

Chapter 346

(Senate Bill 438)

AN ACT concerning

Public Schools – Pregnant and Parenting Students – Policies and Reports

FOR the purpose of requiring the State Department of Education to establish a model policy to support the educational and parenting goals and improve the educational outcomes of pregnant and parenting students; requiring the model policy to include certain policies and procedures; requiring each county board of education to establish a certain policy based on the Department’s model policy; providing for the construction of certain provisions of this Act; altering the required contents of a certain attendance policy developed by a county board; defining a certain term; and generally relating to pregnant and parenting students.

BY adding to

Article – Education

Section 4–138

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2018 Replacement Volume and 2020 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

Article – Education

Section 7–301.1(a) and (b)

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2018 Replacement Volume and 2020 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

Article – Education

Section 7–301.1(c)(1)

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2018 Replacement Volume and 2020 Supplement)

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

Article – Education**4–138.**

(A) IN THIS SECTION, “PARENTING STUDENT” MEANS A STUDENT WHO ~~EXERCISES CARE, CUSTODY, OR CONTROL OVER~~ IS THE MOTHER, FATHER, OR LEGAL GUARDIAN OF A CHILD.

(B) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL DEVELOP A MODEL POLICY TO SUPPORT THE EDUCATIONAL AND PARENTING GOALS AND IMPROVE THE EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES OF PREGNANT AND PARENTING STUDENTS.

(C) THE POLICY ESTABLISHED UNDER SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION SHALL:

(1) REQUIRE EACH HIGH SCHOOL TO DESIGNATE A PRIVATE LACTATION SPACE IN THE SCHOOL THAT:

(I) ~~IS LOCATED CLOSE TO A SINK AND REFRIGERATOR;~~

~~(H)~~ INCLUDES AT LEAST ONE SEATING OPTION WITH A FLAT SURFACE AND ELECTRICAL OUTLET NEARBY TO ACCOMMODATE PLACEMENT OF A BREAST PUMP DEVICE; AND

~~(H)~~ (II) IS NOT A BATHROOM OR CLOSET;

(2) PROVIDE LACTATING STUDENTS WITH ACCESS TO A REFRIGERATOR LOCATED REASONABLY CLOSE TO THE PRIVATE LACTATION SPACE REQUIRED UNDER ITEM (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION;

~~(2)~~ (3) REQUIRE SCHOOLS TO ~~ASSIST AND ADVISE~~ DESIGNATE AT LEAST ONE STAFF MEMBER TO CONNECT, TO THE EXTENT PRACTICABLE, PREGNANT AND PARENTING STUDENTS WITH ~~FINDING~~ RESOURCES TO FIND SAFE, AFFORDABLE, AND RELIABLE:

(I) CHILD CARE AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION SERVICES; AND

(II) TRANSPORTATION SERVICES TO AND FROM SCHOOL;

~~(3)~~ (4) INCORPORATE THE ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR PREGNANT AND PARENTING STUDENTS DEVELOPED UNDER § 7-301.1 OF THIS ARTICLE;

~~(4)~~ (5) PROVIDE FOR TRAINING OF SCHOOL PERSONNEL ON POLICY OBJECTIVES AND REQUIREMENTS; AND

~~(5)~~ (6) BE PUBLISHED IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM'S STUDENT HANDBOOK.

(D) (1) EACH COUNTY BOARD SHALL ESTABLISH A POLICY TO SUPPORT THE EDUCATIONAL AND PARENTING GOALS AND IMPROVE THE EDUCATIONAL

OUTCOMES OF PREGNANT AND PARENTING STUDENTS BASED ON THE MODEL POLICY ESTABLISHED IN SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION.

(2) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO A COUNTY BOARD TO ESTABLISH THE POLICY REQUIRED UNDER THIS SUBSECTION.

(E) NOTHING IN THIS SECTION SHALL BE CONSTRUED TO REQUIRE A SCHOOL TO CONSTRUCT AN ADDITION OR NEW SPACE TO A SCHOOL BUILDING TO PROVIDE A PRIVATE LACTATION SPACE TO COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE POLICY ESTABLISHED UNDER THIS SECTION.

7-301.1.

(a) A student's absence due to a student's pregnancy or parenting needs is a lawful absence as provided under this section.

(b) Each county board shall develop a written attendance policy for pregnant and parenting students that, at a minimum, meets the requirements of this section.

(c) (1) The policy developed under subsection (b) of this section shall:

(i) Excuse all absences due to pregnancy- or parenting-related conditions, including absences for:

1. Labor;
2. Delivery;
3. Recovery; and
4. Prenatal and postnatal medical appointments;

(ii) Provide at least 10 days of excused absences for a parenting student after the birth of the student's child;

(iii) Excuse any parenting-related absences due to an illness or a medical appointment of the student's child, including up to 4 days of absences per school year for which the school may not require a note from a physician; [and]

(iv) 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; AND

(V) EXCUSE ANY PARENTING-RELATED ABSENCE FROM A CLASS DUE TO USE OF A LACTATION SPACE TO NURSE OR EXPRESS BREAST MILK.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2021.

Approved by the Governor, May 18, 2021.