



Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Schools

TO: Members of the State Board of Education
FROM: Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.
DATE: September 24, 2019
SUBJECT: COMAR 13A.03.02.08
Grading and Reporting
PERMISSION TO PUBLISH

PURPOSE:

To request permission to publish amendments to COMAR 13A.03.02.08 *Grading and Reporting*.

REGULATION PROMULGATION PROCESS:

Under Maryland law, a state agency, such as the State Board, may propose an amendment to a regulation whenever the circumstances arise to do so. After the State Board votes to propose an amendment, the proposed regulation is sent to the Administrative, Executive, and Legislative Review (AELR) Committee for a 15-day review period. If the AELR Committee does not hold up the proposed regulation for further review, it is published in the Maryland Register for a 30-day public comment period. At the end of the comment period, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) staff reviews and summarizes the public comments. Thereafter, MSDE staff will present a recommendation to the State Board to either: (1) adopt the regulation in the form it was proposed; or (2) revise the regulation and adopt it as final because suggested revision is not a substantive change. At any time during this process, the AELR Committee may stop the promulgation process and hold a hearing. Thereafter, it may recommend to the Governor that the regulation not be adopted as a final regulation or the AELR Committee may release the regulation for final adoption.

BACKGROUND/HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:

COMAR 13A.03.02.08 *Grading and Reporting* requires each local school system to develop a written policy on grading and reporting that is aligned with the revised language that was adopted by the State Board at the December 4, 2018, State Board meeting. To further ensure consistency across the Local School Systems and to make sure that credits earned mean the same toward earning a Maryland diploma, the amendment to COMAR 13A.03.02.08(5) will further support the alignment. Attendance is a vital factor in the academic success of all students. The amendment will define a consistent impact of unlawful absences on the awarding of credit for high school level courses across all school systems.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The proposed amendment to COMAR 13A.03.02.08 *Grading and Reporting* defines the impact of unlawful absences on the awarding of credit for courses in high school and ensures consistency across all school systems.

ACTION:

Request permission to publish amendment to COMAR 13A.03.02.08 *Grading and Reporting*.

Attachment:

COMAR 13A.03.02.08 *Grading and Reporting*

Title 13A STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Subtitle 03 GENERAL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

Chapter 02 Graduation Requirements for Public High Schools in Maryland

Authority: Education Article, §§2-205, 4-110, 4-111, 7-203, 7-205, 7-205.1, 7-206, and 8-404, Annotated Code of Maryland

.08 Grading and Reporting.

A. Each school system in Maryland shall recognize and accept any and all credits a student earned toward graduation in any other public school in Maryland.

B. Each local school system shall develop a written policy on grading and reporting that complies with the student record requirements as set forth in COMAR 13A.08.02 and that includes:

- (1) An explanation of the grading scale at the elementary and secondary levels;
- (2) An explanation of the calculation of the final grade for a course;
- (3) An explanation of weights of honors, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and/or dual enrollment courses;
- (4) An explanation of how attendance factors into the student's grade *at the elementary, middle, and high school levels*;
- (5) *At the high school level, a policy that students with unlawful absences constituting five percent of school days in a semester or in a yearlong course shall be denied credit unless the student presents compelling mitigating circumstances supporting the awarding of credit. To award credit, the school principal shall obtain approval from the Superintendent (or designee).*

[(5)] (6) An explanation of grade changing procedures, including:

(a) A timeline for final grade changes that cannot exceed 45 school days following the last day of the grading period. For a change of grade for the fourth marking period, the timeline would begin on the first day of school in the new school year.

(b) The names of personnel at the school and central office level authorized to make final grade changes;

(c) Documentation that authorized personnel are required to maintain to support the final grade changes, including, at a minimum the:

- (i) Name of teacher requesting grade change;
- (ii) Reason for the grade change;
- (iii) Signature of person approving the grade change;
- (iv) Reason for the approval;
- (v) Date of the approval; and
- (vi) Signature of the principal;

(d) How and when the school system will audit the validity of the grade changes each year; and

(e) Appeal procedures.

C. On October 1 of each school year, each local school system shall:

(1) File its policy on grading and reporting with State Superintendent of Schools; and

(2) Submit a copy of the grade change validity audit in accordance with [§B(5)(d)] §B(6)(d) of this regulation to the State Superintendent of Schools.

D. Upon submission of the items contained in §C of this regulation, the Maryland State Department of Education will:

(1) Verify that the local school system has met the requirements of this regulation; or

(2) Direct the local school system to develop a corrective action plan to bring it into compliance with this regulation and monitor the school system's progress in completing its corrective action.