




Mohammed Choudhury
State Superintendent of Schools

TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Mohammed Choudhury, State Superintendent of Schools 

DATE: June 28, 2022

SUBJECT: Request for Waiver of Regulation .06H(2) under COMAR 13A.03.02 Graduation Requirements for High Schools in Maryland

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this item is to approve the State Superintendent's recommendation for a waiver of requirements to COMAR 13A.03.02.06H(2) *Graduation Requirements for Public High Schools in Maryland* related to the requirement for the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment for algebra, English, science, and government to account for 20 percent of the student's final grade in the respective high school level algebra, English, science, and government course.

BACKGROUND/HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:

The Maryland High School Graduation Task Force was convened in January 2018 at the request of the State Board and the State Superintendent of Schools. The Task Force recommended to the State Board and the State Superintendent revised graduation requirements including that students must pass assessments in algebra, English, science, and government. The score received on the assessment would move from a stand-alone assessment requirement to an end-of-course assessment requirement, which would count for 20 percent of the student's final grade in the respective course. This requirement would begin in the 2022-2023 school year.

The State Board approved MSDE's request for permission to publish amendments to COMAR 13A.03.02 Graduation Requirements for Public High Schools in Maryland at the February 2021 State Board meeting. The State Board adopted the amendments on May 25, 2021, and the final regulation was published in the Maryland Register on June 14, 2021, 48: 12 Md. R. 474.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

COMAR 13A.03.02.06H(2) is scheduled to go into effect in the 2022-23 school year, however LEAs have indicated that additional time is needed to successfully implement the necessary systemic changes to transition the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment program to account for 20 percent of the student's final grade in the respective high school level algebra, English, science, and government course.

In light of the request of local superintendents for additional time to implement this systemic change, and due to the challenges of emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic, the State Superintendent of Schools recommends the State Board grant the waiver of COMAR 13A.03.02.06H(2), collectively for all LEAs for good cause.

The State Board is authorized to grant the waiver pursuant to its authority under Education Article § 2-205 and COMAR 13A.01.01.02-1 *Waiver from Regulations*. During the period of waiver, COMAR 13A.03.02.06H(1) will be implemented as scheduled. The Maryland Comprehensive Assessments will be required but will not count as a portion of the end of course grade. All other graduation requirements of COMAR 13A.03.02 will continue to remain in effect and in force.

ACTION:

Approve the State Superintendent's recommendation for a waiver of COMAR 13A.03.02.06H(2) *Maryland High School Assessments* –for all students in the 2022-2023 school year taking the Algebra I course, English 10 course, science course, and government course from having the aligned Maryland Comprehensive Assessment account for 20 percent of the student's final grade in the respective high school level algebra, English, science and government course.

ATTACHMENTS: COMAR Title 13A.03.02.06 *Graduation Requirements for Public High Schools in Maryland*.

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, 7-203, 7-205, 7-205.1, and 8-404, Annotated Code of Maryland

.06 Maryland Comprehensive Assessments:

A. A student shall take the requisite Maryland Comprehensive Assessment during its next regular administration if the student received credit for taking, by the methods identified in Regulations .03 and .04 of this chapter, any of the following courses aligned with the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment:

- (1) Algebra;
- (2) Science;
- (3) English; or
- (4) Government.

B. To be awarded the Maryland High School Diploma, all students, including elementary and middle school students who take high school level courses, shall take the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment for algebra, science, English, and government after the student completes the required course or courses.

C. Each local school system shall provide appropriate assistance to strengthen areas of weaknesses for students who have not achieved satisfactory scores on the Maryland Comprehensive Assessments.

D. Bridge Plan for Academic Validation.

(1) Eligibility Criteria. A student is eligible to satisfy the graduation assessment requirement through the Bridge Plan for Academic Validation if the student has:

- (a) Failed one or more Maryland Comprehensive Assessments;
- (b) Received credit in the course or courses related to the assessment or assessments;
- (c) Demonstrated overall satisfactory attendance in the most recent school year completed; and
- (d) Demonstrated satisfactory progress toward achieving the high school diploma requirements specified in COMAR 13A.03.02.09B(1) and (2); and
- (e) Participated successfully in appropriate assistance as defined in §C of this regulation after having failed one or more of the Maryland Comprehensive Assessments.

(2) A student may begin a Bridge Project after one failure of a Maryland Comprehensive Assessment.

(3) A student may use the score on the Bridge Project to meet the graduation requirement only after the student has taken the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment twice and failed twice.

(4) The Bridge Plan for Academic Validation shall consist of:

(a) Specific modules developed by the Department in each of the Maryland Comprehensive Assessments content areas;

(b) The assignment by the local school system of one or more modules for completion by each student meeting the eligibility criteria;

(c) Scoring by the local review panels of the completed modules according to State-developed, Statewide scoring protocols;

(d) A recommendation from the local review panels to the local superintendent as to the outcome of the scoring of each student's module or modules;

(e) Acceptance or rejection by the local superintendent of the local review panel's recommendations; and

(f) An opportunity for the student to appeal the local superintendent's decision to the State Superintendent of Schools.

E. Reporting Student Performance.

(1) A school system shall state on the student's performance record card only that the student has or has not met all assessment requirements and shall not describe the option used to meet the requirement.

(2) For the purpose of this section, except for students identified in §F of this regulation, "met all assessment requirements" means achieving a passing score on all Maryland Comprehensive Assessments, or meeting the requirements of the combined score option, or successfully completing a Bridge Project in those assessment areas that the student did not pass.

F. For the 2020—2021 and 2021—2022 school years, a student will have met the assessment requirement for Algebra I, English 10, science, and government if:

(1) The student has passed the Algebra I course, English 10 course, science course, and government course; and

(2) The student takes the Algebra I, English 10, science, and government Maryland Comprehensive Assessment aligned with the course.

G. Students graduating in school year 2020—2021 are exempt from taking the MCAP American Government Assessment.

H. Beginning with the 2022—2023 school year, at the latest:

(1) A student shall take the requisite Maryland Comprehensive Assessment during its regular administration if the student is taking, by the methods identified in Regulations .03 and .04 of this chapter, any of the following courses aligned with the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment:

(a) Algebra;

(b) English;

(c) Science; or

(d) Government; and

(2) The Maryland Comprehensive Assessment for algebra, English, science, and government shall account for 20 percent of the student's final grade in the respective high school level algebra, English, science, and government course.

I. Reporting Student Performance.

(1) A school system shall state on the student's performance record card only that the student has or has not taken the respective assessment in algebra, English, science, and government.

(2) Except for students identified in §F of this regulation, "met all assessment requirements" means having taken the assessments in algebra, English, science, and government as a part of the respective course.