

MEMORANDUM

To: School District Superintendents

From: Wendy Clemons, Chief Academic Officer
Office of Academic Education

Terissa Williams, Education Program Manager
Office of Compulsory School Attendance Enforcement & Dropout Prevention
Alternative Education Programs

Date: June 5, 2025

Subject: 2025-2026 High School Equivalency Intent Form & Application

The High School Equivalency Program (HSEP) application process is now open for the upcoming 2025-2026 school year. The HSEP packet is attached. The application must be submitted on all new forms along with the district superintendent's signature, no later than June 30, 2025. The Student Roster form is due September 15, 2025, updated January 15, 2026, and June 15, 2026, and is included in the HSEP packet along with the Test Report form, due June 15, 2026.

Please complete the Intent Form for your school district, indicating whether you will or will **not** include a High School Equivalency Program in the school district's alternative education program.

All submissions should be emailed to alteredhsepms@mdek12.org. Please feel free to contact Terissa Williams, the MDE Alternative Education Manager, if you have any questions, either by email at twilliams@mdek12.org or by cell at 662-404-0445.

Attachments: State Board Policy Chapter 7.2
Application Packet
Monitoring Tool



High School Equivalency Program (HSEP)

Intent, Development, & Renewal Application



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Acknowledgements

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HSEP Development, Renewal, & Intent Guidance

School Districts in Mississippi are allowed to provide a program of General Education Development (GED) preparatory instruction as part of their Alternative Education Program, known as the High School Equivalency Program (HSEP). (§37-13-92, MDE Policy 7.2) If a school district chooses to offer GED classes, an application must be submitted annually to the MDE Office of Compulsory School Attendance Enforcement and Dropout Prevention. Students enrolled in the HSEP are not classified as dropouts, and the district will continue to receive State funding for the students enrolled in the program. School districts must declare their intent to participate in an HSEP each year.

Each district must submit a completed Intent Form (Appendix A). If the district is renewing or has decided to develop a new program, the application package (Appendices B-E) must be completed and submitted by June 30, 2025. All submissions are to be emailed to Terissa Williams at twilliams@mdek12.org. Districts are encouraged to contact Terissa Williams at 662-404-0445 (cell) with any questions or concerns.

Program Intent and Renewal – Each school district must submit the Intent Form annually. This includes school districts that **do not** intend to have a High School Equivalency Program (HSEP), renewing HSEP, or plan to discontinue an HSEP. If your district is part of a consortium, the lead school district should collect the completed Intent Forms from all feeder school districts. The lead school district will submit all Intent Forms as one packet when they submit the completed application package to the Mississippi Department of Education by June 30, 2025.

Required Assurances – School districts must submit the Assurances Form for any active programs within their school district. The lead school district in a consortium must submit the signed Assurances Form for all the school districts in the consortium. The lead school district's Superintendent should be the only signature on the Assurances Form.

Application for Program Development – School districts shall submit the document with a continuing or new High School Equivalency Program. The lead school district in a consortium should submit one application for all participating districts. (June 30, 2025) (*Appendix A*)

Student Roster – Student Rosters are due three times per school year. School districts implementing a new program shall submit this document 30 days after the program's actual implementation date. School districts with an ongoing program shall submit this document annually. In a consortium, the lead school district should submit a single roster that includes students from all participating school districts. School districts with an HSEP should submit rosters by September 15th, January 15th, and June 15th of each school year. The rosters should reflect information from



previous rosters, including status updates and information on any new students enrolled in the program. (*Appendix E*)

Test Report – This document provides the data for the completed school year. For school districts with an active HSEP, a completed Test Report Form must be submitted by June 15th. The lead school district in a consortium should complete one Test Report Form that includes all students from each participating school district. (*Appendix D*)

Administrative Guidelines

Guideline 1.1 Enrollment & Classroom Content

District selection procedures ensure that students who enroll in the High School Equivalency Program (1) are credit deficient and (2) are academically capable of meeting the program's graduation requirements.

- The student must be at least 16 years of age.
- The student must be at least one (1) entire grade level behind their ninth-grade cohort **or** must have acquired less than four (4) Carnegie units at the time of enrollment in the High School Equivalency Program.
- The student must have taken every opportunity to continue participating in coursework leading to a regular diploma.
- The school district superintendent must approve all students who enter the High School Equivalency program.

Before enrolling any student in the secondary High School Equivalency Program, schools and districts must:

- Provide all available interventions and support to the student (e.g., tutoring, counseling, and academic advising). Documentation should be available regarding these efforts and results.
- Provide counseling to prospective students and their parents or guardians, explaining the program and their expectations. This includes the advantages and disadvantages of the Secondary High School Equivalency Program instead of the regular high school diploma.
- Obtain a written agreement from the student and parent or guardian for voluntary program participation.
- Submit a copy of the local school board minutes approving the HSEP for the school district with the complete application package.



Before taking the Graduate Equivalency Degree (GED) test, the school districts must:

- Ensure that the educational content in the classroom includes standardized GED instructional materials. The instructional material should deliver high-quality academic content for all students.
- Ensure that workforce development instruction and activities focus on the knowledge and skill sets required to secure and maintain employment. No student should take the GED exam if they have missed opportunities and cannot demonstrate knowledge of the materials needed to pass the GED exam.
- The district shall determine the GED Option instructional time and workforce development based on the individualized needs of students. GED testing is set when the student successfully prepares for the GED exam.
- Ensure the student's educational needs are met through individualized GED-instructional time and workforce development activities.

Guideline 1.2 Counseling

Counseling is required for the students and their families before enrollment and must be available throughout participation in the HSEP program. School districts and schools must:

- Provide adequate access to certified counselors and academic advisors.
- Provide pre-entry counseling.
- Provide regular academic, career, and guidance counseling services to students enrolled in the HSEP program.
- Provide follow-up counseling after the student has completed the program.
- Maintain documentation of all counseling and advising files on each student served in the program.

Guideline 1.3 Curriculum and Instructional Content

Curriculum and instructional content must be at the high school level and designed as such:

- The curriculum and instructional strategies must address the individual needs of each student as specified in an Individual Education and Career Plan developed at the time of placement. The Individual Education and Career Plan committee, which should include an academic counselor, academic teacher, principal, and vocational personnel, will emphasize the educational and instructional needs of the student, job readiness skills, and work experience options.



- The school district must ensure that appropriate assessments and evaluations of each student's educational progress are regularly administered and reported to the student and parent/guardian, according to established policies approved by the local school board. Student assessments and evaluation records must be documented and maintained to ensure individual students' confidentiality.
- Students participating in an approved HSEP enrolled in subject area courses must take the end-of-the-course subject area test(s) for those courses.
- Students shall have access to materials and resources designed to prepare them for passing the GED exams.
- Students participate, in addition to the required hours of direct instruction, in at least one of the following areas each semester:
 - ✓ service learning
 - ✓ career and technical education
 - ✓ additional coursework
 - ✓ internship opportunities
 - ✓ cooperative learning projects
 - ✓ any other learning activity aligned with the student's Individual Education and Career Plan.
- Students have a career component and may participate in job readiness and employability skills training, career exploration and vocational training, or work experience options.

Guideline 1.4 Instructional Staff and Classroom Setting

The school district must provide qualified instructors for the HSEP to ensure effective instructional delivery. Adequate instructional resources must also be available to all HSEP students.

- Staff HSEP with qualified and certified instructors
- Supervise the instructional program in each of the core content areas (Math, English, Social Studies, and Science)
- Provide at least 15 hours of weekly instruction for each student enrolled
- Provide a student/teacher ratio of no more than 15:1
- Ensure program staff participate in annual professional development specific to the High School Equivalency Program
- Provide adequate instructional resources for student success



Guideline 1.5 Recognition of Completion of Program

Successful students should receive official recognition. The district will determine recognition programs, including a unique program or recognition at a school or district function.

Guideline 1.6 Student Data

Districts and schools are responsible for collecting data on the students served by the HSEP by reporting information to the Mississippi Department of Education. This data will include, but is not limited to:

- Student Roster (including race and gender)
- Instructor-to-student ratio
- Number of students who pass the HSEP test by race and gender
- Number of students who do not pass the HSEP test by race and gender
- Number of students who take the HSEP test by grade, race, and gender
- Number of certified teachers assigned to the program

Provide a narrative for the following:

- HSEP testing process
- Instructional delivery methods/strategies in the program
- Instructional resources available
- Referral process
- Selection process
- Type of recognition ceremony



Appendix A: Intent Form (all districts must complete)

Mississippi Department of Education High School Equivalency Program (HSEP) Intent & Application for Program Development

Application Completed by _____ Application Date _____

School District _____ School District Code _____

School District Address _____ Telephone _____

Fax _____ Contact Email _____

HSEP 911 Address _____

Please check the appropriate box(es) below to indicate the district's High School Equivalency Program intent:

- ☐ **Discontinuation of Program:** The school district will discontinue the HSEP.
- ☐ **No Program Development:** The school district does not intend to develop an HSEP.
- ☐ **New Program Development:** The school district intends to establish a new HSEP.
(Complete pages 10-13)
- ☐ **Continuation of Existing Program:** The school district will continue an ongoing HSEP. (Complete pages 10-13)
- ☐ **Current Program Participant:** The school district has entered into an agreement with [school district] as its lead for the HSEP.
- ☐ **Current Program Lead:** The school district has entered into an agreement to serve as the lead HSEP administrator for (list the districts and their associated school codes below and attach the board-approved contractual agreement).



Appendix B: Narrative Form

HSEP Narrative	
Guideline	Based on the HSEP Required Assurances, provide a brief narrative for each guideline describing how the program meets state regulations and standards. School District:
1.1	
1.2	
1.3	
1.4	
1.5	
1.6	



Appendix C: Required Assurances Form

Mississippi Department of Education High School Equivalency Program Required Assurances Acknowledgement

District _____

School(s) Implementing HSEP _____

The Mississippi Department of Education has outlined instructional and administrative guidelines that the Department will utilize to monitor program compliance. District staff signatures acknowledge receipt of the required assurances and the district's intent to implement compliant programs.

Superintendent _____
(Please print)

Signature _____

Date _____



Appendix D: Test Report Form

The Test Report Form should be submitted annually by June 15th. This concludes the school year report. The lead school district in a consortium shall submit one test report that includes all school districts. GED or HiSet Test results for students who take the test during the summer months may be included in the most recent school year report. The students' names should also be included on the September student roster for the upcoming school year.

School District/Lead District (Consortium) _____

School District Code _____ School Year _____ Current Date _____

Contact Person _____ Telephone # _____

Fax # _____ Email Address _____

CONSORTIUM ONLY

Feeder School & Code _____ Feeder School & Code _____

Feeder School & Code _____ Feeder School & Code _____

Feeder School & Code _____ Feeder School & Code _____

ALL HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY PROGRAMS

Number of students enrolled in the program this school year _____

Number of students who left the program before testing _____

Number of students testing _____

Number of students who passed all tests _____

Number of students who did not pass all tests _____

Number of students who left the program after failing tests _____

Number of students continuing to the new school year _____

Ratio of advisors to students _____

Ratio of counselors to students _____

Do you plan to have a High School Equivalency Program next school year? Yes/No
(circle one)



Appendix E: Student Roster

Mississippi Department of Education High School Equivalency Program Student Roster

School District _____ District Code _____ Consortium Yes/No _____ Date _____

Feeder Districts (if applicable) _____

Contact Person _____ Email Address _____ Telephone # _____

Please submit via email by September 15th, January 15th, & June 15th annually.

Reminder: HSEP students must be 16 years old, enrolled in school, and one grade level behind or have earned less than 4 Carnegie units at the time of enrollment. This document is intended for HSEP students only; it does not include pre-HSEP students.

Student Name	Date of Birth	Race & Gender Ex: W/F	Last Grade Level Completed	High School Credits Earned Before Placement	Enroll Date	Entry Reading Level	SPED Eligibility Yes or No	HSEP GED Test Results: Pass or Fail	Exit Program Date	Reason for Exiting Program

Race: A – Asian A Indian – American Indian Black – B White – W Hispanic – H O-Other

Gender: F-Female M-Male