

POLICY	BOARD OF EDUCATION OF FREDERICK COUNTY, MARYLAND
ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOLS	POLICY 430
430.1 Age Requirements for Enrollment 430.2 Attendance Areas 430.3 Residence Exceptions 430.4 Attendance is Essential / Legitimate Reasons for Absence 430.5 Attendance - Pregnant and Parenting Students	

Purpose: The Board of Education of Frederick County (Board) values and supports criteria for school attendance to ensure compliance with the law, as well as working with families and students to remove barriers which may prevent a student's access to his/her education on a regular and consistent basis. The Board recognizes this as a joint effort between the school and home.

430.1 Age Requirements for Enrollment

It is expected that every student enrolled will remain a student until graduating or officially transferring from Frederick County Public Schools. Maryland law requires every child who is 5 years old or older and under 18 years of age residing in the state to attend public school regularly during the entire period of each school year, unless it can be shown that the child is elsewhere receiving regular, thorough instruction in the studies usually taught in public schools to children of the same age or the child satisfies an applicable exemption.

A. Prekindergarten

Children enrolling in prekindergarten shall be 4 years old or older on September 1 of the school year in which the child applies for entrance. Children who are 5 years old by September 1 are not eligible for prekindergarten enrollment.

A 3-year-old, upon request by the parent/guardian, may be admitted to prekindergarten if deemed eligible under Maryland law and the child demonstrates educational needs warranting early admission.

B. Kindergarten

Children enrolling in kindergarten shall be 5 years old or older on September 1 of the school year in which the child applies for entrance.

In accordance with paragraph C below, a 4-year-old, upon request by the parent/guardian, may be admitted to kindergarten if the Superintendent or designee determines that the child demonstrates capabilities warranting early admission.

C. Early Entrance - Kindergarten

Parents/guardians may request an exception for early entrance to kindergarten for any child born up to 45 days after the regular cut-off date of September 1 (i.e., September 2 - October 16) in accordance with regulations issued by the Superintendent.

The intent of early entrance to kindergarten is to accommodate those students who show accelerated development both socially and academically.

D. Waiver to Delay Kindergarten

Children may apply to receive a one-year waiver to delay attending kindergarten and are then required to enter kindergarten the following school year.

E. First Grade

A child admitted to the first grade shall be 6 years old or older on September 1 of the school year in which the child applies for entrance and has successfully completed an accredited kindergarten program.

A 5-year-old, upon request by the parent/guardian, may be admitted to first grade if the Superintendent or designee determines that the child demonstrates capabilities warranting early admission.

F. Age of 21

Students under 21 years of age prior to the first day of school of that year are legally eligible and highly encouraged to enroll for the current school year.¹ Previous limited formal or interrupted education should not be a barrier for students enrolling in school prior to age 21 years of age.

430.2 Attendance Areas

Students shall attend the school of the attendance area in which they reside and in accordance with procedures outlined in regulation.

430.3 Residence Exceptions

A student may be enrolled in a school other than the one in the attendance area in which the student resides in accordance with procedures outlined in regulation. (Refer to FCPS Regulation 400-15 *Assignment and Transfer of Students*.) Such decision will be evaluated annually in accordance with criteria as it relates to health and wellness for students K-8th grade.

¹ COMAR 13A.02.06.02.B(4) "Age 21" means that the student has not received a high school diploma and is not 21 years old on the first day of the school year. (Refer to FCPS Regulation 400-07 Enrollment Residency Requirements)

430.4 Attendance is Essential / Legitimate Reasons for Absence

Attendance is essential to obtaining all that school has to offer. Therefore, the Board expects all students to attend every school day. Obviously, the Board realizes that there are some legitimate reasons, such as illness, which will cause a student to be absent. (Refer to FCPS Regulation 400-98 *Student Attendance*.)

The Board further realizes that occasionally parents will choose to take a trip with their children during the school year. Therefore, students who take trips with approval of their parent/guardian may be excused for a maximum of 5 days, per school year, with prior written notice to the principal or designee.

In this effort to promote good attendance, any student who has more than five unlawful absences in any grading period may fail that course/lose credit in affected class(es) for that grading period.

430.5 Attendance – Pregnant and Parenting Students

The Board recognizes a student's absence due to pregnancy or parenting needs is an excused absence, and directs the Superintendent or designee to modify the existing attendance regulation to comply with Maryland law in this area. Such regulation will include allowances for students to make up work by retaking a semester, participating in an online course credit recovery program, or allowing a student six weeks to continue at the same pace and finish at a later date.

Legal Reference	<i>Annotated Code of Maryland</i> , Education Article, § 7-301 and 7-301.1	
	COMAR 13A.08.01.01 Attendance and COMAR 13A.02.06.02.B(4)	
	Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972	
Policy History	Reviewed: 2015, 2017, 2019, 2021 (Adopted Prior to 1998)	Revised: 1/12/22