

## **PREGNANT AND PARENTING STUDENTS ATTENDANCE POLICY**

### **I. Purpose**

The purpose of Policy JEA is to ~~set forth the attendance policy for pregnant and parenting students~~ improve the educational outcomes of pregnant and parenting students by supporting their educational and parenting goals.

### **II. Background**

~~The Maryland General Assembly enacted Senate Bill 232, entitled "Education – Pregnant and Parenting Students – Attendance Policy," during the 2017 legislative session. The law, codified at Section 7-301.1 of the Education Article of the *Annotated Code of Maryland*, requires local boards of education to develop a written attendance policy for pregnant and parenting students that, at a minimum, meets the requirements set forth under law.~~

It is the policy of the Board of Education to prohibit gender discrimination of any type in educational programs and activities, including bias against pregnant and parenting students. The United States Department of Education's Regulations implementing Title IX of the U.S. Education Amendments of 1972, Public Law 92-318, codified at 20 U.S.C. §§ 1681–1688, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance, specifically address legal issues regarding pregnant and parenting students and prohibit disparate treatment of students based on pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of a pregnancy, or recovery from any of these conditions.

### **III. Definitions**

Within the context of this policy, the following definition applies:

Parenting Student: A student who is ~~a parent~~ the mother, father, or legal guardian of a child.

### **IV. Policy Statement/Procedures**

- A. The Board of Education is committed to providing equity and access for all students in a supportive school environment. Pregnant and parenting students must be allowed to participate in all aspects of the educational program, including all academic, physical, and social components.
- B. Pregnant and parenting students must have access to a range of specific activities and policies that govern activities both in and outside of the classroom. These activities include, but are not limited to, excused absences, make-up work, accommodations for instruction, a private space for lactation, and designated support staff in the school for the purpose of connecting pregnant and parenting students to services.

#### ~~C. Excused Absences~~

- ~~1. Washington County Public Schools ("School System") shall excuse all absences due to pregnancy or parenting-related conditions, including absences for:~~
  - ~~a. Labor;~~
  - ~~b. Delivery;~~
  - ~~c. Recovery; and~~
  - ~~d. Prenatal and postnatal medical appointments.~~

- ~~2. The school system shall provide at least ten (10) days of excused absences for a parenting student after the birth of the student's child.~~
- ~~3. A school must excuse a student's absence because of pregnancy or childbirth for as long as the student's doctor deems the absences medically necessary. A school may require a pregnant student or student who has given birth to submit medical certification for school participation only if the school also requires such certification from all students with physical or emotional conditions requiring the attention of a physician. When a student returns to school, she must be allowed to return to the same academic and extracurricular status as before her medical leave began.~~
- ~~4. The school system shall excuse any parenting-related absences due to an illness or a medical appointment of the student's child, including up to four (4) days of absences per school year for which the school may not require a note from a physician.~~
- ~~5. The school system shall excuse any absence due to a legal appointment involving the pregnant or parenting student that is related to family law proceedings, including adoption, custody, and visitation.~~

~~D. Make-Up Work~~

~~In addition to home and hospital teaching services, the school system may allow the student to:~~

- ~~1. Make up the work that the student missed in a time period that equals at least as many days that the student was absent; and~~
- ~~2. Choose one of the following alternatives to make up work that the student missed:
 
  - ~~a. Retake a semester;~~
  - ~~b. Participate in an online course credit recovery program; or~~
  - ~~c. Allow the student six (6) weeks to continue at the same pace and finish at a later date.~~~~

- C. The Board of Education shall ensure training of Washington County Public Schools employees on the objectives and requirements of this policy and the accompanying administrative regulation.
- D. The Board of Education shall publish ~~this policy and the accompanying administrative regulation shall be posted on the school system's website and referenced in the Student Handbook and Guide.~~
- E. The Superintendent is authorized to promulgate an administrative regulation to implement this policy ~~that addresses attendance and lawful absences, make up work, provisions of a private space for lactation, support for pregnant and parenting students, training of staff, communication, and violations of bullying or harassment.~~

Legal reference: [Section 4-139 of the Education Article of the \*Annotated Code of Maryland\*: "Maryland's Model Policy to Support the Educational and Parenting Goals and Improve the Educational Outcomes of Pregnant and Parenting Students"](#)  
[Section 7-301.1 of the Education Article of the \*Annotated Code of Maryland\*: "Pregnant and Parenting Students Attendance Policy"](#)  
[Code of Maryland Administrative Regulations \(COMAR\) 13A.03.05: "Administration of Home and Hospital Teaching for Students"](#)

COMAR 13A.08.01.03: "Lawful Absence"  
COMAR 13A.08.01.04: "Unlawful Absence"  
COMAR 13A.08.01.05: "Student Attendance Policy"  
COMAR 13A.08.01.06: "Educational Programs for Pregnant Girls"  
*Maryland Student Records System Manual* – ~~2016~~ 2020 edition  
Title IX of Education Amendments of 1972

See also: Policy JE and Administrative Regulation JE-R: "Student Attendance"

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Board of Education of Washington County