

**Students Seeking to Attain a Performance-Based Exit
Option High School Diploma or State of Florida High School
Diploma in Juvenile Justice Education Programs**

**Frequently Asked Questions
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Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services



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Purpose

The purpose of this frequently asked questions (FAQs) document is to provide school districts and educational providers with guidance and clarification related to educational program options that lead to students in Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) schools taking the high school equivalency examination. The document includes a list of FAQs and responses related to educational program options, the high school equivalency examination and data reporting.

Background

There are two educational program options that lead to students taking the high school equivalency examination in DJJ schools (section [s.] 1003.52(3)(a), Florida Statutes [F.S.], and Rule 6A-6.05281(6)(b)2., Florida Administrative Code [F.A.C.]):

- 1) Performance-Based Exit Option Model to attain the Performance-Based Exit Option high school diploma, and
- 2) High School Equivalency Preparation Model to attain the State of Florida high school diploma, which involves:
 - Credit accrual with supplemental high school equivalency examination preparation, and
 - Enrollment in high school equivalency preparation courses.

Note: The decision to pursue the Performance-Based Exit Option diploma or the State of Florida diploma should be based on the individual needs of the student and determined in the transition process (beginning upon entry into a DJJ school). Parents should be included in the decision-making process.

Questions and Answers

A. Performance-Based Exit Option Model

A-1. What is the Performance-Based Exit Option Model?

The Performance-Based Exit Option (formerly the GED[®] Exit Option) Model is an alternative route to graduation for students who are at risk of not graduating on time with their cohort (class with whom the student entered kindergarten) because of credit deficiency, low grade-point average (GPA) or being overage for grade. The program is not an option for early exit (Rule 6A-6.0212, F.A.C.).

A-2. Can DJJ schools implement the Performance-Based Exit Option Model?

Yes. Pursuant to s. 1003.52(3)(a), F.S., school districts must provide the Performance-Based Exit Option Model for all juvenile justice education programs. School districts must

apply and be approved by the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) in order to implement the Performance-Based Exit Option Model at a DJJ school (Rule 6A-6.0212(1)(c), F.A.C.).

A-3. What are the eligibility requirements for the Performance-Based Exit Option Model?

Students who wish to pursue this graduation route must be:

- At least 16 years old and currently enrolled in a prekindergarten through Grade 12 (PK-12) program;
- Enrolled in and attending high school courses that meet high school graduation requirements as specified in s. 1003.4282, F.S. (GED® preparation courses are not permitted);
- In jeopardy of not graduating with their kindergarten cohort because they are behind in credits, have a low GPA or are overage for their grade; and
- Assessed at a seventh-grade reading level or higher at the time of selection (ninth grade or higher at the time of testing for the State of Florida high school diploma authorized under Rule 6A-6.0201, F.A.C.), as documented by the Test of Adult Basic Education reading component, or other assessment, to determine grade-level proficiency.

A-4. Can a student in the Performance-Based Exit Option Model remain enrolled in a PK-12 program while taking the high school equivalency examination?

Yes. To participate in the Performance-Based Exit Option Model, it is required that students be enrolled in a PK-12 program. According to the GED® Testing Service, participation in the Performance-Based Exit Option Model is the only allowable exception for a student to take the high school equivalency examination while enrolled in a PK-12 program.

B. High School Equivalency Examination Preparation Model

B-1. What is the preparation for the high school equivalency examination?

The high school equivalency examination preparation consists of adult education GED® preparation courses designed to prepare adults at a 9.0 grade level or above to successfully pass the complete battery of the GED® subject-area tests. After successfully passing all four subtests, the student earns a State of Florida high school diploma. GED® preparation courses are offered in each of the following four subtest subjects: (1) Reasoning through Language Arts, (2) Social Studies, (3) Science and (4) Mathematical Reasoning. The adult course code directory can be accessed at the following link: <http://www.fldoe.org/policy/articulation/ccd/>.

B-2. Can students in DJJ schools enroll in GED® preparation courses and still receive K-12 funding?

Yes. According to s. 1003.52(3)(a), F.S., students participating in GED® preparation programs must be funded at the basic cost factor for DJJ programs in the Florida Education Finance Program. GED® preparation course numbers in the adult course code directory are eligible for K-12 funding.

B-3. What kind of certification does a teacher need to teach GED® preparation courses in DJJ schools?

A teacher must have a bachelor's degree or higher to teach GED® preparation courses in DJJ schools.

C. High School Equivalency Examination

C-1. Is there an age requirement to take the high school equivalency examination?

Section 1003.435(4), F.S., requires GED® candidates to "... be at least 18 years of age on the date of the examination, except that in extraordinary circumstances, as provided for in rules of the district school board of the district in which the candidate resides or attends school, a candidate may take the examination after reaching the age of 16."

An individual who is 16 or 17 years of age must have approval from the school district in which the individual resides prior to scheduling test appointments. The list for each school district's contact for underage waivers and the Underage Waiver Form is located on FDOE's Underage Testing Information web page at the following link:

<http://www.fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/hse/underage-testing-info.stml>.

C-2. Must a student who is not working in the Performance-Based Exit Option Model in a DJJ school be withdrawn from a PK-12 program prior to taking the high school equivalency examination?

Yes. According to the *GED® Program Policy Manual*, GED® candidates must not be currently enrolled in an accredited high school. To access the manual, go to <http://www.fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/hse/testing-admin.stml>.

C-3. Can a student who is not working in the Performance-Based Exit Option Model be re-enrolled in a PK-12 program until all four subject-area tests of the GED® examination have been taken and passed?

A student's eligibility to take the high school equivalency examination is based on the student not being enrolled in an accredited high school. The student may be re-enrolled in a PK-12 program after each subtest until the student has taken and passed all four subtests; however, the student must be withdrawn from a PK-12 program prior to each subject-area test. In addition, the diploma date noted on the State of Florida high school diploma is the date of the last subtest.

Note: If a student with an individual educational plan (IEP) withdraws and re-enrolls because of taking subject-area tests of the GED® examination at incremental times, there must be an IEP meeting each time to agree upon the same or continued plan.

C-4. Can a student re-enroll in a PK-12 program once the student has taken and failed to pass all four subtests of the GED® examination?

Yes. A student can re-enroll in high school as long as their intent is to pursue a standard high school diploma and meet the school district's maximum age requirement for

enrollment. A student who seeks to earn only a State of Florida high school diploma should not be re-enrolled or enrolled in high school.

C-5. Who is responsible for paying for the high school equivalency examination for DJJ students?

The administrative fees for the high school equivalency examination are the responsibility of district school boards and may be required of providers by contractual agreement.

C-6. Can DJJ residential schools be a high school equivalency examination center?

Yes. The FDOE must assist juvenile justice education programs with becoming high school equivalency examination centers (s. 1003.51(4)(a), F.S.).

D. Data Reporting

D-1. How are data reported for students who seek and earn the State of Florida high school diploma who are not working in the Performance-Based Exit Option Model?

Prior to testing for the high school equivalency examination, a withdrawal code of W26 must be entered.

Once the student has passed all subject-area tests of the GED[®] examination, two records should be submitted in the Student End of Year Status format for Survey 5. These records are W26 and grade level 30 or 31 (one record) and a W45, which indicates the student was awarded the GED[®] as an adult student.

The PK-12 Database Manuals can be viewed at the following link: <http://www.fldoe.org/accountability/data-sys/database-manuals-updates/>.

Note: A W45 does not mean the DJJ student must be enrolled in adult education prior to reporting a W45.

D-2. Is it valid to report grade level 30 or 31 and a W45 using the DJJ PK-12 school number instead of an adult education school number for Student End of Year Status data reporting in Survey 5?

Yes. The school number should be the DJJ school number from which the student was withdrawn with a W26.

D-3. How are data reported for students who seek and earn the Performance-Based Exit Option Model?

For students who pass the state assessments and high school equivalency examination, a code of W10 should be reported. A code of WGA is reported when the student has passed the high school equivalency examination and state assessments via concordant or comparative scores. If the student only passed the high school equivalency examination, a code of WGD should be reported.