

SENATE BILL 664

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11r2587

By: **Senator Ellis**

Introduced and read first time: February 3, 2021

Assigned to: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Education – High School Graduation Requirements – Applications for Student**
3 **Financial Aid**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring certain public high school students, beginning in a certain
5 school year, to confer with a high school counselor or certain designated
6 representative regarding certain financial aid applications as a requirement for
7 graduation; authorizing a student or the parent or legal guardian of a minor student
8 to submit to a county board of education a certain form regarding certain financial
9 aid applications; requiring a county board to waive a certain requirement under
10 certain circumstances; requiring the State Department of Education to adopt certain
11 regulations; requiring certain regulations to include certain guidelines; requiring a
12 county board to report certain information to certain committees of the General
13 Assembly on or before a certain date each year for a certain number of years; and
14 generally relating to graduation requirements for public high school students.

15 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
16 Article – Education
17 Section 7–205.1(a)
18 Annotated Code of Maryland
19 (2018 Replacement Volume and 2020 Supplement)

20 BY adding to
21 Article – Education
22 Section 7–205.1(h)
23 Annotated Code of Maryland
24 (2018 Replacement Volume and 2020 Supplement)

25 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
26 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

27 **Article – Education**

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 7-205.1.

2 (a) The State Board shall establish high school curriculum and graduation
3 requirements for all public schools in accordance with this section.

4 (H) (1) BEGINNING IN THE 2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR, AND EXCEPT AS
5 PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPHS (2) AND (3) OF THIS SUBSECTION, EACH STUDENT, AS A
6 REQUIREMENT FOR GRADUATION, SHALL CONFER WITH A HIGH SCHOOL GUIDANCE
7 COUNSELOR OR OTHER DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVE OF AN INSTITUTION OF
8 POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION OR A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION, REGARDING:

9 (I) THE FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID
10 (FAFSA) TO THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION; OR

11 (II) THE MARYLAND STATE FINANCIAL AID APPLICATION
12 (MSFAA) TO THE MARYLAND HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION.

13 (2) A STUDENT OR THE PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN OF A MINOR
14 STUDENT MAY SUBMIT TO THE COUNTY BOARD A FORM SIGNED BY THE STUDENT OR
15 THE PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN OF THE MINOR STUDENT STATING THAT THE
16 STUDENT UNDERSTANDS THE FAFSA OR MSFAA APPLICATION AND DECLINES TO
17 MEET WITH A HIGH SCHOOL GUIDANCE COUNSELOR OR OTHER DESIGNATED
18 REPRESENTATIVE OF AN INSTITUTION OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION OR A
19 NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION REGARDING THE APPLICATION.

20 (3) A COUNTY BOARD SHALL WAIVE THE REQUIREMENT IN
21 PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION IF:

22 (I) 1. A STUDENT COMPLETES ALL OTHER REQUIREMENTS
23 FOR GRADUATION IN THIS SECTION; AND

24 2. THE STUDENT'S PRINCIPAL ATTESTS THAT THE
25 STUDENT HAS MADE A GOOD FAITH EFFORT TO COMPLETE THE FAFSA OR MSFAA;
26 OR

27 (II) A PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN OF A STUDENT REQUESTS A
28 WAIVER DUE TO EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES.

29 (4) (I) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS TO
30 IMPLEMENT THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS SUBSECTION.

31 (II) THE REGULATIONS ADOPTED UNDER THIS PARAGRAPH
32 SHALL INCLUDE GUIDELINES TO ENSURE THAT EACH STUDENT RECEIVES

1 **ADEQUATE SUPPORT IN COMPLETING AND SUBMITTING THE FAFSA OR MSFAA.**

2 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, on or before July 1 each year,
3 beginning in 2023 and ending in 2028, each county board shall report to the Senate
4 Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee and the House Committee on
5 Ways and Means, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article:

6 (1) the number of students who completed and submitted the FAFSA or
7 MSFAA in the immediately preceding school year;

8 (2) the number of students who declined to complete and submit the
9 FAFSA or MSFAA in the immediately preceding school year; and

10 (3) the number of students who received a waiver under this Act in the
11 immediately preceding school year.

12 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
13 1, 2021.