

SECTION 18A & 18B

A. BACKGROUND

Young people are incredibly resilient. However, some young people struggle academically due to a variety of factors, including the impact of poverty and/or racial inequity, school/home instability, and trauma (which could impede executive functioning associated with academic success). Those with experience in the justice system, in particular, deal with a complicated trajectory of schooling, particularly if they are part of Close to Home, where they take classes on site or at Passages Academy before transferring back to school in their community. Students also face stigma from their peers and school staff which can be disheartening during a critical time when youth are attempting to reenter their communities.

For a young person who may be experiencing those challenges or who has academic gaps, a learning disability, and/or is several grade levels behind, obtaining a high school degree/equivalency can be very challenging.

However, when young people receive the support and guidance they need, the sky is the limit. Resilience can translate into grit and determination, and in NYC there are strong programs and resources for youth who are college-bound.

No matter the academic challenges or gifts a young person has, the **Coach's role is to ensure that young person is enrolled in a best-fit school/program, persists in that setting, and has the supports and resources they need to reach their full educational potential.**

B. COACH'S ROLE IN HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE ACHIEVE THEIR ACADEMIC GOALS

The aim is to help all young people graduate high school and eventually navigate onto a living wage career path. In today's economy, with some exceptions, a living wage career requires a college degree and/or vocational credentials.

Without a high school degree, there is little-to-no chance that a young person will be able to be economically self-sufficient in New York City. These young people will be at very high risk of further system involvement. **Therefore, it is the role of a Coach to ensure that all young people get their high school degree or equivalency, no matter how long that takes!** From there, Coaches help young people navigate onto a best-fit post-secondary pathway and persist in that setting.

Should a young person not be ready to enroll, Coaches can help them connect to career development experiences and/or academic remediation supports to help build their resumes, skills, and post-secondary preparedness.

Should a young person not persist in any particular school/program, the Coach helps them to reflect on the experience, explore other opportunities, and re-engage in a better-fit setting.

Very few young people, if any, will transition right from high school onto a living-wage job without any post-secondary credentials. There are some civil service positions where this is possible – for example, firefighters do not require any college degree and earn over \$55,000 the first year. However, these exams only come out every few years or so and are extremely competitive. And even where these jobs do exist, having some sort of post-secondary degree/ credentials will ultimately help the young person advance, earn more, and/or have more mobility and overall economic stability.

Therefore, Coaches also expose all young people to post-secondary options as early as possible, including college and accredited vocational programs, to help them start to plan and prepare. See [Fair Futures Program Manual Section 21](#).

WHEN YOUNG PEOPLE ENROLL IN THE FAIR FUTURES COACHING PROGRAM, THEY WILL COME IN WITH VARYING LEVELS OF ACADEMIC SKILLS AND CREDENTIALS. COACHES MEET YOUTH WHERE THEY ARE AND HELP THEM ACHIEVE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL, WHETHER THEY ARE DISCONNECTED OR A STAR STUDENT.

A COACH'S ROLE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITHOUT A DEGREE, BASED ON WHERE THEY ARE, INCLUDES:

FOR STUDENTS ENROLLED IN HIGH SCHOOL:

Coaches help young people persist with the overall goal of helping with grade promotion and attainment of 10+ credits that year.¹ They do so by providing emotional support, visiting the school, connecting them to needed services/resources, checking in at critical junctures, and helping them to navigate challenges, as needed.

FOR STUDENTS ENROLLED IN AN GED PROGRAM:

Coaches help them persist with the overall goal of helping them obtain their GED. They do so by visiting the program, providing emotional support, connecting them to needed services/resources, checking-in at critical junctures, and helping them to navigate challenges, as needed. See [Fair Futures Program Manual Section 18F](#).

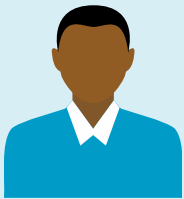
FOR DISCONNECTED YOUTH WITHOUT A HIGH SCHOOL DEGREE/EQUIVALENCY:

The Coach helps reconnect them to an appropriate academic setting. Even if a young person is initially not interested in getting a high school degree/equivalency, the Coach's role is to help them understand why they need their degree. While a young person should always be driving his/her own goals and a Coach should be supportive of whatever pathway they choose, a high school degree is a necessity for their success. It is the Coach's responsibility to find ways to help them realize this in a way that is motivating and supportive. **Telling a young person that a degree is important usually doesn't work – they know that!** There are other effective, innovative approaches to use. See [Fair Futures Program Manual Section 20](#).

FOR STUDENTS IN OR TRANSITIONING FROM CLOSE TO HOME:

Coaches help young people persist in their school settings, **help youth plan for their transition** to another school when they return to their community, **and support that transition when it takes place.** For youth returning to their communities, the two-month period when they transition back home and to school is especially critical. Coaches will want to be highly engaged during the transition (including during special education sessions and discussions about potential school transfers, which disproportionately lead to District 75 enrollment) and will want to promote consistent attendance. Learn more about the various programs for youth in Close to Home placement and about supporting the transition back to home schools in [Appendix C19 Supporting the Transition Period for youth leaving Close to Home](#). The information in this section will be most relevant to youth following their transition from Close to Home placement to community-based schools.

OVERALL, FROM AN EDUCATIONAL PERSPECTIVE, COACHES:



- **Ensure young people are enrolled in a best-fit school, college, or program** (and connect them to one if they are not)
- **Help young people persist in that academic setting**
- **Build relationships** with the primary people at the young person's school/program, and work with the young person's family/adult figures to support them
- **Plan and prepare** for the next step on their journey

Coaches working with MAAP youth may be collaborating with mentors, and Coaches working with youth in Close to Home facilities may be collaborating with Education Specialists and other staff involved in the young person's education.

TIP! Use this “dream team” to your advantage by clarifying your roles and collaboratively problem solving when challenges arise!

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¹ Students with intellectual disabilities who are alternately assessed will have a modified persistence goal. See Goals & Steps framework.