

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

- I. In compliance with the Maryland State Board of Education (COMAR 13A.03.02), the Talbot County Board of Education believes that, “The mission of the public high school is to challenge and prepare students to enter post-high school education, employment, or both.” The Board of Education affirms that the following general state standards govern requirements for graduation from Talbot County Public Schools.
- A. Enrollment Requirement: The student shall satisfactorily complete four (4) years of approved study beyond the eighth grade except as permitted in COMAR 13A.03.02.10. Students who complete all other graduation requirements may qualify for early graduation, and may be exempt from a 4<sup>th</sup> year of attendance. (See Policy Codes 9.30 and 9.30-AR)
- B. State Assessments: Students entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade in the fall of 2005 and thereafter must pass the High School Assessments (HSA) or obtain the minimum composite HSA score. Students may re-take any HSA test, even if they have a passing score, in order to improve the composite score.
- C. Credit Requirements
1. Number of credits: A student shall have earned a minimum of number of credits, including those specifically required by COMAR 13A.03.02.10.
    - a) For those students entering high school in or prior to the fall of 2004, the minimum number of credits shall be 26.
    - b) For those students entering high school in or subsequent to the fall of 2005, the minimum number of credits shall be 22.
  2. Credits earned in middle school: A student may be awarded credit for high school course work taken in middle school provided the conditions established by COMAR 13A.03.02.10 are met. Specifically, all of the following are required:
    - a) Algebra I, and Algebra II are generally permitted. Any other course requires the approval of the Superintendent or designee.

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

- b) The course must align with that taught at the high school, and the earned grade must be 70% (C) or better.
- c) The student must pass the same comprehensive final exam given at the high school. For any course aligned with an HSA, that will be the required final exam.

The earned grade and credit will appear on the high school transcript, but will not be part of the student's GPA/class rank calculation.

- 3. Dual Enrollment Credits: students who qualify may take dual enrollment courses by enrolling in one or more classes at a partner college or university with the following stipulations:
  - a) Students will receive one high school credit for each course of 3 – 5 hours college credit, and one-half credit for each course of 1 – 2 hours college credit.
  - b) All grades awarded by the college will be recorded on the high school transcript and applied towards the student's GPA/class rank. Letter grades will be converted as follows:

|        |           |
|--------|-----------|
| A = 95 | D = 65    |
| B = 85 | F/WF = 55 |
| C = 75 |           |
  - c) Students who participate in off-site college classes are considered to be on partial attendance waiver from high school attendance.
  - d) Courses are generally awarded an *elective* credit, but may be used to fulfill the following high school graduation requirements:
    - English: 4<sup>th</sup> credit BOTH a course in literature *and* a course in composition
    - Science: 3<sup>rd</sup> credit Except biology
    - Math: 3<sup>rd</sup> credit Except algebra or geometry
    - Fine Art
- 4. Transfer Credits from Non-Accredited Schools: Any student transferring from a non-accredited school (including a "church exempt school" or home instruction program) to a Talbot County Public School must substantiate that the objectives of any and all

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

courses in which that student wishes to be awarded credit towards graduation have been satisfactorily achieved.

To do this, the student must pass all relevant final exams or comparable course assessments at the school into which the student wishes to transfer. Each assessment should measure total course achievement or total achievement for a set of cumulative courses and be arranged at the earliest possible time but only after a reasonable opportunity for review or preparation if requested by a student. The course grades that appear on “sender school transcripts” will be entered on Talbot County High School transcripts if the comparable course assessments are passed. Students may not receive credit in courses that included the propagation of any religion.

- D. Service Learning credit: A student must complete 75 hours of approved service learning. Hours may be accrued beginning in the 6<sup>th</sup>-grade. Reductions to the number of required hours may be made for a student who earns a Maryland High School Certificate as determined by the IEP Team.
  - E. Required Course: Students must complete a mathematics course each of their four years of high school as certified in their final transcript/permanent record card. In the senior year, a course in Personal Finance may be substituted for taking mathematics. Personal Finance is not a math course, and its does not replace the graduation requirement for three earned credits in mathematics.
  - F. Graduates will be awarded a Talbot County Public Schools Certificate of Achievement, based on the six *State Rigorous Course Indicators*. These indicators are consistent with State reporting and with the Talbot County Public Schools’ Bridge to Excellence Master Plan. To qualify for the Certificate of Achievement, graduates must earn a minimum of 26 credits and four of the six indicators established by the Maryland State Department of Education, including all course, grade, and test score standards.
- II. MARYLAND HIGH SCHOOL CERTIFICATE
- A. Students with disabilities entering grade 9 in the 2005-2006 school year and beyond, who cannot meet the requirements for a diploma shall be awarded a Maryland High School Certificate of Program Completion if they meet one of the following two standards.

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

1. The student is enrolled in an education program for at least 4 years beyond grade eight or its age equivalent, and is determined by an IEP Team, with the agreement of the parents of the students with disabilities, to have developed appropriate skills for the individual to enter the world of work, act as a responsible citizen, and enjoy a fulfilling life. World of Work shall include but not be limited to:
    - a. gainful employment
    - b. work activity centers
    - c. sheltered workshops
    - d. supported employment
  2. The student has been enrolled in an education program for four (4) years beyond grade eight (8) or its age equivalent, and will have reached age twenty-one (21) by the end of the student's current school year.
- B. An exit document that describes the student's skills shall accompany the Maryland High School Certificate of Program Completion.
- C. The decision to award a student with disabilities a Maryland High School Certificate of Program Completion will not be made by an IEP Team until after the beginning of the student's exit year in high school, unless the student is participating in the Alternative Maryland School Assessment Program (alt-MSA).

-END-