

Hanover County Board of Supervisors
June 27, 2007
6:00 PM
Citizen Time

Good evening member of the Hanover Board of Supervisors. My name is Linda Moore. I live in the South Anna District. My son entered the ninth grade during the 1999-2000 school year. According to **8 VAC 20-131-50. Requirement for Graduation**

A. The requirements for a student to earn a diploma and graduate from a Virginia high school shall be those in effect when that student enters the ninth grade for the first time. Students shall be awarded a diploma upon graduation from a Virginia high school.

After spending many of his high school years being excluded from enrolling in the courses and tests, due to his disability, we researched the policies both in Virginia and Hanover on diploma options and requirements.

My son did what any other student over the age of 18 had the option to do; he enrolled in a correspondence high school program approved for Home Instruction. He dreams of going to college so he chose a high school program which gave him the credits needed to enroll in college.

My son enrolled in the American School in August 2004 in the College Preparatory Diploma program. This accredited correspondence high school offered my son the opportunity to earn the same unit of credits as other public high school students in Virginia and Hanover. American School accepted 11 of the 15 units of credit that my son previously earned from HCPS.

In one year my son earned 7 units of credit from the American School. He earned a GPA of 3.28 and was awarded his high school diploma from the American School on May 9, 2005. At that time we thought those things were over with Hanover County Public Schools, boy were we WRONG.

In August 2005, I attend an exit IEP meeting for my son with Hanover County Public Schools. With his transcripts from America School and a licensed teacher who had administered all the exams to my son we expected that my son's school records would reflect his accomplishments. However that was not the case. HCPS refused to accept the credit from American School. My son went from being a High school graduate to a high school drop out that day.

Since that day we have been working hard to get my son's diploma statue changed. In May 2006 my son reenrolled in HCPS, however the IEP team would not allow him to enroll in the courses he needed to meet 8 VAC 20-131-50 Requirements for graduation.

On December 6, 2006 and January 15, 2007 IEP meetings were held. The IEP team agreed to allow my son to enroll in two courses (Oceanography and Modern Global Studies). According to Project Graduation and confirmed by Mr. Paul Vecchione principal of Patrick Henry High School these were the only courses my son needed to meet the requirements for a standard high school diploma.

On June 14, 2007 (end of 2006-2007 school year) my son successfully completed the two courses needed to meet the requirements for a standard high school diploma. He also took the End of Course World Geography SOL test on June 15, 2007 with his accommodations.

At an IEP meeting held on June 25, 2007, they refused to award my son the standard diploma that he had earned. He was offered only a Special/IEP Diploma by Mrs. Diane Brown. Mrs. Brown stated that HCPS policy states that my son has not met the requirements for any diploma except a Special/IEP Diploma.

In light of the information provided to us by VDOE. We believe Mrs. Brown has been misinformed when it comes to The Standards of Quality (§ 22.1-253.13:4 of the Code of Virginia) and 8VAC 20-131-60. Transfer of Credits - Transfer from a Nonpublic School.

The Standard of Quality, in § 22.1-253.13:4 of the Code of Virginia, require local school boards to make provisions for students who transfer between secondary schools and from nonpublic schools or from home instruction as outlined in the standards for accreditation. Each Local school board shall develop a policy for the transfer of students consistent with these standards.

At the June 25, 2005 IEP meeting in spite of the regulation "Further, reasonable accommodation to meet the requirements for diplomas shall be provided for otherwise qualified students with disabilities as needed." only a Special/IEP diploma was offered. We feel that this is just a mistake on the part of Mrs. Brown nor offering my son a standard high school diploma. It appears Mrs. Brown is not aware that the regulations apply to all students. We ask for your help with this matter before it becomes necessary to take this matter any further.

We ask that you ensure that Hanover County Public Schools follows the regulations from the Virginia Department of Education in all matters. We understand that the Code of Virginia requires compliance with all Board of Education requirements in order to receive funds.