Related Entries: ABA, ABA-RA, ~~ADA,~~ **ABC**, AEB, ~~GEG,~~ GEG-RA, **IFA**, **IFA-RA**, **IKC**, **IKC-RA,**~~ISA,~~ ISB-RA, ~~ISB EA,~~ JEA-RA

Responsible Office: **Curriculum and Instructional Programs**

Related Sources: *Annotated Code of Maryland,* Education Article **§7–205,** *Code of Maryland Regulations* **§13A.03.02.01, §§13A.03.02.03-.05, §13A.03.02.10**

Framework and Structure of High School Education

A.   PURPOSE

To affirm the Board of Education's (Board) commitment to providing a challenging and comprehensive high school program that meets and exceeds the graduation requirements of the state of Maryland, ~~and~~ prepares all students for postsecondary education and the workplace, and equips students to gather and use information and collaborate with others to solve problems and make informed judgments on public and private concerns.

To provide guidance to staff members and community for organization of high schools and delivery of instructional programs that set high expectations for academic achievement for all students in an environment supportive of the social, emotional, and physical development of adolescents and young

29   **adults.**

30   ~~To provide guidelines and directions to staff and community~~

31   ~~for establishing school programs that meet the educational and~~

32   ~~social-emotional needs of all adolescents in keeping with the~~

33   ~~Montgomery County Goals of Education and the~~ *~~Annotated Code of~~*

34   *~~Maryland~~*

35

36   ~~This policy provides a framework for staff and community~~

37   ~~participation in the organization of schools and the delivery~~

38   ~~of instructional programs. Policies and regulations on such~~

39   ~~specific matters as grading and reporting student progress,~~

40   ~~attendance, and homework provide more detailed direction.~~

41

42 B.   ~~PROCESS AND CONTENT~~ **ISSUE**

43

44   **High school preparation is critical to success in college.**

45   **Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) expects all students**

46   **to complete high school prepared for success in postsecondary**

47   **education and the world of work. The high school program**

48   **ensures success for every student through a rigorous,**

49   **comprehensive curriculum; relevant opportunities for students**

50   **to clarify interests, goals, and plans for the future; a**

51   **qualified and committed staff and leadership; a collaborative**

52   **and flexible organizational structure; a differentiated**

53   **instructional program; extracurricular activities; and**

54   **actively involved parent and community stakeholders.**

55   ~~The senior high school has responsibility for educating and~~

56   ~~guiding students in the developmental stage from adolescence~~

57 ~~to young adulthood. This responsibility is shared with the~~
58 ~~students, their families, and the community. The principal~~
59 ~~and staff of each high school, with the involvement of the~~
60 ~~local community and area and central office staff, will~~
61 ~~develop and carry out programs responsive to the particular~~
62 ~~needs and concerns of these students.~~

63

64 **C.   POSITION**

65

66   ~~2~~**1.** School C**ulture**~~limate~~

67

68   **High schools maintain consistently high expectations for**
69   **all students to acquire and develop lifelong learning**
70   **skills, explore and envision a successful future, and**
71   **make connections to post-high school life.**

72

73   **a)   Staff members believe that all students can learn**
74   **at high levels and expect and encourage students to**
75   **achieve at their full potential.**

76

77   **b)   The high school community is committed to equity,**
78   **values diversity, and works actively to remove**
79   **barriers to achievement so that student success is**
80   **not predictable by race or ethnicity.**

81

82   **c)   Through instructional practices and extracurricular**
83   **activities, students learn interpersonal skills**
84   **necessary for healthy social, emotional, and**

85   **intellectual growth. The school environment**
86   **encourages and provides multiple opportunities for**
87   **every student to be known well by one or more**
88   **adults in the school.**
89

90   **d)**   **School leaders promote positive relationships among**
91   **students, staff, and community members within a**
92   **safe school environment. School leaders**
93   **communicate clear behavioral expectations to**
94   **students and staff.**
95

96   **e)**   **Staff, families, and community members work**
97   **together for student achievement.**
98

99   **(1)**   **School staff facilitate communication with the**
100   **community in the languages spoken in the**
101   **community whenever feasible.**
102

103   **(2)**   **School staff work with students and parents to**
104   **emphasize the importance of regular student**
105   **attendance as an essential component of a**
106   **quality learning experience.**
107

108   **(3)**   **School leaders recognize and celebrate**
109   **achievements of students, staff, and the**
110   **community.**
111

112   **(4)**   **Staff, families, and community members provide**

113   **resources and options for service and work-**
114   **based learning, mentoring relationships, and**
115   **career activities.**

116

117   f)   **High school staff members provide the support**
118   **students and families need to understand post-high**
119   **school options, preparations required, and**
120   **assistance available, thereby connecting current**
121   **studies with future endeavors. Staff members**
122   **provide ongoing support as follows:**

123

124   (1)   **Work with each student to plan a course of**
125   **study and related activities that transitions**
126   **the student into and through the high school**
127   **years, and details the courses needed to meet**
128   **academic and personal goals. Students shall**
129   **satisfactorily complete a program of study**
130   **beyond Grade 8, as described in MCPS**
131   **Regulation ISB-RA, *High School Graduation***
132   ***Requirements*.**

133

134   (2)   **Encourage students to take rigorous courses**
135   **that are relevant to their interests and**
136   **prepare them to achieve their postsecondary**
137   **goals.**
138 ~~The nature of the learning environment is a critical~~
139 ~~factor in the intellectual, physical, and~~
140 ~~social-emotional development of each student. A caring~~

141 climate needs to be created in each school that is
142 responsive to the changing developmental and educational
143 needs of every student and provides equal access to
144 educational opportunity. Each student needs to be
145 encouraged to develop personal integrity, respect for
146 differences, and social responsibility, as well as the
147 desire, the confidence, and the capacity to strive for
148 excellence.
149
150 To develop a climate that fosters student growth, schools
151 should:
152
153 a) Ensure that students are expected, encouraged, and
154   given opportunities to learn and succeed in an
155   inviting, stimulating, and supportive environment
156
157 b) Establish high expectations for achievement and
158   success of all students
159
160 c) Create a safe and orderly environment
161
162 d) Support appreciation for all cultures and foster
163   sensitivity toward all those with special needs
164
165 e) Provide for the integration of handicapped students
166   in the total school program
167
168 f) Establish opportunities for students to participate
169   in making decisions that affect their lives

170

171   g) ~~Value and foster risk taking to encourage~~
172   ~~intellectual inquiry and develop self-confidence~~

173

174   h) ~~Promote harmonious and effective human relations~~

175

176   i) ~~View discipline as a means of helping students~~
177   ~~develop citizenship skills and responsibility for~~
178   ~~self, not just as a system of rules and~~
179   ~~consequences for infractions~~

180

181   j) ~~Develop cocurricular activities as an integral part~~
182   ~~of the total educational program~~

183

184   k) ~~Acknowledge and recognize student, staff, and~~
185   ~~community achievements~~

186

187   l) ~~Facilitate effective communications within the~~
188   ~~school and with the community~~

189

190   m) ~~Foster a partnership between the school and the~~
191   ~~parents/guardians of each child~~

192

193   n) ~~Work to ensure that the diversity of the total~~
194   ~~school population is reflected in all school~~
195   ~~activities~~

196

197   o) ~~Develop an attendance plan that:~~

198

199   (1) Complies with the requirements of state law
200   and MCPS policies and regulations
201
202   (2) Provides for accurate and timely recording of
203   school and class attendance
204
205   (3) Emphasizes the importance of regular school
206   and class attendance and recognizes students
207   who meet this requirement
208
209   (4) Establishes procedures for enforcing regular
210   school and class attendance and for working
211   affirmatively with students and parents to
212   resolve attendance issues
213
214   2.   CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND ASSESSMENT
215
216   The MCPS approach to implements high school curriculum,
217   instruction, and assessment to ensures a high level of
218   challenge for all high school students and meets the
219   unique and changing needs of young adult learners.
220
221   6.a)   Curriculum
222
223   (1) The high school curriculum satisfies the
224   graduation requirements of the Board and the
225   Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).
226   The Board has the authority to specify
227   requirements beyond minimum state requirements

228   when it determines it is in the best interest

229   of all students. MSDE requires 21 credits for

230   graduation, of which 18 must be earned in

231   specified courses. MCPS requires 22 credits,

232   of which 19.5 must be earned in specified

233   courses, including an additional credit in

234   mathematics and an additional half credit in

235   physical education, as further described in

236   MCPS Regulation ISB-RA, *High School Graduation*

237   *Requirements.*

238

239 (2) High school course curricula encompass state

240   and national standards to establish learning

241   goals.   The program of studies prepares

242   students   for   success   in   postsecondary

243   education and work by providing a variety of

244   learning   experiences   to   challenge   all

245   students. Curriculum will be reviewed in a

246   manner consistent with Board Policy IFA,

247   *Curriculum*,   and   MCPS   Regulation   IFA-RA,

248   *Curriculum.*

249

250 (3) Each high school provides a comprehensive

251   program of studies.   The Board ensures

252   consistency of course offerings across high

253   schools by approving certain essential courses

254   as Category 1. The Board reviews curriculum

255   for Category 1 courses and ensures adherence

256   **to systemwide assessment standards. All**
257   **comprehensive high schools offer an**
258   **appropriate range of Category 1 courses to**
259   **provide the opportunity for all students to**
260   **earn MSDE and MCPS required graduation credits**
261   **within four years.**

262

263   **(4) The Board approves additional courses as**
264   **Category 2. Category 2 courses are important**
265   **for continuing, expanding, and enriching**
266   **student understanding in a subject area. In**
267   **addition, a Category 2 course may meet a**
268   **graduation requirement. These courses will be**
269   **offered when student interest, staffing, and**
270   **budget permit.**

271

272   **(5) All Category 1 and 2 courses are listed and**
273   **described in the MCPS *High School Course***
274   ***Bulletin*.**

275

276   **(6) Students may apply credits earned for**
277   **coursework at institutions other than MCPS**
278   **when planned and approved in accordance with**
279   **conditions described in MCPS Regulation ISB-**
280   **RA, *High School Graduation Requirements*.**
281   ~~a) The curriculum is the framework for the~~
282   ~~instructional program. It should enable~~
283   ~~all students to master~~

284
285   ~~learning   skills   and   provide~~
286   ~~opportunities   for   further   study   and~~
287   ~~enrichment. The curriculum should reflect~~
288   ~~changing   societal   needs   and   the   rapid~~
289   ~~growth   of   knowledge   and   technology.   A~~
290   ~~major purpose of the curriculum should be~~
291   ~~to give students the strategies necessary~~
292   ~~for learning how to learn.~~
293
294   ~~b)~~   ~~The curriculum should be implemented to achieve the~~
295   ~~MCPS   Goals   of   Education   through   a   sequence   of~~
296   ~~learning   objectives   and   related   opportunities~~
297   ~~supported   by   appropriate   human   and   material~~
298   ~~resources.~~
299
300   ~~c)~~   ~~The curriculum must provide the programs, courses,~~
301   ~~and learning experiences needed to meet Maryland~~
302   ~~graduation requirements.~~
303
304   ~~d)~~   ~~The   MCPS   Program   of   Studies   and   accompanying~~
305   ~~instructional guides should be revised regularly to~~
306   ~~reflect   changing   societal   needs   and   the   rapid~~
307   ~~growth   of   knowledge   and   technology.   Course~~
308   ~~revisions   should   include   the   consideration   of~~
309   ~~replacement and elimination of content.~~
310
311   ~~e)~~   ~~In addition to specifying the subject content to be~~
312   ~~taught, the teaching of the curriculum should:~~

313

314   (1) Accommodate differing interests, backgrounds,
315   learning needs, and styles

316

317   (2) Provide opportunities for students to explore
318   ethical and value issues

319

320   (3) Help students develop aesthetic awareness and
321   expression by exploring their creative
322   capacities and talents to the highest possible
323   level as well as learning about the various
324   art forms

325

326   (4) Provide opportunities for students to
327   demonstrate the mastery of subject content and
328   related skills

329

330   (5) Include career education objectives that help
331   students make appropriate program and course
332   decisions

333

334   (6) Consider students' social and emotional
335   development

336

337   (7) Address the needs of all students, including
338   those with special needs

339

340   (8) Emphasize the cultural diversity of society

341

342   (9) ~~Encourage a sense of social responsibility~~
343   ~~through the performance of citizenship duties~~
344   ~~and community service~~
345
346   (10) ~~Offer each student a comprehensive program of~~
347   ~~instruction and include a   common core of~~
348   ~~course offerings in every   high school~~
349
350   (11) ~~Stress the teaching of critical and analytical~~
351   ~~thinking skills in every course~~
352
353   (12) ~~Emphasize lifelong learning skills~~
354
355   ~~(13) Incorporate   interdisciplinary   topics,~~
356   ~~whenever possible, that complement and~~
357   ~~support each other across content areas~~
358
359 ~~5.~~**b)** Instruction~~al Practices~~
360
361   **Instructional practices will incorporate a variety**
362   **of methods, strategies, and resources that**
363   **encourage students to be active and engaged**
364   **learners.**
365
366   **(1) Instructional practices align with relevant**
367   **Board policies and MCPS regulations such as**
368   **Board Policy IKA, *Grading and Reporting*; Board**
369   **Policy IOA, *Gifted and Talented Education*;**
370   **Board Policy IOD, *Education of English***

371   *Language Learners*; Board Policy IOB, *Education*
372   *of Students with Disabilities*; and MCPS
373   Regulation IHB-RA, *School Academic Grouping*
374   *Practices*.
375
376   **(2)**   **High school instruction prepares students to**
377   **comprehend, gather, evaluate, and synthesize**
378   **information and collaborate with others to**
379   **solve problems. Staff members prepare**
380   **students as follows:**
381
382   **(a**c**)** Communicate high expectations for student
383   achievement and success.
384
385   **(b**d**) Incorporate a variety of innovative and**
386   **research-based methods, strategies, and**
387   **resources including technology that evoke**
388   **critical thinking and encourage students**
389   **to be active, engaged, and lifelong**
390   **learners.**~~Offer students a variety of~~
391   ~~learning experiences, including group and~~
392   ~~independent study, peer learning,~~
393   ~~tutoring, field trips, field study, and~~
394   ~~outside resource persons~~
395
396   **(**e**c)** Use allocated instructional time
397   efficiently and effectively.
398

399   **(d)**   **Provide leadership opportunities for**
400   **students as well as promote student**
401   **discourse and effective self-expression.**
402
403   **(e)**   **Help each student meet his or her**
404   **academic potential by providing**
405   **differentiated instructional**
406   **opportunities and resources as**
407   **appropriate, such as acceleration,**
408   **enrichment, support, and accommodations.**
409
410   **(f)**   **Utilize the special skills of all**
411   **general, alternative, English Speakers of**
412   **Other Languages (ESOL), and special**
413   **education staff members, in both the**
414   **planning and implementation of**
415   **instruction.**
416
417   **a**~~j)Develop articulation plans to facilitate student~~
418   ~~placement and program continuity at each level~~; **and**
419
420   **b**~~g) Minimize fragmentation of the student's day.~~
421
422 ~~Instructional practices should help prepare students to~~
423   ~~become productive and informed adults through the~~
424   ~~on-going application of academic and higher order~~
425   ~~intellectual skills. Continued emphasis should be~~
426   ~~placed on the development of fundamental learning~~

427   and study skills. Instructional practices should
428   incorporate a variety of activities and strategies
429   that encourage students to be active and engaged
430   learners. These practices should provide for the
431   wide range of achievement and energy levels and the
432   rapidly changing intellectual, physical, and
433   emotional development of adolescents.
434   Instructional practices should:

435

436   a) Relate instruction to prior knowledge, to the
437   broader world, and to the needs and interests of
438   students

439

440   b) Facilitate the integration of curriculum objectives

441

442   f) View homework as an extension of learning
443   opportunities and an integral part of the teaching
444   and learning process

445

446   h) Utilize, in both the planning and the
447   implementation of instruction, the special skills
448   of all regular, alternative, and special education
449   staff members

450

451   i) Support leadership opportunities for students

452

453   k) Help students develop thinking and independent
454   learning skills that prepare them as learners able
455   to meet the challenges of a changing world

456

457 ~~1)Provide remediation and support for students who have~~
458 ~~not mastered basic skills~~

459

460 **c)** **Assessment**

461

462 Assessment, as set forth in Board Policy IKA,
463 *Grading and Reporting,* is an integral part of the
464 instructional cycle. A comprehensive assessment
465 program, aligned with district, state, and national
466 standards, includes the following:

467

468 (1) Grading criteria that communicate expectations
469 to students and parents in a clear and timely
470 manner.

471

472 (2) Pre-assessments, formative assessments, and
473 summative assessments, which are used to plan
474 and deliver instruction to meet learning
475 goals, provide meaningful and timely feedback
476 to students on their performance and offer
477 varied opportunities for students to
478 demonstrate learning.

479

480 (3) Reteaching and reassessment within the
481 instructional cycle to promote effective
482 teaching and learning.

483

484   **(4)   Ongoing and timely reporting of student**
485   **achievement to students, parents, teachers,**
486   **administrators, and the school system.**

487

488   **(5)   Consistency within and among schools.**

489

490   **3.   Organizational Structure**

491

492   **MCPS administrators collaborate with school leadership**
493   **teams, staff, parents, students, and the community**
494   **regarding the organizational structure of their school**
495   **and improvement plans, consistent with the priorities of**
496   **the school system. Schools promote and maintain high**
497   **achievement by employing a variety of structures for**
498   **teaching and learning.**

499

500   **a)   High school leaders employ flexible scheduling and**
501   **maximize their resources to provide active and**
502   **meaningful learning experiences that foster student**
503   **achievement, ease student transitions, and**
504   **facilitate program continuity.**

505

506   **b)   High school leaders develop learning communities**
507   **within the school that foster student achievement,**
508   **respond to student interests, and promote positive**
509   **engagement among students and staff.**

510

511   **c)   Each school is staffed and organized to ensure**

512   appropriate educational opportunities for students
513   with a variety of educational needs.
514
515   d)   High school leaders provide opportunities for
516   teachers to use time effectively and efficiently to
517   achieve the following:
518
519   (1)   Plan and coordinate instructional delivery and
520   assessment.
521
522   (2)   Monitor individual student progress, meet with
523   students, and communicate with parents.
524
525   (3)   Engage in professional learning communities
526   and   other   professional   development
527   opportunities.
528
529   e)   High school staff use instructional time during the
530   student day effectively.
531
532   f)   High school staff provide opportunities for
533   enrichment and academic support through before-
534   school and after-school extended learning and
535   extracurricular activities.
536
537   g)   High school staff effectively use communication
538   tools to promote professional learning communities
539   and   facilitate   productive   interactions   among

540   **students, teachers, parents, and other community**
541   **stakeholders.**

542

543   7.   Organization and Staffing

544

545   a)   The Grade 9 through 12 comprehensive high school
546   shall be the basic organizational design for
547   Montgomery County Public Schools. A comprehensive
548   high school program includes the following areas:
549   academic skills, intellectual development, physical
550   development, the role of the individual and
551   society, scientific understanding, aesthetic
552   development, and career development, including
553   fostering positive attitudes toward work.
554   Specialized centers for vocational, aesthetic, and
555   academic programs shall be established to meet the
556   needs of particular populations, further racial
557   integration, and/or improve socio-economic balance.

558

559   b)   Organizational and staffing decisions should
560   promote a nurturing environment that facilitates
561   the integration of cognitive, physical, social, and
562   emotional development.

563

564   c)   Local school staff and community input should be
565   considered in developing and implementing a
566   school's organizational plan.

567

568   d)   Each school should have reasonable autonomy to

569   determine   its   organizational   structure   and
570   implementation plan.

571

572   e)   Each school's staffing allocation and organization
573   should:

574

575   (1)   Reflect   a   balance   that   provides   positive
576   racial,   gender,   ethnic,   and   cultural   role
577   models

578

579   (2)   Promote   organizational   arrangements   that
580   reflect   student   needs   and   the   nature   of   the
581   facility

582

583   (3)   Allow reasonable flexibility in the assignment
584   and utilization of staff members

585

586   (4)   Provide guidance and counseling services so
587   that   each   student   can   receive   appropriate
588   counseling

589

590   (5)   Provide appropriate educational programs for
591   students with special needs, including honors
592   and basic skills

593

594   (6)   Encourage and support programs in the least
595   restrictive   environment   for   students   with
596   special needs

597   (7)   Provide time for teachers to plan together

598

599   (8)   Afford opportunities for enrichment through
600   before-school and after-school curricular and
601   cocurricular activities

602

603   (9)   Allow a variety of organizational patterns
604   such as interdisciplinary teams, grades or
605   multilevel classes, subject matter classes,
606   and self-contained classes

607

608   **4.   Leadership and Planning**

609

610   **MCPS administrators and school leadership teams**
611   **collaborate with staff, students, parents, and the**
612   **community to create, guide, manage, and inspire an**
613   **effective learning community to ensure achievement by all**
614   **students. Effective school leaders:**

615

616   **a)   Model the standards of the professional growth**
617   **system for administrators, teachers, and supporting**
618   **service personnel.**

619

620   **b)   Guide and monitor the implementation of a rigorous**
621   **instructional program that sets the course to**
622   **eliminate the achievement gap among students and is**
623   **designed to prepare them to be college and career**
624   **ready.**

625

626   **c)   Facilitate   continuous   improvement   and**
627   **implementation of the Malcolm Baldrige Education**
628   **Criteria for Performance Excellence.**

629

630   **d)   Collaborate with staff, students, parents, the**
631   **community, and other stakeholders to develop and**
632   **articulate a shared vision of the academic and**
633   **individual needs of students, the direction for the**
634   **school, and progress toward stated goals.**

635

636   **e)   Develop leadership in the school and empower the**
637   **staff, students, parents, and the community in the**
638   **decision-making process.**

639

640   **f)   Manage the organization, operations, and resources**
641   **for a safe, efficient, and effective learning**
642   **environment.**
643   a)   ~~Systemwide and school planning should consider~~
644   ~~demographic and social changes and trends, analysis~~
645   ~~of the data related to change, and the integration~~
646   ~~of that analysis into long-range plans. Educational~~
647   ~~research, future labor needs, funding sources, and~~
648   ~~technological developments are important elements~~
649   ~~to be reviewed in the planning process. To ensure~~
650   ~~effective planning, the school system should~~
651   ~~provide:~~

652

653   ~~(1) Time for individual and group planning~~

654

655   (2)   Current and relevant data

656

657   (3)   Technical and clerical support

658

659   (4)   Channels and processes to ensure effective
660   coordination with school, area, and central
661   offices

662

663   b)   A major result of school planning should be the
664   development of long-range (3-5 years) and annual
665   goals that identify areas of the school program
666   needing improvement and/or further development. The
667   process of setting long-range and annual goals
668   should result in annual management plans that are
669   based on objective data on student progress and the
670   assessments of school staff.

671

672   c)   School annual management plans should:

673

674   (1)   Identify objectives for emphasis and
675   improvement

676

677   (2)   Contain action plans for the attainment of the
678   specified objectives

679

680   (3)   Provide for periodic assessment and reporting
681   of progress

682

683   (4) Be consistent among schools and areas

685 5~~2~~. Parent~~/~~ **and** Community ~~Involvement~~ **Engagement and**
686   **Communication**

688   **Consistent with Board Policy ABA,** *Community Involvement,*
689   **and Board Policy ABC,** *Parental* and Family *Involvement,*
690   **school staff, parents, and the community are partners in**
691   **the social and intellectual development of students.**
692   **Elements of this partnership include the following:**

694 a) **Communication between families and school staff to**
695   **provide information and solicit input and feedback**
696   **regarding an individual student's educational**
697   **experience, collaboration to support student**
698   **learning outside of school, as well as**
699   **opportunities for families to be involved in school**
700   **and community activities and events.**

702 b) **Parent, student, and community participation in**
703   **school improvement teams and other advisory groups**
704   **that set direction for the school, consistent with**
705   **Board Policy AEB,** *Strategic Planning for Continuous*
706   *Improvement.*

708 c) **Collaboration with parent/teacher/student**
709   **organizations, the community, businesses, and**
710   **institutions of higher learning to bring outside**

711   **resources to the school, make direct links between**
712   **learning and careers, and provide authentic**
713   **opportunities for student engagement.**

714

715   **d)**   **Parent advocacy and ongoing communication about**
716   **MCPS policies, regulations, and practices.**

717

718 ~~Individual parents and community members, as well as~~
719 ~~civic organizations, businesses, and other agencies,~~
720 ~~should share in the responsibility for the social and~~
721 ~~intellectual development of students. Parent and~~
722 ~~community involvement should include:~~

723

724 ~~a)~~   ~~Communication networks that enable school~~
725   ~~personnel, parents, and community members to take a~~
726   ~~direct and active role in the education of~~
727   ~~students. These networks should establish and~~
728   ~~include:~~

729

730   ~~(1)~~ ~~School outreach efforts to individual parents~~
731   ~~and community members~~

732

733   ~~(2)~~ ~~Programs to enable parents to help their~~
734   ~~children succeed in school~~

735

736   ~~(3)~~ ~~Strong and continuing partnerships between the~~
737   ~~schools, the parent-teacher associations, and~~
738   ~~other community advisory and support groups~~

739

740   b)   ~~Supportive relationships with local businesses,~~
741   ~~community organizations, and institutions of higher~~
742   ~~learning~~

743

744   ~~c)   Active volunteer programs in each school~~

745

746 **6**~~3~~.   ~~Staff Development~~ **Human Resources and Professional**
747   **Development**

748

749   **MCPS recruits, employs, and retains high school staff**
750   **members who possess the knowledge and skills to foster**
751   **achievement and meet the needs of all high school**
752   **students. The MCPS professional growth systems provide**
753   **regular and systematic opportunities for all**
754   **administrators, teachers, and supporting services**
755   **professionals to increase their knowledge, skills, and**
756   **capacity to continuously improve the teaching and**
757   **learning process.**

758

759   **a)   Staff members are knowledgeable about the**
760   **developmental characteristics of adolescents and**
761   **communicate high expectations for all students.**

762

763   **b)   Staff members are skilled at developing positive**
764   **relationships with students and parents and**
765   **engaging them in the learning process.**

766

767   **c)   Staff members demonstrate content expertise and**

768   **provide effective instruction.**

769

770   **d)   Staff demographics reflect, to the extent possible,**

771   **the diverse population of MCPS.**

772

773   **e)   Staff selection considers the individual needs of**

774   **each school.**

775

776   ~~**f)   Staff members participate in the MCPS professional**~~

777   ~~**growth   systems,   which   include   regular   and**~~

778   ~~**systematic opportunities for all administrators,**~~

779   ~~**teachers, and supporting services professionals to**~~

780   ~~**increase their knowledge, skills, and capacity to**~~

781   ~~**continuously improve the teaching and learning**~~

782   ~~**process.**~~

783

784   ~~Staff development should include regular and systematic~~

785   ~~opportunities for all staff to improve skills and adapt~~

786   ~~to the changing needs of society. In order to establish~~

787   ~~effective and appropriate staff development activities,~~

788   ~~the school system should:~~

789

790   ~~a)   Require ongoing training for all instructional~~

791   ~~staff on new and revised curriculum~~

792

793   ~~b)   Allow reasonable autonomy for schools to identify~~

794   ~~and plan staff development activities that meet the~~

795   ~~needs of individual staff members, staff teams, or~~

796   entire school staffs

797

798   c)   Allocate resources and support to schools for
799   in-service training

800

801   d)   Provide time for teachers, supervisors, and
802   administrators to support staff development
803   activities

804

805   e)   Provide opportunities for staff to assume
806   leadership roles within their buildings

807

808   f)   Establish student-teacher centers for preservice
809   training of prospective teachers

810

811   g)   Support beginning teachers by providing intensive
812   training and supervision

813

814   h)   Ensure systemwide coordination of all staff
815   training, including collaborative efforts with
816   colleges and universities

817

818   4.   Planning

819 **D.   DESIRED OUTCOMES**

820

821   **1.   An educational program that emphasizes academic**
822   **excellence.**

823

824   **2.   A comprehensive program accessible to all students that**

825   **allows students to meet graduation requirements and to**
826   **explore interests through elective courses and**
827   **extracurricular activities.**

828

829 3. **Programs, courses, activities, and learning experiences**
830   **that prepare students to be successful in postsecondary**
831   **education and the world of work.**

832

833 4. **Collaboration among students, staff, parents, and**
834   **families to support and encourage academic achievement**
835   **and the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical**
836   **growth of students.**

837

838 5. **A culture that fosters intellectual development and a**
839   **sense of belonging, and promotes citizenship,**
840   **responsibility, and mutual respect among students.**

841

842 6. **Graduates equipped to gather and use information and**
843   **collaborate with others to solve problems and make**
844   **informed judgments on public and private concerns.**

845

846 ~~C~~**E.** REVIEW AND REPORTING

847

848 ~~1.~~ ~~The superintendent will report to the Board of Education~~
849   ~~biennially on the implementation and monitoring of this~~
850   ~~policy. As part of the management planning process, local~~
851   ~~schools and area and central offices will assess their~~
852   ~~programs to determine the degree to which they are in~~

853 ~~compliance with the policy. The associate~~
854 ~~superintendents will report progress to the~~
855 ~~superintendent, who will use this information as the~~
856 ~~basis for reporting to the Board.~~
857
858 ~~2.~~ This policy will be reviewed ~~every three years~~ in
859 accordance with the Board of Education policy review
860 process.
861
862 *Policy History*: Adopted by Resolution No. 348-88, June 27, 1988;
863 **amended.**
864
865
866 Note. Prior to Resolution No. 348-88, this topic was governed by
867 the following: High School Policy, adopted by Resolution No.
868 161-80, February 12, 1980; amended by Resolution No. 912b-83,
869 November 8, 1983; reformatted in accordance with Resolution No.
870 333-86, June 12, 1986, and Resolution 458-86, August 12, 1986;
871 rescinded by Resolution No. 348-88, June 27, 1988.

POLICY　BOARD OF EDUCATION OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Related Entries:　ISB-RA, ISB-EA, ISB-RB, ISB-EB
Responsible Office: Associate Superintendent for Instruction and Program Development

High School Graduation Requirements and Waiver of Four-Year Enrollment Requirement for Graduation

A.　PURPOSE

To implement the state graduation requirements as stated in Exhibits ISB-EA and ISB-EB and set forth the graduation requirements beyond those required by the Maryland State Department of Education for students in Grades 9-12 in Montgomery County Public Schools

B.　ISSUE

Montgomery County Public Schools must follow minimum state standards established by the Maryland State Board of Education for awarding diplomas for graduation. However, the Montgomery County Board of Education has the authority to specify additional requirements when it believes it is in the best interest of all students.

C.　POSITION

1.　All students must earn 22 credits to graduate.

    a)　For students entering Grade 9 for the first time in 1994-95, four credits are required in mathematics. Two of the four credits must be in algebra and geometry.

    b)　For students entering Grade 9 for the first time in 1995-96, the three required science credits must include one life science, such as biology, and one physical science.

      c)   Physical Education

         (1)   For students entering Grade 9 prior to 1993-94, the requirement for physical education is three semesters in Grades 9-12 or two semesters of physical education and two semesters of physical activity in Grades 9-12.

         (2)   For students entering Grade 9 in 1993-94 and beyond, the requirement for physical education is two semesters.

2.   Students entering Grade 9 in MCPS with marked deficiencies in basic skills of reading, writing, practical mathematics, and citizenship shall be provided appropriate assistance in Grades 9-12 until becoming proficient in the basic skills as demonstrated by passing the Maryland Functional tests.

3.   Students may earn credits toward graduation through college courses or courses offered by approved public and nonpublic institutions in or outside Maryland.

4.   In accordance with state requirements, students may request a waiver of the four-year enrollment requirement. The superintendent will develop procedures to implement this option.

D.   DESIRED OUTCOME

The outcome of this policy is to prepare every student graduating from Montgomery County Public Schools for postsecondary education or employment or both. Through intellectual, personal, physical, and social growth, graduates should be able and willing to take the appropriate first steps into their chosen field of work or study, to act responsibly as citizens, and to enjoy a productive life.

E.   IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

1.   The superintendent will communicate the graduation requirements annually to students, parents, and staff through the *MCPS Course Bulletin*.

2.   The superintendent will develop curricula that support the MCPS graduation requirements.

3.   The superintendent will develop regulations as needed to implement this policy.

F.   REVIEW AND REPORTING

This policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis in accordance with the Board of Education's policy review process.

Policy History: Adopted by Resolution No. 569-71, September 27, 1971; amended by Resolution No. 854-75, December 22, 1975; amended by Resolution No. 339-80, May 27, 1980; amended by Resolution No. 605-84, November 26, 1984; amended by Resolution No. 339-85, July 9, 1985; amended by Resolution No. 359-85, July 22, 1985; reformatted in accordance with Resolution No. 333-86, June 12, 1986, and Resolution No. 458-86, August 12, 1986, and accepted by Resolution No. 517-86, September 22, 1986; amended by Resolution No. 241-88, May 10, 1988; amended by Resolution Nos. 1073-91, 1074-91, 1075-91, 1076-91, 1077-91, December 10, 1991 and Resolution No. 810-92, November 10, 1992; reviewed on January 28, 1994.

POLICY BOARD OF EDUCATION OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Related Entries: IED

High School Core Courses

A. PURPOSE

To provide a core of courses to be available to each senior high school student

B. PROCESS AND CONTENT

1. The Basic Core of Courses will be comprised of Category 1 and Category 2 courses.

   a) Category 1 course shall be offered and given in each senior high school regardless of course enrollment. However, when the enrollment in Category 1 classes is smaller than 15 they may be offered and given in alternate years or in combined classes.

   b) Category 2 courses shall be offered and given in senior high schools when the enrollment in that course is 15 or more students. However, if budget and staffing permit, they may be given for fewer than 15 students.

2. Descriptions for Category 1 and Category 2 courses shall be available to students prior to registration.

3. The categorical status of each course shall be identified in the course listings available to students.

4. The superintendent will list the core courses annually in the *MCPS Course Bulletin,* and appropriate revisions in the list will be made when the Board of Education amends the *Program of Studies.*

C.   REVIEW AND REPORTING

1.   Periodically the superintendent will review Category 3 course offerings and recommend to the Board which ones should be eliminated because they are no longer timely or are of lesser value to students.

2.   This policy will be reviewed every three years in accordance with the Board of Education policy review process.

Resolution No. 67-81, January 13, 1974, amended and reformatted in accordance with Resolution 333-86, June 12, 1986, and Resolution No. 458-86, August 12, 1986, accepted by Resolution 517-86, September 22, 1986.

Summary of Responses to
Policy IED, *Framework and Structure of High School Education*

Public Response Number	Commentator	Issue/Concern Line #'s refer to the Draft for Public Comment	Staff Response Line #'s refer to the Committee Recommended Draft
1	The Arc Education (Montgomery County) Committee and The Autism Society of Montgomery County (MCASA)	Revision is excellent but lacks some attention to inclusion of high school students and some details found in the old policy. Line 52, add to end of sentence, "and development of skills and motivation for life-long learning in response to changing individual needs, changing technology needs, and changing societal needs."	Life-long learning is addressed in the following locations: lines 69-70 and lines 389-390. Staff recommends adding reference to "technology" to line 387. Recently approved Regulation ITA-RA, *School Library Media Programs*, specifies how MCPS will adhere to *Maryland Technology Literacy Standards for Students*.
		Line 75 should read, "The high school community is committed to equality, values diversity, and works to remove barriers to achievement so that expectations for the student are not limited by race, ethnicity, or disability."	Staff recommends retaining language as drafted. The workgroup recommended that MCPS hold consistent expectations for all students.
		Add the following, Provide opportunities for students to participate in decision-making, developing a sense of accountability for their actions, mutual respect, and responsibility to their	Lines 630-634 describe student participation in decision-making. Lines 636-638 describe the development of student leadership and decision-making.

Public Response Number	Commentator	Issue/Concern Line #'s refer to the Draft for Public Comment	Staff Response Line #'s refer to the Committee Recommended Draft
		community."	
		Line 217, add "as reflected in the best practices and latest educational research" to end of sentence.	Lines 385-386 have been revised to add "innovative and researched-based methods" in response to comment.
		Line 279, add (7) "The school shall provide co-curricular opportunities for students to explore interests and develop useful skills."	Lines 49-50, lines 112-115, lines 532-535, and lines 824-827 address this concern.
		Add (8) "The school system shall provide alternative courses and opportunities to meet the needs of students with disabilities and English language learners, or to students who will not be going to college but may benefit from training and developing skills who will be able to help them join the workforce."	Lines 403-408 describe differentiated instructional opportunities, acceleration, enrichment, support, and accommodations.\n\nLines 829-831 reference preparing students to be successful in postsecondary education and the world of work.
		Add (9), "The ultimate purpose of the curriculum should be to give students the strategies necessary for learning how to learn."	Instructional strategies are addressed at a general level in lines 376-379 in the Instructional Practices section, then more specifically at lines 385-390.
		Line 360, add "and best practices that reflect the latest educational research findings (like the Universal Design for Learning)" after the word resources.	Lines 385-386 have been revised to read "innovative and research-based" methods.

Public Response Number	Commentator	Issue/Concern Line #'s refer to the Draft for Public Comment	Staff Response Line #'s refer to the Committee Recommended Draft
		Line 405, add "and adaptations" after accommodations.	Staff recommends that the term "accommodations" is appropriate, without further revision.
		Line 413 adds (g) "Assure that all students are served in the least restrictive appropriate setting with appropriate supports."	Board Policy IOB, *Education of Students with Disabilities* is referenced at lines 371-372. Instructional practices align with Policy IOB.
		Add (h), "Relate instruction to prior knowledge, to the broader world, and to the needs and interests of students."	"Prior knowledge" is one specific strategy among many instructional strategies. Staff recommends retaining language at lines 385-390 that address instructional strategies and desired outcomes more broadly.
		Add (i), "Help students develop thinking and independent learning skills, and prepare them as learners, able to meet the challenges of a changing world."	Lines 838-844 describe desired outcomes of intellectual development, citizenships, gathering and using information to make informed judgments on public and private concerns.
		Line 475, add "using accommodations and adaptations, as provided in the student's IEP" to end of sentence.	Lines 403-408 reference accommodations; lines 371-372 reference Policy IOB, *Education of Students with Disabilities*; and lines 410-415 reference utilizing special education staff members in planning and implementing instruction.

Public Response Number	Commentator	Issue/Concern Line #'s refer to the Draft for Public Comment	Staff Response Line #'s refer to the Committee Recommended Draft
		Line 780; add g) "Provide staff development and supports to enable teachers to work effectively with an ethnically, emotionally and intellectually diverse student body."	Lines 77-80 state the commitment to equity, diversity, and removing barriers to achievement; lines 511-513 call for staffing that ensures appropriate educational opportunities for students with a variety of educational needs; lines 749-752 address the expectation for staff to meet the needs of high school students; line 752 references the MCPS professional growth systems; and line 760 specifically addresses staff knowledge of the developmental characteristics of adolescents.
2	Margaret Roberts	The terms "knowledge and technology" have been removed from the policy. Believes that they should be in the policy.	At lines 239-241, the revised policy requires adherence to state and national standards regarding learning goals. Recently approved Regulation ITA-RA, *School Library Media Programs*, specifies how MCPS will adhere to *Maryland Technology Literacy Standards for Students*.
		A half semester course that teaches practical skills should be required for graduation.	MCPS currently specifies graduation requirements in subject areas required by the Maryland State Department of Education.

Public Response Number	Commentator	Issue/Concern Line #'s refer to the Draft for Public Comment	Staff Response Line #'s refer to the Committee Recommended Draft
3	Montgomery County Council of Parent, Teacher Associations (MCCPTA) High School Committee	The policy lacks clear objectives. The purpose should be much broader , "to ensure that every student graduates prepared to be successful and well-rounded members of society, encompassing not merely their post-secondary education and employment, but also health and civic engagement."	In response to comment, lines 20-22 have been added to the purpose section.
		Believe that language about providing guidance to staff members and the community at large is not under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education. The proposed language is "to provide guidance regarding the organization of high schools and the delivery of instructional programs…"	The policy provides guidance to the community about what MCPS intends to do and what the community can expect from MCPS. Parents involved in the stakeholder process, requested this level of detailed language about parental and community involvement in high school education.
		Line 42, should be expanded to reflect the reality that many of our secondary school students will not attend post-secondary school and that the purpose of a high school education is broader. Language should be revised to reflect that "an excellent high school experience is essential to prepare our young people for success in life, whether that includes college, career,	Lines 19-20 reference postsecondary education and the workplace; lines 117-121 call for supporting families and students in understanding post-high school options; and lines 124-128 specifically reference planning coursework to meet academic and personal goals.

Public Response Number	Commentator	Issue/Concern Line #'s refer to the Draft for Public Comment	Staff Response Line #'s refer to the Committee Recommended Draft
		or military experience", and to stress that MCPS must do more to ensure that all students graduate.	
		Under position, MCCPTA recommends that original language regarding "equal access to educational opportunity" be retained, and that the policy be revised to include strategies to implement this objective.	Lines 77-80 reference equity, diversity, and removing barriers to achievement.
		Objectives set forth in (a) through (f) are too vague. Recommends retaining language beginning on page 5, line 136.	Redacted language was revised incorporating the concepts from the original, reorganizing them into topic headings consistent with Policy IEA, *Framework and Structure of Early Childhood and Elementary Education*, and Policy IEB, *Middle School Education*, but removing dated language such as "handicapped students" from the existing Policy IED, *Framework and Structure of High School Education*.
		Line 214 should be revised as follows: "MCPS shall develop and implement high school curriculum, instruction, and assessment that ensure that all high school students have access to a challenging and relevant curriculum that meets the	In response to public comment, lines 216-219 were revised as noted.

Public Response Number	Commentator	Issue/Concern Line #'s refer to the Draft for Public Comment	Staff Response Line #'s refer to the Committee Recommended Draft
		unique and differing needs of young adult learners."	
		MCCPTA recommends that Line 248 be modified to "establish a minimum listing of Category 1 classes and require them at all MCPS high schools (or allow students the opportunity to cross-register to enroll in them) as previously required in item (e) (10) include a common core set of offerings in every school."	Guidelines regarding course offerings are addressed in Regulation ISB-RA, *High School Graduation Requirements*, and course bulletins.
		Revise line 261 to permit students to cross-register in other high school or online for Category 2 courses not offered in their high school.	Staff disagrees.
		Restore the strategic goals on line 309 in a new subparagraph (7).	Redacted language has been revised as "Instructional Practices" beginning at line 376-415.
		Under instruction, restore the previous language, "these practices should provide for the wide range of achievements and energy levels and the rapidly changing intellectual, physical, and emotional development of adolescents."	In response to comment, lines 216-219 have been revised to include "changing" needs of young adult learners. Proposed language at lines 363-364 reference "active and engaged learners"; line 760 calls for staff knowledgeable in the developmental characteristics of adolescents; and lines 834-

Public Response Number	Commentator	Issue/Concern Line #'s refer to the Draft for Public Comment	Staff Response Line #'s refer to the Committee Recommended Draft
			836 call for supporting "intellectual, social, emotional, and physical growth of students."
		Line 433, relating instruction to prior knowledge to the broader world, and to the needs and interests of students, should be retained.	"Prior knowledge" is one specific strategy among many instructional strategies. Staff recommends retaining language at lines 385-390 that address instructional strategies and desired outcomes more broadly.
		Deleted objective, line 439 (f), should be restored and revised to provide teachers clear guidance on homework.	Policy IKA *Grading and Reporting* and Policy IKB *Homework* provide more complete statements on the Board's position on grading and homework.
		Deleted paragraph, line 414 (j) and line 454 should be restored and strengthened to address the need for appropriate placement, program continuity, remediation and support for students who have not mastered basic skills and credit recovery for students at risk of not graduating.	Lines 403-408 provide for differentiated instructional opportunities and reference "acceleration, enrichment, support, and acceleration" to address the needs of a variety of learners. Credit recovery is specifically addressed in Regulation IKC-RA, *Grade Point Averages (GPA) and Weighted Grade Point Averages (WGPA).*
		Under assessment, line 457, language should be clarified to provide more specific guidance.	Policy IKA *Grading and Reporting* and Policy IKB *Homework* provide a more complete statement on the

Public Response Number	Commentator	Issue/Concern Line #'s refer to the Draft for Public Comment	Staff Response Line #'s refer to the Committee Recommended Draft
			Board's position on grading and homework; and Regulation IKA-RA *Grading and Reporting* provides more specific guidance.
		Restore line 565, paragraph (d).	Lines 492-498 reflect updated practices involving organizational structure.
		Restore line 572 (c) (1).	Lines 511-513 address staffing to ensure appropriate educational opportunities for students with a variety of needs.
		The section on leadership and planning, line 605, should be divided into two subsections to individually address leadership and planning.	The two concepts "leadership" and "planning" were co-located to reflect current priorities for collaborative leadership and the involvement of staff, students, parents, and the community in decision-making and planning.
		MCCPTA appreciates the proposed revision regarding school leadership but more attention is needed to how school leaders will address specific student needs. Add a new paragraph (g), line 640, "Schools should develop plans that allow targeting and response to each individual student's learning needs, particularly for students at risk."	Lines 403-408 describe differentiated instructional opportunities, acceleration, enrichment, support, and accommodations

Public Response Number	Commentator	Issue/Concern Line #'s refer to the Draft for Public Comment	Staff Response Line #'s refer to the Committee Recommended Draft
		Revise the Parent and Community Engagement and Communication section to reflect the need for MCPS to support effective two-way communication with parents.(including by making information available in the languages spoken at home), to create a welcoming environment for parents (including providing non-traditional opportunities to participate in their children's education), and to reach out to community organizations to develop collaborative relationships.	Board Policy ABC *Parental and Family Involvement*, revised in July 2010, provides a fully developed statement of the Board's position on communication with parents and community outreach.
		Under Human Resources and Professional Development, objectives should be revised to reflect that these are the Board's objectives.	A policy is a statement of the Board's position.
		Delete c) line 764, because teacher effectiveness is not defined.	Staff recommends retaining existing language.
		Concerned with the deletion of references to providing staff with opportunities to provide leadership roles within their schools, and to targeted support for beginning teachers, e) and g) lines 802 and 808.	Involvement of staff in leadership is referenced at lines 611, lines 630-634, and lines 636-638. The professional growth systems are referenced at line 752, and "regular and systematic" opportunities for continuous improvement are referenced at 753-757,

Public Response Number	Commentator	Issue/Concern Line #'s refer to the Draft for Public Comment	Staff Response Line #'s refer to the Committee Recommended Draft
			which includes beginning teachers.
		Approve of the desired outcomes section. Recommend that the purpose section be revised to reflect the desired outcomes that go beyond higher education and employment.	In response to comment, lines 20-22 of the purpose section has been revised to include language from desired outcomes.
		Restore the prior language under review and reporting.	Through the strategic planning process, high schools annually assess and report their progress on meeting strategic goals which are aligned with the Board-approved systemwide strategic plan and articulated through individual Baldrige-guided school improvement plans.