



GED ENROLLMENT AND TRANSFER POLICY

Internal Memo for District 79 Programs
Updated for School Year 2010-2011 (As of 8/30/10)

This document sets forth the policies of District 79 regarding referral, enrollment, and transfer of students into and out of GED programs within District 79, a division of the New York City Department of Education (DOE). These GED programs are the GED Plus and the Access GED programs. These GED programs will be held accountable for adhering to applicable provisions of District 79's GED Enrollment Policy. Additionally, community based organizations entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with District 79 to collaborate on the delivery of a GED preparation program shall also adhere to the applicable policies outlined in this document.

1. Referral and Enrollment

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1.1 What are the general principles of enrollment in a GED program?

Enrollment in a GED program is entirely voluntary on the part of the student. Under no circumstances may a student's community school force a student to enroll in a GED or other educational program that does not grant credits leading to either a Regents high school diploma or a regular, local high school diploma.

New York City students under 21 years old who have not received a regular high school diploma have the following essential rights until the end of the school year in which a student turns 21:

Students are entitled to attend a public school, such as a full-time high school or high school program run by the New York City Department of Education;

Students have the right to re-enroll in public high school at any time before turning 21; and

Students have the right to refuse to be involuntarily transferred from a public high school to a full- or part-time education program, such as a GED program or any alternative program that does not provide the opportunity to earn credits toward a regular high school diploma.

Furthermore, students have these rights even if they have voluntarily dropped out of their community school, are currently enrolled in a GED program, or already have a GED or an IEP diploma.

1.2 What factors are considered for enrollment in a GED program?

There are several state-mandated requirements an applicant must meet in order to sit for the GED exam, one of which permits a student to sit for the exam only if he/she is enrolled in a New York State-approved program (called an Alternative High School Equivalency Preparation Program). All students enrolled in a DOE GED program are eligible to sit for the examination because all DOE GED programs have been approved by New York State.

Additionally, there are DOE requirements for enrollment in a GED program that follow local, state and federal laws pertaining to the education of students under the age of 21. These requirements are explained below in Sections 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5.

A student's age and number of earned academic credits are relevant when considering which DOE program is most appropriate. Administrators should evaluate all options before recommending that a student enroll in a GED program and should adhere to the following admissions standards when discussing options with a student and/or the student's parent. See also Attachment A, Student Eligibility Matrix, which sets forth the admissions standards in chart format. Additionally, to qualify for enrollment in a DOE GED program, a student cannot be concurrently enrolled in a college-degree granting program.

Although it is preferable to have a student pursue a regular high school diploma whenever possible, enrolling in a GED program may be appropriate for certain over-age and under-credited students.

1.3 What is the guidance for a student who has not completed the school year in which he/she turns 17 (compulsory aged 17 year old)? *Not permitted to enroll in GED programs, except in rare circumstances*

This student should be strongly advised to pursue a regular high school diploma, either in a regular public high school or in a transfer school. For example, some transfer schools specifically welcome students with 11 or fewer credits.

In some rare circumstances, a 17 year old who has been advised of his/her rights to attend high school, has obtained parental consent, and who prefers to enroll in a GED program may be enrolled in a full time GED program. A full time GED program requires that the student attend classes for at least 5.5 hours per day.

While a student in this age range may be permitted to enroll in a GED program, he/she will not be permitted to sit for the GED exam until the end of the school year in which the student turns 17.

1.4 What is the guidance for a 17 year old student who has completed the school year in which he/she turns 17 (non-compulsory 17 year old)?

1.4.1 Over 17 academic high school academic credits: *Not recommended, but permitted to enroll in GED programs with parental consent*

This student should be advised and encouraged to pursue a regular high school diploma, either in a public high school, at a transfer school, or at a Young Adult Borough Center (YABC).

A 17 year old who has been advised of his/her right to attend a public high school, who has obtained parental consent, and who prefers to enroll in a GED program may enroll in a GED program. This student will be permitted to sit for the GED exam at the time deemed appropriate by the GED program.

1.4.2 Between zero and 17 high school academic credits: *Not recommended, but permitted to enroll in GED programs with parental consent*

This student should be advised and encouraged to use all valid avenues for completing a high school diploma. He/she should plan to attend a high school with a guidance plan and Academic Intervention Support (AIS) plan for credit recovery, or may enroll in a transfer school.

A 17 year old who has been advised of his/her rights to attend high schools, has obtained parental consent, and prefers to enroll in a GED program may enroll in a GED program. This student will be permitted to sit for the GED exam at the time deemed appropriate by the GED program.

1.5 What is the guidance for a student who is at least 18 years old and has not yet completed the school year in which he/she turns 21?

1.5.1 Over 17 high school academic credits: *Not recommended, but permitted to enroll in GED programs*

This student should be advised and encouraged to use all valid avenues for obtaining a regular high school diploma if it is likely that the student will not “age out” of the high school diploma option (*i.e.* if the student is likely not to meet requirements for obtaining a high school diploma prior to completion of the year in which the student turns 21 years old).

A student between the ages of 18 and 21 who has been advised of his/her rights to attend high school and who prefers to enroll in a GED program may enroll in a GED program. This student will be permitted to sit for the GED exam at the time deemed appropriate by the GED program.

1.5.2 Between zero and 17 high school academic credits: *Permitted to enroll in GED programs*

This student may anticipate “aging out” of the regular high school diploma option before he/she can complete the year in which he/she turns 21 years old and may chose to enroll in a GED program. He/she also has a right to remain in his/her current school.

A student who turn 21 and does not complete a regular high school diploma in the same school year can pursue the GED through the Office of Adult and Continuing Education.

1.6 What is the guidance for a student previously receiving special education services?

A student who received special education services when enrolled in a community school is subject to the enrollment guidelines outlined above. In addition, that student must also meet the following requirements:

Parental notification, not direct consent, is required for a student with a disability who wishes to enroll in a GED program before completion of the year in which the student turns 21. After that school year, the student would need to enroll in a DOE Adult Education program instead of a DOE K-12 GED program.

Additionally, the student (and the student's parent, if the student is younger than 18 years old) must sign a form acknowledging that the student will not receive IEP mandated special education services while enrolled in a DOE GED program. This form provides essential information about the services the student may receive when enrolled in a DOE GED program. It also advises the student of his/her right to re-enroll in a public high school (until the student turns 21) and receive the services recommended on the student's IEP. See Attachment B, GED Consent Form – Students with Disabilities: Acknowledgement Regarding Special Education Services. If the student and parent still wish to receive the services on the student's IEP, the student should be referred back to a public high school which could include placement in a District 75 program.

A GED program may not be the most appropriate placement for a student who requires significant special education services and supports. For example, a student previously assigned to District 75 may need a classroom environment that cannot be replicated in a GED program. If a student who is enrolled in a District 75 school wishes to enroll in a GED program, he/she must meet with a counselor who will explain to the student what services he/she will and will not be receiving at the site. District 75 staff should be consulted to discuss whether a GED program is a reasonable setting for that student.

1.7 What is the guidance for a student previously receiving English as a Second Language (ESL) services?

This student shall be subject to the enrollment requirements outlined above. In addition, the student must provide information on the following topics in order for an appropriate placement to be determined:

The student should provide any information he/she has pertaining to previous ESL or ELL services received.

Additionally, for students educated in schools outside of the U.S., if the student completed 8th grade (or the equivalent) in his/her home country, or if the student was formerly enrolled in a non-U.S. university preparation program, he/she should obtain an international high school transcript evaluation from a community school prior to enrolling in a GED program. This process must be completed in order to ensure an informed conversation about the student's options.

1.8 How is a student enrolled?

A student under age 21 is typically enrolled in a GED program through a Referral Center For High School Alternatives (see below for contact information).[†] Referral Centers are available to any student, and are designed to serve those who have fallen behind academically in high school and students in need of other non-academic supports. Referral Centers are responsible for directing students to DOE and non-DOE resources that will help them succeed academically, and are responsible for enrolling students in some programs such as GED programs. A student who wishes to enroll in a DOE GED program should visit a Referral Center during regular school hours to meet with a member of the guidance staff.

Once a student arrives at a Referral Center, he/she consults with a counselor who explains the student's various enrollment options. If the student intends to enroll in a GED program, the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), a math and reading placement evaluation, is administered. The TABE determines the student's current academic levels, and TABE results give the student and the counselor an idea of how long the student will need to be enrolled in a GED program prior to taking the GED exam. The results of the TABE tests will also determine where a student will take GED preparation classes—at a hub or at

a satellite site (explained in 3.2). DOE GED programs serve students of all levels, ranging from students who need more focused literacy instruction to students who are almost ready to sit for the GED exam.

† A student who is 21 or over should enroll in a GED program through the DOE’s Office of Adult Education.

2. Parental Consent

2.1 When is parental consent necessary?

Because enrollment in a DOE GED program is voluntary for students, every student who enrolls in a GED program must sign a consent form. In addition to obtaining consent from all students, informed parental consent is required to enroll any student who is a minor (under the age of 18). If the student is no longer a minor (over the age of 18), no parental consent form is necessary.

Parental notification, not direct consent, is required for a student with a disability who wishes to enroll in a DOE GED program before completion of the school year in which the student turns 21.

2.2 What is required for parental consent?

As part of enrollment in a DOE GED program, both the student and his/her parent (if applicable) must be given an opportunity to review the document entitled “GED Fact Sheet.” After being informed about the DOE’s GED programs, a parent or guardian must have an opportunity to ask questions about the program(s) and must approve, in writing, a minor student’s enrollment in the program. The student and parent must be informed about the student’s enrollment in a DOE GED program. See Attachment C, Consent Forms and Accompanying Documents.

3. Academic Program

3.1 How is a student’s academic program determined?

Upon enrollment in a DOE GED program, the student will begin the process of determining which program best suits the student. The intake process serves to assess the needs and abilities of each student. The purpose of the initial intake session is two-fold. First, a counselor will conduct a comprehensive orientation with each student to identify the program that best meets his/her needs and interests, discuss the GED test and review postsecondary options. Second, the counselor will provide the student with essential information regarding their next steps, including an overview of the program, intake procedures, timelines and schedule for ongoing administration of the TABE test, and the process involved for taking the GED exam.

If not completed already, the TABE examination is administered to assess a student’s achievement levels and based on these scores and information shared at the intake session, the student’s academic program is determined.

3.2 What is the GED Plus “hub and spoke” model?

GED Plus operates under a “hub and spoke” model, with “hubs” located in all five boroughs and “spokes,” or satellite sites, representing the highest need communities, located throughout the City. Each borough has a central location called a “hub.” Each hub has the capacity to provide classes for approximately 200 students at any given time. Classes at each hub are generally offered to those

students who need greater academic support to prepare for the GED exam. English Language Learners, students with disabilities, and students who have lower literacy skills usually attend classes at the hub, where instruction is differentiated, technology is made available, and guidance staff is on site. GED Plus hubs are conveniently located in the same building as the Referral Centers for High School Alternatives where students can explore additional educational options and seek social supports.

GED preparation classes are also provided in various satellite sites located in community based organizations, hospitals, hotels, and schools throughout the City. There are over 70 different locations in New York City where students may study for the GED with a certified NYC DOE teacher. GED Plus satellite sites extend into many different neighborhoods so that students can access them more conveniently. Classes at the satellite sites are usually offered to students whose academic skills and abilities allow them to be scheduled for the GED exam after a shorter period of enrollment than students at the hubs. Programs at satellite sites offer a wide array of wrap-around services, including career training, counseling, internships and other supportive services. Students enrolled at a satellite site may still utilize the services offered at the Referral Center for High School Alternatives.

3.3 What is Access GED and how does it differ from GED Plus?

Access GED programs are designed to serve the needs of students reading at a 6th grade level or above who seek work-related experience in addition to their GED instruction. GED Plus programs serve students of all proficiency levels.

To enroll in an Access GED program, a student should go to the nearest Referral Center and participate in the TABE testing process to determine his/her literacy level. Once completed, a guidance counselor will make recommendations to the student about which educational program best fits his/her needs.

3.4 What is the Learning to Work (LTW) component of the GED Plus and Access GED programs?

In addition to each Access GED site, several GED Plus sites offer a work internship component, LTW, which helps students stay engaged or re-engage in school through work readiness. The LTW program offers students in-depth job readiness, career exploration opportunities, as well as paid internships at selected sites. LTW is accomplished in partnership with community based organizations that support students with free wrap-around services, such as attendance outreach, individual and group counseling, tutoring, and youth development. Sites offering LTW also have both full- and part-time GED instruction that run concurrently with internships. A student who wishes to enroll in a LTW program should express interest in this option at the Referral Center when enrolling in GED Plus or Access GED.

3.5 For what length of time is a student enrolled in a GED program?

Length of enrollment is dependent upon the student's attendance, class participation and demonstrated readiness to take the GED exam. Each student's math and reading levels will be evaluated regularly throughout the period of enrollment via the TABE test. When the student demonstrates readiness, teachers will recommend that the student take the Official Practice Test to predict success on the GED exam. After successfully completing the Official Practice Test, a student will be scheduled to take the state-administered GED exam.

Additionally, during enrollment, GED programs must administer the TABE test to assess the student's reading and math levels and evaluate progress. TABE tests are regularly scheduled and administered five times a year, spaced approximately 6-8 weeks apart. Students will be eligible to take TABE tests after attending between 100 and 150 instructional hours in the program.

3.6 What curriculum is taught to students in a GED program?

To ensure high quality and differentiated instruction, all GED programs adhere to New York State standards-based curricula, with GED performance standards underpinning instruction. The Office of Multiple Pathways to Graduation within the DOE has compiled these standards in consultation with GED teachers. The standards reflect the overarching goals and expectations of both high school content standards and the GED exam.

3.7 What services are available for special education students?

While enrolled in the GED program, special education students have access to a number of resources available to all students, including access to smaller classes, direct relationships with guidance counselors, and more. A student who had an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) when enrolled in a public high school will not receive the IEP-mandated services in the GED program. However, there will be resources dedicated to helping each student learn in ways that are most successful for the individual.

Irrespective of services available at GED sites, state provisions require that reasonable test administration accommodations be authorized for candidates with disabling conditions who apply for and meet state requirements. GED programs will assist a student who wishes to apply for such accommodations.

3.8 What counseling and post-graduation options are available for students in GED programs?

Students in GED programs will receive high quality counseling while in the program, with a focus on their options after passing the GED exam. It is essential that students not see the GED as an end point but rather as a transition into postsecondary opportunities, including college admissions and career preparation. Each site is responsible for providing high quality counseling for GED students to ensure a successful transition.

4. Maintaining a Connection with a GED Program

4.1 What happens after a student passes the GED?

In most cases, a student may not remain connected or enrolled in a GED program after he/she has passed the State-administered GED exam. However, there is one exception to this rule. A student may remain connected to a GED program after he/she has passed the GED exam when the student is actively participating in an existing internship or has a tangible career/college development plan, which was created prior to taking the GED exam. To remain connected with the GED program, the student must obtain approval from the Assistant Principal of the program after passing the GED exam,

4.2 How should a student remaining in a GED program after passing the GED be registered in ATS?

Students remaining connected with GED Plus or Access GED programs after passing the GED exam may only remain connected with the program until the end of the semester in which the student passed the exam. The program shall code the student in ATS as having passed the GED exam (Discharge Code 30) and shall then re-enroll the student in the related program under a different code (ultimate discharge would be under Code 29).

4.3 Is a student who has obtained a GED permitted to enroll in a high school track transitional program or community school?

Yes. In certain select circumstances, a student who has obtained a GED may wish to re-enroll in a high school track transitional program or to re-enroll in a community high school following enrollment in D79. According to Chancellor's Regulations, a student who has received a high school equivalency diploma has the right to stay in school or return until they are 21 years old in order to seek a regular high school diploma.