

# FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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**DPS:** 05-004

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** District School Superintendents

**From:** Jim Warford

**Date:** July 14, 2004

**Subject:** **GENERAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (GED) EXIT OPTION  
MODEL 2004-2005 APPLICATION FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

The American Council on Education (ACE) has authorized the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) to continue the implementation of the GED Exit Option Model. This graduation option provides currently enrolled high school students who meet specific selection criteria the opportunity to take the General Educational Development (GED) Tests. Students who pass the GED Tests and the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) are eligible to graduate receiving a standard diploma. Students may only access this alternate graduation route through the GED Exit Option Model.

JIM WARFORD  
*K-12 Chancellor*

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During the 2003-2004 school year, 53 school districts were approved to implement the GED Exit Option Model. Evaluation data reported in the *Supplemental Academic Instruction Annual Report for 2003-2004* indicated that ninety-two percent (92%) of the students using this strategy passed the GED Tests. Nearly 100% of the students who passed the GED Tests through this strategy also passed the FCAT and earned a standard diploma. It is important to note that students who earn diplomas through the GED Exit Option Model are included in the calculation of the graduation rate under the No Child Left Behind, while students who receive a State of Florida diploma through an adult education program are excluded from this calculation.

The *2003 GED Exit Option Model Procedure Manual*, originally distributed with DPS Memo 04-034, dated October 1, 2002, is still a valid tool and should be used in implementing the GED Exit Option Model. In addition, we are providing you with a *Frequently Asked Questions* document designed to assist you in completing the application and implementing an effective program.

### **2003-2004 GED Exit Option Model Application**

In order to ensure that the Department may continue to provide ACE with comprehensive data on Florida's implementation model and comply with required ACE assurances, school districts that wish to develop and implement the GED Exit Option Model in 2004-2005 must submit a new application to the Florida Department of Education, Office of Title I Programs and Academic Intervention Services, 325 W. Gaines Street, 352 Turlington Building, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400, by **August 31, 2004**. A copy of the 2004-2005 application is attached and consists of:

- Part A, District Application Form, which must be returned to the Department with all required signatures;
- Part B, Annual School Report, which must be completed by personnel at each school site and returned to the Department with the District Application Form (*Please note this is a scannable form. Faxes, copies, and non-white paper may not be accepted.*);
- Part C, Site Self-Evaluation Checklist, which must be completed by each school site and maintained at the district office;
- Part D, Student Self-Evaluation Checklist, which must be completed for each student using this exit strategy and maintained at each site, and
- In addition, a series of frequently asked questions related to the implementation and administration of the GED Exit Option Model is attached.

Approval for implementation in 2004-2005 will be based upon Department staff review to determine completeness of the application and compliance with the requirements from ACE, and will be effective based on the date that the Department of Education receives part A and part B of the application.

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Once the district application is approved by the Department, GED Exit Option Authorization Forms will be mailed to the district GED Exit Option Model contact for test administration at each approved site. When identifying sites for the implementation, please note that HB 1989, passed by the 2004 Legislature, amends section 1003.52(3)(a), Florida Statutes (F.S.), to require that all districts provide the GED Exit Option Model for the Department of Juvenile Justice programs. School districts approved to implement the model may submit an amendment during the school year to add or delete school sites.

We applaud your efforts in meeting the challenge of serving students at risk of dropping out of school prior to receiving a high school diploma and hope that this graduation option will provide an alternative strategy for more effectively meeting the needs of these students. Our staff is available to assist you with the application and implementation process. If you need additional information, please contact Michael Lisle, Program Director, Title I Programs and Academic Intervention Services, at (850) 245-0481 or via email [michael.lisle@fldoe.org](mailto:michael.lisle@fldoe.org).

JW:mlf

Attachments

cc: Assistant Superintendents for Instruction  
Dropout Prevention Coordinators  
Adult Education Directors  
Directors of Exceptional Student Education  
Student Services Directors  
Juvenile Justice Contacts  
District ESOL Coordinators  
District Title I/Migrant Coordinators