

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2020 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 769
Ways and Means

(Delegate Adams, *et al.*)

Education - High School Students - Graduation and Attendance Credit for
Vocational Training

This bill authorizes a local board of education to award credit to a high school student toward a high school diploma or a postsecondary credential, or both, for *one* vocational course per semester in a career and technical education (CTE) program approved by the local board. In addition, a local board of education may count toward high school attendance the time a student spends during vocational training in a CTE program approved by the local board. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2020.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill generally codifies current practice and is directed at local school systems.

Local Effect: None. The bill generally codifies current practice; however, the bill limits to one the number of vocational courses per semester a local board may count toward a student's high school diploma or postsecondary credential and attendance.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/ Background: With the advice of the State Superintendent of Schools, the State Board of Education must establish minimum requirements for issuing certificates and diplomas by public and private high schools.

A local board of education, notwithstanding any other law, may award a high school student credit toward a high school diploma or a postsecondary credential for the work-based training and classroom instruction completed under a registered apprenticeship program. A local board of education, notwithstanding any other law, may count toward high school attendance the time an apprentice or youth apprentice spends during work-based training with an employer under a registered apprenticeship program.

The State Board of Education must establish high school curriculum and graduation requirements for all public schools in accordance with law. The current credit requirements required to earn a public high school diploma are shown in the **Appendix – State Public High School Diploma Credit Requirements**. Local school systems may establish graduation requirements beyond the minimum requirements established by the State board.

Career and Technical Education

The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act is the 2018 reauthorization of the federal Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins), which was last overhauled in 2006. The new Perkins law provides approximately \$1.2 billion in formula grants to states to implement CTE programs in their secondary schools and postsecondary institutions. The new law allows states to set their own goals for CTE programs, requires them to make progress toward those goals, and makes other changes to federal CTE law. Generally, Perkins requires states to develop sequences of academic and CTE coursework, called programs of study, that prepare students for postsecondary degrees or industry-recognized credentials. Many of the programs of study – which range from plumbing and culinary arts to aerospace engineering and cybersecurity – include or encourage apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship opportunities. At a minimum, a program of study must:

- incorporate and align secondary and postsecondary education elements;
- include academic and CTE content in a coordinated, nonduplicative progression of courses;
- offer the opportunity, where appropriate, for secondary students to acquire postsecondary credits; and
- lead to an industry-recognized credential or certificate at the postsecondary level, or an associate or baccalaureate degree.

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has developed several dozen programs of study grouped within 10 career clusters. Each program of study includes a sequence of four courses that begin in either grade 10 or 11 and prepares students for either further study or industry certification; students that complete the course sequence by high school graduation are considered “CTE completers.”

Of the class of 2018, approximately 13,400 students completed a CTE program of study; more than half of those also completed the requirements for admission to the University System of Maryland (*i.e.*, “dual completers”). In addition, some CTE courses enable students to earn industry certifications and transcript college credit.

Chapter 149 of 2017 required MSDE, in consultation with the Maryland Department of Labor (MDL) and the Governor’s Workforce Development Board, to develop statewide goals each year from 2018 through 2024 so that by January 1, 2025, 45% of high school students successfully complete a CTE program, earn industry-recognized occupational or skill credentials, or complete a registered youth or other apprenticeship before graduating high school.

State/Local Fiscal Effect: MSDE advises that the requirements of the bill are already being implemented. Local school systems may award credit to a high school student toward a high school diploma or a postsecondary credential or both for work-based training and classroom instruction completed under registered apprenticeship programs and for *any* courses taken in an approved CTE program of study.

All school systems provide students the option of participating in State-approved CTE programs of study that count toward graduation requirements. In 2018, MSDE in partnership with MDL implemented the Apprenticeship Maryland Career and Technical Education Program of Study (AMP). AMP is a State apprenticeship model program and is available to all school systems for local adoption. Students can earn credit for completion of requirements in AMP. AMP was piloted in Frederick and Washington counties and is in the process of expanding statewide.

Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) advises it already accounts for CTE courses toward graduation requirements as well as internships. Therefore, this would not have a fiscal or operational impact on AACPS.

Additional Comments: The Department of Legislative Services notes that the language of the bill may inadvertently limit the number of vocational courses in an approved CTE program that a local board may award credit to one course per semester. Under current practice there is no limit beyond the other credits a student must take to graduate high school and the courses available to the student. This limitation likely does not affect most students, since CTE programs of study require students to complete three or four full-year CTE courses in their chosen area of study, which generally translates to one course per semester. However, to the extent that a student elects to take more than one CTE course in a given semester, the bill would preclude them from earning credit for a second course.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Designated Cross File: SB 133 (Senators West and McCray) - Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education; Maryland Higher Education Commission; Maryland Department of Labor; Baltimore City Public Schools; Anne Arundel County Public Schools; Montgomery County Public Schools; St. Mary's County Public Schools; Department of Legislative Services

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rh/rhh

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Appendix – State Public High School Diploma Credit Requirements

According to State regulations, to be awarded a high school diploma, a student must be enrolled in a Maryland public school system and have earned a minimum of 21 credits in specified subjects as detailed in **Exhibit 1**.

Exhibit 1 Distribution of Credits Required to Graduate High School

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Credits</u>
English	4.0
Fine Arts	1.0
Mathematics ¹	3.0
Physical Education	0.5
Health Education	0.5
Science	3.0
Social Studies	3.0
Technology Education	1.0
World Language <i>or</i> American Sign Language <i>or</i> Advanced Technology Education ²	2.0
Electives ²	3.0

¹However, beginning with students entering grade 9 in the 2014-2015 school year, each student must enroll in a mathematics course in each year of high school that the student attends, up to a maximum of four years of attendance, unless in the fifth or sixth year a mathematics course is needed to meet a graduation requirement.

²Alternatively, a student may successfully complete a State-approved career and technology program for four credits and one credit in an elective.

Note: The credits must meet other requirements specified in the Code of Maryland Regulations. Elective programs and instruction must be developed at the discretion of the local school system, be open to enrollment for all students, and focus on in-depth study in required subject areas, exploration, or application and integration of what has been learned. In addition, all students must complete a locally designed high school program of environmental literacy approved by the State Superintendent of Schools.

Source: Code of Maryland Regulations; Department of Legislative Services
