

A Great Opportunity for College-bound Students with Mobility Disabilities

Submitted by: The New Jersey Chamber of Commerce

The College Career Ready Academy is a four-day summer experience for college-bound high school students with mobility disabilities that will ensure they are motivated to perform at the peak of their ability so they will excel in the colleges and careers they choose. The workshop will be launched by Scott Chesney, a motivational speaker. Throughout the week, participants will be immersed in business simulation games hear from college admissions officials; develop a plan for optimal high school outcomes, and earn credentials that will help build their résumés. For the comfort of our participants, a semi-private stretching area will be available each day.

DATE AND TIME

July 7 through 10, 2014
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily

LOCATION

Kessler Foundation
300 Executive Drive
Conference Room
West Orange, NJ 07052

INVITEES

College-bound students who reside in the state of New Jersey with a mobility disability who are entering grades 9th, 10th, and 11th in September of 2014.

COST

This workshop is FREE to attendees but registration is required, limited to 30 participants, and will be on a first come, first served basis.

To register, please visit this page:

http://www.learndoeearn.org/July_7_10.html

Compiled by Cynthia Bucchi,
Office of Strategic Communications & Partnerships

The Office of Strategic Communications and Partnerships is responsible for responding to questions from families and community members who write to "Ask DOE" and choose the topic "Other." We have compiled some of the recent frequently asked questions received from across the state. If you are interested in writing to "Ask DOE" please visit our web page at the following address:

<https://www.state.nj.us/education/parents/contact.htm>.

Question: Do you have a list of approved religious holidays?

Answer: The Commissioner of Education is responsible for creating the List of Religious Holidays Permitting Pupil Absence from School, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:36-14 through 16 and N.J.A.C. 6A:32-8.3(j). The purpose of this list is to provide school districts and charter schools a list of religious holidays for which it shall be mandatory to excuse a student. The list, however, is not an exhaustive list.. Districts and charter schools, at their discretion, may add other days to the list to allow excused absences for holidays not on the List of Religious Holidays Permitting Pupil Absence from School. The list for this school year can be found at: [2013-2014 List of Religious Holidays Permitting Pupil Absence From School](#).



Family and Community Circle



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NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

New Adult Education Assessment Providers

New Jersey has offered the General Education Development (GED) test since 1959 as a route to our state-issued high school diploma. The GED has been offered under the auspices of the American Council for Education (ACE), a federal non-profit. Until recently, ACE / GED has been the sole source provider of the GED test used to award the state-issued high school diploma. In 2010, ACE partnered with Pearson to form a for-profit entity, Pearson VUE, to offer the GED, to align the GED with the Common Core standards, and to computerize the test.

The Pearson VUE GED test was scheduled to have a significant cost increase this year. Nationally and in New Jersey, public concern over the impact of the price increase on test takers led to the entry of other test vendors into the market. In August, the Department issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for test vendors to assess applicants for the state-issued high school diploma. Our intention was to:

- Offer applicants several testing options at different prices;
- Ensure testing opportunities in all regions of the state;
- Continue a lower cost, paper testing option for a transitional period; and
- Transition the test to the Common Core by 2016.

Our RFQ panel found all three RFQ responders to be qualified as New Jersey test vendors:

1. Pearson VUE
2. Educational Testing Service (ETS)
3. McGraw Hill

In December, the State Board approved the three vendors. Moving forward, the Department of Education will continue to qualify new vendors as they come forward.

The Department currently authorizes 32 test centers for the GED through Memoranda of Understanding. Each center will be able to use any / all of three tests. ETS & McGraw Hill will offer both paper-based and computerized testing through 2016. Pearson VUE will offer computer-based testing with paper-based testing offered only as an accommodation under the *Americans with Disabilities Act*. Each approved test has subsections which must be passed in order to earn the state diploma: writing, reading, math, science, and social studies. Applicants can retake the entire test or individual subtests.

The new tests will begin January 2014. By 2016, tests will align with the Common Core State Standards.

For more information, please visit the Department's adult education website at <http://www.state.nj.us/education/students/adulted/>. Please direct any questions to adulted_info@doe.state.nj.us.



Professional Development Updates

Over the summer of 2013, new professional development regulations were adopted by the State Board, reflecting the recommendations of the [Governor's 2012 Education Transformation Task Force Report](#) and aligning to the [TEACHNJ](#) legislation. The Department continues to develop guidance and resources to help educators implement new professional development policies, including linking professional growth opportunities to educator evaluations. Please visit the New Jersey Department of Education's [Professional Development website](#) for more details, including the following resources:

- [Overview of Revised Professional Development Regulations](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions About New Regulations](#)

New Evaluation System



As required under the *TeachNJ Act*, which was passed unanimously by the Legislature and signed into law by Governor Christie in 2012, each district in the state is in the process of implementing new educator evaluation systems. These evaluation systems are designed to provide additional support to teachers as they continually improve their practice. The Department is publishing broadcast memos every few weeks with more information about the new evaluation and support system for teachers regarding AchieveNJ. Please visit

<http://www.nj.gov/education/AchieveNJ/resources/memos.shtml> to read these memos and other communications materials.

The Department has recently created a new [Evaluation Scoring Web Page](#) with resources explaining the calculation of each evaluation component score, as well as the final summative rating, including a [Teacher Evaluation Scoring Guide](#). Families may be interested in reviewing this information to learn more about how evaluations are scored for each educator.

In November, The New Jersey Department of Education published the *Final Report of the Evaluation Pilot Advisory Committee (EPAC)*. The report emphasizes the experiences and lessons learned from the second year of the teacher evaluation pilot and the 2012-13 principal evaluation pilot based on interviews, surveys, and discussions with EPAC participants and pilot district staff. Anyone interested in learning more about the development of evaluation policies in New Jersey, and the critical role educators and other stakeholders played in shaping the policies, should read this important report.

Now that we have moved past the pilot stage and all New Jersey districts are implementing AchieveNJ, we are convening a new AchieveNJ Advisory Committee. As with the EPAC, the new committee includes teachers, principals, central office administrators, and representatives of professional associations and higher

education. Several members of the EPAC will continue their service on the committee, joining new educators and stakeholders. Please refer to the November 19 memo for a list of committee members.

For more information on all components of evaluation, please visit the Department's [AchieveNJ](#) website.

Educator Preparation

In June 2013, the Department proposed regulations to the State Board to increase the bar for entry into the teaching profession in New Jersey. Last month, we posted answers to [Frequently Asked Questions](#) we've received over the past few months. Those individuals who are interested in pursuing a career in teaching in the state should review these FAQs for more information.



Students Listen When Future Employers Discuss the 'Other Facts of Life'

This article is Courtesy of The New Jersey Chamber of Commerce, submitted by Dana Egreczky, Senior Vice-President, Workforce Development

"We are especially interested in LearnDoEarn and 'The Principal's Office' because of the opportunities these programs present to talk to kids about careers in science and technology and the resulting increases in enrollment seen in key high school courses," states David Erfert, manager, Phillips 66 Bayway Refinery, sponsor of multiple schools in Elizabeth and its surrounding area.

Over 4,000 high school freshmen across the state are headed for a better future after hearing from business leaders armed with information provided by the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce Foundation, thanks to support from companies like Capital One, Verizon, PSEG, and Phillips 66 Bayway Refinery.

For years, the Chamber Foundation has presented students with tough but honest messages about what they need to do in middle and high school to be successful in college and career through its award-winning curriculum, LearnDoEarn. These messages tell students to take rigorous courses, do homework, get good grades, acquire the right attitude, and don't get visible tattoos or do other things that will reduce employability. In spring 2013, the Chamber Foundation launched a related campaign in support of increased academic achievement called 'The Principal's Office.'

Chamber Foundation staff connects a sponsoring company with a select school and arranges for a representative from that company to present research-based motivational messages to students in an assembly or classroom environment. At the end of the student presentation, the business representative 'deputizes' the school's principal into the Workforce Posse, demonstrating support for the effort principals expend every day to ensure our students succeed. Schools receive other benefits, including wall posters, online resources, and more. The principal receives a Workforce Posse hat and a badge, which many wear in the halls to remind students of their ultimate educational goals.

Only slightly better than half of the state's full-time, first-time, continuously enrolled college and university students graduate with four-year degrees at the six-year mark – the rest

take longer –paying for remedial courses that deliver material that could have been learned in high school for free. And the average graduation rate for community colleges in New Jersey is about 14% at the three-year mark.

"PSEG is proud to support The Principal's Office Campaign in schools in our service area. Thanks to the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce Foundation and its work in local schools, our business community has a much better chance of finding the workforce we need."

On the 'career' side of the equation, our employers report that most young adults are not ready for entry-level jobs, and those who are will likely not be candidates for promotion. As a result, businesses must spend time and resources to make new hires productive and effective workers.

Research indicates these disappointing outcomes happen because students are not working hard enough in high school – electing easier courses, accepting lower grades, and not putting in the homework time. Business leaders set them straight, thus setting the stage for optimal outcomes.

Having the opportunity to listen to a business person reinforcing the messages students hear from principals and teachers every day lends a far greater level of credibility to those messages.



Newly deputized principal Tracey Turner, of Pennsauken High School and Doug Schoenberger, vice president Corporate Responsibility and Public Affairs for Verizon, NJ. Pennsauken is one of several schools participating in The Principal's Office Campaign thanks to sponsorship from Verizon NJ.