

HOUSE BILL 1274

F1

6lr2948

By: **Delegate Miller**

Introduced and read first time: February 12, 2026

Assigned to: Ways and Means

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Education – Posthumous Diploma Awards – Authorized**

3 FOR the purpose of authorizing local school systems to award standard high school
4 diplomas, posthumous honorary diplomas, and in memoriam diplomas to certain
5 deceased students, subject to certain requirements; and generally relating to the
6 posthumous awarding of diplomas.

7 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
8 Article – Education
9 Section 7–205(c)
10 Annotated Code of Maryland
11 (2025 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

12 BY adding to
13 Article – Education
14 Section 7–206
15 Annotated Code of Maryland
16 (2025 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

19 **Article – Education**

20 7–205.

21 (c) (1) Each student who graduates from a public high school shall receive the
22 same type of diploma or certificate, regardless of the high school attended or the course
23 taken.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (2) The diploma or certificate shall state that the student has completed a
2 program of studies satisfactorily in accordance with the requirements of the State Board.

3 **7-206.**

4 (A) (1) **IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS**
5 **INDICATED.**

6 (2) **“IN MEMORIAM DIPLOMA” MEANS A CEREMONIAL DIPLOMA**
7 **RECOGNIZING A STUDENT’S ENROLLMENT AND MEMBERSHIP IN THE SCHOOL**
8 **COMMUNITY.**

9 (3) **“POSTHUMOUS HONORARY DIPLOMA” MEANS A CEREMONIAL**
10 **DIPLOMA HONORING A STUDENT ENROLLED IN SECONDARY EDUCATION.**

11 (4) **“STANDARD HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA” MEANS THE DIPLOMA OR**
12 **CERTIFICATE AWARDED TO A STUDENT UNDER § 7-205 OF THIS SUBTITLE.**

13 (B) A LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM MAY AWARD A STANDARD HIGH SCHOOL
14 DIPLOMA POSTHUMOUSLY TO A DECEASED STUDENT WHO WAS, AT THE TIME OF THE
15 STUDENT’S DEATH:

16 (1) **A RESIDENT OF THE COUNTY;**

17 (2) **ENROLLED IN GRADE 12 IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL;**

18 (3) **WITHIN A CERTAIN NUMBER OF CREDITS FROM COMPLETING THE**
19 **CREDITS REQUIRED FOR GRADUATION; AND**

20 (4) **IN GOOD ACADEMIC STANDING.**

21 (C) A LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM MAY AWARD A POSTHUMOUS HONORARY
22 DIPLOMA TO A DECEASED STUDENT WHO WAS, AT THE TIME OF THE STUDENT’S
23 DEATH:

24 (1) **A RESIDENT OF THE COUNTY;**

25 (2) **ENROLLED IN GRADE 11 OR 12 IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL; AND**

26 (3) **WITHIN A CERTAIN NUMBER OF CREDITS FROM COMPLETING THE**
27 **CREDITS REQUIRED FOR GRADUATION.**

28 (D) A LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM MAY AWARD AN IN MEMORIAM DIPLOMA TO A
29 DECEASED STUDENT WHO WAS, AT THE TIME OF THE STUDENT’S DEATH:

1 **(1) A RESIDENT OF THE COUNTY; OR**

2 **(2) ENROLLED IN ANY GRADE FROM KINDERGARTEN THROUGH**
3 **GRADE 10 IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL.**

4 **(E) (1) SUBJECT TO PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION, A LOCAL**
5 **SCHOOL SYSTEM SHALL DETERMINE THE NUMBER OF CREDITS A STUDENT IS**
6 **REQUIRED TO COMPLETE TO BE AWARDED:**

7 **(I) A STANDARD HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA UNDER SUBSECTION**
8 **(B) OF THIS SECTION; AND**

9 **(II) A POSTHUMOUS HONORARY DIPLOMA UNDER SUBSECTION**
10 **(C) OF THIS SECTION.**

11 **(2) THE NUMBER OF CREDITS A STUDENT IS REQUIRED TO COMPLETE**
12 **TO BE AWARDED A STANDARD HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA SHALL BE SIGNIFICANTLY**
13 **HIGHER THAN THE NUMBER OF CREDITS REQUIRED FOR A POSTHUMOUS HONORARY**
14 **DIPLOMA.**

15 **(F) A LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM SHALL AWARD A DIPLOMA UNDER THIS**
16 **SECTION ONLY ON WRITTEN REQUEST OF:**

17 **(1) A PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN OF THE DECEASED STUDENT; OR**

18 **(2) IF THERE IS NO SURVIVING PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN, THE**
19 **DECEASED STUDENT'S NEXT OF KIN.**

20 **(G) (1) EXCEPT FOR A DIPLOMA AWARDED UNDER SUBSECTION (B) OF**
21 **THIS SECTION, A DIPLOMA AWARDED UNDER THIS SECTION IS CEREMONIAL IN**
22 **NATURE AND DOES NOT CONFER LEGAL RIGHTS OR STANDARDS ASSOCIATED WITH**
23 **ACADEMIC COMPLETION.**

24 **(2) THE AWARDED OF ANY DIPLOMA UNDER THIS SECTION MAY NOT**
25 **BE INCLUDED IN THE COMPUTATION OF GRADUATION RATES MAINTAINED BY THE**
26 **COUNTY BOARD OR THE DEPARTMENT.**

27 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
28 1, 2026.