

BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HARFORD COUNTY

INFORMATIONAL REPORT

DECISION ON

**CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES
POLICY NO. 04-0020-000**

**STUDENT PROMOTION
POLICY NO. 04-0018-000**

**CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES
POLICY NO. 04-0019-000**

**HOME INSTRUCTION
POLICY NO. 04-0002-000**

APRIL 11, 2016

Background Information:

The Board maintains a manual which sets forth the various policies of the Harford County Public Schools. The manual contains policies which are either required by federal and state law and regulation or which are, in the Board's judgment, necessary and appropriate in order for the school system to operate in a lawful, appropriate and effective manner. Included among such policies are those entitled:

04-0020-000 Controversial Issues
04-0018-000 Student Promotion
04-0019-000 Ceremonies and Observances
04-0002-000 Home Instruction

Discussion:

04-0020-000 Controversial Issues

This policy was reviewed by the Board Policy Review Committee ("BPRC") at its October 26, 2015, meeting and recommended for revision. At the Board's business meeting of March 7, 2016, the proposed, revised policy was presented to the Board.

The proposed, revised policy includes the definition of controversial issues, and establishes criteria regarding the presentation of a controversial issue within the classroom.

This policy was posted for public comment and none was received.

The Superintendent recommends that the revised policy be adopted by the Board.

04-0018-000 Student Promotion

This policy was reviewed by the BPRC at its October 26, 2015 meeting and recommended for revision. The proposed, revised policy was presented to the Board at its business meeting of March 7, 2016.

This policy has been revised to align with local graduation requirements and includes updated information regarding numbers of credits required for promotion.

The proposed, revised policy was posted for public comment and none was received.

The Superintendent recommends that the revised policy be adopted by the Board.

04-0019-000 Ceremonies and Observances

At the BPRC meeting of October 26, 2015, this policy was recommended for deletion. This recommendation was presented to the Board at its business meeting of March 7, 2016.

The subject matter of this policy is addressed in the Maryland Education Code §7-116 and does not require Board policy language as special calendar events and observances are addressed within curriculum and instructional programming.

This policy was posted for public comment and none was received.

The Superintendent recommends that the Board delete this policy.

04-0022-000 Home Instruction

At the BPRC meeting of October 26, 2015, this policy was recommended for deletion. This recommendation was presented to the Board at its business meeting of March 7, 2016.

The subject matter of this policy is addressed in the Code of Maryland Regulations (“COMAR”) 13A.10.01.01 and does not require Board policy language.

This policy was posted for public comment and none was received.

The Superintendent recommends that the Board delete this policy.

Attachments:

1. Current Board Policy 04-0020-000 entitled Controversial Issues.
2. Proposed, revised policy 04-0020-000 entitled Controversial Issues.
3. Current Board Policy 04-0018-000 entitled Student Promotion.
4. Proposed, revised policy 04-0018-000 entitled Student Promotion.
5. Current Board Policy 04-0019-000 entitled Ceremonies and Observances.
6. Current Board Policy 04-0002-000 entitled Home Instruction.

Superintendent's Recommendation:

For the foregoing reasons, the Superintendent recommends the following.

- A. That the Board adopt revised policy 04-0020-000 entitled Controversial Issues.
- B. That the Board adopt revised policy 04-0018-000 entitled Student Promotion.
- C. That the Board approve deletion of policy 04-0019-000 entitled Ceremonies and Observances.
- D. That the Board approve deletion of policy 04-0002-000 entitled Home Instruction.

POLICY TITLE: Controversial Issues		
ADOPTION/EFFECTIVE DATE:	MOST RECENTLY AMENDED:	MOST RECENTLY REAFFIRMED: 5/6/2002
POLICY/PROCEDURE MANUAL SUMMARY CATEGORY: Instruction		

As a public institution, the Harford County Public Schools has a responsibility to provide for the study of controversial issues. Many areas of study abound with vital issues which should be carefully studied and adequately discussed to develop student abilities in reflective and responsible thinking. Facing issues without prejudice and withholding judgments until facts have been gathered, considered, and conclusions drawn are valuable student outcomes of a free educational system. A free exchange of ideas is highly important in democratic living. Serious consideration of purposeful, carefully planned investigations of controversial issues relating to a course of study is important to the citizenship education of students.

In providing for the study and discussion of such issues, the school system must maintain a non-partisan, neutral position. Controversial issues shall be presented and discussed in secondary school classrooms. Such study shall be objective and scholarly, and teachers shall guard against giving their personal opinions until after students have had the opportunity to collect and assemble factual information on the subject, to interpret the data without prejudice, to reconsider assumptions and claims, and to reach personal conclusions. Students must be encouraged to search after truth as well as to form, express, and justify personal views in controversial issues.

The teacher has the right to express personal views regarding controversial issues which have been previously presented and discussed in class. Such points of view should be clearly identified as opinions. The teacher may also express his/her views to generate additional thought and discussion but should identify these opinions and their purposes.

Further, the teacher has the obligation to assist students in achieving a scholarly competence, to teach factual information and concepts upon which truth is based, to help students develop a respect for factual knowledge as the basis for critical thought, to avoid discussion of issues beyond the comprehension and maturity of students, to lead students to recognize that some problems and issues escape solution, and to demonstrate a deep respect for the dignity of each student and his/her right to express opinions without jeopardizing relationships with the teachers of the school.

Board Approval Acknowledged By:

Patricia L. Skebeck, Secretary and Treasurer
Board of Education of Harford County

Policy Action Dates		
ACTION DATE	ACTION DATE	ACTION DATE
Reaffirmed 5/12/1980		
Reaffirmed 10/26/1998		
Reaffirmed 5/6/2002		

Responsibility for Policy Maintenance & References		
LAST EDITOR/DRAFTER NAME: Unknown	JOB POSITION OF LAST EDITOR/DRAFTER: Unknown	
PERSON RESPONSIBLE:	JOB POSITION OF PERSON RESPONSIBLE:	
DESIGNEE NAME: N/A	JOB POSITION OF DESIGNEE: N/A	
REFERENCE 1 TYPE:	REFERENCE 1 NO.	REFERENCE 1 DESCRIPTION:
REFERENCE 2 TYPE:	REFERENCE 2 NO.	REFERENCE 2 DESCRIPTION:
REFERENCE 3 TYPE:	REFERENCE 3 NO.	REFERENCE 3 DESCRIPTION:
REFERENCE 4 TYPE:	REFERENCE 4 NO.	REFERENCE 4 DESCRIPTION:
REFERENCE 5 TYPE:	REFERENCE 5 NO.	REFERENCE 5 DESCRIPTION:
POLICY NUMBER PRIOR TO NOVEMBER 1, 2005: Instructional Program .03.05.090		

POLICY TITLE: CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES		
ADOPTION/EFFECTIVE DATE:	MOST RECENTLY AMENDED:	MOST RECENTLY REAFFIRMED: 5/6/2002
POLICY/PROCEDURE MANUAL SUMMARY CATEGORY: INSTRUCTION		

~~As a public institution, the Harford County Public Schools has a responsibility to provide for the study of controversial issues. Many areas of study abound with vital issues which should be carefully studied and adequately discussed to develop student abilities in reflective and responsible thinking. Facing issues without prejudice and withholding judgments until facts have been gathered, considered, and conclusions drawn are valuable student outcomes of a free educational system. A free exchange of ideas is highly important in democratic living. Serious consideration of purposeful, carefully planned investigations of controversial issues relating to a course of study is important to the citizenship education of students.~~

~~In providing for the study and discussion of such issues, the school system must maintain a non-partisan, neutral position. Controversial issues shall be presented and discussed in secondary school classrooms. Such study shall be objective and scholarly, and teachers shall guard against giving their personal opinions until after students have had the opportunity to collect and assemble factual information on the subject, to interpret the data without prejudice, to reconsider assumptions and claims, and to reach personal conclusions. Students must be encouraged to search after truth as well as to form, express, and justify personal views in controversial issues.~~

~~The teacher has the right to express personal views regarding controversial issues which have been previously presented and discussed in class. Such points of view should be clearly identified as opinions. The teacher may also express his/her views to generate additional thought and discussion but should identify these opinions and their purposes.~~

~~Further, the teacher has the obligation to assist students in achieving a scholarly competence, to teach factual information and concepts upon which truth is based, to help students develop a respect for factual knowledge as the basis for critical thought, to avoid discussion of issues beyond the comprehension and maturity of students, to lead students to recognize that some problems and issues escape solution, and to demonstrate a deep respect for the dignity of each student and his/her right to express opinions without jeopardizing relationships with the teachers of the school.~~

Board Approval Acknowledged By:
Patricia L. Skebeck, Secretary and Treasurer

I. Purpose

To establish criteria related to the teaching of controversial issues in the schools.

II. Definitions

Controversial issue means a subject or matter about which there are significant differences of opinion, and about which related discussion may create strong feelings among students and/or members of the community.

III. Statement of Policy

A controversial issue may be considered for classroom instruction or discussion when the following criteria are met:

- A. The issue is related to the instructional goals of the course of study and commensurate with the level of maturity of the students.
- B. The controversial issue is presented in an impartial and objective manner and in an atmosphere that is free from bias and prejudice.
- C. The controversial issue presented encourages open discussion and a respect for conflicting beliefs and opinions.

Board Approval Acknowledged By:

Barbara P. Canavan, Superintendent
Board of Education of Harford County

Policy Action Dates		
ACTION	DATE	ACTION DATE
Reaffirmed	5/12/1980	
Reaffirmed	10/26/1998	
Reaffirmed	5/6/2002	

Responsibility for Policy Maintenance & References		
LAST EDITOR/DRAFTER NAME: Patrick P. Spicer, Esquire	JOB POSITION OF LAST EDITOR/DRAFTER: General Counsel	
PERSON RESPONSIBLE: Dr. Susan Brown	JOB POSITION OF PERSON RESPONSIBLE: Executive Director of Curriculum and Assessment	
DESIGNEE NAME: N/A	JOB POSITION OF DESIGNEE: N/A	
REFERENCE 1 TYPE:	REFERENCE 1 NO.	REFERENCE 1 DESCRIPTION:
POLICY NUMBER PRIOR TO NOVEMBER 1, 2005: Instructional Program .03.05.090		

REFERENCES¹

References are set forth in the Policy.

¹ All references are to specific federal or Maryland statutes or regulations. References are provided for convenience and informational purposes only and are not to be considered as exhaustive or as precluding Harford County Public Schools from relying upon any other statutes, regulations, or legal authority in support of a policy.

POLICY TITLE: Student Promotion		
ADOPTION/EFFECTIVE DATE:	MOST RECENTLY AMENDED: 7/14/1997	MOST RECENTLY REAFFIRMED: 4/22/2002
POLICY/PROCEDURE MANUAL SUMMARY CATEGORY: Instruction		

"Promotion or retention is based upon an analysis of multiple factors. Promotion for a student in the elementary and middle school grades is based upon a review of such factors as:

- demonstrated mastery of the essential learnings in the curriculum;
- the developmental level of the student;
- the student's ability to function in school;
- emotional, social, and physical factors; and,
- parental input.

Promotion in high school is based upon progress towards meeting the minimum requirements for a Maryland high school diploma. The requirements for a Maryland high school diploma include:

- successful completion of four years of enrollment in approved programs;
- successful completion of all competency prerequisites and the local program of student service learning;
- successful completion of specific subject area requirements; and,
- the accumulation of a minimum of 21 credits.

The minimum number of credits required for promotion is as follows:

- promotion to grade 10 - 5 credits
- promotion to grade 11 - 10 credits (one of which must be in English)
- promotion to grade 12 - 15 credits (two of which must be in English)

Graduation from high school will occur at the end of the school year or summer school in which the student has met the minimum requirements for graduation of the Maryland State Board of Education and of the Harford County Board of Education.

Board Approval Acknowledged By:

Patricia L. Skebeck, Secretary and Treasurer
Board of Education of Harford County

POLICY

Harford County Public Schools

Policy Action Dates		
ACTION	DATE	ACTION DATE
Reaffirmed	3/10/1980	
Amended	7/14/1997	
Reaffirmed	4/22/2002	

Responsibility for Policy Maintenance & References		
LAST EDITOR/DRAFTER NAME: Unknown		JOB POSITION OF LAST EDITOR/DRAFTER: Unknown
PERSON RESPONSIBLE:		JOB POSITION OF PERSON RESPONSIBLE:
DESIGNEE NAME: N/A		JOB POSITION OF DESIGNEE: N/A
REFERENCE 1 TYPE:	REFERENCE 1 NO.	REFERENCE 1 DESCRIPTION:
REFERENCE 2 TYPE:	REFERENCE 2 NO.	REFERENCE 2 DESCRIPTION:
REFERENCE 3 TYPE:	REFERENCE 3 NO.	REFERENCE 3 DESCRIPTION:
REFERENCE 4 TYPE:	REFERENCE 4 NO.	REFERENCE 4 DESCRIPTION:
REFERENCE 5 TYPE:	REFERENCE 5 NO.	REFERENCE 5 DESCRIPTION:
POLICY NUMBER PRIOR TO NOVEMBER 1, 2005: School Administration - .02.08.060		

POLICY TITLE: Student Promotion		
ADOPTION/EFFECTIVE DATE:	MOST RECENTLY AMENDED: 7/14/1997	MOST RECENTLY REAFFIRMED: 4/22/2002
POLICY/PROCEDURE MANUAL SUMMARY CATEGORY: Instruction		

~~“Promotion or retention is based upon an analysis of multiple factors. Promotion for a student in the elementary and middle school grades is based upon a review of such factors as:~~

- ~~• demonstrated mastery of the essential learnings in the curriculum;~~
- ~~• the developmental level of the student;~~
- ~~• the student's ability to function in school;~~
- ~~• emotional, social, and physical factors; and,~~
- ~~• parental input.~~

~~Promotion in high school is based upon progress towards meeting the minimum requirements for a Maryland high school diploma. The requirements for a Maryland high school diploma include:~~

- ~~• successful completion of four years of enrollment in approved programs;~~
- ~~• successful completion of all competency prerequisites and the local program of student service learning;~~
- ~~• successful completion of specific subject area requirements; and,~~
- ~~• the accumulation of a minimum of 21 credits.~~

~~The minimum number of credits required for promotion is as follows:~~

- ~~• promotion to grade 10 — 5 credits~~
- ~~• promotion to grade 11 — 10 credits (one of which must be in English)~~
- ~~• promotion to grade 12 — 15 credits (two of which must be in English)~~

~~Graduation from high school will occur at the end of the school year or summer school in which the student has met the minimum requirements for graduation of the Maryland State Board of Education and of the Harford County Board of Education.~~

Board Approval Acknowledged By:

Patricia L. Skebeek, Secretary and Treasurer
Board of Education of Harford County

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set forth student promotion factors and requirements for Harford County Public Schools students.

II. Definitions

- A. Elementary school student means all students in grades Prekindergarten-5.
- B. Middle school student means all students in grades 6-8.
- C. High school student means all students in grades 9-12.

III. Policy Statement

A. Promotion in elementary and middle school grades is based on an analysis of multiple factors.

1. The following are factors taken into consideration in order for a student to be promoted in elementary and middle school grades from HCPS.

- i.* Demonstrated mastery of the essential learnings in the curriculum;
- ii.* The developmental level of the student;
- iii.* The student's ability to function in school;
- iv.* The emotional, social, and physical factors; and
- v.* Parental input.

B. Promotion in high school is based upon progress towards meeting the minimum state and local requirements for a high school diploma.

1. The following are required for a student to be promoted in high school grades from HCPS. Students must successfully complete:

- i.* four years of enrollment in approved programs;
- ii.* all competency prerequisites and the local program of student service learning;
- iii.* specific subject area requirements; and
- iv.* a minimum of 26 credits.

2. Students must meet the minimum number of credits required for promotion as follows:

- i.* promotion to grade 10 - 6 credits.

- ii.* promotion to grade 11 - 12 credits.
 - iii.* promotion to grade 12 - 18 credits.
- C. Graduation from high school will occur at the end of the school year or summer school in which the student has met the minimum requirements for graduation of the Maryland State Board of Education and of the Harford County Board of Education as outlined in the HCPS Student Education Planning Guide, which can be found on the Harford County Public Schools [website](#).

POLICY

Harford County Public Schools

Policy Action Dates		
ACTION	DATE	ACTION DATE
Reaffirmed	3/10/1980	
Amended	7/14/1997	
Reaffirmed	4/22/2002	

Responsibility for Policy Maintenance & References	
LAST EDITOR/DRAFTER NAME: Patrick P. Spicer, Esquire	JOB POSITION OF LAST EDITOR/DRAFTER: General Counsel
PERSON RESPONSIBLE: Ms. Angela Morton Mr. Joseph Schmitz	JOB POSITION OF PERSON RESPONSIBLE: Executive Director of Elementary School Performance Executive Director of Middle and High School Performance
DESIGNEE NAME:	JOB POSITION OF DESIGNEE:
POLICY NUMBER PRIOR TO NOVEMBER 1, 2005: School Administration - .02.08.060	

REFERENCES¹

References are set forth in the Policy.

¹ All references are to specific federal or Maryland statutes or regulations. References are provided for convenience and informational purposes only and are not to be considered as exhaustive or as precluding Harford County Public Schools from relying upon any other statutes, regulations, or legal authority in support of a policy.

POLICY TITLE: Ceremonies and Observances		
ADOPTION/EFFECTIVE DATE:	MOST RECENTLY AMENDED: 10/26/1998	MOST RECENTLY REAFFIRMED: 5/6/2002
POLICY/PROCEDURE MANUAL SUMMARY CATEGORY: Instruction		

The school instruction program shall include the commemoration of special days and events which are identified as part of the curriculum.

Board Approval Acknowledged By:

Patricia L. Skebeck, Secretary and Treasurer
Board of Education of Harford County

POLICY

Policy Action Dates		
ACTION DATE	ACTION DATE	ACTION DATE
Reaffirmed 5/12/1980		
Amended 10/26/1998		
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Responsibility for Policy Maintenance & References		
LAST EDITOR/DRAFTER NAME: Unknown	JOB POSITION OF LAST EDITOR/DRAFTER: Unknown	
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REFERENCE 1 TYPE:	REFERENCE 1 NO.	REFERENCE 1 DESCRIPTION:
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REFERENCE 3 TYPE:	REFERENCE 3 NO.	REFERENCE 3 DESCRIPTION:
REFERENCE 4 TYPE:	REFERENCE 4 NO.	REFERENCE 4 DESCRIPTION:
REFERENCE 5 TYPE:	REFERENCE 5 NO.	REFERENCE 5 DESCRIPTION:
POLICY NUMBER PRIOR TO NOVEMBER 1, 2005: Instructional Program .03.05.085		

POLICY

POLICY TITLE: Home Instruction		
ADOPTION/EFFECTIVE DATE: 10/8/1984	MOST RECENTLY AMENDED: 10/26/1998	MOST RECENTLY REAFFIRMED: 5/6/2002
POLICY/PROCEDURE MANUAL SUMMARY CATEGORY: Instruction		

Home instruction programs shall be evaluated in accordance with the criteria established by the Maryland State Board of Education.

Board Approval Acknowledged By:

Patricia L. Skebeck, Secretary and Treasurer
Board of Education of Harford County

POLICY

Harford County Public Schools

Policy Action Dates		
ACTION DATE	ACTION DATE	ACTION DATE
Adopted 10/8/1984		
Amended 10/26/1998		
Reaffirmed 5/6/2002		

Responsibility for Policy Maintenance & References		
LAST EDITOR/DRAFTER NAME: Unknown	JOB POSITION OF LAST EDITOR/DRAFTER: Unknown	
PERSON RESPONSIBLE:	JOB POSITION OF PERSON RESPONSIBLE:	
DESIGNEE NAME: N/A	JOB POSITION OF DESIGNEE: N/A	
REFERENCE 1 TYPE: Legal	REFERENCE 1 NO. 13A.10.01.01	REFERENCE 1 DESCRIPTION: Code of Maryland Regulations
REFERENCE 2 TYPE:	REFERENCE 2 NO.	REFERENCE 2 DESCRIPTION:
REFERENCE 3 TYPE:	REFERENCE 3 NO.	REFERENCE 3 DESCRIPTION:
REFERENCE 4 TYPE:	REFERENCE 4 NO.	REFERENCE 4 DESCRIPTION:
REFERENCE 5 TYPE:	REFERENCE 5 NO.	REFERENCE 5 DESCRIPTION:
POLICY NUMBER PRIOR TO NOVEMBER 1, 2005: Instructional Program .03.05.100		