

Importance of the Option Team

As part of the commitment to the Option Pathway program, counties agree to establish an Option Team. This team is responsible for the screening and selection of students who are referred to the Option Pathway.

The Option Pathway Team consists of but is not limited to the following personnel:

- CTE Administrator/Principal/Director and/or County Superintendent
- Counselor/Mentor
- CTE Staff if an approved CTE concentration is selected
- Option Teacher
- Student's Home School Representative
- Special Education Director or Designee-If student has an Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- The Student Assistant Team (SAT) may be used as the Option Team as long as the Option Pathway teacher and a CTE representative (if an approved CTE concentration is selected) are present when decisions are being made for the Option student.

Option Team Meeting/Student Selection

A preliminary Option Team meeting will be held once a student is recommended by a classroom teacher or administrative staff. Before the student is allowed to begin the Option program, the Option Team will determine if the Option pathway is an appropriate selection for the student.

Selection of students for the Option pathway is a very life-changing decision for the student. Students are taken from regular academic classes and put into a program that redesigns their path for graduation. Every effort should be made to choose students you feel will fit the program and succeed. While we know we cannot ensure 100% success, it is our obligation to take a serious approach to choosing students before placing them in Option. **This is not an alternative program for extreme behavior and/or learning problems.**

Determining if a student recommended for the Option Pathway is qualified is the total responsibility of the Option Pathway Team. Placement of an at-risk student not capable of passing the HSEA is setting the student up for failure. Therefore, the student being recommended to the program should have the signature of a parent or guardian to take the Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE®). (See *Appendix 1, Parent Permission for Student TABE Testing.*)

The student must achieve a minimum of an 8th grade level on the Language Arts, Reading and a 7th grade level on the Mathematics in order to establish an entry level into the program. The Option Pathway Team should not consider these scores alone but should take into consideration the student’s grades and standardized scores found in his/her school record.

Criteria for Student Selection

Participation in Option will be restricted to students who are at least 16 years of age and meet the following criteria:

- Student must have credit deficiencies (a total of one year’s credits behind their 9th grade cohort group) and/or are at risk of dropping out due to inappropriate age.
- Student must be at least sixteen (16) and at high risk of dropping out of school due to personal issues.
- Prospective students must take and receive the recommended TABE (Tests of Adult Basic Education) scores of 8th grade reading level and 7th grade math level. This test helps to demonstrate the ability to perform math skills and to read independently in English at a level sufficient to successfully complete the high school equivalency instruction and testing.
- If a history of behavioral problems has existed, documentation must be in the student file that the behavioral issues have significantly improved.

Criteria for Student Behavior

While behavior issues are more times than not a problem with at-risk students, the level of the behavior problems should be considered when screening potential Option Pathway students. Students with serious behavior problems have a very minimal chance of being successful and also cause teachers and students to lose valuable time needed to study and pass the HSEA. Following are some areas of behaviors that students may have and **still are likely to get into** the program:

Less Significant Behaviors	Moderate Behaviors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occasionally late for class • Wearing hats in the hallway • Inappropriate display of affection • Not paying attention in class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequently late for class • Frequently skipping class • Disrespectful to some teachers • Profanity toward teachers and classmates • Disobeying class rules

Less Significant Behaviors	Moderate Behaviors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not having completed homework • Gets irritated easily • Absenteeism • Etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insubordination towards some but not all staff and teachers • Moderate to severe absenteeism • Etc.

The behaviors listed below are indications that the student **should not be admitted** in the Option Pathway:

Serious Behaviors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numerous fights • Threats toward staff and classmates • Constantly disobeying all school rules • Disruption of class and lunch periods • Outbursts of anger and aggression • Extreme absenteeism • Etc.

Students who are being considered for the Option Pathway (Option 1) **should have a desire and willingness** to be in the program and motivation to achieve the goals needed to be a successful graduate.

Criteria for At-Risk Students with Disabilities

The Option team should take careful consideration before placing students with disabilities into the Option Pathway, keeping in mind that 40% of graduating seniors cannot pass the high school equivalency assessment. Therefore, parents and students should be aware that the HSEA preparation is rigorous and that accommodations on the tests must be approved by the WVDE and may not reflect the student’s IEP.

Thus, prior to placement into the Option Program, it must be determined if the student with a disability can be successful. Students with disabilities should meet the list of Students with Disability Selection Criteria as follows:

- The student should take the HSEA practice test, using the accommodations stated in the Individual Education Plan (IEP) **prior to entering the Option Pathway** to see if passing the HSEA is possible.
- If the student passes the practice test for the HSEA with required accommodations, a request should be made to the WVDE to make sure these accommodations are approved prior to placement. The accommodation

request must include the proper documentation, as required by the testing service and the WVDE.

- IEPs can only be used as support documentation when submitting an accommodation request.
- The psychological report must be no older than five (5) years and must be attached to the accommodation request.

Not only should great consideration be given concerning passing the HSEA, the placement in a concentration related to the student's career interest and correlated to the student's Personalized Education Plan (per policy 2510 guidance) must also be deliberated, and if the concentration is in CTE, the CTE instructor must be consulted.