**Maryland**
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# Program Completion Endorsements

**Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services**

June, 2024

PRESENTED BY

Molly Conner, Jeff Wyatt & Michele Weddle

# Presentation Outline

1. COMAR Requirements and Efforts-to-Date

2. Certificate Endorsements

1. COMAR Requirements and Efforts-to-Date

2. Certificate Endorsements

# COMAR Requirements and Efforts-to-Date

3

**Maryland**
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# COMAR: Diploma and Certificate Endorsements

**State Endorsements**
1) Beginning with the 2024-2025 school year, students graduating may earn a **College Ready** State endorsement, a **Career and Technical Education (CTE)** State endorsement, or both.
2) The Department will establish the requirements for the endorsements.

**Certificate Endorsements**
1) Beginning with the 2024-2025 school year, students completing a Certificate may earn one or more endorsements.
2) The endorsements include a **Post-Secondary Education** endorsement, a **Work-Ready/Employment/Career** endorsement, and a **Community/Citizenship** endorsement.
3) Requirements for the endorsements will be identified by the Department.

https://dsd.maryland.gov/regulations/Pages/13A.03.02.09.aspx

# The Maryland High School Graduation Task Force

The Maryland High School Graduation Task Force was first convened in January 2018 at the request of the Board and Superintendent. The group was to make recommendations to the Board and Superintendent on the Code of Maryland Regulation (COMAR) Chapter 13A.03.02 (Graduation Requirements for Public High Schools in Maryland).

The Task Force was asked to focus on three areas: **credit and program requirements** (number of credits, subject areas, and other requirements), **assessments**, and **options for awarding high school diplomas**. All decisions were informed by current research, data, and experts.

In 2018, the Task Force formally recommended the addition of a **College-Ready** and **Career and Technical Education Endorsement**. COMAR regulations were updated to reflect Task Force recommendations in January of 2021.

However, several factors, including the Covid-19 Pandemic, a Board change, upper-level leadership changes, and Blueprint legislation slowed this work.

# Maryland Certificate of Program Completion (MCOPC) Taskforce

The task force met at the recommendation of the High School Graduation Task Force to develop standards for endorsements added to current certificate of program completion. There were 27 workgroup members representing 14 organizations, agencies, or roles. The workgroup met 3/2/2020, 4/16/2020, 4/29/2020.

The group met to review national best practices to inform **three areas** for endorsement.

A second round of the workgroup met between 2020-2022 to **refine the endorsement recommendations** and develop **standards and competencies**. This group included more presence from community stakeholders and was facilitated by staff at the Division of Early Intervention and Special Education Services (DEI/SES).

The **finalized endorsement areas** and corresponding **attainment rubrics** were presented to various advocacy groups, steering committees, and the Governor's Workforce Development Boards.

# Certificate Endorsements

Maryland
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# Certificate Endorsements: Three Endorsements

| Post-Secondary Education | Career and Work Readiness | Community and Citizenship |
|---|---|---|
| • There are **48 Competencies** identified in Post-Secondary Education.<br><br>• Purpose: To measure and verify development of skills that align with the expectations of postsecondary opportunities that do not require a high school diploma.<br><br>Example competencies include:<br>• States learning strengths and identifies challenges one may face in a post-secondary setting.<br>• Uses a mobile device to manage and monitor course schedule and grades. | • There are **61 Competencies** identified in Career and Work Readiness.<br><br>• Purpose: To promote, measure and verify development of skills that align with the expectations of post school and work experiences that do not require a high school diploma.<br><br>Example competencies include:<br>• Understands the importance of time in the workplace and can manage time effectively.<br>• Understands the difference between wages earned and take-home pay. | • There are **63 Competencies** identified in Community and Citizenship.<br><br>• Purpose: To promote, measure and verify skill development that aligns with being an active and contributing member of one's community.<br><br>Example competencies include:<br>• Follows a schedule for personal and community activities.<br>• Shops within a predetermined budget, using appropriate assistive technology as needed. |

# Attainment Rubric Components

| Standards | Competencies | Alignment to Graduation / Diploma / Standards / College and Career Ready Standards |
|---|---|---|
| **INTERPERSONAL SKILLS**<br><br>Demonstrates the ability to communicate, interact, and work with individuals and groups in a school or college setting (in person and online).<br><br>Maintains appropriate relationships with friends and peers, manages interactions respectfully with others, and engages in assigned group work. | 3.1    Participates in a variety of school and community activities and/or groups.<br>3.2    Demonstrates skills to manage conflict, frustration, or disappointment appropriately.<br>3.3    Demonstrates the ability to take on roles within small groups for presentations, study sessions, or other academic tasks.<br>3.4    Demonstrates strategies to manage emotions during times of disagreement.<br>3.5    Listens to and acknowledges others' points of view.<br>3.6     Communicates thoughts and ideas with others appropriately in person and or via social media. | CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11.1-12.1B Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.<br><br>DLM.ELA.EE.SL.11-12.6 Adapt communication to a variety of contexts and tasks using complete sentences when indicated or appropriate.<br><br>DLM.ELA.EE.L.11-12.3 Use language to achieve desired outcomes when communicating. |

# Attainment Rubric Competency Scores

| Competency Level | Description | Criteria |
|---|---|---|
| 0 | Not Introduced | NA |
| 1 | Approaching the competency | Demonstrates the competency with less than 75% accuracy in all authentic opportunities |
| 2 | Demonstrates the competency with or without adult support | Demonstrates the competency with between 75-90% accuracy in all authentic opportunities |
| 3 | Demonstrates the competency independently (with or without identified accommodations) | Demonstrates the competency with 90% or greater accuracy in all authentic opportunities |

# Endorsement Attainment

Students must receive a rubric score of 2 or 3 to demonstrate mastery:

1. **Post-Secondary Education Endorsement**
   70% mastery of all competencies and
   At least 3 competencies mastered in each Standard Area
2. **Career and Work Readiness Endorsement**
   60% mastery of all competencies and
   At least 2 competencies mastered in each Standard Area
3. **Community and Citizenship Endorsement**
   50% mastery of all competencies and
   At least 1 competency mastered in each Standard Area

Maryland
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# Certificate Endorsements: A Phased Rollout

| Phase One (2021-2024) | Phase Two (2024-2025) | Phase Three (2025-2026) |
|---|---|---|
| • Maryland Certificate of Program Completion (MCOPC) Task Force Completed Recommendations.<br><br>• Certificate Endorsement Attainment Rubric Re-Routed and Reapproved by MSDE Leadership. Will be included in May superintendent transmittal.<br><br>• Professional Learning (PL) scheduled for June 3rd and June 4th to preview attainment rubric for LEA special education leadership, transition coordinators, and guidance counselors. PL will be recorded and distributed to LEA leadership, including superintendents, special education directors, and guidance counselors.<br><br>• Guidance on scoring the attainment rubric and an FAQ sheet will also be provided. | • In Fall 2024, LEAs will identify a cohort of all students in their final year of school being assessed according to the Alternate Academic Achievement Standards.<br><br>• From September – January, practitioners will be supported through Professional Learning series, Technical Assistance sessions, and open office hours. From January-February, MSDE will provide targeted coaching on the rubric-based observations of cohort students.<br><br>• By May 1st 2025, practitioners will utilize the MSDE created endorsement observation look-fors tool to complete an independent observation of cohort students and reward applicable endorsements.<br><br>• MSDE will conduct focus groups of these practitioners to inform and refine the observation cycle and 25-26 Professional Learning. | • For all students being assessed according to the Alternate Academic Achievement Standards, starting at age 14 the student's annual review meeting will include a discussion of the student's progress towards attainment of endorsements.<br><br>• Starting in October 2025, rubric-based observations for students in their final year of school will be conducted prior to the student's annual IEP meeting and distributed to parents and students as part of the student's pre-meeting documentation.<br><br>• At the annual IEP meeting, the team will incorporate all stakeholder feedback into the attainment rubric; this feedback will be incorporated into the finalized assessment will inform endorsement attainment.<br><br>• At least 3 observations will be required of exiting students on the Alternate Framework. |

Maryland
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# Certificate Endorsements: Fall 2026 and Beyond

Starting in school year 2026-2027, the attainment rubric and draft competency scores will be a **required part of pre-meeting documentation** for **all transition aged students\***  participating in the Alternate Framework aligned to the **Alternate Academic Achievement Standards**. Based on an IEP team discussion, students may be awarded credit for mastery of competencies using multiple assessments documented in the student's Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance.

Competencies will **directly inform** educational programming (IEP goals, objectives, and transition activities) and serve as an accounting of what the student has accomplished.

Students may master a competency in one endorsement area that serves in multiple endorsement areas; early attainment of the endorsements, especially for students aged 14-15, should generate an IEP team conversation on if instruction aligned to the **Alternate Academic Achievement Standards** is truly part of the student's Least Restrictive Environment.

**Professional Learning** will continue to be provided to ensure that school-based teams are making decisions about competencies aligned to IEP data.

In Maryland, transition aged student is defined as a student aged 14 or older over the life of the IEP.

# Supporting Documents

- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

- Certification Form

# Save the Dates

- Webinar: How to Conduct an Endorsement Observation
  - Tuesday, September 24th (9:00-10:00)
  - Wednesday, September 25th (2:00-3:00)

- Office Hours- Beginning October 2024
  - 1st & 3rd Monday of the month from 9:00-10:00
  - 2nd & 4th Tuesday of the month from 2:00-3:00

- Supported School-based Observations
  - ST liaisons will support initial observations
  - LEAs will sign up for dates and times October 2024-January 2025