

SENATE BILL 899

F2, F1

5lr2392

By: **Senator Augustine**

Introduced and read first time: January 28, 2025

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Education – High School Class Rankings and Guaranteed Admissions to Public**
3 **Senior Institutions of Higher Education**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring certain high schools to prepare, in a certain manner, a class
5 ranking of each high school student who completes a certain grade level to establish
6 rankings for use in a certain guaranteed admissions process to certain public senior
7 institutions of higher education in the State; requiring, beginning in a certain
8 academic year, public senior institutions of higher education to establish a certain
9 process for accepting high school students who apply for admission under a
10 guaranteed admission policy; and generally relating to admissions to public senior
11 institutions of higher education in the State.

12 BY renumbering

13 Article – Education

14 Section 7–205.2, 7–205.3, and 7–205.4

15 to be Section 7–205.3, 7–205.4, and 7–205.5, respectively

16 Annotated Code of Maryland

17 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

18 BY adding to

19 Article – Education

20 Section 7–205.2 and 15–101.1

21 Annotated Code of Maryland

22 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

23 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

24 Article – Education

25 Section 10–101(a) and (m)

26 Annotated Code of Maryland

27 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
Article – Education
Section 15–101(a)
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2022 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That Section(s) 7–205.2, 7–205.3, and 7–205.4 of Article – Education of the Annotated Code
of Maryland be renumbered to be Section(s) 7–205.3, 7–205.4, and 7–205.5, respectively.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland read
as follows:

Article – Education

7–205.2.

(A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS
INDICATED.

(2) “CLASS” MEANS A COHORT OF STUDENTS IN THE SAME GRADE
LEVEL.

(3) “HIGH SCHOOL” MEANS A PUBLIC OR NONPUBLIC SCHOOL IN THE
STATE THAT OFFERS A PROGRAM OF INSTRUCTION FOR AT LEAST GRADES 11 AND
12, INCLUDING A VIRTUAL SCHOOL ESTABLISHED UNDER SUBTITLE 14 OF THIS
TITLE.

(4) “PUBLIC SENIOR INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION” HAS THE
MEANING STATED IN § 10–101 OF THIS ARTICLE.

(B) THIS SECTION APPLIES ONLY TO STUDENTS ENROLLED IN A HIGH
SCHOOL.

(C) BEGINNING WITH THE STUDENTS ENTERING GRADE 12 FOR THE
2025–2026 SCHOOL YEAR, EACH HIGH SCHOOL SHALL PREPARE A CLASS RANKING
OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE SCHOOL IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS SECTION.

(D) (1) IF A HIGH SCHOOL CLASS HAS AT LEAST 15 STUDENTS, ON
COMPLETION OF GRADE 11, EACH STUDENT IN THE HIGH SCHOOL CLASS SHALL BE
RANKED ON THE BASIS OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT USING A STUDENT’S OVERALL
CUMULATIVE GRADE POINT AVERAGE AS THE SOLE CRITERION FOR THE RANKING.

(2) SUBJECT TO PARAGRAPH (3) OF THIS SUBSECTION, EACH HIGH SCHOOL CLASS RANKING SHALL IDENTIFY THE STUDENTS WHO RANK IN THE TOP 5% AND 10% OF THEIR HIGH SCHOOL CLASS.

(3) IF A HIGH SCHOOL CLASS MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS TO BE RANKED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION BUT HAS FEWER THAN 20 STUDENTS:

(I) THE HIGHEST RANKED STUDENT SHALL BE DESIGNATED AS BEING THE ONLY STUDENT IN THE TOP 5% OF THEIR HIGH SCHOOL CLASS; AND

(II) THE SECOND HIGHEST RANKED STUDENT SHALL BE DESIGNATED AS BEING THE ONLY STUDENT IN THE TOP 10% OF THEIR HIGH SCHOOL CLASS.

(E) (1) ON COMPLETION OF THE HIGH SCHOOL CLASS RANKING REQUIRED UNDER SUBSECTION (D) OF THIS SECTION, EACH STUDENT WHO RANKS IN THE TOP 10% OF THEIR HIGH SCHOOL CLASS SHALL BE NOTIFIED BY THE HIGH SCHOOL OF THE STUDENT'S CLASS RANK.

(2) A HIGH SCHOOL CLASS RANKING IN THE TOP 5% OR 10% AS DETERMINED UNDER THIS SECTION SHALL BE:

(I) DESIGNATED ON A STUDENT'S HIGH SCHOOL TRANSCRIPT, AS APPLICABLE; AND

(II) USED TO ESTABLISH ELIGIBILITY FOR GUARANTEED ADMISSIONS TO A PUBLIC SENIOR INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION UNDER § 15-101.1 OF THIS ARTICLE.

(F) THE PERCENTAGE DESIGNATIONS FOR A HIGH SCHOOL CLASS RANKING UNDER SUBSECTION (D)(3) OF THIS SECTION:

(1) SHALL BE USED ONLY TO ESTABLISH ELIGIBILITY FOR GUARANTEED ADMISSIONS TO A PUBLIC SENIOR INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION UNDER § 15-101.1 OF THIS ARTICLE; AND

(2) DO NOT PRECLUDE A COUNTY BOARD OR HIGH SCHOOL FROM USING AN ALTERNATIVE METHOD FOR CALCULATING THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN THE TOP 5% AND 10% OF THEIR HIGH SCHOOL CLASS FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE.

10-101.

(a) In this division the following words have the meanings indicated.

(m) “Public senior higher education institution” means:

(1) The constituent institutions of the University System of Maryland and the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science;

(2) Morgan State University; and

(3) St. Mary’s College of Maryland.

15–101.

(a) **(1) [Each] SUBJECT TO PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION, EACH public institution of higher education shall accept for admission any graduate of an approved public high school:**

[(1)] (I) Who is certified by his high school principal, based on standards of the State Board of Education, as qualified to pursue a course of study at the institution; or

[(2)] (II) Who meets the admission standards of the institution.

(2) EACH PUBLIC SENIOR INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION SHALL ACCEPT FOR ADMISSION ANY INDIVIDUAL WHO QUALIFIES FOR GUARANTEED ADMISSION UNDER § 15–101.1 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

15–101.1.

(A) IN THIS SECTION, “HIGH SCHOOL” HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 7–205.2 OF THIS ARTICLE.

(B) EACH PUBLIC SENIOR INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION SHALL ESTABLISH A PROCESS FOR ACCEPTING ELIGIBLE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO APPLY FOR ADMISSION TO THE INSTITUTION UNDER A GUARANTEED ADMISSION POLICY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS SECTION.

(C) SUBJECT TO SUBSECTION (D) OF THIS SECTION, BEGINNING IN THE 2026–2027 ACADEMIC YEAR, A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT IS ELIGIBLE FOR GUARANTEED ADMISSION TO A PUBLIC SENIOR HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION IF THE STUDENT:

(1) HAS COMPLETED OR IS EXPECTED TO COMPLETE ALL OF THE PREREQUISITE COURSES THAT ARE REQUIRED BY THE INSTITUTION TO WHICH THE STUDENT APPLIES;

(2) APPLIES FOR ADMISSION TO AN INSTITUTION:

(I) BY THE REQUIRED APPLICATION DEADLINE ESTABLISHED BY THE INSTITUTION;

(II) DURING GRADE 12 OF HIGH SCHOOL OR THE FINAL YEAR OF HOME INSTRUCTION; AND

(III) SUBJECT TO SUBSECTION (E) OF THIS SECTION, INDICATES ON THE APPLICATION THAT THE STUDENT QUALIFIES FOR GUARANTEED ADMISSION; AND

(3) SATISFIES ONE OF THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

(I) IS RANKED IN THE TOP 10% OF THE STUDENT'S HIGH SCHOOL CLASS IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 7-205.2 OF THIS ARTICLE;

(II) IS DESIGNATED AS A FINALIST IN THE NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM ADMINISTERED BY THE NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP CORPORATION OR HAS ACHIEVED AN EQUIVALENT DESIGNATION UNDER A SUCCESSOR PROGRAM OR BY A SUCCESSOR ORGANIZATION; OR

(III) 1. PARTICIPATES IN A HOME INSTRUCTION PROGRAM; AND

2. HAS ATTAINED A SCORE ON A NATIONALLY ACCEPTED COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION THAT PLACES THE INDIVIDUAL'S SCORE IN AT LEAST THE 90TH PERCENTILE FOR THE EXAMINATION CYCLE.

(D) A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR GUARANTEED ADMISSION TO THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK CAMPUS ONLY IF THE STUDENT:

(1) APPLIES FOR ADMISSION BY THE EARLY APPLICATION DEADLINE ESTABLISHED BY THE INSTITUTION;

(2) SATISFIES ONE OF THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

(I) IS RANKED IN THE TOP 5% OF THE STUDENT'S HIGH SCHOOL CLASS IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 7-205.2 OF THIS ARTICLE;

(II) IS DESIGNATED AS A FINALIST IN THE NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM ADMINISTERED BY THE NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP

CORPORATION OR HAS ACHIEVED AN EQUIVALENT DESIGNATION UNDER A SUCCESSOR PROGRAM OR BY A SUCCESSOR ORGANIZATION; OR

(III) 1. PARTICIPATES IN A HOME INSTRUCTION PROGRAM;
AND

2. HAS ATTAINED A SCORE ON A NATIONALLY ACCEPTED COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION THAT PLACES THE STUDENT'S SCORE IN AT LEAST THE 98TH PERCENTILE FOR THE EXAMINATION CYCLE; AND

(3) MEETS THE OTHER REQUIREMENTS ESTABLISHED UNDER SUBSECTION (C) OF THIS SECTION FOR GUARANTEED ADMISSION.

(E) IF A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT ELIGIBLE FOR GUARANTEED ADMISSION UNDER THIS SECTION APPLIES TO MORE THAN ONE PUBLIC SENIOR INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION, THE STUDENT SHALL DESIGNATE THE ONE INSTITUTION TO WHICH THE STUDENT DESIRES GUARANTEED ADMISSION.

(F) A PUBLIC SENIOR INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION MAY:

(1) VERIFY ANY INFORMATION REQUIRED BY THE INSTITUTION AND PROVIDED BY A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT INDICATING ELIGIBILITY FOR GUARANTEED ADMISSION UNDER THIS SECTION; AND

(2) REVOKE A STUDENT'S OFFER OF ADMISSION AT THE INSTITUTION UNDER THE GUARANTEED ADMISSION POLICY UNDER THIS SECTION IF THE STUDENT:

(I) IS NOT AWARDED A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA BEFORE THE STUDENT'S ANTICIPATED MATRICULATION DATE;

(II) ENGAGES IN ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT;

(III) AFTER THE STUDENT'S APPLICATION IS SUBMITTED, EXPERIENCES SIGNIFICANTLY DECLINING GRADES SUCH THAT, UNDER THE INSTITUTION'S STANDARD APPLICATION PROCESS, WOULD JUSTIFY THE INSTITUTION REVOKING AN OFFER FOR ADMISSION; OR

(IV) MISREPRESENTED ANY INFORMATION ON THE STUDENT'S APPLICATION REGARDING THE ELIGIBILITY OF THE STUDENT FOR GUARANTEED ADMISSION, INCLUDING CLASS RANK, COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION SCORE, OR STATUS AS A FINALIST IN THE NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.

1 **(G) THE PROVISIONS IN THIS SECTION DO NOT GUARANTEE A HIGH SCHOOL**
2 **STUDENT ELIGIBLE FOR GUARANTEED ADMISSION PLACEMENT IN ANY SPECIFIC**
3 **PROGRAM OFFERED BY THE PUBLIC SENIOR INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION**
4 **OR TO ANY SPECIFIC COLLEGE, SCHOOL, OR FUNCTIONAL EQUIVALENT WITHIN THE**
5 **INSTITUTION TO WHICH THE STUDENT APPLIES.**

6 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
7 1, 2025.