

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



**Standard Operating Procedures**

**Policy Name:** Program Services/Education Services

**Policy Number:** 108.02

**Effective Date:** 01/09/2025

**Page Number:** 1 of 15

**Authority:**  
Commissioner

**Originating Division:**  
Inmate Services Division  
(Education)

**Access Listing:**  
Level I: All Access

**I. Introduction and Summary:**

In each state prison and private prison, instruction is provided in literacy and remedial reading (L/RR), adult basic education (ABE), and in the skills necessary for attainment of a High School Equivalency.

**II. Authority:**

- A. Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA): 34 CFR Part 463 (1998), and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA): 20 U.S.C.A. Ch. 70 (2015);
- B. O.C.G.A. §§42-5-64, and 42-5-57;
- C. Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) Board Rules: 125-4-2-.01; 125-4-2-.02; 125-4-2-.03; 125-4-2-.04; 125-4-2-.07, and 125-4-2-.10;
- D. GDC Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs): 108.01 Education Programs Administration, 108.04 High School Equivalency (HSE) Testing Centers, 220.03 Classification Committee and 220.05 Diagnostic Reception, Orientation, and Processing and
- E. ACA Standards: 5-ACI-7B-01; 5-ACI-7B -02; 5-ACI-7B-04; 5-ACI-7B-05; 5-ACI-7B-06; 5-ACI-7B-07; 5-ACI-7B-09; 5-ACI-7B-10; 5-ACI-7B-11; 5-ACI-7B-12; 5-ACI-7B-13; 5-ACI-7B-14; 5-ACI-7B-15, and 4-ALDF-5A-09.

**III. Definitions:**

As used in this SOP, these terms are defined as follows.

- A. **Classification Committee** - A committee designated by the Warden designed to provide an objective categorization of each offender based on their needs to assist them in reaching their goals. See SOP 220.03, Classification Committee for details.

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- B. **Completion** - Achieving the prescribed level of mastery for each objective per the prescribed level of proficiency and corresponding achievement as measured on designated tests.
- C. **Curriculum** - Subject matter as defined by the approved learning materials.
- D. **Education Program Specialist (EPS)** - Regional Education Specialist who performs designated academic duties and responsibilities and performs the educational services assessments at each facility.
- E. **Educator** - Paid full or part time academic instructor.
- F. **High School Diploma (HSD)** – Completion of a High School Diploma through an accredited program approved by the Georgia Department of Education (DOE).
- G. **High School Equivalency (HSE)** - Completion of a High School Equivalency, including GED (most common), charter school, HiSET (as appropriate), or other test accepted by the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) for High School Equivalency.
- H. **Individualized or Small Group Instruction** - Informal or formal instruction per individualized written study plan, as determined by best practices.
- I. **Instructional Coach** - Regional Instructional Coach who provides Instructional support for all the teachers and educational staff with a focus on 17 – 21-year-old students.
- J. **Placement** - Determining a specific education program (L/RR, ABE, GED Prep, GED Testing, or other High School Equivalency as appropriate) for a new student.
- K. **Promotion** - Advancement to Adult Basic Education (ABE), GED Prep, GED Testing, or High School Equivalency program.

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- L. **Student Support Specialist** - Regional Student Support Specialist who manages a caseload of students to ensure academic success with a focus on 17 – 21-year-old students.
- M. **The State Repository of Information System (SCRIBE)** - GDC’s official offender records management system.
- N. **Work Activity Performance Report (WAPR)** - Documentation used to report to counselors the progress/performance/attitude of offenders.

**IV. Statement of Policy and Applicable Procedures:**

- A. Central Office provides academic and vocational education programs that are recognized, certified, or licensed by the Georgia Department of Education (DOE) or other recognized agency having jurisdiction. Programs up to the Completion of High School and/or an approved High School Equivalency are available at no cost to offenders.
- B. Central Office provides and establishes uniform education standards throughout GDC education sites to meet Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) compliance for Educators that include:
  - 1. Educator job descriptions.
  - 2. Formal and informal observation formats that measure the job duties.
  - 3. Screening of applicants and interview formats that emphasize security and teaching requirements.
  - 4. Education induction/orientation training of new Educators.
  - 5. Education staff hiring procedures.
  - 6. Annual/Quarterly Educator training.

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7. Offender post-secondary/continuing education options; and
8. Federal and State Funding Compliance, including:
  - a. Serving Neglected and Delinquent youth housed in adult correctional facilities.
  - b. Providing training for Educators on best practices.
  - c. Overseeing expenditures of the facilities that serve special education students.
  - d. Rule 10 of the State Interagency Services Grant: Providing Educators who are certified in special education for qualified students.

C. Educator Duties:

1. Educators operate classes as specifically assigned by the facility, with regional and Central Office oversight, unless school or class is canceled for institutional reasons.
2. Part-time Educators operate classes according to the number of hours employed up to, and not to exceed, twenty-nine (29) hours per week, and full-time Instructors up to a minimum of forty (40) hours per week, to include teaching on Friday.
3. Educators will be certified by the DOE or other comparable authority:
  - a. Educators must possess an appropriate degree or certificate and maintain credentials after being hired.
  - b. Educators must attend all mandatory training.
4. Educators will:

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- a. Utilize class time to teach.
- b. Implement the best teaching practices.
- c. Maximize effective use of teaching assistants.
- d. Develop small groups for learning.
- e. Move among students.
- f. Develop written, Individualized Study Plans; and
- g. Coordinate with other institutional services to provide instruction in functional social skills.

5. Educators are assigned:

- a. To teach during the day or evening;
- b. As needed for the purpose of providing instruction;
- c. To conduct authorized testing;
- d. Pre- and post-GED testing responsibilities; and
- e. Planning.

D. GED Pre-Test Procedures:

1. After students are promoted to the GED Prep/GED Testing classes, the facility designee will register the GED Prep students in GED Manager and add GED Testing to the student's list of programs in SCRIBE once qualified.

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2. Offenders qualify for GED Testing by scoring at a minimum performance level on approved tests using designated criteria provided by regional and Central Office Education Staff. Students must qualify in a specific subject area in order to take the GED test in that subject area. Minimum approved criteria include, but is not limited to:
  - a. GED Ready – a score of 145;
  - b. Kaplan – a score of 75 on a specific subject area test;
  - c. GED Academy – a score of 145 in a specific subject area test;
  - d. TABE – a score of 668 on the D level for math or reading;
  - e. IXL – a minimum score of 750 in a specific subject area test;
  - f. Aztec – a diagnostic Placement score at the GED Ready level of 50%;
  - g. Other diagnostic measures as added by Central Office and/or regional academic education staff, and;
  - h. An Instructional Coach can offer discretionary approval, if appropriate. Educators must submit a rationale for the requested approval if a student does not qualify using approved minimum scores.
3. Educators must receive approval from regional academic education staff to apply for accommodations if they are needed regarding the qualification scores or other approved tests.
4. After students meet the qualifications for GED Testing, the GED Educator will submit a final testing roster to the:
  - a. Deputy Warden of Care and Treatment (DWCT).

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- b. Business Manager; and
- c. Education Program Specialist (EPS) in accordance with the GED Testing Contract.

E. GED Post-Test Procedures:

- 1. The Educator is responsible for:
  - a. Securing testing equipment and setting up the testing site with computers and the necessary materials needed for testing.
  - b. Reporting testing results to DWCT and EPS within three (3) days of testing, and ensuring results are inputted in SCRIBE within five (5) days after testing.
  - c. Submitting appropriate documentation to update the offender's education status in SCRIBE under education testing and closing the programs that have been completed.
  - d. GED Testing is closed automatically by entering a passing score on each of the four GED tests in SCRIBE.
  - e. The official GED post-test spreadsheet will be submitted to regional Education Staff within three days of testing; and
  - f. Complete other duties that are assigned during non-instructional hours.

F. Other HSE Testing Procedures will be implemented as students who have earned partial Completions as recognized by TCSG enter Georgia Department of Corrections.

G. Other HSD enrollment and assessment procedures will be implemented as necessary upon the implementation of a HSD option.

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H. Curriculum:

1. Educators will use approved Curricula.
2. Educators will use additional resources to supplement the Curricula with approval from:
  - a. Central Office.
  - b. Instructional Coach.
3. Educators will provide adequate resources for student use in:
  - a. LRR.
  - b. ABE.
  - c. GED Prep. and/or Testing; and
  - d. Additional HSE or HSD programs as appropriate.

I. Instruction:

1. Offenders are enrolled in school through the Classification Committee, which may occur anytime during the week, and HSE classes are designed for open entry.
2. Teachers involve students in relevant and rigorous learning experiences aligned to the course Curricula and instruct utilizing Individualized or Small Group Instruction.
3. Using results of diagnostic tests, Educators provide feedback to students based on the data analysis and utilize differentiated content and strategies to meet individual student learning needs.



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4. The Educator employs a variety of teaching strategies and utilizes available technology to enhance student learning and increase student interest/motivation.
5. Educators maintain a safe and positive learning environment and ensure that the students are on task.
6. Educators positively reinforce student growth and success through:
  - a. Incentives.
  - b. Certificates; and
  - c. Graduations, etc.
7. Educators effectively manage teacher assistants/aides to maximize student engagement and learning as a supplement to the Educator's instruction, such as in Small Group Instruction:
  - a. Educators should have no more than two teacher assistants/aides per classroom at one time unless approved by DWCT and Regional EPS.
8. Educators must monitor the progress of each student.
9. When an offender is not making the expected progress, an analysis is conducted and documented with the Regional Student Support Specialist to determine the root cause.
10. Based on the identified cause, interventions should be implemented and monitored, with assistance from the Regional Student Support Specialist; and
11. Teachers who identify offenders who are not progressing with intervention must document this on a Work Activity Performance Report (WAPR) and

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forward it to the offender's Regional Student Support Specialist and counselor for action.

J. TABE Testing:

1. The Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) Locator Test, or other approved diagnostic achievement assessment, is administered by qualified Educators or other TABE certified staff to determine academic deficiencies, and results are shared with the Classification Committee in order to assign offenders to appropriate HSE programs.
2. Using approved diagnostic achievement assessment data, Educators will designate classes for students.
3. Educators provide counselors with approved diagnostic achievement assessment results, i.e., TABE scores, for use in:
  - a. Case planning.
  - b. Making recommendations to the Classification Committee for Placement; and
  - c. For use in completing parole review summaries or other paperwork.
4. Educator or facility designee will place scores in SCRIBE.
5. Initial diagnostic achievement assessment, i.e., TABE testing or other approved diagnostic test, of eligible offenders, is completed on the following occasions:
  - a. Upon arrival at the first permanent facility when education is requested; and
  - b. Prior to classification assignments to education.

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6. Subsequent diagnostic achievement tests are given to determine individual achievement and course Completion and, at a minimum, after the student has completed forty (40)-sixty (60) hours of instruction.
7. Subsequent diagnostic achievement tests are also given to students as a qualification for Completion of L/RR, ABE, GED preparation, and other HSE programs as appropriate.
8. Prescribed time limits for the diagnostic achievement test, i.e., TABE test, are observed.
9. Exceptions, if any, must be justified in writing; and
10. Testing requirements and manuals must be followed for assessment.

**K. Placement, Promotion and Offender Progress:**

1. The TABE 11 & 12 Locator Test or other approved diagnostic test, i.e., Kaplan will be administered to:
  - a. Students who wish to enroll in school who do not have a TABE score within a six (6) month window.
  - b. All scores are valid for Placement within a six (6) month window; and
2. If a student has not been enrolled in class before and the academic ability of that student is unknown, the student shall be given TABE 11 & 12 Locator Test, or other approved test, for Placement.
3. After the initial Diagnostic test, TABE 11 & 12 locator or other approved test is administered, students will be placed in a class.
4. Placement is based on the scale score earned on the initial diagnostic test.

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5. Placement is no longer based on grade level.
6. At this time, initial Placement in academic courses shall align to the following guidelines: (However, teacher discretion may be used to promote the student into a higher bracket if academic performance in class proves ability to be higher):
  - a. Reading:
    - i. L/RR: Level E. (300-470);
    - ii. ABE: Level M. (471-535);
    - iii. GED Prep: Level D or A. (Level D) (536-668);
    - iv. GED Testing: (Level D) (669-800); Students are placed in GED Testing if they have already qualified for and taken at least one part of the GED; and
    - v. Other HSE course as appropriate.
  - b. Mathematics:
    - i. L/RR: Level E. (300-470);
    - ii. ABE: Level M. (471-535);
    - iii. GED Prep: Level D or A. (Level D) (536-668);
    - iv. GED Testing: (Level D) (669-800); Students are placed in GED Testing if they have already qualified for and taken at least one part of the GED; and

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- v. Other HSE course as appropriate.
  - c. When a student qualifies for Placement in two levels, instructors shall select the(lower) level for Placement; and
  - d. When a student qualifies for Placement in two levels, but the range between qualifying scores is extensive (i.e., student qualifies at the top of range for GED Prep in Reading, but in the low end of range for ABE in mathematics), instructors shall recommend Placement in lower level, but student can be scheduled to allow for both advanced study and remediation in both levels.
7. After the first administration of TABE 11 & 12 Locator Test, a facility shall use an approved assessment indicator to determine if a student is ready to be promoted to the next level after forty (40) to sixty (60) hours of instruction.
  8. Instructors who have seen evidence that students are ready for Promotion may use discretion to assess for Promotion earlier than forty (40) to sixty (60) hours of instruction.
  9. Promotions will be placed on a WAPR and forwarded to the appropriate facility personnel for program enrollment adjustments to be made.
  10. All students shall be given an approved progress assessment after every sixty (60) hours of instruction.
  11. Students who are enrolled in GED Prep or GED Testing shall have progress monitored by a list of assessments that may include, but are not limited to:
    - a. Scores obtained on GED Ready;
    - b. GED Academy;
    - c. IXL;

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- d. Kaplan; and
  - e. Other tests approved by regional education staff.
12. Students who are enrolled in L/RR or ABE shall have progress monitored by a list of assessments that may include, but are not limited to:
- a. TABE Academy; or
  - b. Other approved diagnostic assessment approved by Instructional Coach.
13. All progress assessment scores should be entered in SCRIBE and on the Completion report.
14. All testing results must be documented in the student file as well as on a WAPR; and
15. The WAPR is forwarded to the Chief Counselor who shall follow-up with necessary recommendations to the Classification Committee.
- L. Placement in a HSD program will be based on transcripts obtained from the school system of previous enrollment.
- M. Record Keeping and Tracking:
- 1. Educators are responsible for tracking and recording:
    - a. Daily/monthly academic achievements.
    - b. Attendance; and
    - c. Level Completions of their students in the formats as required by the Deputy Warden and regional education staff and must provide all required data for data entry.

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**V. Attachments:**

None.

**VI. Record Retention of Forms Relevant to this Policy:**

None.