset County High School Academic Catalog of courses. Courses requested but not listed in the academic catalog must be pre-approved by the Principal and the Superintendent's designee.
 - D. Students must assume responsibility for completing the application, gaining permission from the high school principal and local superintendent/designee, and reporting accomplishments at the close of the alternative experience.

Policy 500-25 Administrative Procedures will include the information below.