




THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK STATE / ALBANY, NY 12234

James N. Baldwin, Senior Deputy Commissioner for Education Policy
Education Building, Room 2M EB (518) 474-3862
89 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12234
jim.baldwin@nysed.gov

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To: District Superintendents
Superintendents of Schools
Public School Administrators
Nonpublic School Administrators
Charter School Administrators

From: James N. Baldwin 

Subject: Providing Over-Age Students the Opportunity to Return to School in the 2022-23 School Year Due to the Impact of COVID-19

As previously announced, the Board of Regents and the State Education Department have implemented a number of temporary regulatory changes to minimize the educational impact that COVID-19 has had on all students in New York State. This has resulted in the need to modify the requirements students must meet to earn high school diplomas, credentials, and endorsements.

While COVID-19 has impacted all of us, it has been particularly harmful to vulnerable populations, including English language learners, economically disadvantaged and homeless students, and students with disabilities. Students who “aged out” of the P-12 education system because they have turned 21 years old by the start of school in September 2022 were also greatly impacted this past school year.

To ensure that 21-year-old students have the chance to earn their high school diploma and fully prepare for the transition to their planned postsecondary experiences, the Board of Regents and the State Education Department are strongly encouraging schools and school districts to allow those students who will age out of school the opportunity to attend school in the 2022-2023 school year, in order to complete their education and earn a diploma, credential, or endorsement.

Many plans for the 2022-2023 school year were again placed on hold or interrupted due to constantly changing health and safety conditions and the need to transition between remote, hybrid and in-person instruction. As we experienced last school year, these changes to our educational system disrupt learning leaving some students without

the high levels of support and planning they need to effectively transition from high school to their postsecondary plans. Through no fault of their own, some of these students were unable to earn a high school diploma and aged out of the system at the end of the 2021-2022 school year. This is an unfair and unjust outcome for our students who can least afford to lose the life-changing opportunity to earn a diploma, credential, or endorsement.

We must do everything possible to continue to support our most vulnerable students and their families through these challenging times. As was stressed last school year, giving these young adults that have worked so hard for so long the opportunity to complete their schooling and transition to the next step in their lives will benefit them, their families, and the communities in which they live and work – this is what they deserve and again we urge you to offer them this opportunity.