

# FairFutures»

## **ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS TO HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION IN NYC**

### **AMONG 16 TO 18-YEAR-OLDS IN FOSTER CARE, FEWER THAN HALF ARE ON TRACK TO GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL.**

Some students start high school overage for their grade, and many others struggle with attendance or are not prepared academically for high school, causing them to fall behind in 9th or 10th grade.

For students who do fall behind in traditional high schools, the NYC Department of Education (DOE) offers a range of alternatives, including transfer schools, Young Adult Borough Centers (YABCs), and high school equivalency (HSE) programs. There are also a handful of alternative options for overage middle school students.

**All these models are tailored to serve overage, under-credited students and provide them with the supports they need to graduate in a condensed timeframe.** Some programs are co-located in buildings with LYFE programs and can provide childcare to infants and toddlers of parenting students<sup>1</sup>.

While graduation rates among transfer schools are lower than rates of traditional high schools, data suggest that students attending transfer schools would, in the absence of these schools, have graduated at rates at least 50 percent lower than they did. It is estimated that tens of thousands of NYC youth who would otherwise have dropped out have graduated due to these school models.

If a student isn't sure which type of program to pursue, they can visit a **Referral Center** for more information. Social workers at Referral Centers can counsel students on their options, refer students to schools with available seats, and help students enroll in DOE HSE programs. A list of Referral Centers is available online: [www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/other-ways-to-graduate/learn-about-other-ways-to-graduate](http://www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/other-ways-to-graduate/learn-about-other-ways-to-graduate).

Each May, the DOE also holds a citywide fair where students can meet representatives from transfer schools, YABCs and other programs. This fair is a good opportunity for students to learn about all the different programs and for agencies to network with DOE staff.

For more information on alternative pathways, including contact information for schools and programs in every borough, visit [www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/other-ways-to-graduate](http://www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/other-ways-to-graduate).

<sup>1</sup> Student parents who attend nearby schools can also enroll their children in the LYFE program; they do not need to attend school in the building.

## **RESTART ACADEMY**

An intensive program for overage 8th graders located on high school campuses where students can earn high school credits while completing 8th grade requirements. There are ReStart Academy programs in every borough. You can find a list of locations with contact information at [www.restartacademy.org/8th-Grade-Program](http://www.restartacademy.org/8th-Grade-Program).

### **KEY COMPONENTS OF RESTART ACADEMY:**

- Small class sizes with targeted academic support
- Student support teams, including a full-time guidance counselor and community associate, who conduct daily group advisory, restorative Circles, individual and group counseling, and offer family support
- Intensive support with the high school application process
- Art-infused curriculum

### **DOE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

- 8th grade students ages 14-17 who have been held over at least once
- 7th graders who are 14 and older may be accepted on a case-by-case basis

### **POTENTIAL CANDIDATES FOR RESTART PROGRAM**

**Student must meet the following criteria:**

- 8th grader who has been held back at least once
- AND**
- Consistently truant (attendance below 70%), or attends school but frequently cuts class and subsequently failing*
- OR**
- Struggling with behavioral challenges and/or has safety issues in current school, or other reasons to transfer into a more supportive setting*
- 15 and 16-year-olds in 8th (or sometimes 7th) grade are often good candidates for a ReStart program  
*Students who are 17 or even 18 years old and still in middle school may be best served in a HSE program.*

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## **ROLE OF THE EDUCATION SPECIALIST & COACHING TIPS**

### **DURING THE APPLICATION PROCESS:**

Education Specialists should engage the student and caregiver/foster parent about the opportunity to transfer into a school that will allow the student a “fresh start” in a smaller environment with more individualized supports.

**Once the student expresses interest**, the Education Specialist should reach out to ReStart programs directly to see if there is space available and set up an interview.

- While going through this process, the Specialist should be helping to motivate the young person and do a practice interview. Given the limited number of ReStart programs available, schools may select the most motivated students when they have multiple applicants.

**Once the interview is scheduled**, the Specialist should visit the school with the student (and the birth or foster parent, if the student has a positive relationship with them), describe the coaching supports provided, and explain how they can be helpful to the school.

The Specialist should be in touch with the young person the day before, morning of, and immediately after the interview or school visit for motivation and reflection purposes.

## PERSISTENCE COACHING

### Once the student is accepted, the Education Specialist should:

- Meet with the young person to celebrate the achievement, reflect on the process, and discuss next steps.
  - Build a relationship with the student's support team, as they can keep the Specialist abreast of the student's progress/challenges.
  - Visit the school during the first few weeks to provide support to the student and ensure the student is settling in well.
  - Request regular updates from the support team regarding the student's attendance and performance.
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## ADDITIONAL NOTES

Aside from ReStart Academy, there are four other schools that may serve as alternative settings for overage middle school students:

[New Directions Secondary School](#) in the Bronx serves over-age students in grades 6-12. The school has classes of 15 students with 1 or 2 teachers, bilingual Spanish classes, ESL classes, small advisory classes, and counseling. Students must be at least one-year over-age to apply, and applications are accepted throughout the year. To apply, attend one of the school's Open Houses and complete an intake. *For more information, contact the school and ask for Jose Gonzalez.*

[New Visions AIM Charter High School I](#) in Brooklyn and [New Visions AIM Charter High School II](#) in the Bronx are transfer schools that accept 15 and 16-year-olds in 8th or 9th grade. Apply [online](#) or call 646-470-0375 for more information.

[Judith S. Kaye High School](#), co-located with Co-op Tech, accepts students age 16 or older, including students who are still in middle school. Students work toward a high school diploma while participating in career and technical education training. For more information, contact the school directly.

For a general overview of alternative programs for overage middle school students, visit [www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/other-ways-to-graduate/alternative-middle-schools](http://www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/other-ways-to-graduate/alternative-middle-schools).

## TRANSFER SCHOOLS

**Transfer High Schools are small, full-time high schools designed to re-engage students who have dropped out or fallen behind in credits.** These schools offer a personalized, academically rigorous environment where students can earn a high school diploma in a shorter timeframe.

**Most transfer schools partner with community based organizations (CBOs) to offer additional supports.**

Examples of CBOs include: SCO Family of Services, Good Shepherd Services, Comprehensive Development Inc., etc. CBO staff are embedded within the school and bring a youth-development lens to the school environment. These schools tend to have smaller staff to student ratios and more comprehensive supports (*Database coming soon!*).

### KEY COMPONENTS OF TRANSFER SCHOOLS:

- Classes tend to be smaller, and total enrollment is often no more than 200 students
- Some schools offer trimesters; students can graduate in 2-3 years or less
- Transfer schools use the Learning to Work (LTW) program, which offers individualized support services, job readiness, paid internships and college and career exploration
- Many transfer schools use a Primary Person Model, where each student is matched with an Advisor who provides support in setting goals, assessing progress, and post-secondary planning. Advisors should meet with students regularly. Some schools have high ratios (over 100) of students to Advisors, while others have caseloads in the 1:20-1:30 range.
- Some of these schools also use biweekly assessments to help keep students on-track (so that they don't have to wait until the end of the semester to know whether they are passing)

### WHEN APPLYING TO TRANSFER SCHOOLS, THE COACH SHOULD ASK:

*What Advising Model does the school use?  
How does it work?*

*What does each Advisors' caseload look like?*

*What academic calendar does the school follow?  
(i.e., do they use semesters, trimesters, etc.)*

*How many students at any given time have paid internships? What do students need to do to participate in a paid internship?*

*Are biweekly assessments available?*

*How frequently do advisors meet with students?  
Can Caregivers and/or Coaches can attend these meetings?*

*How frequently are counselors in touch with adult supporters (Caregivers and/or Coaches) in the students' life? (Counselors may call, text, and even conduct home visits if the student is not attending school.)*

### DOE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS\*

*\*Requirements are school specific.*

- Most transfer schools require students to have completed, or attempted to complete, one year of high school
- Age and number of credits required for entry varies by school, but could be as low as 0 credits
- Some transfer schools may require students to have passed a Regents exam

### POTENTIAL CANDIDATES FOR TRANSFER SCHOOLS

**Student must meet any of the following criteria:**

- Failed ninth grade
- Dropped out/on the verge of dropping out
- Consistently truant (attendance below 70%)
- 16-18 years-old with few credits, or age 19 with over 10/11 credits ([see diagram on Page 12](#))
- Struggling in a large school environment, and/or has safety issues in current school, or other reasons to transfer into a more supportive setting

## **APPLICATION AND COACHING PROCESS:**

Coaches should engage the student and caregiver/foster parent about the opportunity to transfer into a school that will allow the student a “fresh start” in a smaller environment with more individualized supports.

### **ONCE THE STUDENT EXPRESSES INTEREST:**

**The Coach should identify which schools to reach out to**, based on geography, credits, time of year (Schools consider new applicants at different points during the year), etc.

Coaches should consider the student's situation when identifying potential schools. The DOE website breaks transfer schools into categories such as “I’m Behind on Credits,” “I’m Very Behind on Credits,” or “I’m Learning English” in their online guide: [www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/other-ways-to-graduate/transfer-high-schools/transfer-schools-guide](http://www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/other-ways-to-graduate/transfer-high-schools/transfer-schools-guide).

The quality of the school should also be seriously considered. [Appendix F9 Vetted List of Alternative Middle and High Schools](#) highlights schools with solid outcomes. Schools that have lower class sizes and lower Guidance Counselor to student ratios tend to be more supportive.

### **ONCE THE COACH IDENTIFIES POTENTIAL TRANSFER SCHOOLS:**

**The Coach should contact the school directly** to learn about Open House dates or to speak to a counselor to set up an interview.

### **TO APPLY:**

**The Coach will need a copy of the student’s transcript and their IEP, if applicable.** Some schools may also ask students to complete an application or take a placement test. *Transfer schools should not ask applicants for any other education records, like attendance or suspension records, as part of the admissions process.*

**The Coach should be helping to motivate the young person and do practice interviews.** Many schools have limited seats and will select the most motivated students when they have multiple candidates.

### **ONCE THE OPEN HOUSE OR INTERVIEW IS SET UP:**

**The Coach should visit the school with the student** (and the birth or foster parent, if the student has a positive relationship with them) describe the coaching supports provided, and explain how the Coach can be helpful to the school.

The Coach should be in touch with the young person the day before, morning of, and immediately after the interview or school visit for motivation and reflection purposes.

## **IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, STUDENTS SHOULD APPLY TO AT LEAST THREE SCHOOLS.**

If the student is not accepted into any transfer schools, but they have applied to at least three, reach out to:

**Anne Fennelly, Director of Enrollment at the Office of City-Wide Transfer High Schools**

*Ms. Fennelly can work with you to identify a transfer high school that is a good match for your student.*

To contact Ms. Fennelly, please email: [afennelly@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:afennelly@schools.nyc.gov)

## PERSISTENCE COACHING | ONCE THE STUDENT IS ACCEPTED:

### The Coach should:

- Meet with the young person to celebrate the achievement, reflect on the process, and discuss next steps.
  - Build a relationship with the student's Advisor, as the Advisor is often the best person to communicate with about the student's progress/challenges.
  - Attend the first few meetings with the student's Advisor to provide support and ensure the student is settling in well.
  - Request regular updates from the student's Advisor regarding the students' attendance and performance.
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## **ADDITIONAL NOTES**

**Some transfer schools are also *Consortium Schools***, meaning students complete performance-based assessment tasks rather than Regents exams. These schools may be a good fit for students who struggle on standardized tests or prefer to complete longer research projects as preparation for college.

### **Transfer schools serve many students with Individual Education Programs (IEPs).**

Most offer counseling, Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) classes, or Special Education Teacher Support Services (or SETSS), but few transfer schools offer the full range of services.

Typically, transfer schools can provide lots of support to students with emotional needs, behavioral challenges, or academic delays, but they may struggle to support students with significant mental health needs or learning disabilities. For those students, a specialized or nonpublic school may be needed.

Refer to the Education Specialist Manual for more information (*coming soon!*).

### **Many transfer schools do not have the necessary expertise to support English Language Learners (ELLs).**

However, a few transfer schools are specifically designed to serve ELLs. Refer to [Appendix F9 List of Alternative Middle and High Schools](#) for more information.

Older ELLs who are relative newcomers to the country may also want to explore international high schools. For more information, see Education Specialist Manual (*coming soon!*).

## **YOUNG ADULT BOROUGH CENTERS (YABCS)**

YABCS are afternoon and evening academic programs designed to meet the needs of older high school students who might be considering dropping out because they are missing key credits or Regents exams or because they have adult responsibilities that make attending school on a traditional schedule difficult.

Some YABCS may allow students to be dually enrolled in their home high school during the regular school day and at a YABC in the evening, so they can earn credits at an accelerated pace.

### **KEY COMPONENTS OF YABCS:**

- Part-time evening instruction to earn a diploma
- Small class settings

### **Many YABC sites offer the following:**

- Learning to Work program, which provides individualized support services, job readiness, paid internships, and college and career exploration activities;
- An Advocate Counselor who helps with academic goal setting and post-secondary planning.

### **DOE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

*Students should:*

- Be enrolled in a New York City high school
- Be 17.5+ years-old and at least in their fifth year of high school
- Have earned at least 17 credits toward high school graduation (*although 26+ credits is recommended, as students often only stay at a YABC for one or two semesters*)
- Have completed the school year in which they turn 17 years-old

### **POTENTIAL CANDIDATES FOR YABC**

*Student must meet any of the following criteria:*

- Over 18 years-old with most of their required credits completed, and interested in working during the regular school day
- Has earned all or nearly all their required credits, but needs to pass one or two Regents exams
- Left school suddenly with most of their required credits completed or Regents exams already passed and would like to earn a high school diploma but not interested in returning to a high school environment

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### **APPLICATION AND COACHING PROCESS:**

Coaches should engage the student and caregiver/foster parent about the opportunity to transfer into a school that will allow the student a “fresh start” in a smaller environment after the regular school day.

#### **ONCE THE STUDENT EXPRESSES INTEREST:**

**The Coach should identify which YABC sites to reach out to, based on location and available seats.**

You can find a list of YABCS by borough online: [www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/other-ways-to-graduate/young-adult-borough-centers](http://www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/other-ways-to-graduate/young-adult-borough-centers).

If the student requires special education or ENL services or has other specific needs, Coaches may want to contact a YABC Principal directly to determine which site(s) can best meet your student’s needs.

*Note: YABCS offer limited special education and English as a New Language (ENL) services that can vary by semester*



**TO APPLY:**

**The Coach should meet with a guidance counselor at the student's current high school to obtain the following documents:**

- YABC Guidance Referral Form Y-1
- YABC Course Requirements Form Y-2
- Current transcript
- Immunization records

The Coach should complete the YABC Guidance Referral Form Y-1 and YABC Course Requirements Form Y-2 with the guidance counselor and then bring all completed documents directly to the YABC (typically in the late afternoon, but call after 1:00pm to get a good time).

**Eligible students who are not currently enrolled in high school** must go to a [Family Welcome Center](#) to enroll in a high school, as that is where their diploma will ultimately come from.

**PERSISTENCE COACHING | ONCE THE STUDENT IS ACCEPTED:**

**The Coach should:**

- Meet with the young person to celebrate the achievement, reflect on the process, and discuss next steps.
- Build a relationship with the Advisor, as they will keep the Coach abreast of student progress/challenges.
- Visit the school after the first few weeks to provide support to the student and ensure they are settling in well.
- Request regular updates from the student's Advisor regarding the students' attendance and performance.

**YABC PRINCIPALS:**

Each YABC site is run by an Assistant Principal who reports to one of two YABC principals that oversee programs citywide.

If you are experiencing any problems working with a YABC and cannot resolve those issues with the particular site, reach out to the principal responsible for overseeing the program.

**DAWN HARRIS • Brooklyn / Queens**  
dharris12@schools.nyc.gov  
(917) 521-3611

**MATTHEW WILLOUGHBY • Bronx / Manhattan / S.I.**  
mwilloughby@schools.nyc.gov  
(718) 510-6752

**ADDITIONAL NOTES**

**YABC Student schedules:** Student schedules at YABCs should be individually designed based on the specific credits and exams a student needs to graduate. Review each student's program carefully when they enroll in a YABC. If you have questions about a student's schedule or the credits they have earned so far, speak to their guidance counselor immediately or reach out to the DOE's office of Academic Policy.

**YABCs must complete a Y-3 Form to document what coursework and exams the student completed in their program.** Coaches should ensure these forms are completed before a student is discharged from a YABC. YABCs must complete a Form Y-3 any time a student leaves their program to: return to their home school for graduation, transfer to another YABC or back to their home school to continue their education, enroll in a High School Equivalency program, or leave the NYCDOE as a non-graduate.

**Accessing Education Records:** Because YABCs mostly serve students who are age 18 and over, they are sometimes reluctant to share student records with foster care agencies, even though agencies can access education records for students in care without a release under a federal law called the Uninterrupted Scholars Act. Coaches should make the YABC aware of this law when a student enrolls so they can stay informed of the student's progress. For students who are no longer in care, ask the student to sign a FERPA release so you can access the student's records and maintain communication with the YABC.



## HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY (HSE) PROGRAMS

**HSE programs help students pass the TASC exam.**

To earn a High School Equivalency (HSE) diploma, students must pass five subjects on the TASC exam. The Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC) exam, which replaced the GED test in New York, has 5 sections and is 7 hours long.

**Pathways to Graduation (P2G) programs** are HSE programs run by the DOE for students **17-21 years-old\***. In addition to earning a HSE diploma, students in **P2G programs** can receive services to help them prepare to advance to college and career opportunities. Classes are held in diverse settings, such as hospitals, non-profits, community centers, and high school buildings.

*\*The DOE's Office of Adult Education also provides HSE, ESL, and vocational programs for students **over 21 years-old**. The information included in this guide will primarily focus on HSE programs aimed at youth, as they tend to be much more supportive than adult programming.*

### KEY COMPONENTS AVAILABLE IN SOME P2G SITES:

- Classes in all five sections of the TASC exam
- English as a New Language (ENL) services or bilingual Spanish classes
- Classes for all reading and language levels
- Opportunities for paid internships
- Breakfast and/or lunch
- MetroCards for all eligible students
- College and Career Resource Centers
- Rolling admissions

### DOE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Any student 18 or over can enroll
- Students who are 17 can enroll with parent/guardian permission. This may include foster parents or agency staff for youth in group homes or other congregate settings.

### POTENTIAL CANDIDATES FOR HSE PROGRAMS:

**Student must meet any of the following criteria:**

- 17 years-old with no high school credits, still in middle school, and/or life circumstances (i.e. parenting, mental health needs, etc.) that make it unlikely they will be able to complete high school, even in a transfer school setting
- 18 years-old with less than 10 high school credits
- 19 years-old with less than 20 high school credits
- Any young person over 21 years-old who has not graduated from high school

## **APPLICATION AND COACHING PROCESS:**

Coaches should engage the student and caregiver/foster parent about the opportunity to enroll in a HSE program.

### **ONCE THE STUDENT EXPRESSES INTEREST:**

**The Coach should go with the young person to a [Referral Center](#) to enroll in a HSE program.**

If the student is 17 years old, they will need parental/guardian permission.

The young person will need to bring the following to the Referral Center:

- Photo ID (if available – a school ID is fine)
- Proof of address (for new admits to the DOE)
- Transcript (if available)
- IEP (if available)
- Proof of Immunization (17-year-olds only)

The student will meet with a social worker at the Referral Center to discuss their school options, review the requirements of the TASC, and explain how the DOE's P2G programs work. Many Referral Centers hold daily group orientation meetings for prospective students, or orientations on alternating days. *Call ahead of time to determine a good day to visit.*

### **IF THE STUDENT DECIDES THEY WANT TO ENROLL IN A HSE PROGRAM:**

**The student will get a date to return to the Referral Center to take a placement test,** usually within a week.

The DOE uses the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) to assess students. Coaches may want to give students practice questions if they are anxious about the placement test. If students have testing accommodations on their IEP or 504 plan, they should get the same accommodations when they take the TABE. *Note: Testing is done in the morning and can take several hours.*

### **ONCE THE STUDENT COMPLETES THE TABE ASSESSMENT TEST:**

Students will get their test results later that same day.

**Social workers at the Referral Centers will go over results with the student and match them to a program** based on their reading and math levels, interests, and any ENL needs. Depending on their academic levels, students may qualify for multiple programs. Refer to [Appendix F9 List of Alternative Middle and High Schools](#) for more information.

### **ONCE THE STUDENT IS MATCHED WITH A HSE PROGRAM:**

**The Coach should visit program(s) with the young person and speak to staff there.** This will help the Coach and young person vet the program, and also help the Coach start to build a relationship with the young person's Primary Person at that program.

### **THROUGHOUT THE APPLICATION PROCESS:**

**The Coach should be helping to motivate the young person for their initial trip to the Referral Center, the follow-up testing appointment, and their eventual enrollment in and attendance at the specific HSE program.** Many students who start the process at a Referral Center never begin attending classes, so it's critical that Coaches support youth throughout the process, especially youth who may have been disconnected from school and school routines for a while.

The Coach should be in touch with the young person the day before, morning of, and immediately after the initial visit to the Referral Center, the date of the placement test, and the day the student begins attending the HSE program site for motivation and reflection purposes.

### **IF A STUDENT IS RELUCTANT TO VISIT A REFERRAL CENTER:**

The Coach should consider contacting P2G programs housed in Community Based Organizations (CBOs) to inquire about enrollment, as some programs will enroll students directly, allowing them to bypass the step of going to a Referral Center.

## PERSISTENCE COACHING | ONCE THE STUDENT BEGINS ATTENDING

### The Coach should:

- Meet with the young person to celebrate the achievement, reflect on the process, and discuss next steps.
- Build a relationship with the Primary Person/Advisor at the program, as they can keep the Coach abreast of the student's progress/challenges.
- Visit the program during the first few weeks to support the student and ensure they are settling in well.
- Request regular updates from the student's Primary Person/Advisor regarding the students' attendance and performance.

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## ADDITIONAL NOTES

**Under recent revisions to NY state regulations, students who pass Regents exams can count those passing scores toward the corresponding subtest on the TASC.** So, for example, if a student passed the Living Environment, Common Core Algebra, and U.S. History Regents exams, these would count toward the science, math, and social studies portions of the TASC. That student would only need to pass the reading and writing subtests of the TASC to earn their HSE diploma.

For students with disabilities, a Regents exam score of 55 or above typically would count as passing for purposes of the TASC exam.

**Popular program option: attending Co-op Tech for half the day (either morning or afternoon) and attending classes at a HSE program for the other half of the day.** We have found that this type of program can be particularly motivating for students who need to see the connection between educational attainment and career options. P2G students can attend Co-op Tech's main site on 96th Street in Manhattan or one of the smaller satellite programs in each of the boroughs. *Students should let the social worker at the Referral Center know if they are interested in enrolling in Co-op Tech.*

**Students may want to study and sign up for the TASC on their own, rather than enrolling in a program.** Students should be discouraged from doing this.

First, students under 19 years-old cannot take the TASC unless they are enrolled in a program.

Second, it can be difficult to sign up for the TASC on your own. Testing sites fill up quickly, and students may be forced to travel to a testing site far from their home.

Additionally, if students need testing accommodations on the TASC, it can be difficult to gather all the documentation needed to request those accommodation, while a P2G program will put the accommodations in place for the student.

**In addition to the DOE, many two-year CUNY schools, the SUNY Educational Opportunity Centers (EOCs), and SUNY community colleges in Westchester, Nassau, and surrounding counties offer free HSE programs, along with public libraries and other non-profit organizations.** Students should NEVER pay for a HSE program. Typically, the CUNY and SUNY programs offer quality, academically rigorous instruction; however, they often have stricter eligibility requirements than DOE programs and sometimes have limited enrollment or long waiting lists.

Coaches should refer to [Appendix F9 List of Alternative Middle and High Schools](#) or visit individual schools' websites for more information.

For a map of New York State HSE programs visit [www.acces.nysed.gov/hse/hse-prep-programs-maps](http://www.acces.nysed.gov/hse/hse-prep-programs-maps).

## ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS GUIDE

Selecting an appropriate alternative high school or program can be challenging. A student and their Coach can always visit a Referral Center for High School Alternatives to speak with someone about the most appropriate option. There is a Referral Center in each borough.

**KEY FACTORS WHEN CONSIDERING THE TYPE OF ALTERNATIVE PATHWAY INCLUDE:**

**Age, number of credits earned, and Regents passed.**

*EXAMPLE:* A student cannot remain in a YABC program or transfer high school past the end of the school year when they turn 21. If a young person transfers into a transfer high school at age 19 but does not earn a degree by age 21, **they will have to leave the school** and enroll in an HSE program.

*Therefore, it is important to consider the student's age, number of credits earned, and Regents exams passed when considering options.*

There is a visual guide below that provides guidelines around the type of school/program based solely on age and number of credits obtained.

**Any special needs a student has and whether their needs can be met in that setting.**

Not all transfer schools and YABCs provide the full range of IEP programs that may be available in other schools. Students with significant mental health needs or learning disabilities may require a more specialized setting, such as a nonpublic school.

Coaches will need to weigh the potential benefits of a transfer school – such as the ability to earn credits in a shorter timeframe – with a student’s need for specialized services.

*For more information, refer to the Special Education section of the Education Specialist Manual (coming soon!).*

**ALTERNATIVE HIGH SCHOOL PATHWAYS GUIDE**

