



JIMMY H. BAKER
Chancellor

Alabama Community College System
Adult Education Division
135 South Union Street
Montgomery, AL 36104

May 30, 2025

To: Alabama Adult Education Providers
From: ACCS Adult Education Division

Subject: Implementation of **Act #2025-326**, the Restoring Educational Advancement of Completing High School (REACH) Act – Effective June 1, 2025

Dear Adult Education Providers,

We are pleased to inform you that Governor Ivey has signed Act #2025-326, known as the Restoring Educational Advancement of Completing High School (REACH) Act. This law will officially go into effect on June 1, 2025. This significant piece of legislation codifies into Alabama law the High School Diploma Option (HSDO) program, a non-traditional diploma pathway that has been offered since 2016. The HSDO program allows Alabama adult education programs to support individuals who have dropped out of high school with at least 10 previously earned credits to complete the requirements for a diploma awarded by the last high school they attended.

Key considerations include:

- **Eligibility at Age 18:** Beginning June 1, 2025, individuals will be eligible to enroll in the HSDO program starting at age 18.
- **Withdrawal Age:** In Alabama, students may legally withdraw from school at age 17. However, under the new law, any individual withdrawing must be provided with information regarding adult education services and opportunities offered by ACCS-approved adult education providers.
- **Enrollment Prior to Age 18:** While the awarding of a high school diploma through the HSDO program requires an individual to be at least 18 years of age, students aged 17 that withdraw from school under the conditions of the Act may enroll in eligible adult education services and begin progressing through pathways that allow for the transfer of credits toward the HSDO program upon turning 18.
- **GED Pathway:** The GED continues to be a strong and viable option for many learners and remains an essential part of our commitment to educational attainment.

We want to emphasize that our team is actively working in collaboration with the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) to ensure that all provisions of the law are implemented with fidelity. This includes the development and distribution of guidance materials for school districts, dropout notification protocols, and quarterly dropout lists that will be shared with Adult Education providers. We are also working collaboratively with ALSDE on formal guidance they will be sending to local K-12 school districts. Please refrain from formally or informally issuing guidance or directives pertaining to the new law with your local education agencies until the Alabama State Department of Education formally releases their guidance.

We will continue to provide timely updates and share all necessary materials and instructions as new actions, and guidance become available. In the meantime, please continue to operate the HSDO program in accordance with the current guidelines and instructions provided by the Adult Education Division, including the updated age eligibility requirement of 18. Thank you for your unwavering dedication and continued commitment to empowering adult learners across our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Walters". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end of the name.

David Walters
Vice Chancellor for Adult Education and Correctional Education
Alabama Community College System
Adult Education Division

Attachments: Act #2025-326