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| LOCAL COMMISSIONERS MEMORANDUM |
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Transmittal No: 91 LCM-19

Date: February 13, 1991

Division: Income Maintenance

TO: Local District Commissioners

SUBJECT: Information on High School Diploma Programs

ATTACHMENTS: Attachment A-High School Diploma Programs - available
on-line

Attachment B-Survey of Alternative Education Programs
Leading to a High School Diploma - (County
Specific) - not available on-line

Attachment C-Alternative High School Equivalency
Preparation Programs - not available on-line

The following attachments have been developed by the State Education Department for use by local district employment units in the operation of the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training (JOBS) Program.

One of the primary goals of the JOBS Program is to improve the skills and educational competencies of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) recipients. Local district employment staff must establish close working relationships with educational agencies on the secondary (high school) and post secondary level.

Many local districts have established excellent working relationships with adult educational programs through the Welfare Education Program, Vocational Education Act and the Education for Gainful Employment (EDGE) Programs. However, those AFDC recipients under the age of 24, without a High School diploma (one of the four JOBS target groups) will require services from different types of educational programs. We urge you to share the attached information concerning high school and alternative high school programs with respective staff. As New York State education law provides for a free public education including high school diploma programs for individuals under the age of 21, local districts should ensure appropriate coordination of these educational services for JOBS participants in target groups takes place.

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Questions concerning these programs should be directed to your Bureau of Employment Programs' Technical Advisor at 1-800-342-4100, extension 3-8377.

Oscar R. Best, Jr.
Deputy Commissioner
Division of Income Maintenance

There are three kinds of high school diploma programs discussed below. They are:

1. Regular High School Diploma Programs - listed in Directory of Public School Districts. Many of these include occupational education training.
2. Alternative High School Programs - Course leads to the awarding of a regular high school diploma but employs instructional techniques which may vary substantially from traditional high school programs.
3. Alternative High School Equivalency Programs - Course leads to the awarding of a New York State High School Equivalency Diploma, also known as a General Educational Development (GED) Diploma. Many alternative High School Equivalency Programs provided by BOCES offer one half day of occupational training and one half day of academics.

Under JOBS, custodial parents under 21 years of age may be assigned to any of these programs. In some cases, it may be appropriate for an AFDC custodial parent to return to a regular high school. In other cases, however, JOBS participants may need programs which can deal with the particular problems of young parents. Alternative programs, whether leading to a regular high school diploma or to an equivalency diploma, may better meet their needs. The one situation in which having an equivalency diploma puts one at a disadvantage is in qualifying for enlistment in military service. All branches of the United States Armed Forces place a premium on attainment of a regular high school diploma. This places holders of equivalency diplomas in a less desirable category, to be reached only in cases where there is an insufficient supply of candidates with regular high school diplomas. Women with equivalency diplomas are not accepted into the Armed Forces.

In making a decision as to the best available program for any young custodial parent, the local social services district may wish to contact the guidance office of the school district in which the parent resides or the guidance office of the Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) in which the participant school district is located. (For the "Big Five" school districts - New York City, Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, and Yonkers - the Teen Parent Program office should be contacted. A list of contact persons for those five cities is listed on page 3 of this attachment.)

The assistance of a guidance counselor will be especially valuable in selecting the best program for 16 and 17 year olds. Teen parents may only attend an Alternative High School Equivalency Program if the number of credits which they have accrued at the time of application is less than half of the number of credits they should have accrued at that point in their high school education. This requirement was put in place by the Regents to discourage high school students who still have the potential to earn a regular high school diploma from pursuing an equivalency diploma. However, this requirement can be waived if a case is made that pursuit of an equivalency diploma is the most viable option for the student.

Other considerations:

1. Programs which lead to an equivalency diploma normally take less time than do programs which lead to a regular high school diploma. Of course, there are exceptions, such as a case in which a student may have dropped out in her senior year with only a few credits left to take.
2. Generally, colleges, training programs, and employers require a high school diploma as a prerequisite for admission or employment. Usually, they will accept either a regular high school diploma or an equivalency diploma. In certain cases, a college may require a score on the GED examination higher than the 225 which is the minimum for an equivalency diploma to be awarded.

Listed below are contact people for the Teen Parent Programs in the Big 5 Cities, who can provide information to you on their programs:

Ms. Josephine Robbins
Principal
Fulton Academic Complex
220 Fulton Street
Buffalo, NY 14204
(716) 842-4771

Ms. Ann Marie Spatafor
Principal
Seymour School
128 Shonnard St.
Syracuse, NY 13204
(315) 435-4645

Mr. Steven Phillips
Superintendent
Alternative High Schools and Programs
High School Division, NYC Board of Ed.
c/o High School of the Humanities
351 West 18th Street
New York, NY 10011
(212) 206-0570

Dr. Barbara Cox
145 Palmer Rd.
Yonkers, NY 10701
(914) 963-7202

Mr. Richard Elmer
Supervising Director,
Elementary Instruction
Of. of Early Childhood Ed.
(Child Care)
Rochester School District
131 West Broad St.
Rochester, NY 14614-1187
(716) 325-4947

Ms. Donna L. Phillips
Coordinating Director
Adult and Continuing
Education
(Teen Program)
131 West Broad St.
Rochester, NY 14614-1187
(716) 262-8326