

FREDERICK COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS		Reg. No. 400-34
Subject:	ALTERNATIVES TO FOUR-YEAR HIGH SCHOOL ENROLLMENT	Date of Issue: 2/22/83
Preparing Office:	Office of the Superintendent	Amended: 10/1/08

I. Policy 422

II. Procedures

The purpose of this regulation is to describe students' alternatives to attending high school for four (4) years. Frederick County Public Schools requires students to earn a total of 25 credits in grades 9 through 12 in order to receive a Maryland high school diploma.

A. Waiver of Four-Year Enrollment

An FCPS student who has completed grade 11 may have the grade 12 enrollment requirement waived through acceptance into and successful completion of:

- The first year in an early college admission program, or
- An approved vocational, technical or other post-high school program.

A faculty committee, principal, and the director of high schools must determine that this is in the best interest of the student.

1. Students must submit the "Request for Waiver of the Four-Year Enrollment Requirement for Graduation" form to the principal at the completion of grade ten and prior to beginning grade 11. The student's parent or guardian must sign the form.
2. The "Request for Waiver of the Four-Year Enrollment Requirement for Graduation" must be completed and approved prior to implementation of the program.
3. With the assistance of the school counselor, the student and parents/guardian must develop an appropriate educational plan to meet the specific needs of the student. High school assessment and student service learning requirements must be met.
4. The principal shall appoint a faculty committee to review the request for waiver and make a recommendation to the principal on the basis of the individual student's needs and the plan's adequacy to meet these needs.
5. The principal shall review the faculty committee recommendation and if approved forward the recommendation to the director of high schools for review.
6. If the director of high schools approves the request, the school will notify the student and parent of the decision in writing.

7. If at any point in the approval process disapproval is registered, the school must notify the parent in writing and the parents/guardians shall have ten (10) days to appeal the recommendation to the next highest level.
8. The request for waiver for early admission to college, vocational, technical or other post-secondary school must be accompanied by written notice of acceptance from that institution. The student must provide verification that the institution has an early admissions policy.
9. The applicant and parents or legal guardian of the applicant must be informed that if this waiver is approved the student is forfeiting honors available to high school seniors.
10. The Board of Education of Frederick County considers a minimum of 12 credit hours per semester for two (2) semesters as being a full year of study at a post-secondary institution. Any student who did not successfully complete four (4) units of English credit while enrolled in high school must successfully complete three (3) semester hours of credit in English for two (2) semesters while enrolled in the approved post-secondary or college program. The student must successfully complete the minimum 24 semester-hour program in order to satisfy state and Frederick County graduation requirements.
11. At the conclusion of a full year of study at the post-secondary school, the student must submit to the principal a written request for the high school diploma along with a transcript or letter from the vocational, technical or post-secondary school indicating the student has successfully completed a year of post-secondary work and has met the requirements as stated above.

B. Alternatives for Structuring Programs (Early Graduation)

A Frederick County Public Schools student may receive a Maryland high school diploma after grade 11 through an alternative plan that includes a waiver of the grade 12 enrollment if the student has met all credit and high school assessment requirements, competency prerequisites and student service learning requirements. A faculty committee, principal, and the director of high schools must determine that this is in the best interest of the student.

1. A student who wishes to graduate early must, with the assistance of the school counselor and involvement of the student's parents or guardians, develop an appropriate alternative educational plan that meets the student's specific needs.
2. The student must submit to the principal an application to which the educational plan is attached. The student's parent or guardian must sign the application.

3. Requirements for implementing alternative programs include:
 - a. Develop and approve a curricular plan that:
 - Includes the content of the specified required credits.
 - Assures the standards for graduation are met.
 - Contains a program description, performance requirements, and evaluation procedures.
 - b. The superintendent of schools must approve the plan and notify the state superintendent of schools once approval has been given.
4. The principal shall appoint a faculty committee to review the request for early graduation and make a recommendation to the principal on the basis of the student's needs and the plan's adequacy to meet these needs.
5. The principal will forward the application and plan to the director of high schools, who shall either approve or deny the request.
6. If the director approves the application, it will be forwarded to the superintendent for approval. The school shall notify the student and parent of the decision in writing.
7. If at any point in the application process disapproval is registered, the school will notify the student and his or her parent or guardian in writing. The student and parent or guardian shall have ten (10) days to appeal the recommendation to the next highest level.
8. The school counselor must annually review the early graduating student's educational plan. If the student wishes to make any change in the approved plan, he or she must reapply for early graduation.
9. A student who graduates early is eligible for honors traditionally awarded to high school graduates. The total credits earned could have an impact on the final grade point average.
10. The student will receive his or her high school diploma at graduation.
11. Each high school shall annually report the names of students approved to graduate early through an alternative plan other than attending college or technical school to the director of high schools.

Approved:

Original signed by

Linda D. Burgee
Superintendent

**BOARD OF EDUCATION OF FREDERICK COUNTY, MARYLAND
REQUEST FOR WAIVER 4TH YEAR/EARLY GRADUATION**

Name of Student Date

Name of School Present Grade

REASONS FOR REQUEST:

College admission prior to graduation

Four year Community College Vocational or Technical School Other

Name of School (if known)

Signature of Student Date Signature of Parent (Guardian) Date

Faculty Committee Recommendation Approved Not Approved

Signature of Committee Chairperson Date

Principal Recommendation Approved Not Approved

Signature of Principal Date

Director of High Schools Recommendation Approved Not Approved

Signature of Director of High Schools Date

Superintendent Action Approved Not Approved

Signature of Superintendent Date

PLAN FOR WAIVER 4TH YEAR/EARLY GRADUATION

Student _____

SUBJECT AREA	YEAR COMPLETED	CREDITS	COMPLETER PROGRAMS	CREDITS
English 9			COLLEGE	
English 10			Algebra I	
English 11			Geometry	
English 12			Algebra II	
			Foreign Language or	
World History			CAREER TECH/COLLEGE COMPLETER	
American Studies 2			Algebra I	
Government			Geometry	
			Algebra II	
Algebra			C&T	
Geometry			Foreign Language (2)	
Math (2)			CAREER & TECH	
			C&T Program	
Science			Algebra I	
Biology			Geometry	
Science			Elective Math (2)	
			HIGH SCHOOL ASSESSMENTS	
Fine Arts			English 10	
Technology Education			Biology	
PE/Health			Government	
Foreign Language or			Algebra with Data Analysis	
Advanced Technology or			OTHER:	
Career & Technology			Bridge	
Career Pathway Electives (3)			Mod HSA	
Other Electives			Mod Plus	
Service Learning			HSA Plan	
GRAND TOTAL				

NOTE: Any changes to an approved Educational Plan will require reapplication for early graduation.

 School Counselor Date Student Date Parent Date