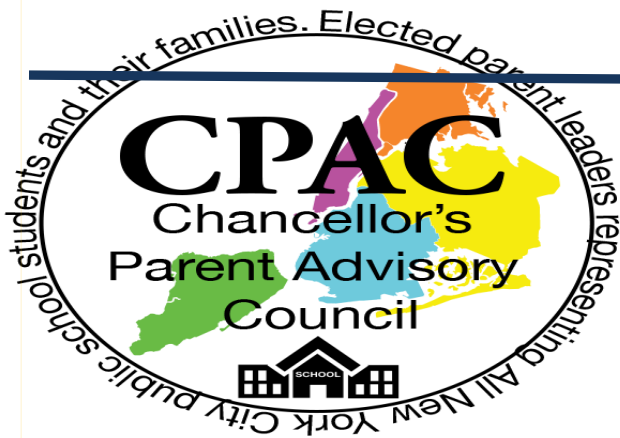


Chancellor's Parent Advisory Council

Tweed Courthouse *52 Chamber Street, New York 10007 / Email: InfoCPACNYC@gmail.com



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November 18, 2021

Deputy Chancellor Adrienne Austin
FACE Executive Director Sadye Campoamor
Department of Education
Tweed Courthouse
52 Chambers Street
New York, New York 10007

Dear Deputy Chancellor Austin and Executive Director Campoamor,

The current covid-19 pandemic has focused all our attention on our most vulnerable students. As you know, CPAC supported efforts to allow students who were aging out (turning 21-years old) last year, in the midst of the pandemic, the opportunity to return to high school for the 2021-2022 school year rather than lose their chance to graduate. This effort led the CPAC High School Committee on a “wondering” exercise to better understand how the DOE currently supports students of all ages who are over 21 years old and do not have a high school diploma but wish to earn a high school equivalency. Our first stop was obviously the DOE website, which provided little information. **We are urging you to revamp the DOE webpage devoted to adult education to clearly direct parents and students on how to obtain their high school equivalency and the supports the DOE provides. The DOE should also leverage its Transition Centers to assist these students with questions regarding the high school equivalency, create information pamphlets in multiple languages, and use Presidents’ Councils, CECs, City-wide Councils, and PAs/PTAs to help get the word out.**

Currently those interested in learning more about high school equivalency are directed to the following page: <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/other-ways-to-graduate/adult-education>. Unfortunately, the Adult Education webpage provides little information on any of the adult education programs that the DOE provides; it references multiple programs but does not provide specific details. Oddly, without any explanation of classes offered and location, potential students are directed to enroll via email or a phone number (parents are having difficulty getting a response via the email and phone number – can the DOE check to see if they are working?). Instead, the DOE needs to map out exactly what students need to do to obtain their high school equivalency, with links to resources, and explain the test they need to take.

While we would encourage a complete review of the page, we suggest that the DOE create a stand-alone webpage, much like the NYSED page (<http://www.acces.nysed.gov/what-hsetasc-test>), explaining the following:

1. What TASC (Test Assessing Secondary Completion) is – that if passed, it grants the equivalent of a high school diploma

2. What subjects are covered under the TASC, with course materials provided on the website
3. How the TASC works – what does the test look like (including sample tests, if available) and length of the test
4. How often TASC tests are given, test locations, how students sign up, and how much the tests cost
5. What programs are available to support New York City residents of any age in preparing for the TASC
6. Where programs are located
7. How much the programs cost
8. What students need to do to enroll (and whether proof of residency/citizenship is required)
9. What accommodations are available for non-English speakers, English Language Learners, or those with special needs and disabilities

Please include links to other resources that support students seeking the high school equivalency, including links to the state webpage.

The webpage needs to be positive, encouraging, informative, and accessible in multiple languages.

We also encourage the DOE to use its newly created Transition Centers as information centers to assist potential over-aged students with questions and general encouragement. Information pamphlets in multiple languages explaining TASC should be made available, and Presidents' Councils, CECs, Citywide Councils, and PAs/PTAs should be used to disseminate information about the TASC and DOE programs to support students of all ages considering the test.

We remain concerned that economic reality may have led many high school students to drop out in the past two years, but the pandemic has merely highlighted New York City's decades-long problem with students leaving school without obtaining their high school diplomas. We can all recognize that lack of a high school diploma will have a significant economic impact on students' lives. We should all work to encourage adults without high school diplomas to obtain their high school equivalency. The first step is to improve the DOE website so that it lays out clearly and simply what students need to do who wish to take and pass the TASC.

With much appreciation,

The Chancellor's Parent Advisory Council

Approved by the membership at its November 18, 2021 meeting

Cc: Chancellor Meisha Ross Porter, First Deputy Chancellor Donald Conyers, Chief Academic Officer Linda Chen, Executive Superintendent Tim Lisante, Superintendents Paul Rotundo and Robert Zweig, Chief Information Officer Anuraag Sharma