

SENATE BILL 343

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HB 1262/25 – W&M

6lr1036
CF HB 29

By: **Senator King**

Introduced and read first time: January 23, 2026

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **County Boards of Education – Post College and Career Readiness**
3 **Pathways – Payment of Costs**

4 FOR the purpose of authorizing a county board of education to develop and establish income
5 eligibility guidelines and procedures for payment of costs for a certain post college
6 and career readiness pathway, except under certain circumstances; and generally
7 relating to post college and career readiness pathways.

8 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
9 Article – Education
10 Section 7–205.1(a) and (c)
11 Annotated Code of Maryland
12 (2025 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

13 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
14 Article – Education
15 Section 7–205.1(g)
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:

20 **Article – Education**

21 7–205.1.

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

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



(c) (1) (i) It is the goal of the State that students enrolled in public school shall meet the CCR standard before the end of the 10th grade and no later than the time the student graduates from high school.

(ii) It is the goal of the State that each student enrolled in public school, regardless of the student's race, ethnicity, gender, address, socioeconomic status, or the language spoken in the student's home, shall have equitable access to college and career readiness and shall meet the CCR standard at an equal rate.

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

(3) The Blueprint for Maryland's Future and the CCR standard established under this section are not intended to alter the need for high quality programs and content in fine arts, civics, physical education, and other areas that are necessary to provide a holistic education and enable every student to be well-rounded and meet the CCR standard.

(4) On or before January 1, 2022, the Department shall develop and begin to implement a communication strategy to inform parents, students, educators, and the wider public about the CCR standard developed under this section.

(g) (1) Subject to [paragraph] **PARAGRAPHS (2) AND (4)** of this subsection, [beginning in the 2023–2024 school year,] each county board shall provide all students who meet the CCR standard required under subsection (c) of this section with access to the following post college and career readiness (post–CCR) pathways, at no cost to the student or the student's parents **OR GUARDIANS**, including the cost of any fees:

(i) A competitive entry college preparatory program, chosen by the county board, consisting of:

1. The International Baccalaureate Diploma Program;
2. The Cambridge AICE Diploma Program; or
3. A comparable program consisting of Advanced Placement courses specified by the College Board;

(ii) A program that allows a student, through an early college program or dual enrollment at a student's high school and an institution of higher education to earn:

1. An associate degree; or
2. At least 60 credits toward a bachelor's degree; and

(iii) A robust set of career and technology education programs that are recommended by the CTE Skills Standards Advisory Committee and approved by the CTE Committee and that allow students to complete:

1. A credit or noncredit certificate or license program, course, or sequence of courses, including a program, course, or courses taken through dual enrollment under § 15–127 of this article, at a secondary or postsecondary institution, through an Advanced Placement course at a secondary institution, or through an apprenticeship sponsor that leads to an industry recognized occupational–credential or postsecondary certificate;

2. A registered apprenticeship program approved by the Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning within the Maryland Department of Labor; or

3. A youth apprenticeship program, under Title 18, Subtitle 18 of this article.

(2) (I) [Each] **SUBJECT TO SUBPARAGRAPH (II) OF THIS PARAGRAPH, EACH** public high school shall provide access to the programs described under paragraph (1) of this subsection through that public school or through another public school in the county.

(II) 1. **EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSUBPARAGRAPH 2 OF THIS SUBPARAGRAPH, A COUNTY BOARD MAY DEVELOP AND ESTABLISH INCOME ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR PAYMENT OF COSTS FOR THE POST–CCR PATHWAY UNDER PARAGRAPH (1)(I) OF THIS SUBSECTION.**

2. **A STUDENT WITH A FAMILY INCOME BELOW 400% OF THE FEDERAL POVERTY LEVEL SHALL BE PROVIDED ACCESS TO THE POST–CCR PATHWAY UNDER PARAGRAPH (1)(I) OF THIS SUBSECTION AT NO COST TO THE STUDENT OR THE STUDENT’S PARENTS OR GUARDIANS.**

(3) (i) Each student who meets the CCR standard required under subsection (c) of this section shall be enrolled in at least one post–CCR pathway described in paragraph (1) of this subsection.

(ii) Each student who enrolls in a post–CCR pathway shall remain enrolled in the student’s public high school.

(iii) Each public high school shall provide to every student, regardless of whether the student is enrolled in a post–CCR pathway, the full range of services to which the student is entitled, including:

1. Personal, career, and academic advising; and

1 2. Counseling, in accordance with § 7–126 of this title, to help
2 the student choose one or more post–CCR pathways, or courses within a post–CCR
3 pathway, that fits with the student’s educational and career goals.

4 (iv) Priority for counseling and advising services described under
5 subparagraph (iii) of this paragraph shall be given to students who have not met the CCR
6 standard by the end of 10th grade.

7 (v) Any high school graduation requirements that a student does not
8 meet by the time the student has completed the assessment required under subsection (d)
9 of this section shall be provided within the post–CCR pathway the student chooses.

10 (4) To phase in expansion of dual enrollment to maximize the number of
11 students who can earn the maximum number of dual enrollment credits consistent with
12 the phased increases in school funding, for fiscal years 2025 through 2027, the State Board
13 and the Accountability and Implementation Board, in consultation with each local school
14 system, may limit the number and types of courses that a student dually enrolled at the
15 student’s public high school and at an institution of higher education may enroll in during
16 the school year at the institution of higher education as part of the post–CCR pathway in
17 accordance with paragraph (1) of this subsection and § 15–127 of this article.

18 (5) (i) The State Board shall adopt regulations to carry out this
19 subsection.

20 (ii) The regulations shall include standards that:

21 1. Guarantee, to the extent practicable, statewide uniformity
22 in the quality of the post–CCR pathways;

23 2. Meet the requirements of paragraph (1) of this subsection;
24 and

25 3. Require high school graduation credit to be awarded for
26 any programs administered in accordance with this subsection.

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