



Muscogee County School District

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For Immediate Release

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MEDIA RELEASE

House Bill 91 Notice

Eligibility Requirements and Procedures to Petition for High School Diploma

(Columbus, GA)-Former students of the Muscogee County School District who are eligible and want to apply for a high school diploma under House Bill 91 (HB 91) must submit a petition form by Friday, March 4, 2016, in order to receive a diploma at no cost. HB 91 petition forms received *after* the March 4, 2016, deadline will incur a cost of \$25.

HB 91, a retroactive law, was signed and approved by Governor Nathan Deal on Monday, March 30, 2015. The law eliminated the Georgia High School Graduation Test (GHS GT), Georgia High School Writing Test (GHS WT) and Basic Skills Test. As a result, former students who enrolled in 9th grade for the first time on or after July 1, 1981, who meet credit requirements for the state and the Muscogee County School District, are eligible to earn a high school diploma.

The district's HB 91 procedures outline the steps former/eligible students may take to obtain a high school diploma. All former students who are eligible under HB 91 for a high school diploma must complete and submit a HB 91 petition form to the Muscogee County School District Records Management Office, 5661 Lorenzo Road, Columbus, Georgia 31904. HB 91 petition forms are accessible on-line at the *For Students* or *For Parents* link on the district's web site, www.muscogee.k12.ga.us. Students who last attended Baker High School, the Teenage Parenting Center, or the Academic Success Center should also complete the petition form and submit it to the records management office.

When a former HB 91 eligible student submits a petition for the high school diploma, he or she must present a valid (*non-expired*) government-issued photo ID. The parents of former/eligible

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students *cannot* initiate the process for any student 18 years of age or older unless there is a court order presented, which shows parental rights have been retained. Once the completed petition is received, the student's transcript is reviewed and compared to the graduation requirements that were in place the year the student first entered the 9th grade. If the student attempted the 9th grade more than once, the year of the student's first attempt will be used.

If the student *meets* the credit requirements (*state and district*) for graduation, the petitioner is contacted and informed of the decision. In addition, the student's transcript is updated to indicate the new graduation status and a diploma is ordered for the eligible HB 91 petitioner. The student's name appears on the diploma as it appeared on the transcript during the time he or she was enrolled in school. The graduation date is listed as March 30, 2015.

If the student *does not meet* the credit requirements (*state and district*) for graduation, the petitioner is contacted and informed of the decision and the right to appeal. Appeals are handled through the Department of K-12 Curriculum and Instruction.

Approved HB 91 eligible petitioners may also participate in a summer graduation ceremony. The request to participate in the summer graduation *must* be indicated on the HB 91 petition form at the time of submission. Petitioners who choose to participate in the *summer graduation ceremony* must complete a petition form by June 10, 2016.

For more information about HB 91, access the Georgia General Assembly website, <http://www.legis.ga.gov/Legislation/en-US/dis--play/20152016/HB/91>. **HB 91 applicants may contact the Department of Records Management, (706) 748-2383**, or the Department of K-12 Curriculum and Instruction, (706)748-2121. All media representatives should contact communications@muscogee.k12.ga.us .

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