



**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education**

January 13, 2017

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: High School Equivalency (HSE) Testing

All reference to GED® in the *Code of Virginia* has been changed to a high school equivalency examination approved by the Virginia Board of Education, effective January 1, 2014. Information in this memorandum supersedes all previous superintendents' memoranda addressing eligibility guidelines for GED testing. The HSE testing format changed from paper-based to computer-based. The *Code of Virginia* ([22.1-254.2](#)), "Testing for high school equivalency; eligibility; guidelines" are unchanged since July 1, 2006. Applicants must meet all other eligibility guidelines of the HSE examination provider.

AGE:

An applicant must be at least 18 years of age and not currently enrolled in public education or otherwise meeting the school attendance requirements set forth in [§ 22.1-254](#) of the *Code of Virginia*. Under special circumstances, the age limit may be lowered to 16 years for applicants. A summary of the rules for underage eligibility and documentation required to allow registration for testing in categories 1-6 follows.

1. Home Schooled

Applicants under 18 years of age, but at least 16 years of age, must provide the Specialist for High School Equivalency with documentation signed by the division superintendent or designee certifying that the applicant has completed a home instruction program. (Refer to [§ 22.1-254.1](#)).

2. Released from Compulsory Attendance

Applicants under 18 years of age, but at least 16 years of age, must provide the Specialist for High School Equivalency with documentation signed by the division superintendent or designee certifying that the applicant has been released from compulsory attendance by the local school board.

Emancipated and adjudicated minors are subject to the compulsory attendance law, unless released by the local school board. (Refer to Subsections B and D of [§ 22.1-254](#)).

3. Alternative Education

Students for whom an ISAEP has been granted may take the HSE examination when the division superintendent or designee provides the Specialist for Adult Secondary & ISAEP Programs with the completed ISAEP GED® Testing Eligibility Form. ISAEP students must achieve a minimum score of 145 on each of the subtests of the GED Ready, the official GED® Practice Test, before this form may be submitted. Currently, the GED® test is the only approved HSE examination for administration. (Refer to Subsection E of [§ 22.1-254](#)).

4. Adult Correctional Facility

Applicants under 18 years of age, but at least 16 years of age, must provide the Specialist for High School Equivalency with documentation signed by the Department of Correctional Education that the

individual is actively pursuing a HSE certificate. (Refer to Subsection E of [§ 22.1-254](#)).

5. Expelled from School

Applicants under 18 years of age, but at least 16 years of age, must provide the Specialist for High School Equivalency with documentation signed by the division superintendent or designee certifying that the applicant has been expelled from school. (Refer to §§ [22.1-277.04](#) through [22.1-277.08](#) and [22.1-277.2](#)).

6. Court Ordered

Applicants under 18 years of age, but at least 16 years of age, must provide the Specialist for High School Equivalency with documentation signed by the judge ordering the applicant to participate in the HSE testing program. (Refer to Subsection G of [§ 22.1-254](#)).

RESIDENCE:

HSE testing candidates are not required to be Virginia residents.

REGISTRATION TO TEST:

An individual must register online to take a HSE examination. Upon arrival at the testing center on the preselected date and time, the examinee must provide a government-issued photograph and signature-bearing identification as required by the HSE examination provider.

If you have questions, please contact Dr. Sue Mansfield, Specialist for High School Equivalency, at Sue.Mansfield@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 225-3999; or Beverly Godwin, Specialist for Adult Secondary and ISAEP Programs, at Beverly.Godwin@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 786-7644.

SRS/LBH/aab