

## TIPS FOR COMPLETING YOUR EDUCATION

---

*Did you know that? The average dropout can expect to earn an income of \$20,241 per year – a full \$10,386 less than the typical high school graduate and \$36,424 less than someone with a bachelor’s degree. U.S. Census Bureau Data*

---

### **You have the right to stay in school**

- You have the right to be in school until the age of 21. If you turn 21 during the school year, you can go to school until the end of that school year.
- If you leave school, you have the right to go back at any time before you turn 21.
- You cannot be made to leave school because you are too old, don’t have enough credits, or have poor grades.
- You have the right to receive full-time instruction and work towards earning a regular New York State diploma if you choose.
- You cannot be suspended or kept out of school without written notice and a chance to tell your side of the story. Suspensions for more than 5 days require a full hearing.
- During a suspension you have the right to obtain all your classwork and take tests, including Regents exams.

### **Can you be taken off the school’s register because of absences?**

- A student who is over 17 can be discharged if he or she is absent (not suspended) for at least 20 days in a row. Cutting class does not count as an absence if you were there for part of the day. The school must notify you and your parent in writing about your absences and hold a planning interview with you before you can be discharged from the school. If you are a special education student, the committee on special education should have a meeting with you and your parent to discuss how they can support you.
- Even if you have previously withdrawn or been dropped from enrollment you have the right to return to school before you turn 21; you may be asked to provide proof that you still reside in the school district.

### **How can I get help if I am having a hard time in school?**

- If you are struggling with class work, attendance, or your behavior is affecting with your ability to make progress in school, you may have the right to academic interventions (i.e. tutoring), counseling, or other support services.
- If you think you have a disability which is interfering with your ability to make progress in school you have a right to be evaluated for special education services and accommodations. If your current services or accommodations do not seem to be working, or if you think your placement is wrong, you have the right to be re-evaluated and to have your District consider alternatives.

### **What vocational or career training programs are available?**

- If you are interested in a technical school or a trade, public schools offer vocational training within their District or through BOCES. Students with disabilities may use this training earn a Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) commencement credential, which documents your preparation for entry-level employment. The CDOS can be awarded either in addition to a Regents or Local diploma or alone to a student with a disability who is unable to earn a credential. Ask your District about opportunities for vocational or career education.
- If you have a disability, ACCES-VR may be able to assist you with the transition from high school to employment by providing support and financial assistance. Services may include: career counseling, funding for college or vocational training program or job coaching. For more information, see: [www.acces.nysed.gov/vr](http://www.acces.nysed.gov/vr)

## How can I get my High School Equivalency-TASC exam (formerly GED)?

- If you choose this option, typically you must be 18 to take the test, although there are some exceptions. It is recommended that test-takers should at least have a 9<sup>th</sup> grade reading level. The Department of Education and several other agencies offer classes to help prepare for the test, now called the TASC exam. Information on the exam is available at: [www.tasctest.com](http://www.tasctest.com). Online resources and preparation classes are available on the web and at [www.acces.nysed.gov/hse/hse-prep-programs-maps](http://www.acces.nysed.gov/hse/hse-prep-programs-maps)

*For questions or more information call the Long Island Advocacy Center at (631) 234-0467*

