

# SENATE BILL 324

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CF 6lr2925

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By: Senator Augustine

Introduced and read first time: January 22, 2026

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Higher Education – Public Senior Higher Education Institutions – Direct**  
3 **Admission Program**

4 FOR the purpose of establishing a direct admission program at participating public senior  
5 higher education institutions for certain eligible high school students beginning in a  
6 certain academic year; requiring the Maryland Higher Education Commission to  
7 administer the direct admission program through a certain financial aid system and  
8 the Common Application; requiring the State Department of Education and the  
9 Commission jointly to establish a process for notifying the Commission of the high  
10 school students who have met the college and career readiness standard each school  
11 year; and generally relating to a direct admission program and public senior higher  
12 education institutions.

13 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,  
14 Article – Education  
15 Section 7–205.1(a) and (c)(2)  
16 Annotated Code of Maryland  
17 (2025 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

18 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,  
19 Article – Education  
20 Section 10–101(a) and (m)  
21 Annotated Code of Maryland  
22 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

23 BY adding to  
24 Article – Education  
25 Section 15–101.1  
26 Annotated Code of Maryland  
27 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



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

3 **Article – Education**

4 7-205.1.

5 (a) In this section, “CCR standard” means the college and career readiness  
6 standards established under this section.

7 (c) (2) A student shall meet the CCR standard when the student meets a  
8 standard in English language arts, mathematics, and, when practicable, science that  
9 enables the student to be successful in entry level credit bearing courses or postsecondary  
10 education training at a State community college.

11 10-101.

12 (a) In this division the following words have the meanings indicated.

13 (m) “Public senior higher education institution” means:

14 (1) The constituent institutions of the University System of Maryland and  
15 the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science;

16 (2) Morgan State University; and

17 (3) St. Mary’s College of Maryland.

18 **15-101.1.**

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

21 (2) “CCR STANDARD” HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 7-205.1(A) OF  
22 THIS ARTICLE.

23 (3) “HIGH SCHOOL” MEANS A PUBLIC SCHOOL IN THE STATE THAT  
24 OFFERS A PROGRAM OF INSTRUCTION FOR AT LEAST GRADES 11 AND 12, INCLUDING  
25 A VIRTUAL SCHOOL ESTABLISHED UNDER TITLE 7, SUBTITLE 14 OF THIS ARTICLE.

26 (B) (1) BEGINNING IN THE 2027-2028 ACADEMIC YEAR, THERE IS A  
27 DIRECT ADMISSION PROGRAM AT PARTICIPATING PUBLIC SENIOR HIGHER  
28 EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS FOR ELIGIBLE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO MEET THE  
29 CCR STANDARD ESTABLISHED UNDER § 7-205.1 OF THIS ARTICLE.

4 (C) A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT IS ELIGIBLE FOR DIRECT ADMISSION TO A  
5 PARTICIPATING PUBLIC SENIOR HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION UNDER THIS  
6 SECTION IF THE STUDENT:

7 (1) HAS COMPLETED OR IS EXPECTED TO COMPLETE ALL OF THE  
8 PREREQUISITE COURSES THAT ARE REQUIRED BY THE INSTITUTION TO WHICH THE  
9 STUDENT APPLIES BY THE STUDENT'S ANTICIPATED MATRICULATION DATE;

10 (2) HAS MET THE CCR STANDARD ESTABLISHED BY THE  
11 DEPARTMENT;

**(3) APPLIES FOR ADMISSION TO AN INSTITUTION:**

13 (I) BY THE REQUIRED APPLICATION DEADLINE ESTABLISHED  
14 BY THE INSTITUTION; AND

15 (II) DURING GRADE 12 OF HIGH SCHOOL;

18 (5) MEETS THE ADDITIONAL CRITERIA ESTABLISHED BY THE  
19 INSTITUTION, IF ANY.

20 (D) (1) A PUBLIC SENIOR HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION MAY CHOOSE  
21 TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DIRECT ADMISSION PROGRAM UNDER THIS SECTION.

10 (II) REVOKE A STUDENT'S OFFER OF DIRECT ADMISSION AT THE  
11 INSTITUTION IF THE STUDENT:

12                           **1.     IS NOT AWARDED A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA BEFORE**  
13   **THE STUDENT'S ANTICIPATED MATRICULATION DATE:**

**3. ENGAGES IN ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT; OR**

24 (F) (1) THE COMMISSION SHALL ESTABLISH A PROCESS TO OFFER  
25 CONDITIONAL DIRECT ADMISSION FROM EACH PARTICIPATING INSTITUTION TO  
26 EACH ELIGIBLE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT BASED ON:

27 (I) THE CCR STANDARD DATA PROVIDED BY THE  
28 DEPARTMENT UNDER SUBSECTION (E) OF THIS SECTION; AND

6 (G) THE PROVISIONS IN THIS SECTION DO NOT GUARANTEE A HIGH SCHOOL  
7 STUDENT ELIGIBLE FOR DIRECT ADMISSION PLACEMENT IN ANY SPECIFIC  
8 PROGRAM OFFERED BY THE PARTICIPATING INSTITUTION OR TO ANY SPECIFIC  
9 COLLEGE, SCHOOL, OR FUNCTIONAL EQUIVALENT WITHIN THE PARTICIPATING  
10 INSTITUTION TO WHICH THE STUDENT APPLIES.

11 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July  
12 1, 2026.