

# HOUSE BILL 1274

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6lr2948

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By: ~~Delegate Miller~~ Delegates Miller, Addison, Buckel, Coley, Ebersole, Griffith, Hartman, Hornberger, R. Long, Mireku-North, Palakovich Carr, Pasteur, Patterson, Roberson, Vogel, Wilkins, Wims, and Young

Introduced and read first time: February 12, 2026

Assigned to: Ways and Means

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Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

House action: Adopted

Read second time: March 4, 2026

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## CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Education – Posthumous Diploma Awards – ~~Authorized~~ Established**  
3 **(Eric’s Law)**

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

8 ~~BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,~~  
9 ~~Article – Education~~  
10 ~~Section 7–205(e)~~  
11 ~~Annotated Code of Maryland~~  
12 ~~(2025 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)~~

13 BY adding to  
14 Article – Education  
15 Section 7–206  
16 Annotated Code of Maryland  
17 (2025 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



## Article - Education

~~7-205.~~

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

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

~~7-206.~~

~~(A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED.~~

~~(2) "IN MEMORIAM DIPLOMA" MEANS A CEREMONIAL DIPLOMA RECOGNIZING A STUDENT'S ENROLLMENT AND MEMBERSHIP IN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY.~~

~~(3) "POSTHUMOUS HONORARY DIPLOMA" MEANS A CEREMONIAL DIPLOMA HONORING A STUDENT ENROLLED IN SECONDARY EDUCATION.~~

~~(4) "STANDARD HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA" MEANS THE DIPLOMA OR CERTIFICATE AWARDED TO A STUDENT UNDER § 7-205 OF THIS SUBTITLE.~~

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

~~(1) A RESIDENT OF THE COUNTY;~~

~~(2) ENROLLED IN GRADE 12 IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL;~~

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

~~(4) IN GOOD ACADEMIC STANDING.~~

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

~~(1) A RESIDENT OF THE COUNTY;~~

1           ~~(2) ENROLLED IN GRADE 11 OR 12 IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL; AND~~

2           ~~(3) WITHIN A CERTAIN NUMBER OF CREDITS FROM COMPLETING THE~~  
3 ~~CREDITS REQUIRED FOR GRADUATION.~~

4           ~~(D)~~ A SUBJECT TO SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION, A LOCAL SCHOOL  
5 SYSTEM MAY SHALL AWARD AN IN-MEMORIAM A POSTHUMOUS HONORARY DIPLOMA  
6 TO A DECEASED STUDENT WHO WAS, AT THE TIME OF THE STUDENT'S DEATH:

7           ~~(1) A RESIDENT OF THE COUNTY; OR~~

8           ~~(2) ENROLLED,~~ ENROLLED IN ANY GRADE FROM KINDERGARTEN  
9 THROUGH GRADE 10 12 IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL.

10           ~~(E) (1) SUBJECT TO PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION, A LOCAL~~  
11 ~~SCHOOL SYSTEM SHALL DETERMINE THE NUMBER OF CREDITS A STUDENT IS~~  
12 ~~REQUIRED TO COMPLETE TO BE AWARDED:~~

13           ~~(I) A STANDARD HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA UNDER SUBSECTION~~  
14 ~~(B) OF THIS SECTION; AND~~

15           ~~(II) A POSTHUMOUS HONORARY DIPLOMA UNDER SUBSECTION~~  
16 ~~(C) OF THIS SECTION.~~

17           ~~(2) THE NUMBER OF CREDITS A STUDENT IS REQUIRED TO COMPLETE~~  
18 ~~TO BE AWARDED A STANDARD HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA SHALL BE SIGNIFICANTLY~~  
19 ~~HIGHER THAN THE NUMBER OF CREDITS REQUIRED FOR A POSTHUMOUS HONORARY~~  
20 ~~DIPLOMA.~~

21           ~~(F)~~ (B) A LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM SHALL AWARD A DIPLOMA UNDER THIS  
22 SECTION ONLY ON WRITTEN REQUEST OF:

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

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

26           ~~(G) (C)~~ (1) EXCEPT FOR A DIPLOMA AWARDED UNDER SUBSECTION (B)  
27 OF THIS SECTION, A A DIPLOMA AWARDED UNDER THIS SECTION IS CEREMONIAL IN  
28 NATURE AND DOES NOT CONFER LEGAL RIGHTS OR STANDARDS ASSOCIATED WITH  
29 ACADEMIC COMPLETION.

1                   **(2) THE AWARDING OF ANY DIPLOMA UNDER THIS SECTION MAY NOT**  
 2 **BE INCLUDED IN THE COMPUTATION OF GRADUATION RATES MAINTAINED BY THE**  
 3 **COUNTY BOARD OR THE DEPARTMENT.**

4                   SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July  
 5 1, 2026.

Approved:

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Governor.

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Speaker of the House of Delegates.

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President of the Senate.