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### WHY ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION?

Educational attainment is the single greatest predictor of future economic success of our young people. Compared to high school graduates, those without a diploma or General Equivalency Diploma (GED®) have higher rates of mortality, incarceration, and unemployment, while those with higher levels of education will earn significantly more over their lifetime and experience shorter periods of unemployment. San Francisco is home to one of the most highly educated workforces in the United States with nearly two-thirds of new jobs, particularly those paying a living wage, requiring a post-secondary credential.

Unfortunately, many young people in San Francisco do not currently have these credentials or are not positively engaged in an educational program. Between 9th and 12th grades, about 1,500 students leave or drop out of SFUSD. 7,700 young adults ages 18-24 lack a diploma or GED®. These young people and our community face significant challenges. According to the CA Dropout Research Project, this current drop-out rate costs the City and County of San Francisco \$122 million in lost lifetime earnings.

Fortunately, San Francisco has several high quality educational programs designed to reengage young people on a successful educational path. This Alternative Education Guide provides information about programs that provide academic instruction specifically for off-track and out-of-school youth leading to a high school diploma or GED® and connection with postsecondary education and training. These programs often utilize a different pedagogy that is not available in traditional school settings – offering relevant and diverse learning opportunities,

personalized and flexible learning environments and supports and services to address the range of needs that students have struggled with such as counseling, substance abuse and employment.

### WHY THE GED®?

The GED® test has been the “second chance” for those who did not complete high school to earn a credential equivalent to a diploma for fifty years. If you did not graduate from high school and do not have a diploma, you should think about taking the GED. A GED diploma shows that you have high school level skills. About 96 percent of employers accept the GED diploma as equal to a regular high school diploma. It will also allow you to enroll in colleges or universities.

### THE NEW 2014 GED®

In 2011, the organization that administers the GED® test, the American Council on Education, partnered with Pearson VUE testing company to change GED® test content to more adequately reflect college preparedness, and also computerize the GED® test format. Starting in 2014, students will complete the new GED® test completely on computer format. Also, the original subject matter of the old tests has been redesigned for the new GED® test to include a four-test format: literacy, math, science, and social studies. In addition, two types of certification will now be available through the new GED® test: general high school equivalency and endorsement that indicates college and career readiness.

Potentially, the new subject matter and content on the GED® tests starting 2014 will be more difficult than the older tests. The new GED® test will incorporate strong college readiness standards modeled around the common core state standards. Changes to the new GED test that could negatively affect individuals include increased test costs and reduction in the number of test centers, according to The Working Poor Families Project. For more info about the 2014 GED® Test, visit [www.gedtestingservice.com](http://www.gedtestingservice.com).



## SAN FRANCISCO ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

### Early Morning Study Academy, Success Center San Francisco

375 Woodside Avenue, Building W2, San Francisco, CA 94127  
www.successcentersf.com

Contact Person: Jermaine King, Program Coordinator

Email: [jking@successcentersf.org](mailto:jking@successcentersf.org)

Phone: 415-753-7690

Current Enrollment: 100 students

Early Morning Study Academy promotes and assists over 100 students per year prepare for and attain their GED. This represents over 70% of all SF Unified School District's Court and County School graduates. Of these students, 75% matriculate into employment and post secondary opportunities. This work is done in partnership with the SF Juvenile Probation Department, Department of Children Youth and Their Families and a host of community based agencies.

### Five Keys Independence High School, San Francisco Sheriff's Department

70 Oak Grove St, San Francisco, CA 94107 (with other locations in San Francisco)  
www.fivekeyscharter.org

Contact Person: Kelli Villa, Student Enrollment

Email: [kelliv@fivekeyscharter.org](mailto:kelliv@fivekeyscharter.org)

Phone: 415-575-6454

Current Enrollment: 1,200 students

Five Keys offers adults ages 17 and older (no age cap) the opportunity to earn credits toward their High School Diploma and/or take courses to prepare them to take the GED exam. Different from most public high schools, Five Keys requires students to obtain 180 units to graduate, whereas, other traditional high schools require up to 240 units. Five Keys also offers the CAHSEE exam several times throughout the year and /or pays the associated fee for taking the GED. Students have the option to attend school in a traditional classroom setting or work through independent study.

### Gateway to College Program, City College of San Francisco

50 Phelan Avenue, Science Building 127, San Francisco, CA 94112  
www.ccsf.edu/gatewaytocollege

Contact Person: Ingrid Gonzales, Program Director

Email: [gateway@ccsf.edu](mailto:gateway@ccsf.edu)

Phone: 415-452-5773

Current Enrollment: 150 students

Gateway to College is a program at City College of San Francisco that serves students between 16-20 years-old, who have dropped out of high school in San Francisco or may not graduate. Students take courses that help earn credit towards their high school diploma and a college degree or certificate at the same time.

### GED® BASICS:

The GED® covers five subjects:

- Language Arts, Reading: 65 minutes
- Language Arts, Writing: 120 minutes
- Mathematics: 90 minutes
- Science: 80 minutes (90 minutes starting 2014)
- Social Studies: 70 minutes (90 minutes starting 2014)

Starting 2014, however, the score range will change and test-takers will need to reach a score of at least 150 on each module and a total score of 600 across the four-module battery in order to receive their GED® test credential.. If you don't pass a subtest the first time, you can retake it two more times, with a total of three chances per year.

#### Websites with practice questions:

- [www.acenet.edu](http://www.acenet.edu), click on "Programs and Services" and then "GED Testing Service," then "Sample Test Questions"
- [www.testpreview.com](http://www.testpreview.com) and go to the GED section; has practice questions and free flashcards
- [www.4tests.com/exams](http://www.4tests.com/exams) click on GED.
- [www.gedpractice.com](http://www.gedpractice.com)
- [www.quizmoz.com](http://www.quizmoz.com)

### GED® COSTS:

As of 2013, the test costs \$75.00 in exact cash or money order for each first-time test taker, and each subtest taken more than once costs \$10.00.

You can pay less if you are a CCSF student AND receiving TANF, CAAP, Food Stamps, Medi-Cal, SSI or Unemployment OR an instructor or counselor determines you have financial need.



## SAN FRANCISCO ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

### Hire Up, Larkin Street Youth Services

1150 Sutter Street, San Francisco, CA 94109  
[www.larkinstreetyouth.org](http://www.larkinstreetyouth.org)

Contact Person: Martha Mar, Associate Director of Education

Email: [mmar@larkinstreetyouth.org](mailto:mmar@larkinstreetyouth.org)

Phone: 415-673-0911 ext 235

Current Enrollment: 40-50 students (per day)

Larkin Street Youth Services Hire-Up provides youth up to 24 years-old with GED completion support, and also tutoring, employment/education case management, job readiness class, job training program, internship program, art groups, computer/audio visual classes and college support.

### Independence High School

1350 Seventh Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94122  
[www.sfusd.edu/en/schools/school-information/independence-high-school.html](http://www.sfusd.edu/en/schools/school-information/independence-high-school.html)

Contact Person: Robert Maass

Email: [maassr@sfusd.edu](mailto:maassr@sfusd.edu)

Phone: 415-242-5000

Current Enrollment: 320 Students

Independence High School is a WASC-approved independent study high school offering a full educational program to the students of San Francisco working towards a GED or high school diploma. Independence High School students 16 years-old or older meet one-to-one with an assigned teacher/counselor for one instructional period (45 minutes) per week to review progress on assigned work and the new assignments. Eligible participants for one-to-one study must have at least 60 school credits. Students less than age 16 meet at Independence's one-room school house every weekday for two hours.

### Life Learning Academy

651 8th Street, Treasure Island, San Francisco, CA 94130  
[www.llasf.org](http://www.llasf.org)

Contact Person: Craig Miller, Vice Principal

Email: [cmiller@llasf.org](mailto:cmiller@llasf.org)

Phone: 415-397-8957

Current Enrollment: 70 students

Life Learning Academy is a WASC-accredited charter high school that reconnects SF's highest-need teens with paths to success. Regardless of their past, LLA students excel in small classes that create a safe and supportive atmosphere, provide rigorous hands-on academic projects, and deliver 21st century skills. Even teens at high risk of incarceration and school failure earn SFUSD diplomas, and can access off-site paid internships, workforce training, academic counseling, and financial support for college. LLA is a diploma-granting school that requires a commitment to positive change and nonviolence, and extends the support that brings success within reach.

### GED® ELIGIBILITY:

#### Who can take the GED?

You must be:

- 18 years of age or older, or within 60 days of your 18th birthday (whether or not you are enrolled in school).
- 18 years of age or older, and within 60 days of when you would have graduated from high school had you remained in school (you may not be enrolled in school).
- 17 years of age, been out of school for at least 60 consecutive school days, and provide a letter of request for the test from the military, a post-secondary educational institution or a prospective employer.
- 17 years of age, and incarcerated in a California state or county correctional facility.

### S.F. GED® TEST CENTER

is located at the Gough Street Campus of City College of San Francisco, 33 Gough Street, Room 19, one block from Market Street.

First-time test takers have to register in person by coming in to the GED Testing Center on Monday from 8-11am, or Wednesday from 8-11am or 1-4pm. You have to bring ID and \$\$\$. The test is offered in English and Spanish.

For more information about the GED test in San Francisco, go to [www.ccsf.edu/Services/GED/](http://www.ccsf.edu/Services/GED/).



## SAN FRANCISCO ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

### POST-SECONDARY ED.

#### RESOURCES:

##### Applying for College

□ <http://studentaid.ed.gov/prepare-for-college>: Provides general planning guide on applying for college including how to pick a college, steps to apply and how high school students can begin preparing for college.

□ <http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/maps/alphaList.asp>: Listing of all California Community College by name and region.

□ [www.cccapply.org](http://www.cccapply.org): Community College application.

□ [www.csumentor.edu](http://www.csumentor.edu): Cal State application.

□ <http://calstate.edu/fosteryouth/>: Admission information for Cal State Universities targeted towards foster youth along with a host of other resources.

□ [www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/](http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/): University of California application.

□ [www.onyourway.org](http://www.onyourway.org): A youth oriented site that allows youth to create a plan for their future and track information on line.

##### Financial Aid

□ [www.fafsa.ed.gov/](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/): FAFSA application.

□ [www.calgrants.org/index.cfm](http://www.calgrants.org/index.cfm): Cal Grant information and Search for free FAFSA workshops in your area.

□ [www.icanaffordcollege.info](http://www.icanaffordcollege.info): Information on financial aid targeting community college students and applicants.

□ [www.chafee.csac.ca.gov/default.aspx](http://www.chafee.csac.ca.gov/default.aspx): Chafee grant application and information.

□ <http://studentaid.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/students/english/index.jsp>: Information about federal grant and loan programs.

□ [www.finaid.org/](http://www.finaid.org/): Offers an overall look at financial aid, where to look for it, how to get it, and gives hints on completing the FAFSA and common errors to avoid.

□ [http://cccapply.org/BOG\\_Waiver/](http://cccapply.org/BOG_Waiver/): How to apply for the Community College Board of Governors fee waiver.

Current Enrollment: 2,400-2,990 students

Transitional Studies Department offers free instruction in the CCSF High School Diploma Program, General Educational Development (GED), Adult Basic Education, and Vocational Foundation Skills. The High School Diploma program provides an opportunity for adults to earn the CCSF High school Diploma. Additionally, classes that begin after 4:00 p.m. are open to students who are still enrolled in 11th or 12th grades and wish to earn high school credit to transfer to their regular high school. Transitional Studies also offers GED courses as well as individualized, self-paced, and multi-level classes. Transitional studies high school classes also may be taken in preparation for the GED.

### Mission Neighborhood Center, GED Program

362 Capp Street, San Francisco, CA 94110

(Precita Center, GED location) 534 Precita Ave., San Francisco, CA 94110

(Bernal Dwellings, GED location) 3125 26th Street (& Harrison), San Francisco, CA 94110

(Mission Beacon Center, Everett Middle School, GED location) 450 Church Street, Room 214, San Francisco, CA 94114

[www.mncsf.org](http://www.mncsf.org)

Contact Person: Gabriel Martinez

Email: [gabriel.martinez@gmail.com](mailto:gabriel.martinez@gmail.com) or [locoteacher@gmail.com](mailto:locoteacher@gmail.com)

Phone: 646-673-1468

Current Enrollment: 1,000 students (per year)

Mission Neighborhood Center GED Program offers GED preparation and ESL supportive services to at risk, and multi-systems involved young adults ages 17-25. MNC offers afternoon, evening and Saturday classes, at 3 different sites to ensure the client completes the program successfully. Precita Center, Bernal Dwellings, and Mission Beacon at Everett Middle school offer preparation classes twice per week. Tutoring and individual sessions are available to students to prep for testing and learning basic english.

### San Francisco Conservation Corps

102 Fort Mason, San Francisco, CA 94124

[www.sfcc.org](http://www.sfcc.org)

Contact Person: Amber Bocanegra, Recruiter

Email: [abocanegra@sfcc.org](mailto:abocanegra@sfcc.org)

Phone: 415-928-7417 ext 313

Current Enrollment: 67 students

San Francisco Conservation Corps' Academic Services, in association with the John Muir Charter School, offers a variety of courses and educational approaches to help young people work towards their High School Diploma as well as prepare for college or other training programs.

### Transitional Studies Department, City College of San Francisco

(John Adams Campus) 1860 Hayes Street, (Room 45), San Francisco, CA 94117

Tel. 415-561-1925

(Mission Campus) 1125 Valencia Street, San Francisco, CA. 94110

[www.ccsf.edu/trst](http://www.ccsf.edu/trst)

Contact Person: Jane Sneed, Department Chair

Email: [jsneed@ccsf.edu](mailto:jsneed@ccsf.edu)

Phone: 415-920-6042



## SAN FRANCISCO ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Treasure Island Job Corps, GED Program/SIA Tech Academy  
351 Ave. H, Bldg. 442, San Francisco, CA 94130  
[www.treasureisland.jobcorps.gov](http://www.treasureisland.jobcorps.gov)

### POST-SECONDARY ED.

#### RESOURCES:

##### Scholarships:

- [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com): One of the largest free scholarship search services on the Internet. Contains a searchable database of millions of public and private scholarships, grants and loans. Registration is required.
- [www.collegenet.com/mach](http://www.collegenet.com/mach): Free scholarship search engine with more than 500,000 private sector awards searchable by key word. No registration required.
- [www.scholarshipexperts.com](http://www.scholarshipexperts.com): Free scholarship search database. Registration is required.
- [www.unitedfriends.org/youth-access/resources-links/foster-youth-scholarships](http://www.unitedfriends.org/youth-access/resources-links/foster-youth-scholarships): List of several resources for scholarships for foster youth
- [www.fc2success.org/what-we-do/scholarships-and-grants/apply-for-an-ofacasey-scholarship](http://www.fc2success.org/what-we-do/scholarships-and-grants/apply-for-an-ofacasey-scholarship): Scholarships for youth under 25 who were in foster care on their 18th birthday

##### College Preparation:

- [www.csumentor.com/Planning/](http://www.csumentor.com/Planning/): Year by year college planning guides from 6th grade through 12th grade.
- [www.knowhow2go.org/](http://www.knowhow2go.org/): Year by year college planning guides with a section specifically for mentors to help support youth.
- [www.cde.ca.gov/ls/pf/fy/cwjdccontacts.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/pf/fy/cwjdccontacts.asp): Contact information for Foster Youth Services Coordinators (K-12) for each county.
- [www.collegeaccess.org/member\\_directory.aspx](http://www.collegeaccess.org/member_directory.aspx): Provides information on college access programs throughout California
- [www.collegeaccessfoundation.org/grants/grant-recipients.aspx](http://www.collegeaccessfoundation.org/grants/grant-recipients.aspx): List of grantees for the College Access Foundation of California, including links to each grant recipient's website.
- [www.going2college.org/actPage.cfm?stateID=5&isMain=0&pageID=18](http://www.going2college.org/actPage.cfm?stateID=5&isMain=0&pageID=18): List of federally funded TRiO programs in California.
- [www.collegeboundbros.org/directory/search.php](http://www.collegeboundbros.org/directory/search.php): Searchable database of college readiness and enrichment programs in the San Francisco Bay Area
- [www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/gd/gedtestcntrs.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/gd/gedtestcntrs.asp): List of GED test centers.
- [www.eaop.org/](http://www.eaop.org/): UC program that specializes in early outreach.

Contact Person: William Chan, Admission Counselor

Email: [chan.william@jobcorps.org](mailto:chan.william@jobcorps.org)

Phone: 415-352-2473

Current Enrollment: 472 students

Job Corps is a free education and training program that helps young people learn a career, earn a high school diploma or GED, and find and keep a good job. For eligible young people at least 16 years of age that qualify as low income, Job Corps provides the all-around skills needed to succeed in a career and in life. If you or someone you know is interested in joining Job Corps, call (415) 277-2408 where an operator will provide you with general information about Job Corps, refer you to the admissions counselor closest to where you live, and mail you an information packet.

### Youth Chance High School, Embarcadero YMCA

169 Steuart Street, San Francisco, CA 94105,  
[www.ymcasf.org/embarcadero](http://www.ymcasf.org/embarcadero)

Contact Person: Eugenia Young, Principal

Email: [eyoung@ymcasf.org](mailto:eyoung@ymcasf.org)

Phone: 415-615-1337

Current Enrollment: 75 students

Youth Chance High School strengthens the community by partnering with high-risk inner-city youth to earn their high school diplomas in a safe, supportive environment. Students gain academic, vocational and life skills necessary to become self-sufficient, socially responsible young adults. For teens who are truant, chronically absent or have dropped out completely, the Y collaborates extensively with the San Francisco Unified School District and the juvenile justice system. Half of the teens at Youth Chance have been or are involved with foster care and the juvenile justice system. Youth Chance partners with other YMCA of San Francisco truancy and mental health support programs for recruitment, strategic planning, community collaborations and resource allocation.



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

### FOR PROVIDERS:

A Guide to Implementation: Preparing Young Adults for GED Programs. (2009). Youth Development Institute.

<http://bit.ly/17y2URs>.

Information Related to the 2014 General Education Development (GED®) Test Series. (2013). Employment & Training Administration, U.S. Department of Labor.

<http://bit.ly/HsXFci>.

High Expectations and Strong Supports Yield Postsecondary Success. (2010). Ready by 21. <http://bit.ly/1h1Eo12>.

From GED to College Degree: Creating Pathways to Postsecondary Success for High School Dropouts. (2011). Jobs for the Future. <http://bit.ly/1cromvB>.

Key Design Features of a GED to College Pathway. (2009). Jobs For the Future. <http://bit.ly/17y8gfx>.

At TAYSF, we believe all young people need high-quality education and training experiences that respond to the diverse needs and life challenges of transitional age youth in order to move their lives forward and become self-sufficient.

### FOR POLICYMAKERS:

The Economic Benefits from Halving San Francisco-Oakland's Drop-out Rate. (2010). Alliance for Excellent Education. <http://bit.ly/1ivBYDj>.

An Overview of Alternative Education. (2006). The Urban Institute. <http://bit.ly/1crqKCA>.

Expanding Options: Cities Roles in Creating High School Alternatives for Struggling Students. (2010). National League of Cities. <http://bit.ly/19TBepS>.

Preparing for the New GED® Test: What to Consider Before 2014. (2012). The Working Poor Families Project. <http://bit.ly/1hv4dEy>.

Creating Postsecondary Pathways to Good Jobs for Young High School Dropouts. (2008). Center for American Progress. <http://wp.me/a3vwy5-3R0>.

Powerful Pathways: Framing Options and Opportunities for Vulnerable Youth. (2001). Youth Transitions Funders Group. <http://wp.me/a3vwy5-3R1>.

Programs and Policies for High School Dropouts: What Does the Research Say? (2011). American Youth Policy Forum, MDRC. <http://wp.me/a3vwy5-3R2>.

Building a Learning Agenda Around Disconnected Youth. (2010). MDRC. <http://wp.me/a3vwy5-3R3>.

## ABOUT TAYSF

The Transitional Age Youth Initiative (TAYSF) serves as convener of policy coordination, a resource for young people and service providers and a source for youth voice in local policymaking concerning TAY. TAYSF works closely with public agencies, young adults and non-profit service providers with the goal to create a coordinated system of supports in education, employment, health & wellness and housing services so that San Francisco's 8,000 most vulnerable youth and young adults can enjoy a healthy transition to adulthood. Through the Citywide TAY Advisory Board, TAYSF engages youth and young adults, ages 16-25 who, from personal and professional experiences, represent San Francisco's most vulnerable transitional age youth—those who are disconnected from education, employment and social support systems.

TAYSF provides resources for young people, policy-makers and the community through two comprehensive resource websites and monthly newsletters highlighting work being done by young people, community organizations, city departments and community leaders to improve the lives of TAY. SF4TAY.org is a resource website for TAY and developed by TAY that provides over 180 resources in the areas of Education, Employment, Housing and Health & Wellness, along with services for youth in crisis or special populations. TAYSF.org provides serves as an online resource directory for research, data and professional development opportunities for those working with or on behalf of TAY.