

From Compliance to Confidence:

Mapping Competency and Capturing Potential Through the Maryland Certificate of Program Completion Endorsements

Division of Special Education

PRESENTED BY

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Presentation Outline

1. COMAR Requirements, Efforts to Date, and Timeline
2. Identification and Engagement
3. Review and Preparation
4. IEP Meeting Discussion and Documentation
5. Completion and Recognition
6. Wrap Up and Reassurance

COMAR: Certificate 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.**

Where We Have Been: Phase One

2021-2024

- Maryland Certificate of Program Completion (**MCOPC**) **Task Force**
 - **Completed and developed** Recommendations
- Certificate Endorsement **Attainment Rubric**
 - Approved
 - Superintendent transmittal – May 2024
- **Professional Learning** (PL)
 - June 2024 – preview **Attainment Rubric** (was recorded)
 - LEA special education leadership, transition coordinators, and school counselors
- **Scoring** the Attainment Rubric guidance
- Frequently Asked Questions (**FAQ**)

Where We Have Been: Phase Two

2024-2025

- LEAs **Identified cohort** of all eligible **students** in their **final year** of school
- **Support** was provided to **practitioners**
 - Professional **Learning**, Technical **Assistance**, Open **Office hours**
 - **Targeted coaching** on the observation process
- Endorsements **earned** through the **observation process**
 - One **successful** Endorsement Competency **Observation completed**
 - **Student transcripts** reflected attained Endorsement(s)
- **Task Force** groups **informed** and **refined** next steps

MCOPC Endorsements Support to Date



Trainings



Supporting Documents



Open Office Hours



Coaching



Secondary Transition Steering Committee Subcommittee



MCOPC Endorsements Taskforce

Where We Are Going: Phase Three

2025-2026

2026 Final Year Cohort of eligible students:

- **Pre-meeting**
 - **Observation(s)** conducted **prior to IEP meeting**
 - Endorsement Competency Observation **form(s)** distributed to **parents** and **students**
- **Three** Competencies required per Endorsement

All Transition-Aged eligible students:

- Annual **IEP meeting**
 - Discussion of student's **progress** towards **attainment of Endorsements**
 - Incorporate all stakeholder **feedback** into **Attainment Rubric**
 - Feedback **incorporated** into the **finalized assessment**

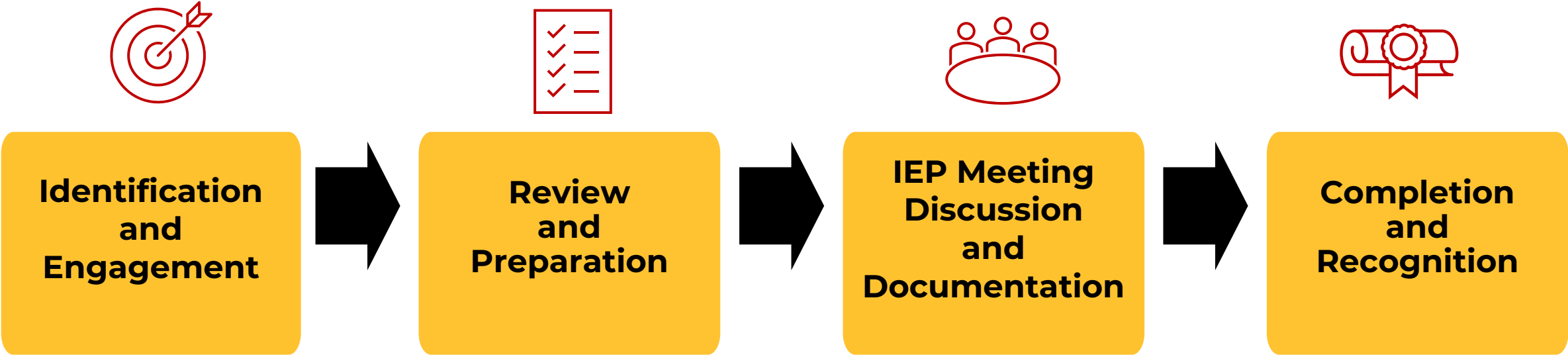
Where We Are Going: Full Implementation

2026 and Beyond

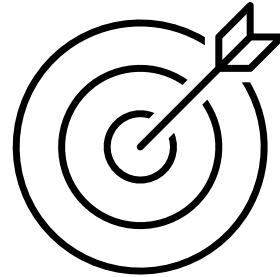
All Transition-Aged Students:

- **Pre-meeting** documentation
 - **Attainment Rubric** and draft **Competency scores**
- **Awarding credit** for **mastery** of Competencies
 - IEP team **discussion**, multiple **assessments documented**

MCOPC Endorsement Process Timeline

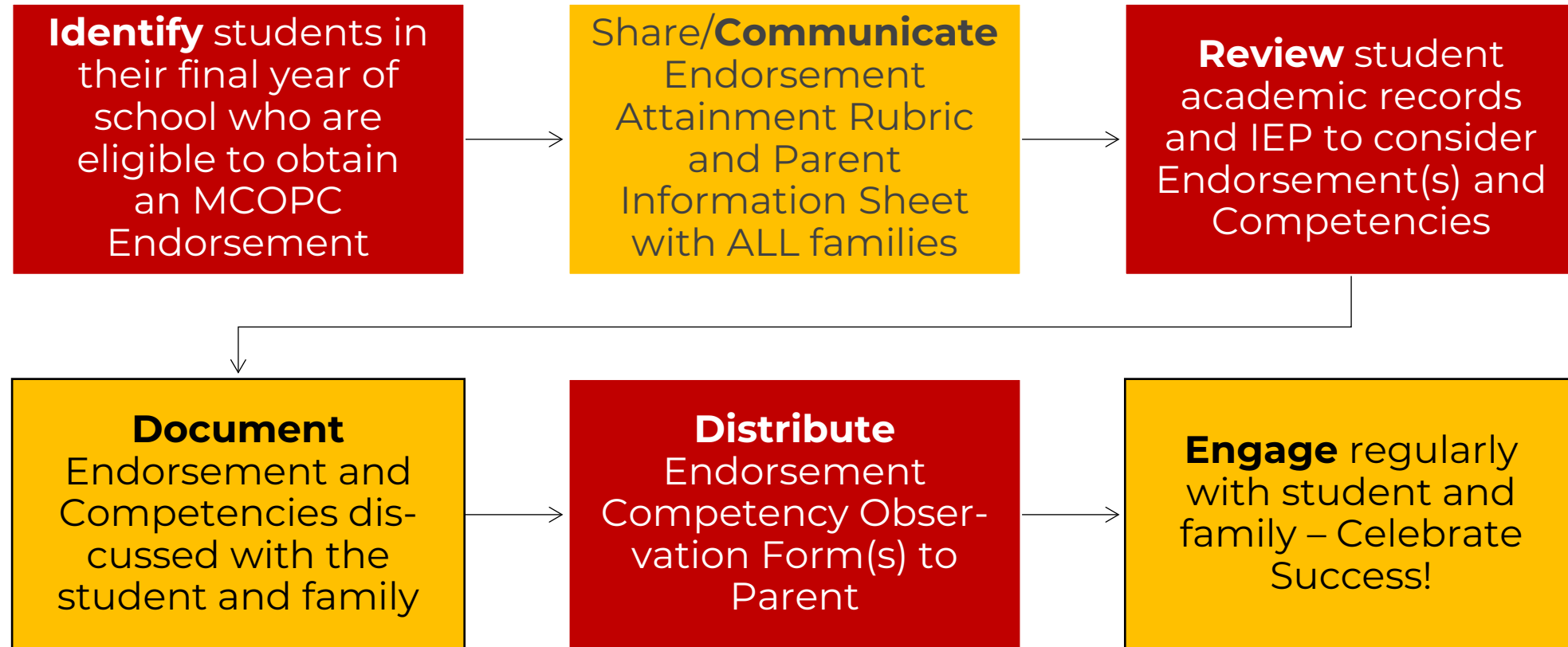


MCOPC Endorsement Process Timeline: Identification and Engagement



**Identification
and
Engagement**

Cohort of Exiting Students - 2026



Cohort of Exiting Students – 2026 (Continued)

- Choose **one (1)** Endorsement
- Choose **three (3)** Competencies under an Endorsement
- Complete the **Competency Observation process** for the attainment of three (3) Competencies
- Observations conducted by **qualified** staff



Parent Engagement: Pre-Meeting

Engage Parents in the MCOPC Endorsement process by

- Building **trust** and **partnership** by sharing important documentation
- **Preparing** families for the Discussion
- Reinforcing how Competencies **align** with student's interests, strengths, and postsecondary goals



Student Engagement: Pre-Meeting

Engage Students in the MCOPC Endorsement Process by

- Reviewing the **IEP Draft** and Goals with the student
- Helping the student **prepare** what they want to say about their strengths, challenges, and future goals
- **Gathering and documenting** student input



MCOPC Endorsement Process Timeline: Review and Preparation



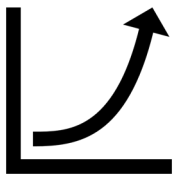
**Review
and
Preparation**

Preparing for the IEP Meeting: Review

Review Student Academic Records and Current Educational Programming



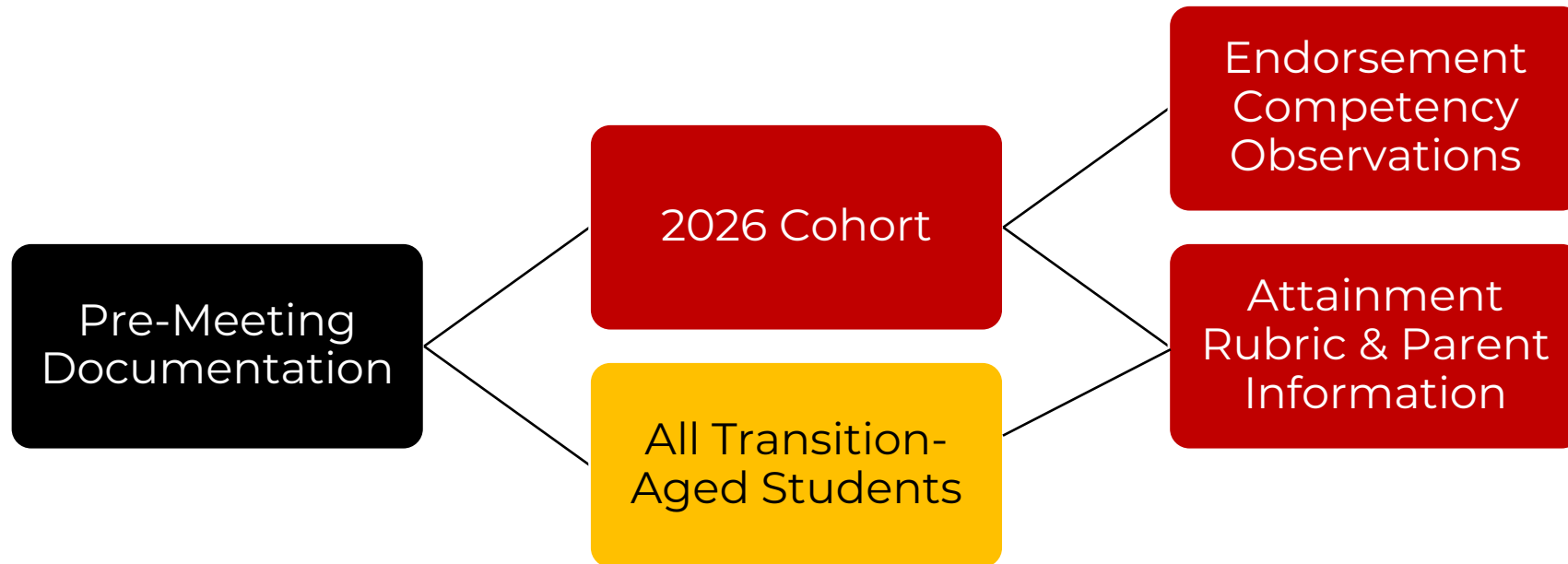
Focus on alignment with selected
Endorsement Competencies



Consider current progress on transition
goals/activities and coursework

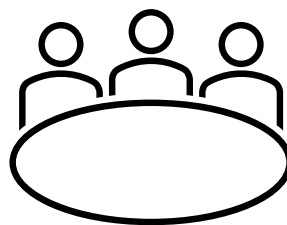
Best Practice: Encourage student reflection ahead of the meeting to help them articulate how their experiences connect with Endorsement areas.

Preparing for the IEP Meeting: Documentation



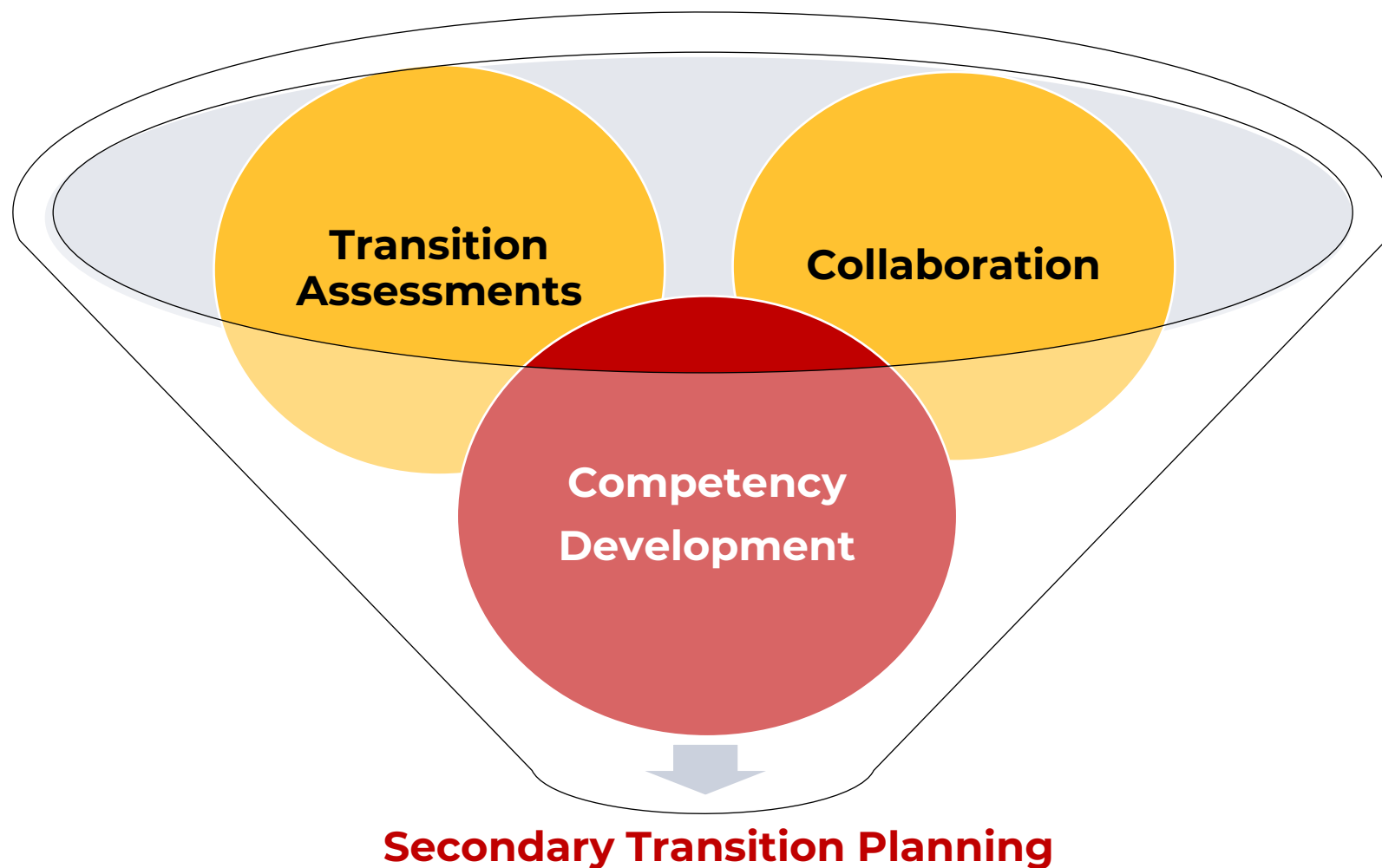
Best Practice: Encourage student voice when reflecting on their own skills and progress to deepen student ownership.

MCOPC Endorsement Process Timeline: IEP Meeting Discussion and Documentation



IEP Meeting Discussion and Documentation

Age 14 – The Starting Point

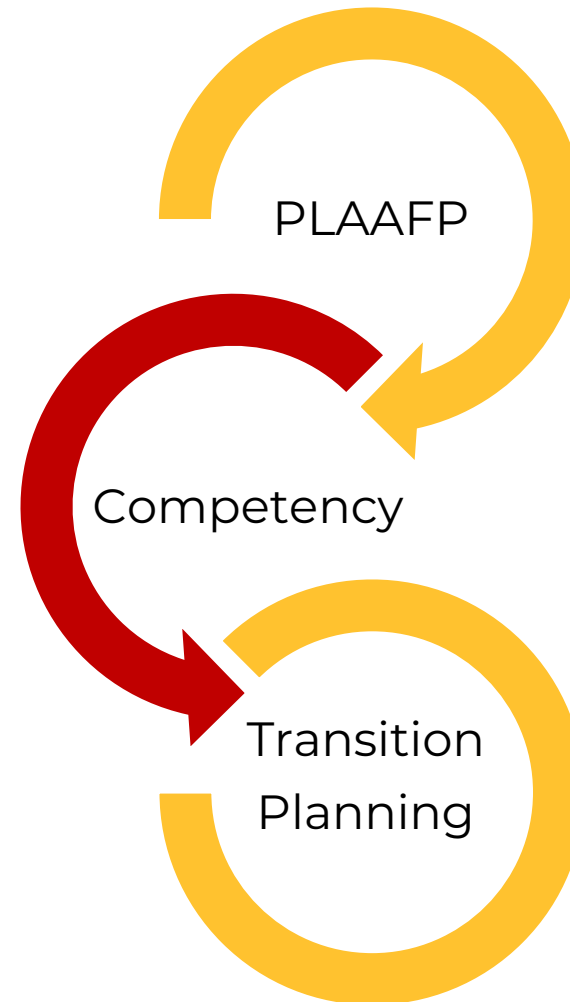


- Secondary Transition planning and the delivery of Secondary Transition services **begin** during the IEP year in which the student turns **14**.
- Collect and **incorporate** all **feedback** into the Attainment Rubric to inform Endorsement decision-making.

Best Practice: Begin early. Use transition assessments to drive conversations, foster collaboration, and develop a shared vision.

PLAAFP and Endorsement Competencies

- **Document** natural alignment between a student's Secondary Transition Present Levels of Academic and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) and the knowledge or skills reflected in an Endorsement/Competency area(s).
- This alignment **reinforces** the **relevance** and **authenticity** of the student's transition plan while supporting individualized program decisions.



Best Practice: The alignment of a well-developed PLAAFP reflects the student's real-world skills & aspirations, strengthening the connection between school & post-school outcomes.

Secondary Transition PLAAFP and Competency Alignment

Employment PLAAFP

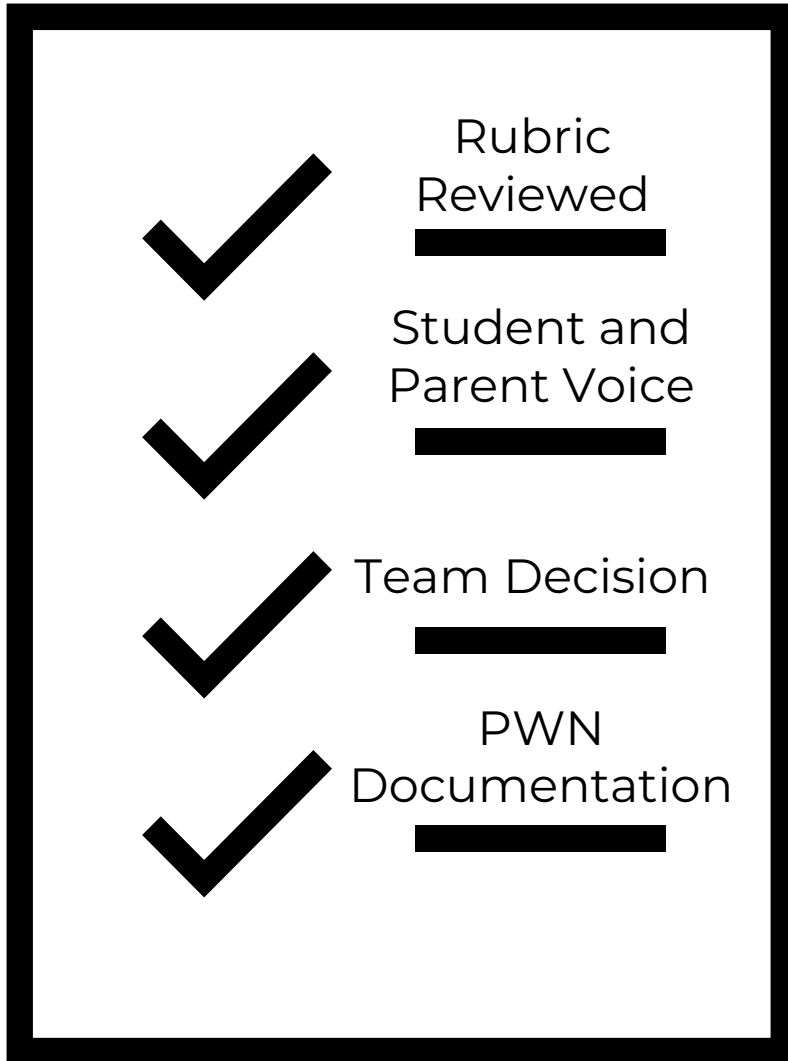
Jordan has completed a *Career Interest Inventory* and a *student-led interview*. These assessments revealed an interest in digital media and video production. Jordan expressed a desire to work with media tools and editing software. Jordan has been involved in several transition-focused activities, including a job shadowing experience with the school's media technician and creating a personal YouTube channel for school projects.

Jordan requires support with **task organization**, **project time management**, and **self-advocacy** for constructive feedback. Jordan is currently receiving instruction in self-regulation and digital career readiness skills.

Competency Alignment

Jordan's executive functioning needs naturally align with Career and Work-Readiness Competency 7.3: Plans ahead to **manage work assignments, organizes work materials**, and **asks for help** if needed.

IEP Team Decision and PWN Documentation



- Clearly **document** the IEP team's **decision** on pursuing Endorsements
- Include in the Prior Written Notice (PWN) under “Other factors relevant to the action proposed”

Best Practice: Honor student voice, document intentionally, and plan purposefully.

Example PWN Language: Participation in Endorsements

After reviewing multiple data sources, including the MCOPC Endorsement Attainment Rubric, IEP data, and feedback from stakeholders, **the IEP team determined that the student will participate in the [insert Endorsement name]**. This Endorsement aligns with the student's Postsecondary Goal of [insert student's Postsecondary Goal]. The Competencies associated with this Endorsement are appropriate for supporting the student's transition needs and current strengths, including [insert relevant strengths or skills, e.g., "increased independence, improved communication skills, and consistent use of job-related vocabulary"].

The team agreed that this decision supports the student's transition plan and that monitoring of performance toward Endorsement competencies will be reviewed annually. Endorsement(s) and/or Competencies may be based on the student's evolving strengths, interests, and postsecondary goals.

Best Practice: Use specific, student-centered language in the PWN. The decision should reflect the student's voice and the team's planning.

Example PWN Language: Opting-Out of Endorsements

The IEP team discussed the Maryland Certificate of Program Completion Endorsement options and how they support postsecondary outcomes. After reviewing these options, **the parent has chosen to opt out of participation in any of the Endorsements at this time. This decision was communicated in writing to the IEP team via [insert method of communication: "email," "written letter"] dated [insert date]. A record of this communication has been entered in the parent communication log.**

The team respects and supports the family's informed decision. The parent may contact the IEP team or case manager at any time to request to opt-in to an Endorsement pathway.

Best Practice: Emphasize that the opt-out was informed, voluntary, and based on collaborative discussion.

Storage of Documentation



Student Special Education File

Summary of
Competence
Performance

Observation forms

Parent input

Best Practice: Ensure data is accessible for future planning and compliance.

Emoji Poll Check-In

**How prepared do you feel to support Phase 3 of the MCOPC
Endorsement rollout?**



Totally ready! – We've got systems in place and feel confident.

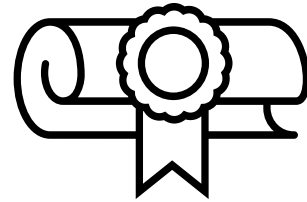


Getting there – We're working on it but still ironing out some pieces.



Feeling overwhelmed – I need more clarity or support to feel confident.

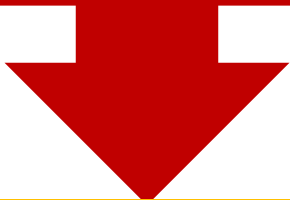
MCOPC Endorsement Process Timeline: Completion and Recognition



**Completion
and
Recognition**

MCOPC Endorsement Summary of Competency Performance

The Summary of Competency Performance was developed to provide LEAs/PAs with a tool to record student Endorsement Competency attainment.



Four (4) sections

| | | | |
|---------------------|--|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Student Information | Attainment Rubric Scoring and Requirements | Standards and Competencies | MCOPC Endorsement Certification |
|---------------------|--|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|

Student Information

Student Demographics

- Name
- State ID Number
- Date of Birth
- Grade
- Years of Eligibility



Summary of Competency Performance



Maryland Certificate of Program Completion Endorsement Summary of Competency Performance (Insert name of LEA/PA)

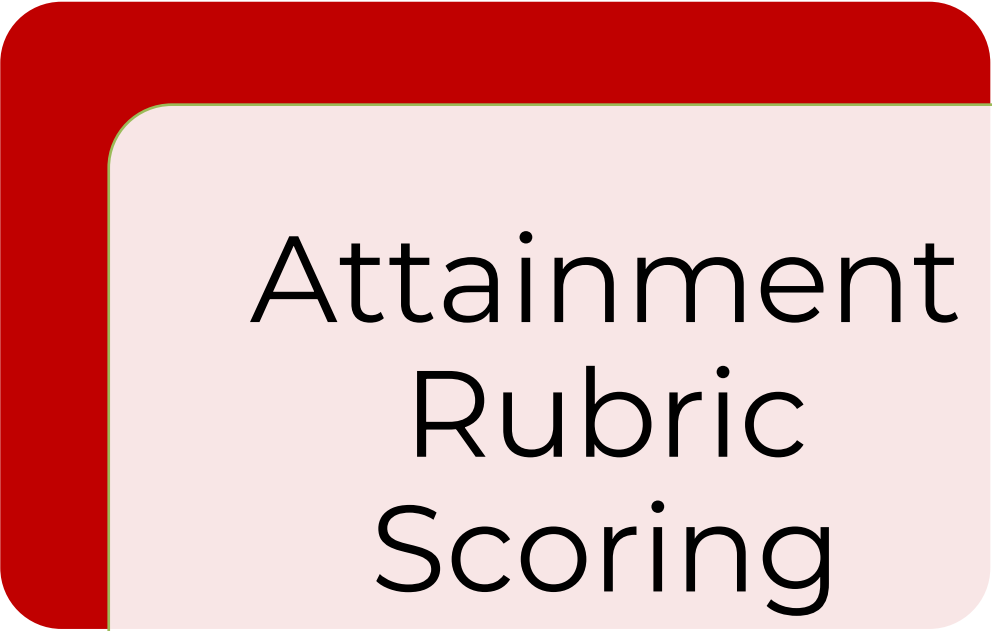
Community and Citizenship

This data collection tool is intended to provide Local Education Agencies and Partner Agencies with **a tool to record student performance** on and attainment of Competencies in each Standard area for the Citizenship and Community Endorsement.

STUDENT INFORMATION

| Student Demographics | |
|----------------------|--|
| Name | |
| State ID# | |
| Date of Birth | |
| Grade | |
| Eligibility Years | |

Attainment Rubric Scoring and Requirements



Attainment
Rubric
Scoring



Attainment
Requirements

Attainment Rubric Scoring

This **scoring tool** is provided as a reference to provide guidance when determining an attainment score.

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

Attainment Requirements



- Are **specific** to each Endorsement
- Identify **requirements** for both Competency and Scoring

EXAMPLE: Community and Citizenship

REQUIREMENTS:

Competency Requirements:

- At least **one** Competency must be completed **in each Standard area**
- At a minimum, an **additional 23 Competencies** must be completed **within this Endorsement.**
- Selection of Competencies should **align with the student's post-school outcome**, with a minimum **total** number achieved of **31**.

Scoring Requirements:

- Mastery of a Competency is defined as earning a **score of 2 or 3**.
- Each selected Competency **must meet this mastery** level.

Standards and Competencies

Documentation units created for each Standard

Each unit is divided into six (6) parts

- Competency
- Attainment Method
- Competency Attainment
- Rubric Score
- Date of Mastery
- Certified By (Name/Title)

Standards and Competencies On the Tool

SELF-ADVOCACY

| Competency | Attainment Method | Competency Attainment | Rubric Score | Date of Mastery | Certified By (Name/Title) |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Choose an item. | Choose an item. | | Choose an item. | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

Competency Example for Career and Work Readiness

SELF-ADVOCACY

| Competency | Attainment Method | Competency Attainment | Rubric Score | Date of Mastery | Certified By (Name/Title) |
|--|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Choose an item. | Choose an item. | | Choose an item. | | |
| <div>Choose an item: 1.1 State opinions and preferences related to work environments, job types, and tasks. 1.2 Articulates how their skills and strengths apply to career goals and the most effective ways they learn new skills. 1.3 States what post-school services and support they may be eligible for and knows how to effectively request services. 1.4 Requests and completes desired job applications. 1.5 Demonstrates when/how to disclose their disability and can identify and communicate examples of effective accommodations..</div> | | | | | |
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| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

Attainment Method

Options available in Drop Down:

- Endorsement Competency Observation
- IEP
- Assessments
- Stakeholders Input
- Other



Attainment Methods Examples



- **Endorsement Competency Observation**
- **IEP:** PLAAFP, Annual IEP Goals, IEP Objectives, Secondary Transition Activities
- **Assessments:** Classroom assessments, formative, summative, educational, psychological, work evaluation, curriculum-based, performance-based, and portfolio
- **Stakeholder Input:** Input on attainment that is reported by school staff, employer, parent and verified through an IEP team discussion
- **Other:** A measurement that does not neatly fit into any of the above categories

Standards and Competencies: Competency Attainment

SELF-ADVOCACY

| Competency | Attainment Method | Competency Attainment | Rubric Score | Date of Mastery | Certified By (Name/Title) |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Choose an item. | Choose an item. | | Choose an item. | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

Standards and Competencies: Wrapping Up

SELF-ADVOCACY



| Competency | Attainment Method | Competency Attainment | Rubric Score | Date of Mastery | Certified By (Name/Title) |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Choose an item. | Choose an item. | | Choose an item. | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

Attainment Method: Endorsement Competency Observation

SELF-ADVOCACY

| Competency | Attainment Method | Competency Attainment | Rubric Score | Date of Mastery | Certified By (Name/Title) |
|---|------------------------------------|---|--------------|-----------------|---|
| 3.12. Locates items within a store, using appropriate assistive technology as needed. | Endorsement Competency Observation | Endorsement Competency Observation tool noted that Fred was able to successfully locate and purchase 5 items from a prepared shopping list. Minimal adult support needed. | 2 | 11/29/25 | Pippi Longstocking, Special Education Teacher |

Attainment Method: IEP

SELF-ADVOCACY

| Competency | Attainment Method | Competency Attainment | Rubric Score | Date of Mastery | Certified By (Name/Title) |
|--|-------------------|---|--------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| 6.1 Prepares a grocery or shopping list, using appropriate assistive technology. | IEP | Fred’s achievement of annual IEP goal (insert) noted attainment on 12/3/25. Progress reporting noted minimal adult support required and the use of an iPad. | 2 | 12/3/25 | Goldie Locks, IEP Chair |

Attainment Method: Assessments

SELF-ADVOCACY

| Competency | Attainment Method | Competency Attainment | Rubric Score | Date of Mastery | Certified By (Name/Title) |
|---|-------------------|--|--------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| 3.6 Identifies and recognizes warning and safety signs. | Assessments | Fred completed a classroom unit on warning and safety signs in the community. He scored an 88% on his summative unit assessment. | 2 | 12/3/25 | Jules Verne, Case Manager |

Attainment Method: Stakeholders Input

SELF-ADVOCACY

| Competency | Attainment Method | Competency Attainment | Rubric Score | Date of Mastery | Certified By (Name/Title) |
|---|--------------------|--|--------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| 1.4 Participates in community organizations and activities. | Stakeholders Input | Current student involvement as discussed at the School Counselor check in meeting: JV Field Hockey team, church youth group, and a monthly buddy club at the high school | 3 | 11/14/25 | Tom Thumb, School Counselor |

Certification

MARYLAND CERTIFICATE OF PROGRAM COMPLETION ENDORSEMENT CERTIFICATION

(Insert Student Name) has achieved the following Standards for Community and Citizenship:

- ☐ Self-Advocacy
- ☐ Communication
- ☐ Skills for Independence
- ☐ Technology
- ☐ Transportation
- ☐ Financial Management
- ☐ Academic
- ☐ Interpersonal Skills

Certification-Continued

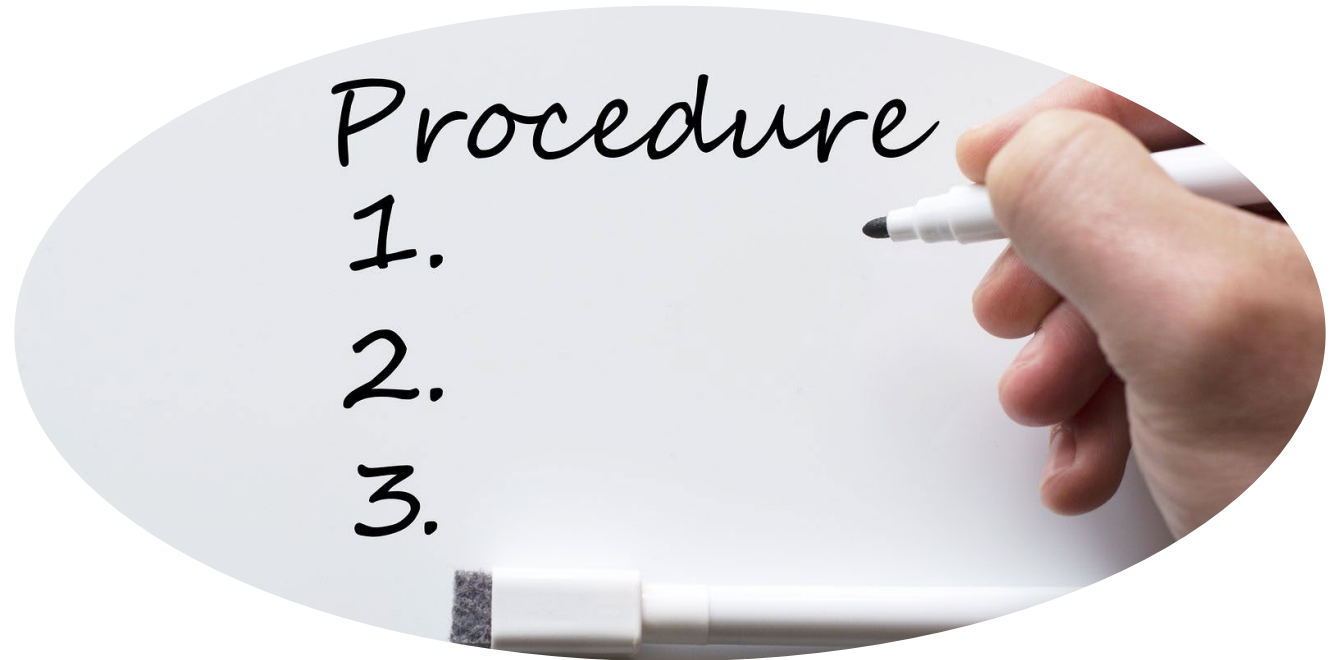
MARYLAND CERTIFICATE OF PROGRAM COMPLETION ENDORSEMENT CERTIFICATION

(Insert Student Name) has achieved the required Competencies for Citizenship and Community and therefore has earned the Endorsement for Community and Citizenship on (insert date).

Certified by: (Enter Name and Title)

Transcripts

Once a student has earned an Endorsement, follow your LEA/PA's **procedure** for **adding** the **Endorsement** to the student's Transcript.



Supports Moving Forward

Available Supports

Attainment Rubric Guidance

MCOPC Endorsement Training
Resources

Parent Engagement

Open Office Hours

Virtual and In-person Trainings

Takeaways and Next Steps



Key Takeaways:

- MCOPC Endorsements **enhance** transition outcomes
- Clear **steps** for Competency attainment and assessment
- Ongoing **support** available



Next Steps:

- **Review** Endorsement resources
- **Participate** in future training opportunities
- **Stay engaged** with open office hours
- **Celebrate** student success

Contact Information

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Professional Learning Evaluation

Please scan the **QR code** or use the [link](#) to complete the Professional Learning Evaluation

