

You Have The Right To Be Immediately Enrolled Back In A NYC Public School!

HOW DO I GET BACK INTO SCHOOL?

Returning from Detention

Passages Academy (the school you attended while in detention) is responsible for putting you back on the register of the last school you were enrolled in before you were arrested. You should be able to return to your old school immediately.

•If you were suspended at the time of your arrest you may have to finish serving your suspension at a suspension site before you can return to your old school.

•If the school wants to transfer you to another school, you have the right to a hearing to determine if you can remain at the school.

For more information about suspensions and hearings contact Advocates For Children.

What if my old school won't let me back?

Contact Passages Academy to make sure they have discharged you and that they have informed your old school of your return.

Contact Passages Placement Coordinator at 718-292-0065 ext. 193 or the Family Paraprofessional at 718-292-0065 ext. 191

You can also go to your Regional Offices for help (see information in the next section for details).

Returning from OCFS Custody

Junior High students: You should go with a parent to the Regional Office of Student Placement & Youth and Family Support Services (SPYFSS office). *Call 311 to get the location of your regional office.* They will register you at your zoned school and give you a letter to bring to the school so that you can be enrolled.

High school students: You should go to your Regional Enrollment Center (if you are under 18 you will need a parent or legal guardian to accompany you). *Call 311 to get the location of your Regional Enrollment Center.* Ask to meet with a high school placement officer, they will register you in a high school and give you a letter to bring to the school so that you can be enrolled.

You should bring birth certificate, proof of address, and immunizations with you to register. You have the right to be enrolled immediately even if you do not have these documents. You also should not be required to have a release letter from the facility or past transcript in order to register. Tell them that Chancellor's Regulation A-101 states that a student lacking documentation should be immediately enrolled and the documents can be collected later.

Write down the name and phone number of the person at the regional office who is registering you. Make sure they give you what is called a Disposition Letter to take with you to the school. If you have trouble when you get to the school, have the school call the person from the region who registered you.

What if I am having trouble getting registered?

If you are not being immediately registered in a school, contact the *Office of Student Enrollment, Planning, and Operations*. Identify yourself as a student returning from a court-ordered setting and explain the problem.

Middle School students call 212-374-7647

High School student call 212-374-6809

You can also call Advocates For Children for more assistance at 1-866-427-6033

At the Enrollment Centers:

•Even if the enrollment staff is telling you to get your GED or go into an alternative program, you have the right to enroll in a high school until the year you turn 21 or earn your high school diploma.

•A referral to a school does not mean you are registered at that school. You will need to go to the school for an interview, and the school will decide whether or not they will accept you. If you are not accepted you will need to return to the Enrollment Center.

Did I earn credit for the work I did while in detention or in OCFS custody?

For students in detention (Passages Academy): Passages is supposed to give ¼ of a credit for every 23 days of completed work you do. Unfortunately, this has created many problems for students because you need full credit to complete the course requirements. Keep records of the grades you earned at Passages and ask your school guidance counselor to review the work you have done and get that work translated into credits.

Junior High Students: You should have been given work on your grade level and you should have been given the citywide tests that are required for promotion to the next grade.

For students who were placed in OCFS custody: If you were attending a New York State registered high school while in a residential treatment center of private placement, the law says you must receive credit for the work you did. According to the Department of Education, it is up to the Principal with the help of the guidance staff to review your transcripts and transfer the credits you may have earned to your NYC transcript.

What you can do: Get a copy of your *Transcript Summary Form* from the placement you were at. Find out who the Education Administrator is at the placement site and ask them to send the Transcript Summary Form to you or your new school. Meet with the guidance counselor at your school to have them review this form and translate the work you did into credits.

Note: The units of credit given at schools outside NYC are different than the units of credits that are given at NYC schools. When you return to NYC make sure you are given the full amount of credit on your NYC transcript. Generally, 1 credit from outside NYC city would be equal to 2 credits in NYC schools.

More about credits:

Local Diploma: students need **44 credits** plus a **55 or above** on the 5 Regents*

*Students who start 9th grade in 2005 must pass 2 of 5 Regents with a 65 or above.

*Students who start 9th grade in 2006 must pass 3 of 5 Regents with a 65 or above.

*Students who start 9th grade in 2007 must pass 4 of 5 Regents with a 65 or above.

Regents Diploma: student need **44 credits** plus a **65 or above** on the 5 Regents *If you are a special education student and have failed the Regents exams, you may be allowed to take the Regents Competency Tests (RCT) and still receive your high school diploma.*

For more detailed information go to:

<http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/DYD/GraduationRequirementsBinder/default.htm>

Special Education students:

If you receive special education services or have a need for special education services, there are special laws to make sure you are getting the services you need. If you feel like you may need extra help, or are not receiving the right services contact Advocates For Children to get assistance or go to our website www.advocatesforchildren.org for more information.

Can I switch to a different school?

Once you are enrolled at a school, transfers are very hard to get. However, if you want to try to get a transfer make sure to take the right steps:

Safety Transfers: If something happens in or near your school and you don't feel safe there, report it to the police or school staff immediately. You will need a police report or an occurrence report from the school to request a safety transfer. All decisions about safety transfers are made by the Regional Office but generally require that the transfer forms and reports about the incident be sent from your school. If your school will not send the forms, you can go to the Regional Office to get assistance.

Travel Hardship Transfers: If you live more than 1 and ½ hours from your school, you can request a transfer to a school closer to your home. Go to your Regional Learning Support Center to request the transfer. *Call 311 to get the location of your Regional Office.*

No Child Left Behind Transfers: If you are attending a school on the NCLB list of failing schools, you can apply for a NCLB transfer. There are specific deadlines for these transfers. Talk to your guidance counselor or parent coordinator to find out if you are eligible and how to apply.

Am I too old for High School?

You have the right to be in school until the year you turn 21, but if you feel uncomfortable at your school there are some other options for you. The Office of Multiple Pathways to Graduation has some different options for older students:

Transfer Alternative Schools: These schools were designed for older students who have failed in regular high schools but still want to get their high school diploma. These schools have their own admission requirements (many require a minimum number of credits), so to enroll at one of these schools, contact the school directly to ask about enrollment. *For a list of Transfer schools go to the DOE's Office of Alternative Schools and Programs website:*

<http://schools.nyc.gov/OurSchools/Region79/default.htm>

YABC (Young Adult Borough Centers): Can't go to school during the day?

Students can attend these centers in the evening to earn their high school diploma. Students must be 17 and have at least 17 credits to enroll. Ask your guidance counselor if you want to enroll in this program.

Learn to Work: These programs may be available to students who are in certain Transfer schools, YABCs, or GED programs. They offer job training and extra school support to students.

Alternative Programs: These are programs, not schools. Some of these have GED programs, some have high school classes, some have vocational/job training classes. It is not possible to get your high school diploma from one of these programs, but you may be able to earn credits and then transfer to a diploma granting school later on.

Call the Office of Alternative Schools and Programs at 718-557-2681 to find out about these programs and if one might be right for you.

What about the GED? The GED stands for **General Education Development**.

It is not a high school diploma, but can be used to apply to some colleges, the military, or jobs.

Who is eligible? The GED is not an easy exam. Students should be on a 9th grade level in reading and math if they wish to take the tests. Students between the ages of 17-19 must first complete an approved GED program or have been out of school for over a year before they are allowed to take the tests. If you are not on a 9th grade level in reading and math, there are Pre-GED programs that can help you get your levels up to where they need to be.

For information about getting into a GED or Pre-GED program, call the Office of Alternative Schools and Programs at 718-557-2681.

Important Tips!!!!

1. Read everything before you sign it! Don't sign anything you don't understand!
2. Keep copies of all forms you sign.
3. Get a folder and keep your education records together.
4. If you don't have your education records, get them!
5. Get a notebook: Keep notes of the names and numbers of all the people you speak to about your education.
6. Be nice but make sure you are being heard!
7. If you need something (e.g.: copies of records, a meeting with a teacher, or extra help), put it in writing.
8. Keep a copy of all requests you make.
9. Ask questions when you need more information or something explained a second time.
10. Keep track of your own attendance, especially if you are on probation or parole. Ask your teacher for attendance sheets that each teacher can sign.

Important contact information

Your attorney _____

Tel. # _____

If you were at Passages:

Guidance Counselor _____

Tel. # _____

If you were in OCFS custody:

Educational Administrator _____

Tel. # _____

After-Care worker _____

Tel. # _____

Additional notes: _____

CONTACT INFORMATION

Here are some useful numbers to contact if you are having trouble getting back into school!



ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN: 212-947-9779
EDUCATION HOTLINE - 1-866 427-6033

For students with cases in Family Court

THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY - Juvenile Rights Divisions
Manhattan: 212-312-2260 Bronx: 718-579-7900
Brooklyn: 718-237-3100 Queens: 718-298-8900
Staten Island: 718-981-0219

Students with Legal Aid attorneys should contact their lawyers if they are having trouble with school related issues

For students with cases in Criminal court

THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY (ask for Central Records to find out if you have a Legal Aid attorney)
Manhattan: 212-298-5000 Bronx: 718-579-3000
Brooklyn: 718-237-2000 Queens: 718-286-2000



USEFUL WEB SITES

Advocates for Children - www.advocatesforchildren.org
To find information on area schools go to Inside Schools at:
www.insideschools.org
The Official Department of Education website - www.nycschools.gov
To take a look at the Chancellor's Regulations see
<http://www.nycenet.edu/Administration/ChancellorsRegulations>

Back to School

Educational Guide for Youth Coming Back from Detention or Custodial Placements



NOTE: Information about enrolling back into school may change starting in the fall of 2007. Contact Advocates For Children for further information.

"I want to go back to school, but they don't want me back because I was locked up"

"What's the point of going back to school -- I'm already 17 and might as well get a GED"

How to use this Guide:

Welcome back! No matter how long you were away, this guide will teach you how to get back in school and get on track. Students who have been in detention or OCFS custody sometimes have a hard time returning to school. You want to go back to school, but may be confused about how to get back into a school that will be right for you. This guide will provide an overview of school issues and teach you how to stand up for your right to a meaningful education in NYC. Let's get started!

An informational guide published by the
Juvenile Justice Coalition
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and
Advocates For Children of New York, Inc.
THIS GUIDE DOES NOT PROVIDE LEGAL ADVICE