



**TO:** P-12 Education Committee  
Adult Career and Continuing Education Services (ACCES)  
Committee

**FROM:** Kevin Smith   
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**SUBJECT:** Alternative Education Services Overview

**DATE:** January 6, 2014

**AUTHORIZATION(S):**   
SUMMARY

### **Issue for Discussion**

What is the scope and status of Adult and Alternative Education Services in New York State provided by the State Education Department?

### **Proposed Handling**

This item will come before the Board of Regents' P-12 Education Committee and Adult Career and Continuing Education Services (ACCES) Committee for discussion at the January 2014 joint meeting.

### **Background Information**

#### **Alternative Education - Adult Education**

There are approximately 2.2 million adult New Yorkers (aged 18 and older) who do not have a High School diploma. In today's growing competitive global economy, a High School diploma is increasingly a minimum prerequisite for living wage employment.

ACCES-Adult Education provides funding to programs throughout the State for Adult Literacy Education (Adult Basic Education, Adult Secondary Education and High School Equivalency Preparation). Together, these programs served 52,733 New Yorkers in the past year. ACCES Adult Education also provides funding to English as a

Second Language (ESL) programs that served 62,299 New Yorkers mostly in downstate communities. Nearly 85% of all ESL students served reside south of Dutchess and Ulster counties. Although not as pronounced, most Adult Literacy funded programs are also downstate (63% of all students are from Long Island, NYC and Hudson Valley), and are more likely to serve lower level students (91% Adult Basic Education, 9% Adult Secondary Education) than upstate (84% Adult Basic Education, 16% Adult Secondary Education). Providing instruction to these 115,032 adult education students are 3,112 paid teachers; the majority of whom are part-time (64%). An additional 1,599 volunteers provide instruction to 3,412 students through literacy volunteer programs. The ratio of paid teachers (3,112) to students (111,620) is 36:1. These instructors are generalists who teach basic literacy, language and math skills and are responsible for covering all five test subjects (English Writing, English Reading, Math, Science, and Social Studies).

Funding for Adult Education programs comes from State and Federal sources. The largest funding source is the Employment Preparation Education Program (EPE) which is formula funding indexed to the State's school aid formula. EPE authorizes \$83 million to school districts and BOCES, and \$13 million to the Consortium for Worker Education. The \$96 million annual appropriation has not been increased in over a decade. Federal funding through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title II is the next largest funding source. WIA funding is awarded through a competitive process and is available to school districts and BOCES, libraries, institutions of higher learning, and Community Based Organizations. Over the past few years, WIA funding has been reduced. In the program year ending June 30, 2013, New York State distributed \$41 million in WIA funding for adult education; this year only \$34 million is available.

In addition, the New York State Welfare Education Program (WEP) provides \$1.8 million and \$6.2 million in Adult Literacy Education (ALE) program through a competitive procurement. With total State and Federal funding of \$138,075,000 for 115,032 students, the State's per-capita spending for adult education students in New York State is approximately \$1,200.

### **Alternative Education - Alternative High School Equivalency Preparation Program**

The Alternative High School Equivalency Preparation Program (AHSEP) is a program operated by school districts, Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), and facilities operated by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services for students at least 16 years of age and under the age of 19. Students who are at least 16 years of age, or such older maximum age as the board of education of the school district may designate for required school attendance, and who have completed the school year during which they reached 16 years of age, may be enrolled in an AHSEP program<sup>1</sup>.

In order to obtain the approval from SED for an AHSEP program, the school district, BOCES or the New York State Office of Children and Family Services facility shall submit an application that assures the program offers each student a minimum of

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<sup>1</sup> New York Code, Rules and Regulation Title 8 Part 100.7 (i) high school equivalency preparation programs.

12 hours per week; operates for at least 150 hours during the school year; the class register does not exceed 20 students; the program includes a workforce preparation component; students with disabilities receive special education programs and services including supplementary aids as specified on their Individualized Education Program (IEP), among others.

There are 252 AHSEP programs approved for the 2013-14 School Year. Of these approved programs, 119 are operated by school districts outside the City of New York, 82 by NYC Department of Education, 35 by BOCES, 16 by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services. Within these approved programs, there are 60 AHSEP programs operating in county jails by school districts or BOCES. The total student enrollment for School Year 2012-13 was 22,804: a total of 11,520 were enrolled in New York City and 11,284 were enrolled in the Rest of State. The number of enrolled students who took the exam in the 2012-13 School Year was 5,290 and the number of students who passed the exam was 3,996; a passing rate of 76%. It is estimated that there are 1,000 teachers in the AHSEP program but, at this time, there is no data system that captures number of teachers in the AHSEP program or demographic or specific academic information related to enrolled students.

Depending on the structure of the program and how it meets statutory state aid requirements, students in AHSEP programs may generate State Aid.

### **Recommendation**

Given that we are implementing a new, more rigorous High School Equivalency exam, within the existing capacity of the ACCES and P-12 offices the Department will develop a cross office plan to offer enhanced professional staff development and training including content instruction at the Adult Secondary Education level. In addition, we will improve data collection to capture more specific student and program information needed to support improved service and results. To the extent possible, the Department will leverage technology to develop program capacity.