Chapter PI 5

HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY DIPLOMAS AND CERTIFICATES OF GENERAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PI 5.01 Intent statement.
PI 5.02 Definitions.
PI 5.03 Eligibility.
PI 5.035 General educational development test.
PI 5.037 Certificate of general educational development and high school equivalency diploma fees.
PI 5.04 Certificate of general educational development.
PI 5.05 High school equivalency diploma based on passing of the general educational development test with additional requirements in citizenship, health, career awareness and employability skills.
PI 5.06 High school equivalency diploma based on attainment of high school credits.
PI 5.07 High school equivalency diploma based on post–secondary education.
PI 5.08 High school equivalency diploma based on a foreign diploma or degree.
PI 5.09 High school equivalency diploma based on completion of a program approved by the state superintendent.

Note: Chapter PI 5 as it existed on February 29, 1988 was repealed and a new chapter PI 5 was created effective July 1, 1988.

PI 5.01 Intent statement. (1) Under s. 115.29 (4) (a), Stats., the state superintendent may issue a high school equivalency diploma to a person who, in the state superintendent's judgment, has presented satisfactory evidence of having completed a recognized high school course of study or its equivalent; and the state superintendent may establish the standards by which high school graduation equivalency may be determined. The purpose of the high school equivalency diploma is to provide a credential to adults who did not graduate from high school and are unable to receive a high school diploma from their school district of residence, but are able to demonstrate attainment of credits, knowledge, and skills that are equivalent to those which would be attained in a high school program of study. This chapter sets forth criteria for determining that equivalency, based on s. 118.33, Stats., the high school graduation standards, and s. 121.02 (1) (m), Stats., the education for employment standard. The age eligibility requirements are intended to aid school districts in serving children at risk by discouraging youths from dropping out of school to pursue the high school equivalency diploma.

(2) This chapter also provides for the granting of a certificate of general educational development to a person who achieves passing scores, as determined by the state superintendent, on the general educational development test but has not met the additional requirements for the high school equivalency diploma.

History: Cr. Register, February, 1988, No. 386, eff. 7–1–88; **CR 03–102: am. (1) Register April 2004 No. 580, eff. 5–1–04.**

PI 5.02 Definitions. In this chapter:

(1) "Certificate of general educational development" means the certificate granted to a person who has achieved a passing score on the general educational development test.

(2) "College" or "university" means an institution which is accredited on a degree granting level by an accrediting agency which is listed by the United States department of education as a nationally recognized accrediting agency.

(3) "Community–based organization" means a private nonprofit organization which is representative of a community or a significant segment of a community and which provides educational and job training services.

(4) "Course" means study which has the fundamental purposes of developing the knowledge, concepts, and skills in a subject; and evaluation of the degree of attainment of the knowledge, concepts and skills.

(5) "Department" means the Wisconsin department of public instruction.

(6) "General educational development test" means the test developed by the American council on education and administered in Wisconsin at testing sites approved by the state superintendent and the American council on education.

(6m) "Graduated from high school" for purposes of compulsory attendance under s. 118.15 (1) (a), Stats., means having received a diploma in satisfaction of school board requirements under s. 118.33, Stats., or a high school equivalency diploma under s. 115.29 (4) (a), Stats.

(7) "High school credit" means the credit given for successful completion of a school term of study in one course in the high school grades that meets daily for a normal class period or the equivalent in time, or a high school level correspondence course, or a high school level course offered in a TCS district or college or university program.

(8) "High school diploma" means the diploma granted by a public or private high school to a person who has successfully completed the program of study required by the public school board or private high school.

(9) "High school equivalency diploma" means the diploma granted by the state superintendent under s. 115.29 (4) (a), Stats., and this chapter.

(10) "Post–secondary credit" means the credit given for successful completion of a course in a college, university, or TCS district which meets requirements for the institution's post–secondary certificate, diploma, or associate, bachelors' or advanced degree.

(11) "State superintendent" means the Wisconsin state superintendent of public instruction.

(11m) "Subtest" means one of the 5 content area tests given under the general educational development test.

(11n) "TCS district" means a technical college system district established under s. 38.02, Stats.

(11p) "Test" means the entire battery of 5 subtests given under the general educational development test.

History: Cr. Register, February, 1988, No. 386, eff. 7–1–88; cr. (6m), Register, June, 1992, No. 438, eff. 7–1–92; cr. (11m), (11p), Register, April, 1995, No. 472, eff. 5–1–95; corrections made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 1. and 6.; Stats., Register, March, 1996, No. 483; **CR 03–102: am. (6m) and (9) Register April 2004 No. 580, eff. 5–1–04.**

PI 5.03 Eligibility. No person may be granted a high school equivalency diploma or certificate of general educational development unless that person verifies in writing that he or she:

(1) Is a resident of Wisconsin for voting purposes, or has lived in Wisconsin for at least 10 days, or is a migrant worker, as defined in s. 103.90 (5) (a), Stats., or is the child of a migrant worker.

(2) Is at least 18 years and 6 months of age, or that the class with which the person entered grade 9 has graduated from high school.

(3) Has not graduated from high school and is not enrolled in any public or private high school.

superintendent shall grant a high school equivalency diploma to a person who meets the requirements of s. PI 5.03 and all of the following:

(a) Has completed the general educational development test with a passing score on each subtest and a passing average score as determined by the state superintendent.

(b) 1. Has successfully completed 0.5 high school credit in health under s. 118.33 (1) (a), Stats.; or

2. Has successfully completed a course in health approved by the state superintendent. A course may be approved if it is taught by a person who is licensed by the department or the state TCS board to teach health or health occupations, and if it includes at least 30 hours of instruction in mental and emotional, personal, family, community and environmental health; or

3. Has received a passing score on a test in health administered by the state superintendent.

(c) 1. Has successfully completed 3 high school credits in social studies under s. 118.33. (1) (a), Stats.; or

2. Has successfully completed a course in citizenship approved by the state superintendent. A course may be approved if it is taught by a person who is licensed by the department or the state TCS board to teach social studies and if it includes at least 30 hours of instruction in the forms, funding and function of local, state and national government; principles of constitutional government; federalism; basic rights and responsibilities of citizenship, including ways to participate in the political process; and influence of government on the economy; or

3. Has received a passing score on a test in citizenship administered by the state superintendent.

(d) Has attained employability skills, including skills in job seeking, applying for work, retaining a job, and self–development and awareness skills. The applicant shall provide written verification of attainment of these skills from a high school, TCS district, community–based organization, college, university, psychologist licensed by the department or by the department of regulation and licensing, or a school counselor licensed by the department. This requirement shall be waived for a person who is 55 years of age or older at his or her written request.

(e) Has completed instruction in career awareness, including instruction in setting short–term and long–term career goals. The applicant shall provide written verification of completion of the instruction from a high school, TCS district, community–based organization, college, university, or psychologist licensed by the department or by the department of regulation and licensing, or a school counselor licensed by the department. This requirement shall be waived for a person who is 55 years of age or older at his or her written request.

(2) Notwithstanding s. PI 5.03 (2), the state superintendent may grant a high school equivalency diploma to a person who meets the requirements under s. PI 5.035 (1) (b) and all of the requirements under this section. The high school equivalency diploma may be granted no sooner than at the end of the semester in which he or she takes the final general educational development test under s. PI 5.035 (1) (b) 2.

History: Cr. Register, February, 1988, No. 386, eff. 7–1–88; renum. to be (1), cr. (2), Register, June, 1992, No. 438, eff. 7–1–92; corrections made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 6., Stats., Register, March, 1996, No. 483; corrections in (2) made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register October 2001 No. 550; **emerg. am. (1) (a), eff. 1–2–04; CR 03–102: am. (1) (a) Register April 2004 No. 580, eff. 4–1–04.**

PI 5.06 High school equivalency diploma based on attainment of high school credits. (1) The state superintendent shall grant a high school equivalency diploma to a person who meets the requirements of s. PI 5.03 and has completed at least 22 high school credits, including at least 4 in English or communications; 3 in social studies, including citizenship; 2 in mathematics; 2 in science; and 0.5 in health.

(2) Post–secondary credits shall be accepted by the state superintendent in meeting the requirements under sub. (1). A post–secondary course which grants 3 semester credits or 4 quarter credits is equivalent to one high school credit.

(3) The applicant shall provide certified transcripts from public or private high schools, TCS districts, colleges, or universities to document completion of the credits.

Note: Persons who meet the requirements of this section may be eligible for a high school diploma and should contact their school district of residence to determine if they meet the school board requirements for the school district high school diploma.

History: Cr. Register, February, 1988, No. 386, eff. 7–1–88; corrections in (3) made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 6., Stats., Register, March, 1996, No. 483.

PI 5.07 High school equivalency diploma based on post–secondary education. The state superintendent shall grant a high school equivalency diploma to a person who meets the requirements of s. PI 5.03 and has earned at least 24 post–secondary semester credits or 32 post–secondary quarter credits, including credit in each subject in which the person did not complete the high school credits required under s. 118.33 (1) (a), Stats., except physical education. Only post–secondary credit may be counted in meeting the credits required under this section. The applicant shall provide certified transcripts from a public or private high school to document completion of requirements of s. 118.33 (1) (a), Stats.; and from colleges, universities or TCS districts to document completion of the post–secondary credits.

History: Cr. Register, February, 1988, No. 386, eff. 7–1–88; correction made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 6., Stats., Register, March, 1996, No. 483.

PI 5.08 High school equivalency diploma based on a foreign diploma or degree. The state superintendent shall grant a high school equivalency diploma to a person who meets the requirements of s. PI 5.03 and all of the following:

(1) Presents a high school diploma or the equivalent or a degree from an institution of higher learning earned in another country and a certified transcript attesting to the completion of the program of study required for the diploma or degree. If the transcript is not in English, the applicant shall also provide a certified translation.

(2) Is a United States citizen or meets both of the following requirements:

(a) Documents that he or she is able to speak, read and write words in ordinary usage in the English language as required for United States citizenship under 8 USC 1423.

(b) Has successfully completed a course in citizenship approved by the state superintendent; has received a passing score on a test in citizenship administered by the state superintendent; or documents that he or she has satisfied the requirement for knowledge of United States history and forms of government required for United States citizenship under 8 USC 1423.

History: Cr. Register, February, 1988, No. 386, eff. 7–1–88.

PI 5.09 High school equivalency diploma based on completion of a program approved by the state superintendent. (1) A TCS district, college, university, community–based organization, federal job corps center or the department of corrections may submit a plan to the state superintendent requesting approval of a program for determining high school equivalency. The program shall be designed to determine whether a person has attained the knowledge and skills generally associated with graduation from high school, including employability skills, career awareness, citizenship, and each of the subject areas under s. 118.33 (1) (a), Stats., except physical education. The plan shall include all of the following:

(a) A description of any courses, training, and counseling which will be included in the proposed program, including the number of hours of instructional time, if any; and a description of the methods of evaluation or assessment that will be used to determine the person's knowledge and skills.

(b) The qualifications of the professional staff members who will be involved in the program.

(4) Has completed a counseling session or sessions provided by a high school, TCS district, community–based organization, college, university, psychologist licensed by the department or the department of regulation and licensing, or a school counselor licensed by the department. The sessions shall include all of the following:

(a) Assessment of the person's reading level and career interests and aptitudes.

(b) Discussion of the options available to the individual regarding completion of high school, the high school equivalency diploma, and the certificate of general educational development, and the requirements, expectations, benefits and limitations of each option.

(c) Development of a plan for completion of one of the options discussed, and subsequent activities necessary to work toward an identified goal, career or occupation.

History: Cr. Register, February, 1988, No. 386, eff. 7–1–88; correction in (4) (intro.) made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 6., Stats., Register, March, 1996, No. 483.

PI 5.035 General educational development test. **(1)** No person may take the general educational development test unless the person is at least 18 years and 6 months of age or the class with which the person entered grade 9 has graduated from high school except as follows:

(a) A person who meets the requirements under s. PI 5.03 (1), (3) and (4) and who is at least 17 years of age may take the general educational development test if one of the following applies:

1. The person is or has been incarcerated in a correctional institution and has written recommendation of the person responsible for the educational program in the correctional institution; or

2. The person is enrolled in a federal job corps center program and has the written recommendation to take the general educational development test from the person responsible for the educational program in the job corps center. After July 1, 1992, no person may take the GED test under this subdivision unless the program at the job corps center has been approved under s. PI 5.09; or

3. The person provides written verification that he or she was excused from regular school attendance under s. 118.15 (1) (c) 2., Stats., is enrolled in a program approved under s. PI 5.09, and has written permission to take the test from his or her parent or legal guardian.

(b) 1. A person who meets the requirements under s. PI 5.03 (1) and (4) and who is at least 17 years of age may begin taking the general educational development tests except that the person may not take the final test until he or she is eligible as specified under subd. 2. and only if the person is continuously enrolled and attending a program under a contracted arrangement between the local high school of residence and a TCS district or a community–based organization which leads to a high school equivalency diploma and meets the requirements under s. 118.15 (1) (c) 2., Stats.

2. A person who begins taking the general educational development test under par. (a) may take the final test no sooner than three weeks prior to the end of the semester in which the person turns 18 years of age or 3 weeks prior to the graduation date of the class in which the person entered grade 9.

(2) The state superintendent shall determine the general educational development test passing score on each subtest and a passing average test score. The average test score and the score for each subtest shall be set at or above the minimum standard established by the general educational development testing service of the American council on education.

(3) The subtest and test scores established under sub. (2) may be based on either of the following:

(a) The national norming study conducted by the general educational development testing service of the American council on education.

(b) A statewide norming study which shall be conducted at the state superintendent's direction. If a statewide norming study is conducted, all of the following requirements shall be met:

1. The norming study shall be conducted in collaboration with the general educational development testing service of the American council on education or other equivalent, qualified agency.

2. The norming study shall include administering the general educational development tests to a representative sample of graduating high school seniors in Wisconsin. A representative sample shall be comparable to Wisconsin's high school senior population with respect to gender, race, size of school district and regions of the state.

3. The norming study results shall be summarized by the collaborating entity under subd. 1. and evaluated by the task force established under sub. (5).

(4) The state superintendent shall consider the recommendations made by the general educational development task force established under sub. (5).

(5) The state superintendent shall appoint a task force representing business, labor, education interest groups, students, counselors, teachers, and other interested persons to advise the state superintendent in establishing a general educational development test passing score on each subtest and a passing average score.

(6) Based on the process specified under sub. (3), the state superintendent establishes the general educational development subtest and test passing scores as follows:

(a) A minimum standard score of no less than 410 shall be required on each subtest in the battery of 5 subtests; and

(b) A total average score of the 5 subtests may not be less than 450.

History: Cr. Register, June, 1992, No. 438, eff. 7–1–92; emerg. renum. (intro.), cr. (2) to (6), eff. 9–15–94; renum. (intro.) to be (1) (intro.), cr. (2) to (6), Register, April, 1995, No. 472, eff. 5–1–95; correction in (1) (b) 1. made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 6., Stats., Register, March, 1996, No. 483; **emerg. am. (2), (5) and (6), eff. 1–2–04; CR 03–102: am. (1) (b) 1., (2), (5) and (6) Register April 2004 No. 580, eff. 4–1–04.**

PI 5.037 Certificate of general educational development and high school equivalency diploma fees. **(1)** The state superintendent shall establish fees for issuing a certificate of general educational development or a high school equivalency diploma sufficient to fund program implementation and administration costs to the department under this chapter. The state superintendent may provide fee exemptions based on financial need.

(2) If the fee under sub. (1) is modified, the department shall submit the proposed fee change to the assembly and senate committees having jurisdiction over kindergarten through grade 12 public education for review.

Note: GED/HSED fee, fee exemption, and fee reduction information is available on the department's web site at http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dlsis/let/gedhsed.html or may be obtained at no charge from the Department of Public Instruction, P.O. Box 7841, Madison, WI 53707–7841.

Note: The treatment of s. PI 5.037 first applies to persons applying for a certificate of general educational development or a high school equivalency diploma on or after January 1, 2004.

History: Emerg. cr. eff. 1–2–04; CR 03–102: cr. Register April 2004 No. 580, eff. 5–1–04.

PI 5.04 Certificate of general educational development. The state superintendent shall grant a certificate of general educational development to a person who meets the requirements under s. PI 5.03 and completes the general educational development test with a passing score on each subtest and a passing average score as determined by the state superintendent.

History: Cr. Register, February, 1988, No. 386, eff. 7–1–88; emerg. cr. 1. a., eff. 4–18–89; r. and recr. (2) (b) 2., Register, October, 1989, No. 406, eff. 11–1–89; renum. (1) to be PI 5.04, r. (2), Register, June, 1992, No. 438, eff. 7–1–92; **emerg. am. eff. 1–2–04; CR 03–102: am. Register April 2004 No. 580, eff. 5–1–04.**

PI 5.05 High school equivalency diploma based on passing of the general educational development test with additional requirements in citizenship, health, career awareness and employability skills. **(1)** The state

(c) A description of any groups, such as older adults, minorities, displaced homemakers or displaced workers, which might be effectively served by the proposed program, and a description of how the program will meet the special needs of these groups.

(d) A plan for evaluating the proposed program to determine its effectiveness in assessing high school equivalency.

(2) (a) The state superintendent may approve the program for an initial period of time, not to exceed one year. At the end of the initial approval period, if the state superintendent determines that the program has successfully measured attainment of high school equivalency, as described in sub. (1) (intro.), he or she may grant continuing approval, subject to annual reviews. The state superintendent may withdraw approval of a program at any time, if the program does not meet all of the requirements of this section and of the approved plan.

(b) The state superintendent shall approve or disapprove the application in writing. If the application is not approved, the reasons for disapproval shall be specified in the written disapproval. An agency under sub. (1) which has been denied approval may, within 30 days of receipt of the written disapproval:

1. Resubmit the application with additional information or modifications in the proposed program, or,

2. Request, in writing, a review of the disapproval and an opportunity to meet with the department concerning the reasons for disapproval. If a request is made under this subdivision, the department shall grant the request and shall issue a final decision in writing following the review and any requested meeting.

(3) The state superintendent shall grant a high school equivalency diploma to a person who meets the requirements of s. PI 5.03 and provides written verification that he or she has satisfactorily completed an approved program under this section.

Note: The department will maintain a listing of general educational development testing sites and of programs which meet the requirements of this chapter. The list may be obtained at no charge by writing to the Department of Public Instruction, Division for Instructional Services, 125 South Webster Street, P.O. Box 7841, Madison, WI 53707–7841.

History: Cr. Register, February, 1988, No. 386, eff. 7–1–88; am. (1) (intro.), Register, October, 1989, No. 406, eff. 11–1–89; am. (1) (intro.), Register, June, 1992, No. 438, eff. 7–1–92; correction in (1) (intro.) made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 6., Stats., Register, March, 1996, No. 483.