

STATE OF NEW YORK

129--B

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

(Prefiled)

January 8, 2025

Introduced by M. of A. ZACCARO, CRUZ, DAVILA, HEVESI, DeSTEFANO, MANKTELOW, RAMOS, CHANDLER-WATERMAN, JONES, BROOK-KRASNY, HOOKS, GALLAHAN, BEEPHAN, K. BROWN, TAPIA, BURROUGHS -- Multi-Sponsored by -- M. of A. REYES -- read once and referred to the Committee on Education -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee -- again reported from said committee with amendments, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the education law, the correction law, the administrative code of the city of New York, the civil service law, the executive law, the labor law, the parks, recreation and historic preservation law, the social services law and the state finance law, in relation to changing the name of the general education development diploma to the Excelsior diploma

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Section 317 of the education law, as added by chapter 170
2 of the laws of 1994, is amended to read as follows:

3 § 317. [~~General education development~~] Excelsior diploma exam.
4 Notwithstanding any provision of law, no fee shall be established for
5 admission to the [~~general education development~~] Excelsior diploma exam.

6 § 2. Section 305 of the education law is amended by adding a new
7 subdivision 63 to read as follows:

8 63. The commissioner shall promulgate rules and regulations to change
9 the name of the state high school equivalency diploma, as established
10 pursuant to section 100.7 of title eight of the New York codes, rules
11 and regulations, to the Excelsior diploma.

12 § 3. Subdivision 19 of section 2 of the correction law, as amended by
13 chapter 322 of the laws of 2021, is amended to read as follows:

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

LBD00560-03-5

1 19. "Vocational and skills training facility" means a correctional
2 facility designated by the commissioner to provide a vocational and
3 skills training program ("VAST") to incarcerated individuals who need
4 such service before they participate in a work release program. The VAST
5 facility shall provide intensive assessment, counseling, job search
6 assistance and where appropriate academic and vocational instruction to
7 program participants. Such assistance may include an assessment of any
8 incarcerated individual's education attainment level and skills apti-
9 tudes; career counseling and exploration; the development of a compre-
10 hensive instructional plan including identification of educational and
11 training needs that may extend beyond the date of entry into work
12 release; instructional programs including [~~GED~~] Excelsior diploma prepa-
13 ration or post-secondary instruction as appropriate; occupational skills
14 training; life skills training; employment readiness including workplace
15 behavior; and job search assistance. The department and the department
16 of labor shall jointly develop activities providing career counseling,
17 job search assistance, and job placement services for participants.
18 Nothing contained in this section shall be deemed to modify the eligi-
19 bility requirements provided by law applicable to incarcerated individ-
20 uals participating in a work release program.

21 § 4. The seventh undesignated paragraph of subdivision a of section
22 9-151 of the administrative code of the city of New York, as added by
23 local law number 168 of the city of New York for the year 2017, is
24 amended to read as follows:

25 [~~High school equivalency diploma~~] Excelsior diploma test. The term
26 "~~[high school equivalency diploma]~~ Excelsior diploma test" means any
27 test offered by the New York state education department for the purpose
28 of establishing the equivalent of a high school diploma, including, but
29 not limited to, a general education development test or the test assess-
30 ing secondary completion.

31 § 5. Subdivision a of section 21-408 of the administrative code of the
32 city of New York, as added by local law number 86 of the city of New
33 York for the year 2018, is amended to read as follows:

34 a. Definitions. For the purposes of this section, the term "test
35 assessing secondary completion (TASC)" means the [~~New York state high~~
36 ~~school equivalency~~] Excelsior diploma test which replaced the General
37 Education Development (GED) as the primary pathway to [~~a New York state~~
38 ~~high school equivalency~~] an Excelsior diploma.

39 § 6. Subdivision b and paragraph 4 of subdivision c of section 21-703
40 of the administrative code of the city of New York, as added by local
41 law number 23 of the city of New York for the year 2003, are amended to
42 read as follows:

43 b. If an applicant, recipient or participant who is eligible for
44 education or training as set forth in subdivision c of this section
45 expresses an intention or preference to the agency to enroll in educa-
46 tion, training or vocational rehabilitation, or if an applicant's,
47 recipient's or participant's assessment indicates that [~~he or she~~] such
48 applicant, recipient or participant lacks basic literacy, a secondary
49 school diploma, or [~~a general equivalency~~] an Excelsior diploma [~~(GED)~~]
50 or otherwise indicates that education, training or vocational rehabili-
51 tation would enhance the individual's ability to obtain and maintain
52 employment, then the agency shall offer such applicant, recipient or
53 participant the opportunity to enroll in an approved program or
54 programs, provided that such approved program or programs can be classi-
55 fied as countable work activities.

1 4. An applicant, recipient or participant is eligible to participate
2 in [~~a GED~~] an Excelsior diploma program if [~~s/he~~] such applicant, recip-
3 ient or participant has attained basic literacy but has not received a
4 secondary school diploma.

5 § 7. The twentieth undesignated paragraph of subdivision a of section
6 21-902.1 of the administrative code of the city of New York, as amended
7 by local law number 145 of the city of New York for the year 2016, is
8 amended to read as follows:

9 Test assessing secondary completion (TASC). The term "test assessing
10 secondary completion (TASC)" means the [~~New York state high school~~
11 ~~equivalency~~] Excelsior diploma test which replaced the general education
12 development examination as the primary pathway to [~~a New York state high~~
13 ~~school equivalency~~] an Excelsior diploma.

14 § 8. The eleventh undesignated paragraph of subdivision a of section
15 21-924 of the administrative code of the city of New York, as added by
16 local law number 21 of the city of New York for the year 2024, is
17 amended to read as follows:

18 [~~High school equivalency~~] Excelsior diploma test. The term "[~~high~~
19 ~~school equivalency diploma~~] Excelsior diploma test" means any test that
20 the New York state education department offers for the purpose of estab-
21 lishing the equivalent of a high school diploma, including, but not
22 limited to, a general education development test or the test assessing
23 secondary completion.

24 § 9. Paragraph 5 of subdivision a of section 9-137 of the adminis-
25 trative code of the city of New York, as amended by chapter 322 of the
26 laws of 2021, is amended to read as follows:

27 5. Educational background as self-reported by incarcerated individuals
28 after admission to the custody of the department, categorized as follows
29 based on the highest level of education achieved: no high school diploma
30 or [~~general education~~] Excelsior diploma, [~~a general education~~] an
31 Excelsior diploma, a high school diploma, some college but no degree, an
32 associate's degree, a bachelor's degree, or a post-collegiate degree.

33 § 10. Subparagraph (iv) of paragraph (d) of subdivision 1 of section
34 803 of the correction law, as amended by section 1 of part EE of chapter
35 56 of the laws of 2025, is amended to read as follows:

36 (iv) Such merit time allowance may be granted when an incarcerated
37 individual successfully participates in the work and treatment program
38 assigned pursuant to section eight hundred five of this article and when
39 such incarcerated individual obtains [~~a general equivalency~~] an Excels-
40 ior diploma, an alcohol and substance abuse treatment certificate, a
41 vocational trade certificate following at least six months of vocational
42 programming, at least eighteen credits in a program registered by the
43 state education department from a degree-granting higher education
44 institution or performs at least four hundred hours of service as part
45 of a community work crew. The commissioner may designate additional
46 programs and achievements for which merit time may be granted.

47 Such allowance shall be withheld for any serious disciplinary infrac-
48 tion or upon a judicial determination that the person, while an incar-
49 cerated individual, commenced or continued a civil action, proceeding or
50 claim that was found to be frivolous as defined in subdivision (c) of
51 section eight thousand three hundred three-a of the civil practice law
52 and rules, or an order of a federal court pursuant to rule 11 of the
53 federal rules of civil procedure imposing sanctions in an action
54 commenced by a person, while an incarcerated individual, against a state
55 agency, officer or employee.

1 § 11. Paragraph (b) of subdivision 1 of section 58 of the civil
2 service law, as amended by section 4 of part C of chapter 55 of the laws
3 of 2025, is amended to read as follows:

4 (b) they are a high school graduate or a holder of [~~a high school~~
5 ~~equivalency~~] an Excelsior diploma, issued by an education department of
6 any of the states of the United States or a holder of a comparable
7 diploma issued by any commonwealth, territory or possession of the
8 United States or by the Canal Zone or a holder of a report from the
9 United States armed forces certifying their successful completion of the
10 tests of general educational development, high school level;

11 § 12. Paragraph (b) of subdivision 2 of section 352-a of the educa-
12 tion law, as amended by section 1 of part II of chapter 56 of the laws
13 of 2023, is amended to read as follows:

14 (b) To be eligible to receive such nomination and scholarship, the
15 applicant must be a resident of the state. For purposes of this section,
16 a state resident shall be defined as a person who has resided in the
17 state of New York for a period of at least one year prior to the time of
18 nomination, is a graduate or within one year of graduation from an
19 approved high school or has attained [~~a New York state high school~~
20 ~~equivalency~~] an Excelsior diploma or its equivalent as determined by the
21 commissioner.

22 § 13. Clause (ii) of subparagraph 8 of paragraph h of subdivision 2 of
23 section 355 of the education law, as amended by chapter 669 of the laws
24 of 2022, is amended to read as follows:

25 (ii) attended an approved New York state program for [~~general equiv-~~
26 ~~alency~~] an Excelsior diploma exam preparation, received [~~a general~~
27 ~~equivalency~~] an Excelsior diploma issued within New York state and
28 applied for attendance at an institution or educational unit of the
29 state university within five years of receiving [~~a general equivalency~~]
30 an Excelsior diploma issued within New York state; or

31 § 14. Subdivision 2 of section 610 of the education law, as added by
32 chapter 425 of the laws of 1988, is amended to read as follows:

33 2. Eligibility for scholarship. Liberty scholarships shall be awarded
34 to persons:

35 a. who have applied for such scholarship;

36 b. who have graduated from a secondary school located within New York
37 state or have received [~~a high school equivalency~~] an Excelsior diploma
38 from New York state;

39 c. who have not attained the age of twenty-two as of June thirtieth
40 prior to the academic year for which the initial award is received and
41 who are undergraduate students receiving aid under this chapter for the
42 first time during academic year nineteen hundred ninety-one--nineteen
43 hundred ninety-two or thereafter;

44 d. who have enrolled in an approved program in a degree-granting
45 institution located in New York state within twenty-four months of the
46 date that the recipient graduated from secondary school or received [~~a~~
47 ~~high school equivalency~~] an Excelsior diploma, provided that those
48 students who are temporarily unable to avail themselves of the award due
49 to illness, military service or other causes in accordance with rules of
50 the board of regents prior to receipt of the first payment of an award
51 may be granted a leave of absence pursuant to regulations of the trus-
52 tees of the higher education services corporation;

53 e. who satisfy the requirements of section six hundred sixty-one of
54 this [~~chapter~~] title;

55 f. who retain good academic standing as defined by the commissioner;
56 and

1 g. who qualify for a scholarship pursuant to subdivision six of this
2 section.

3 § 15. Subparagraph 7 of paragraph b of subdivision 1 of section 612 of
4 the education law, as added by chapter 425 of the laws of 1988, is
5 amended to read as follows:

6 (7) the degree to which the institution proposes to cooperate with
7 school districts and not-for-profit community based organizations to
8 provide services and insure continuity of such services until such
9 students graduate from high school or receive [~~a high school equivalen-~~
10 ~~cy~~] an Excelsior diploma.

11 § 16. Clause (b) of subparagraph (ii) of paragraph a of subdivision 5
12 of section 661 of the education law, as amended by chapter 26 of the
13 laws of 2019, is amended to read as follows:

14 (b) attended an approved New York state program for [~~a state high~~
15 ~~school equivalency~~] an Excelsior diploma, received [~~a state high school~~
16 ~~equivalency~~] an Excelsior diploma and applied for attendance at the
17 institution of higher education for the undergraduate study for which an
18 award is sought within five years of receiving [~~a state high school~~
19 ~~equivalency~~] an Excelsior diploma; or

20 § 17. Subdivision 2 of section 679-g of the education law, as added by
21 section 1 of part C of chapter 56 of the laws of 2015, is amended to
22 read as follows:

23 2. Eligibility. To be eligible for an award pursuant to this section,
24 an applicant shall: (a) have graduated from a high school located in New
25 York state or attended an approved New York state program for [~~a state~~
26 ~~high school equivalency~~] an Excelsior diploma and received such [~~high~~
27 ~~school equivalency~~] diploma; (b) have graduated and obtained an under-
28 graduate degree from a college or university with its headquarters
29 located in New York state in or after the two thousand fourteen--fifteen
30 academic year; (c) apply for this program within two years of obtaining
31 such degree; (d) be a participant in a federal income-driven repayment
32 plan whose payment amount is generally ten percent of discretionary
33 income; (e) have income of less than fifty thousand dollars; (f) comply
34 with subdivisions three and five of section six hundred sixty-one of
35 this part; and (g) work in New York state, if employed. For purposes of
36 this program, "income" shall be the total adjusted gross income of the
37 applicant and the applicant's spouse, if applicable.

38 § 18. Subdivision 5 of section 3622-a of the education law, as amended
39 by chapter 422 of the laws of 2004, is amended to read as follows:

40 5. Transportation of pupils during the school day to and from programs
41 at a board of cooperative educational services or to or from approved
42 shared programs at other school districts, which programs may lead to a
43 diploma or [~~a high school equivalency~~] an Excelsior diploma or to or
44 from career education programs operated within the district;

45 § 19. Subdivision 1 of section 6451 of the education law, as amended
46 by chapter 917 of the laws of 1970, is amended to read as follows:

47 1. To advance the cause of educational opportunity in higher educa-
48 tion, the commissioner may contract with non-public institutions of
49 higher education for the support of special programs for the screening,
50 testing, counseling, tutoring of, and, assistance to, residents of the
51 state who are, (1) graduates of an approved high school or individuals
52 who have attained [~~a New York state high school equivalency~~] an Excels-
53 ior diploma or its equivalent, as determined by the commissioner, (2)
54 who have potential for the successful completion of a post secondary
55 program, and (3) are economically and educationally disadvantaged, as
56 defined by the regents.

1 § 20. Subdivision 1 of section 6452 of the education law, as added by
2 chapter 917 of the laws of 1970, is amended to read as follows:

3 1. To provide additional educational opportunity at the state univer-
4 sity of New York and the city university of New York, such institutions
5 shall provide special programs for the screening, testing, counseling,
6 and tutoring of, and assistance to, residents of the state who are, (1)
7 graduates of an approved high school or individuals who have attained [~~a~~
8 ~~New York state high school equivalency~~] an Excelsior diploma or its
9 equivalent, as determined by the commissioner, (2) who have potential
10 for the successful completion of a post secondary program, and (3) are
11 economically and educationally disadvantaged.

12 § 21. Clause 2 of subparagraph (ii) of paragraph (a) of subdivision 2
13 and clause 2 of subparagraph (ii) of paragraph (a) of subdivision 3 of
14 section 6455 of the education law, as amended by chapter 26 of the laws
15 of 2019, are amended to read as follows:

16 (2) attended an approved New York state program for [~~a state high~~
17 ~~school equivalency~~] an Excelsior diploma, received [~~a state high school~~
18 ~~equivalency~~] an Excelsior diploma and applied for attendance at the
19 institution of higher education for the undergraduate study for which an
20 award is sought within five years of receiving [~~a state high school~~
21 ~~equivalency~~] an Excelsior diploma; or

22 (2) attended an approved New York state program for [~~a state high~~
23 ~~school equivalency~~] an Excelsior diploma, received a state [~~high school~~
24 ~~equivalency~~] diploma and applied for attendance at the institution of
25 higher education for the graduate study for which an award is sought
26 within ten years of receiving [~~a state~~] an Excelsior [~~high school equiv-~~
27 ~~alency~~] diploma; or

28 § 22. Subdivision 4 of section 532-d of the executive law, as amended
29 by section 5 of part M of chapter 56 of the laws of 2017, is amended to
30 read as follows:

31 4. for a homeless youth whose service plan involves independent
32 living, provide practical assistance in achieving independence, either
33 through direct provision of services or through written agreements with
34 other community and public agencies for the provision of services in the
35 following areas; high school education or [~~high school equivalency~~
36 ~~education~~] an Excelsior diploma; higher education assessment; job train-
37 ing and job placement; counseling; assistance in the development of
38 socialization skills; guidance and assistance in securing housing appro-
39 priate to needs and income; and training in the development of skills
40 necessary for responsible independent living, including but not limited
41 to money and home management, personal care, and health maintenance; and

42 § 23. Subdivision 15 of section 42 of the labor law, as added by
43 section 6 of part E of chapter 389 of the laws of 1997, is amended to
44 read as follows:

45 15. Notwithstanding any other law, rule or regulation to the contrary,
46 the department shall prepare and submit to the governor, the temporary
47 president of the senate, the speaker of the assembly and the chair of
48 the legislative commission on skills development and vocational educa-
49 tion, an annual evaluation report of this program no later than October
50 thirty-first following the end of the program year. The report shall
51 include a statement of program objectives which identifies outcomes and
52 indicators of the effectiveness of the program. It shall represent the
53 extent to which program activities meet program objectives including,
54 but not limited to, improvements in participants' educational competen-
55 cies and employability skills as measured by accepted testing tools. The
56 basic measures of performance for projects for in-school youth shall be:

1 high school retention, attainment of a high school diploma, enrollment
2 in a post-secondary educational program or vocational skills training
3 program, or attainment of unsubsidized employment. The basic measure of
4 performance for projects for out-of-school youth shall be: improvement
5 in basic academic and vocational skills, return to high school, attain-
6 ment of [~~a high school equivalency~~] an Excelsior diploma, enrollment in
7 a post-secondary educational program or vocational skills training
8 program, or attainment of unsubsidized employment. The report shall
9 include a separate count of participants who have participated in the
10 same program model through more than one program cycle. A methodology
11 shall be prescribed which requires collection of post-program informa-
12 tion on program participants including, but not limited to, whether a
13 participant receives a high school degree or its equivalent and subse-
14 quent labor market experience for one year following termination from
15 the program, and the extent to which the participant achieved outcomes
16 as defined by the certified program model. The report shall also
17 describe the types of support services provided, levels of expenditure,
18 and demonstrate how such support services improve participant involve-
19 ment in local projects.

20 § 24. Subparagraph (iii) of paragraph t of subdivision 4 of section
21 3.23 of the parks, recreation and historic preservation law, as amended
22 by chapter 717 of the laws of 1988, is amended to read as follows:

23 (iii) encouraging corps members to continue studies during non-working
24 hours to complete [~~high school equivalency~~] an Excelsior diploma or
25 college courses or job skill training;

26 § 25. Subdivision 1 and paragraph (b) of subdivision 2 of section 335
27 of the social services law, subdivision 1 as amended by chapter 819 of
28 the laws of 2022, paragraph (b) of subdivision 2 as amended by section
29 148 of part B of chapter 436 of the laws of 1997, are amended to read as
30 follows:

31 1. Each social services official shall ensure that each recipient of
32 public assistance who is a member of a household with dependent children
33 and is eighteen years of age or older, or who is sixteen or seventeen
34 years of age and is not attending secondary school and has not completed
35 high school or [~~a high school equivalency~~] an Excelsior diploma
36 program, receives an assessment of employability based on [~~his or her~~]
37 their educational level, including literacy and English language profi-
38 ciency, basic skills proficiency, child care and other supportive
39 services needs; and skills, prior work experience, training and voca-
40 tional interests. This assessment shall include a review of family
41 circumstances including a review of any special needs of a child and
42 whether home visiting services would be appropriate and beneficial for
43 the family. Such assessment shall be completed within ninety days of the
44 date on which such person is determined eligible for public assistance.
45 An applicant for or recipient of public assistance may be assigned to
46 work activities prior to completion of such assessment.

47 (b) Where an assessment indicates that a participant who is not
48 subject to the education requirements of subdivision four of section
49 three hundred thirty-six-a of this [~~title~~] article has not attained a
50 basic literacy level, the social services official shall encourage and
51 may require the participant to enter a program to achieve basic literacy
52 or [~~high school equivalency~~] an Excelsior diploma or to enter such
53 educational programs in combination with other training activities
54 consistent with the employability plan.

1 § 26. Paragraph (b) of subdivision 2 of section 335-a of the social
2 services law, as amended by section 148 of part B of chapter 436 of the
3 laws of 1997, is amended to read as follows:

4 (b) Where an assessment indicates that a participant who is not
5 subject to the education requirements of this title has not attained a
6 basic literacy level, the social services official shall encourage and
7 may require the participant to enter a program to achieve basic literacy
8 or [~~high school equivalency~~] an Excelsior diploma or to enter such
9 educational programs in combination with other training activities
10 consistent with the employability plan.

11 § 27. Paragraphs (j) and (k) of subdivision 1 of section 336 of the
12 social services law, as amended by section 148 of part B of chapter 436
13 of the laws of 1997, are amended to read as follows:

14 (j) education directly related to employment, in the case of a recipi-
15 ent who has not yet received a high school diploma or [~~a certificate of~~
16 ~~high school equivalency~~] an Excelsior diploma;

17 (k) satisfactory attendance at secondary school or a course of study
18 leading to [~~a certificate of general equivalency~~] an Excelsior diploma
19 in the case of a recipient who has not completed secondary school or
20 received such certificate;

21 § 28. Subdivisions 1 and 2 and the opening paragraph and paragraph (a)
22 of subdivision 4 of section 336-a of the social services law, subdivi-
23 sion 1 as amended by section 1 of part X of chapter 56 of the laws of
24 2023, subdivision 2 and the opening paragraph and paragraph (a) of
25 subdivision 4 as amended by section 148 of part B of chapter 436 of the
26 laws of 1997, are amended to read as follows:

27 1. Social services districts shall make available vocational educa-
28 tional training and educational activities. Such activities may include
29 but need not be limited to, high school education or education designed
30 to prepare a participant for [~~a high school equivalency certificate~~] an
31 Excelsior diploma, basic and remedial education, education in English
32 proficiency, education or a course of instruction in financial literacy
33 and personal finance that includes instruction on household cash manage-
34 ment techniques, career advice to obtain a well paying and secure job,
35 using checking and savings accounts, obtaining and utilizing short and
36 long term credit, securing a loan or other long term financing arrange-
37 ment for high cost items, participation in a higher education course of
38 instruction or trade school, and no more than a total of four years of
39 post-secondary education (or the part-time equivalent). Educational
40 activities pursuant to this section may be offered with any of the
41 following providers which meet the performance or assessment standards
42 established in regulations by the commissioner for such providers: a
43 community college, licensed trade school, registered business school, or
44 a two-year or four-year college; provided, however, that such post-sec-
45 ondary education must be necessary to the attainment of the partic-
46 ipant's individual employment goal as set forth in the employability
47 plan and such goal must relate directly to obtaining useful employment.
48 When making an assignment to any educational activity pursuant to this
49 subdivision, such assignment shall be permitted only to the extent that
50 such assignment is consistent with the individual's assessment and
51 employment plan goals in accordance with sections three hundred thirty-
52 five and three hundred thirty-five-a of this title and shall require
53 that the individual maintains satisfactory academic progress and hourly
54 participation is documented consistent with federal and state require-
55 ments. For purposes of this provision "satisfactory academic progress"
56 shall mean having a cumulative C average, or its equivalent, as deter-

1 mined by the academic institution. The requirement to maintain satisfac-
2 tory academic progress may be waived if done so by the academic institu-
3 tion and the social services district based on undue hardship caused by
4 an event such as a personal injury or illness of the student, the death
5 of a relative of the student or other extenuating circumstances. Partic-
6 ipation in an educational and/or vocational training program, that shall
7 include, but not be limited to, a two-year post-secondary degree
8 program, which is necessary for the participant to attain their individ-
9 ual employment goal and is likely to lead to a degree or certification
10 and sustained employment, shall be approved consistent with such indi-
11 vidual's assessment and employability plan to the extent that such
12 approval does not jeopardize the state's ability to comply with federal
13 work participation rates, as determined by the office of temporary and
14 disability assistance.

15 2. When a district contracts with a proprietary vocational school to
16 provide vocational educational training to participants, not more than
17 twenty-five percent of the approved duration of the program shall be
18 devoted to preparation for [~~a high school equivalency~~] an Excelsior
19 diploma or instruction in English for students with limited proficiency
20 in English. Participants needing instruction in basic literacy shall be
21 referred to basic education programs. Instructors employed by proprie-
22 tary schools to prepare a participant for [~~a high school equivalency~~
23 ~~certificate~~] an Excelsior diploma or for education in English proficien-
24 cy shall meet experience requirements established by the regulations of
25 the commissioner of education.

26 To the extent provided in paragraphs (a) through (d) of this subdivi-
27 sion and if resources permit, each social services official shall assign
28 to appropriate educational activities any participant who has not
29 obtained a high school diploma or its equivalent:

30 (a) In accordance with the provisions of this chapter, any such
31 participant who is under age eighteen shall be required to attend educa-
32 tional activities designed to prepare the individual for a high school
33 degree or [~~equivalency certificate~~] an Excelsior diploma. Participants
34 who are not subject to compulsory school attendance requirements may be
35 exempted from the requirements of this paragraph under criteria estab-
36 lished by the department in consultation with the state education
37 department and consistent with federal law and regulations.

38 § 29. Section 97-hhh of the state finance law, as added by section 84
39 of part A of chapter 436 of the laws of 1997, is amended to read as
40 follows:

41 § 97-hhh. [~~High school equivalency~~] Excelsior diploma account. 1.
42 There is hereby established in the joint custody of the state comp-
43 troller and the commissioner of the department of taxation and finance
44 an account of the miscellaneous special revenue fund to be known as the
45 [~~high school equivalency~~] Excelsior diploma account.

46 2. Notwithstanding any other law, rule or regulation to the contrary,
47 the state comptroller is hereby authorized and directed to receive for
48 deposit to the credit of the [~~high school equivalency~~] Excelsior diploma
49 account, fees established by the commissioner of education and approved
50 by the director of the budget to supplement administration of the
51 [~~general educational development~~] tests for the [~~high school equivalen-~~
52 ~~cy~~] Excelsior diploma.

53 3. Moneys of this account, following appropriation by the legislature,
54 shall be available to the state education department for services and
55 expenses related to the administration of the [~~general educational~~
56 ~~development~~] tests for the [~~high school equivalency~~] Excelsior diploma.

1 § 30. Subdivision 3 of section 97-jjjj of the state finance law, as
2 amended by section 1 of part VV of chapter 57 of the laws of 2010, is
3 amended to read as follows:

4 3. Moneys of this account, following appropriation by the legislature,
5 shall be available to the state education department for services and
6 expenses relating to state assessments of elementary and secondary
7 school students, including but not limited to the [~~state-high-school~~
8 ~~equivalency~~] Excelsior diploma examination. Moneys of this account shall
9 only be available for expenditure pursuant to approval of an expenditure
10 plan by the director of the budget.

11 § 31. Subparagraph 1 of paragraph d of subdivision 1 of section 3602
12 of the education law, as amended by section 11 of part B of chapter 57
13 of the laws of 2007, is amended to read as follows:

14 (1) Equivalent attendance shall mean the quotient of the total number
15 of student hours of instruction in programs in a public school of a
16 school district or a board of cooperative educational services leading
17 to a high school diploma or [~~a-high-school-equivalency~~] an Excelsior
18 diploma as defined in regulations of the commissioner for pupils under
19 the age of twenty-one not on a regular day school register of the
20 district, divided by one thousand. Average daily attendance shall
21 include the equivalent attendance of the school district. For the
22 purposes of secondary school weighting, such equivalent attendance shall
23 be considered as average daily attendance in grades seven through
24 twelve.

25 § 32. Paragraphs a, a-1 and e of subdivision 11 of section 3602 of the
26 education law, paragraph a as amended by chapter 82 of the laws of 1995,
27 paragraph a-1 as amended by section 20-a of part A of chapter 56 of the
28 laws of 2025, paragraph e as amended and such subdivision as renumbered
29 by section 15 of part B of chapter 57 of the laws of 2007, are amended
30 to read as follows:

31 a. School districts and boards of cooperative educational services
32 (BOCES) providing approved programs shall be eligible for aid in accord-
33 ance with the provisions of this subdivision for the attendance of
34 persons twenty-one years of age or over who have not received a high
35 school diploma or [~~a-high-school-equivalency~~] an Excelsior diploma
36 recognized by New York State who attend employment preparation education
37 programs provided by such school districts or BOCES, which programs lead
38 to a high school diploma or [~~high-school-equivalency~~] an Excelsior
39 diploma as defined in regulations of the commissioner, even if such
40 persons attend regular day school classes with permission of the board
41 of education; provided that such programs are provided in accordance
42 with a plan of service approved by the commissioner in accordance with
43 the provisions of paragraph f of this subdivision. Such programs may
44 operate between July first and June thirtieth of a school year. Whenever
45 a person enrolls in a program approved pursuant to this subdivision
46 offered by a BOCES or in a school district other than their district of
47 residence, the program provider shall send a notice of such enrollment
48 to the persons district of residence, and shall issue a new notice if
49 such person moves from one district to another. In the event that the
50 cost of a program approved and provided in accordance with the
51 provisions of this subdivision exceeds all sources of funds, other than
52 tax levy revenues, which are available to defray such expenses, the
53 school district or BOCES providing such program shall determine an
54 excess cost per contact hour provided during the base year, and then
55 shall determine the local share of such excess costs for each school
56 district whose residents were served by such program by multiplying such

1 base year hours by the excess cost per contact hour, and such local
2 share shall be a charge against each such district, payable within
3 forty-five days. Notwithstanding the provisions of section nineteen
4 hundred fifty of this chapter, a BOCES shall be authorized to provide a
5 program pursuant to this subdivision in the same manner as a school
6 district.

7 a-1. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph a of this subdivi-
8 sion, for aid payable in the school years two thousand--two thousand one
9 through two thousand nine--two thousand ten, and two thousand eleven--
10 two thousand twelve through two thousand twenty-five--two thousand twenty-
11 ty-six, the commissioner may set aside an amount not to exceed two
12 million five hundred thousand dollars from the funds appropriated for
13 purposes of this subdivision for the purpose of serving persons twenty-
14 one years of age or older who have not been enrolled in any school for
15 the preceding school year, including persons who have received a high
16 school diploma or [~~high school equivalency~~] an Excelsior diploma but
17 fail to demonstrate basic educational competencies as defined in regu-
18 lation by the commissioner, when measured by accepted standardized
19 tests, and who shall be eligible to attend employment preparation educa-
20 tion programs operated pursuant to this subdivision.

21 e. Employment preparation education apportionment. In addition to any
22 other aid payable under this section, the apportionment pursuant to this
23 subdivision shall be the product obtained when the employment prepara-
24 tion education hours are multiplied by the aid per contact hour which
25 shall equal the product of the employment preparation program aid ceil-
26 ing and the employment preparation education aid ratio computed to two
27 decimals, rounded, as calculated based on data on file with the commis-
28 sioner on May fifteenth of the base year. Notwithstanding the provisions
29 of section thirty-six hundred nine-a of this part, the payment of such
30 apportionment shall be based upon reports required by the commissioner
31 for the periods ending December thirty-first, and June thirtieth of each
32 school year; payments for the first reporting period shall be made after
33 April first, based on claims on file by March first, provided that the
34 total of all such payments shall not exceed twenty-five percent of the
35 amount for such school year, with the approved amount of such claims
36 reduced on a pro rata basis if necessary; the remainder of any payments
37 due for the first period plus any payments due for the rest of the
38 school year shall be paid after October first, based on claims on file
39 by September fifteenth, provided that the total of such payments shall
40 not exceed the total amount of ninety-six million dollars (\$96,000,000)
41 for such school year, with the approved amount of such claims reduced on
42 a pro rata basis if necessary, provided that the total of such payment
43 for services provided to persons who received a high school diploma or
44 [~~a high school equivalency~~] an Excelsior diploma recognized by New York
45 state shall not exceed the total amount set aside for such purpose
46 pursuant to paragraph a-one of this subdivision in any such school year,
47 with the approved amount of such claims reduced on a pro rata basis if
48 necessary; and aid paid pursuant to this paragraph shall not be included
49 in the computation of the district expenditure need as defined in such
50 section thirty-six hundred nine-a of this part. The employment prepara-
51 tion education apportionment for the city school district of the city of
52 New York shall be computed only for the city as a whole.

53 § 33. This act shall take effect on the ninetieth day after it shall
54 have become a law; provided, however, that the amendments to section 803
55 of the correction law made by section ten of this act shall take effect
56 on the same date and in the same manner as section 1 of part EE of chap-

1 ter 56 of the laws of 2025, takes effect and shall not affect the expi-
2 ration of such section and shall be deemed repealed therewith; and,
3 provided further, that the amendments to section 58 of the civil service
4 law made by section eleven of this act shall take effect on the same
5 date and in the same manner as section 4 of part C of chapter 55 of the
6 laws of 2025, takes effect. Effective immediately, the addition, amend-
7 ment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the implemen-
8 tation of this act on its effective date are authorized to be made and
9 completed on or before such effective date.