
By: **Delegates E. Burns, Healey, Howard, Leopold, Linton, McKee, Muse,
O'Donnell, Pitkin, Poole, Ports, Rzepkowski, Shriver, Valderrama,
Walkup, Beck, C. Davis, Hurson, Marriott, Hutchins, Bozman, and C.
Mitchell**

Introduced and read first time: February 5, 1998

Assigned to: Ways and Means

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Education - Counseling for Potential Dropouts**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing a counseling program for public school students who
4 plan to withdraw from school enrollment before receiving a high school diploma;
5 requiring the State Board of Education to adopt certain regulations; making
6 certain technical changes; and generally relating to counseling for potential
7 dropouts from public school.

8 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
9 Article - Education
10 Section 7-301(a)
11 Annotated Code of Maryland
12 (1997 Replacement Volume and 1997 Supplement)

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

15 **Article - Education**

16 7-301.

17 (a) (1) Except as otherwise provided in this section, each child who resides
18 in this State and is 5 years old or older and under 16 shall attend a public school
19 regularly during the entire school year unless the child is otherwise receiving regular,
20 thorough instruction during the school year in the studies usually taught in the public
21 schools to children of the same age.

22 (2) In accordance with regulations of the State Board [of Education], a
23 child who resides in this State and is 5 years old may be exempted from mandatory
24 school attendance for 1 year if the child's parent or guardian files a written request
25 with the local school system asking that the child's attendance be delayed due to the
26 child's level of maturity.

1 (3) Except as provided in subsection (f) of this section or in regulations of
2 the State Board [of Education], each child who resides in this State shall attend a
3 kindergarten program regularly during the school year prior to entering the first
4 grade unless the child is otherwise receiving regular, thorough instruction in the
5 skills and studies usually taught in a kindergarten program of a public school.

6 (4) (I) A CHILD WHO IS AT LEAST 16 YEARS OLD AND WHO HAS NOT
7 RECEIVED A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA MAY NOT WITHDRAW FROM PUBLIC SCHOOL
8 ENROLLMENT UNLESS THE CHILD HAS FIRST ATTENDED A COUNSELING PROGRAM
9 THAT SHALL:

10 1. PROVIDE ADVICE TO THE CHILD RELATING TO ISSUES
11 AND PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH EARLY WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL; AND

12 2. BE ATTENDED BY THE CHILD'S PARENT OR GUARDIAN.

13 (II) THE STATE BOARD SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS SPECIFYING
14 THE CONTENT OF THE COUNSELING PROGRAM REQUIRED UNDER THIS PARAGRAPH.

15 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
16 July 1, 1998.