

SENATE BILL 447

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8lr1575

By: **Senators Pugh, Conway, Currie, Forehand, Jones, King, Lenett, Madaleno, McFadden, Peters, and Raskin**
Introduced and read first time: January 31, 2008
Assigned to: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Education – High School Diploma – GED Options Program**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring the State Board of Education to establish a GED
4 Options Program that provides certain students with an alternative course for
5 obtaining a high school diploma beginning on a certain date; providing for
6 certain program requirements; requiring students enrolled in a certain program
7 to be counted in the average daily attendance of a certain school system;
8 requiring the State Board to adopt certain regulations; and generally relating to
9 the GED Options Program for obtaining a high school diploma.

10 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
11 Article – Education
12 Section 7–206
13 Annotated Code of Maryland
14 (2006 Replacement Volume and 2007 Supplement)

15 BY adding to
16 Article – Education
17 Section 7–208
18 Annotated Code of Maryland
19 (2006 Replacement Volume and 2007 Supplement)

20 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
21 Article – Education
22 Section 7–301(a)
23 Annotated Code of Maryland
24 (2006 Replacement Volume and 2007 Supplement)

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

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 **Article – Education**

2 7–206.

3 (a) **[An] EXCEPT AS OTHERWISE PROVIDED IN THIS TITLE, AN** individual
4 may obtain a high school diploma by examination as provided in this section if the
5 individual:

6 (1) Has not obtained a high school certificate or diploma;

7 (2) Has resided in this State or on a federal reservation in this State
8 for at least 3 months, except that the State Board may waive this residence
9 requirement if it considers the waiver justified;

10 (3) Is 16 years old or older; and

11 (4) Has withdrawn from a regular full–time public or private school
12 program for at least 3 months, except that the State Board may waive the 3–month
13 withdrawal requirement if the State Board considers the waiver justified.

14 (b) The State Board shall examine individuals for a high school diploma at
15 least twice each year at places throughout this State that are reasonably convenient
16 for the applicants.

17 (c) The examination shall:

18 (1) Be offered in appropriate high school subject areas; and

19 (2) Be of a comprehensive nature as determined by the State Board.

20 (d) An individual who fails an examination may take retests.

21 (e) A member of the armed forces may earn the Maryland high school
22 diploma by taking the examinations furnished by the United States Armed Forces
23 Institute and given by the appropriate service officer.

24 (f) The diploma shall be awarded in accordance with the rules and
25 regulations adopted by the State Board.

26 **7–208.**

27 **(A) BEGINNING AUGUST 1, 2009, THE STATE BOARD SHALL ESTABLISH**
28 **A GED OPTIONS PROGRAM THAT PROVIDES STUDENTS AT RISK FOR DROPPING**
29 **OUT OF HIGH SCHOOL WITH AN ALTERNATIVE COURSE FOR OBTAINING A HIGH**
30 **SCHOOL DIPLOMA.**

1 **(B) THE PROGRAM REQUIRED UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS**
2 **SECTION SHALL:**

3 **(1) ONLY INCLUDE STUDENTS WHO ARE BETWEEN THE AGES OF**
4 **16 AND 18 YEARS OLD WHO ARE DETERMINED TO BE AT HIGH RISK FOR**
5 **DROPPING OUT OF HIGH SCHOOL;**

6 **(2) REQUIRE MANDATORY ENROLLMENT AND ATTENDANCE IN A**
7 **GENERAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PREPARATORY PROGRAM FOR AT**
8 **LEAST 15 HOURS EACH WEEK IN A PLACE AND MANNER APPROVED BY THE**
9 **APPROPRIATE SCHOOL AUTHORITY;**

10 **(3) PROVIDE TRAINING IN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SKILLS;**
11 **AND**

12 **(4) DETERMINE PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS TO BE IN COMPLIANCE**
13 **WITH THE COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS UNDER § 7-301 OF THIS**
14 **TITLE.**

15 **(C) STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE GED OPTIONS PROGRAM UNDER**
16 **THIS SECTION SHALL BE COUNTED IN THE AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE OF**
17 **THE LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM.**

18 **(D) THE STATE BOARD SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS TO CARRY OUT**
19 **THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION.**

20 7-301.

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

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

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

1 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
2 July 1, 2008.