

HOUSE BILL 324

F1, F5
HB 1200/15 – HRU

6lr1927

By: **Delegates Kittleman, Adams, Flanagan, Ghrist, S. Howard, Jalisi, Krebs, Metzgar, Rose, Shoemaker, West, B. Wilson, and Wivell**

Introduced and read first time: January 27, 2016

Assigned to: Ways and Means

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Education – Maryland High School Diploma – Civics Test Requirement**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring a student to take and achieve a passing score on a certain
4 civics test in order to graduate from a public high school on or after a certain date;
5 requiring the State Board of Education on or before the first day of a certain school
6 year to determine the means of providing certain high school students an opportunity
7 to take a certain civics test; requiring a student to correctly answer at least a certain
8 percentage of the questions on a certain civics test to achieve a passing score;
9 authorizing a student to repeat taking a certain civics test until the student achieves
10 a passing score; requiring certain county boards of education to indicate on the
11 official educational record of certain high school students whether the student has
12 complied with certain requirements; requiring, on or after a certain date, certain
13 alternative requirements provided by the Department of Labor, Licensing, and
14 Regulation for obtaining a Maryland high school diploma to include taking and
15 achieving a certain passing score on a certain civics test; requiring, on or after a
16 certain date, an individual to take and receive a passing score on a certain civics test
17 to qualify for a Maryland high school diploma by examination; and generally relating
18 to the implementation of a civics test requirement for a Maryland high school
19 diploma.

20 BY adding to

21 Article – Education

22 Section 7–205.4

23 Annotated Code of Maryland

24 (2014 Replacement Volume and 2015 Supplement)

25 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

26 Article – Labor and Employment

27 Section 11–807(a)

28 Annotated Code of Maryland

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (2008 Replacement Volume and 2015 Supplement)

2 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
3 Article – Labor and Employment
4 Section 11–807(b) and 11–808
5 Annotated Code of Maryland
6 (2008 Replacement Volume and 2015 Supplement)

7 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
8 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

9 **Article – Education**

10 **7–205.4.**

11 (A) ON OR AFTER JANUARY 1, 2018, TO GRADUATE FROM A PUBLIC HIGH
12 SCHOOL, A STUDENT SHALL TAKE AND ACHIEVE A PASSING SCORE ON A CIVICS TEST
13 THAT CONSISTS OF THE 100 QUESTIONS USED FOR THE CIVICS PORTION OF THE
14 NATURALIZATION TEST ADMINISTERED BY THE U.S. CITIZENSHIP AND
15 IMMIGRATION SERVICES.

16 (B) ON OR BEFORE THE FIRST DAY OF THE 2017–2018 SCHOOL YEAR, THE
17 STATE BOARD SHALL DETERMINE THE MEANS OF PROVIDING EACH HIGH SCHOOL
18 STUDENT AN OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE THE CIVICS TEST REQUIRED UNDER
19 SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION.

20 (C) (1) A STUDENT SHALL ANSWER CORRECTLY AT LEAST 60% OF THE
21 QUESTIONS ON THE CIVICS TEST TO ACHIEVE A PASSING SCORE.

22 (2) A STUDENT MAY REPEAT TAKING THE CIVICS TEST UNTIL THE
23 STUDENT ACHIEVES A PASSING SCORE.

24 (D) EACH COUNTY BOARD SHALL INDICATE ON THE OFFICIAL
25 EDUCATIONAL RECORD OF EACH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT WHETHER THE STUDENT
26 HAS COMPLIED WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS SECTION.

27 **Article – Labor and Employment**

28 11–807.

29 (a) In this section, “Program” means the Maryland Adult External High School
30 Program established for the citizens of Maryland under regulations adopted by the
31 Secretary in consultation with the State Board of Education.

1 (b) (1) The Department and the State Board of Education recognize
2 demonstrated competencies in adults, whether or not those competencies were acquired in
3 a formal school setting.

4 (2) (I) [In] SUBJECT TO SUBPARAGRAPH (II) OF THIS PARAGRAPH,
5 IN response to its recognition of competencies, the Department shall provide alternative
6 requirements and methods of obtaining a Maryland high school diploma.

7 (II) 1. ON OR AFTER JANUARY 1, 2018, THE ALTERNATIVE
8 REQUIREMENTS PROVIDED UNDER SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH SHALL
9 INCLUDE TAKING AND ACHIEVING A PASSING SCORE ON A CIVICS TEST THAT
10 CONSISTS OF THE 100 QUESTIONS USED FOR THE CIVICS PORTION OF THE
11 NATURALIZATION TEST ADMINISTERED BY THE U.S. CITIZENSHIP AND
12 IMMIGRATION SERVICES.

13 2. AN INDIVIDUAL SHALL ANSWER CORRECTLY AT
14 LEAST 60% OF THE QUESTIONS ON THE CIVICS TEST TO ACHIEVE A PASSING SCORE.

15 3. AN INDIVIDUAL MAY REPEAT TAKING THE CIVICS
16 TEST UNTIL THE INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVES A PASSING SCORE.

17 (3) The State Board of Education shall award diplomas to the individuals
18 meeting the requirements of this subtitle.

19 11-808.

20 (a) An individual may obtain a high school diploma by examination as provided
21 in this section if the individual:

22 (1) has not obtained a high school diploma;

23 (2) resides in this State;

24 (3) is 16 years old or older; [and]

25 (4) has withdrawn from a regular full-time public or private school
26 program; AND

27 (5) (I) ON OR AFTER JANUARY 1, 2018, HAS TAKEN A CIVICS TEST
28 THAT CONSISTS OF THE 100 QUESTIONS USED FOR THE CIVICS PORTION OF THE
29 NATURALIZATION TEST ADMINISTERED BY THE U.S. CITIZENSHIP AND
30 IMMIGRATION SERVICES; AND

31 (II) ACHIEVED A PASSING SCORE BY ANSWERING CORRECTLY AT
32 LEAST 60% OF THE QUESTIONS ON THE CIVICS TEST.

1 (b) The Department shall offer examinations to individuals who are pursuing a
2 high school diploma under this subtitle at least twice each year at places throughout the
3 State that are reasonably convenient for the applicants.

4 (c) The examination shall:

5 (1) be offered in appropriate high school subject areas; and

6 (2) be of a comprehensive nature as determined by the State Board of
7 Education.

8 (d) An individual who fails an examination may repeat taking the examination.

9 (e) A member of the armed forces may earn a Maryland high school diploma by
10 taking the examinations furnished by the United States Armed Forces Institute and given
11 by the appropriate service officer.

12 (f) The diploma shall be awarded in accordance with the regulations adopted by
13 the Secretary and the State Board of Education.

14 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
15 October 1, 2016.