



Deputy Commissioner
Office of Higher Education

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To: Cindy Frieder, Office of the State Comptroller
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Laura Anglin, Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities
Donna Gurnett, Association of Proprietary Colleges

From: John L. D'Agati 

Subject: Clarification on TAP

This memorandum is being issued to clarify that the memorandum issued January 21, 2015 does not alter the policy established for college credits that can be accepted in lieu of a high school diploma or GED of CEO Memo No. 02-06 or the policy direction for home schooled students being able to receive State student aid.

Can prior college credits be accepted in lieu of a high school diploma or GED?

As established by CEO 02-06, Section 100.7 of the Commissioner's Regulations provides that a student can receive a high school equivalency diploma (GED) when the student has completed 24 college credits as a recognized candidate for a degree at an approved institution. If a student never completed high school or is otherwise unable to document high school completion, a college can admit a student, and once that student has completed 24 college credits as the equivalent of having the GED, he/she is eligible for TAP, provided the credits satisfy the appropriate course distribution requirements specified in section 100.7 of the Regulations as amended in 1999. (The required distribution is 6 credits of English, 3 credits of math, 3 credits of natural science, 3 credits of social science, 3 credits of humanities, and 6 credits applicable to the student's program.)

Also acceptable for financial aid purposes would be a record of a prior (postsecondary) degree earned by a student.

How should home schooled students be handled?

As established by CEO 02-06, home schooled students cannot receive a high school diploma. Only public schools or registered nonpublic schools are permitted by law and regulation to issue diplomas. Self-reporting of home schooling is not acceptable for financial aid purposes. To establish eligibility for State student aid (not the issuance of a postsecondary degree), the following options are available to a home schooled student:

- obtain a letter from local school district officials confirming that the student has received an education "substantially equivalent" to instruction given to students graduating high school in the public schools;
- take and pass the GED test; or
- achieve a satisfactory score on an ability-to-benefit test approved by the U.S. Secretary of Education.

c: Elsa Magee, Higher Education Services Corporation