

TITLE 23: EDUCATION AND CULTURAL RESOURCES
SUBTITLE A: EDUCATION
CHAPTER I: STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
SUBCHAPTER e: INSTRUCTION

PART 215
ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION DIPLOMAS

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AUTHORITY: Implementing and authorized by Section 2-3.81 of The School Code (Ill. Rev. Stat. 1987 Supp., ch. 122, par. 2-3.81).

SOURCE: Emergency rules adopted at 11 Ill. Reg. 3344, effective January 28, 1987, for a maximum of 150 days; adopted at 11 Ill. Reg. 17096, effective October 9, 1987.

Section 215.100 Purpose

This Part establishes procedures and criteria for the approval of applicants seeking authority to award high school diplomas to students who successfully complete programs approved pursuant to this Part, as authorized by Section 2-3.81 of The School Code (Ill. Rev. Stat. 1987 Supp., ch. 122, par. 2-3.81).

Section 215.110 Policy and Eligible Applicants

- a) Several agencies already have programs, developed in conjunction with one or more school districts, in which students who successfully complete the program will receive a high school diploma from their school district of residence. It is the policy of the State Board of Education to encourage, rather than disturb or replace, such existing relationships. Therefore, applicants (hereinafter called agency(ies)) seeking alternative education diploma granting authority pursuant to this Part shall be limited to:
 - 1) community colleges established and operating under the authority of the Public Community College Act (Ill. Rev. Stat. 1985, ch. 122, par. 101-1 et seq.) which do not already have relationships with local school districts that allow for awarding of diplomas as described in subsection(a) of this Section;
 - 2) educational service regions established and operating under the authority of Article 3A of The School Code (Ill. Rev. Stat. 1985, ch. 122, par. 3A-1 et seq.) which do not already have relationships with local school districts that allow for awarding of diplomas as described in subsection(a) of this Section.
- b) Community colleges or educational service regions wishing to award diplomas under this Part must provide written assurance of their inability to establish agreements with their secondary and unit school districts in which students who successfully complete alternative programs will receive high school diplomas from their school district of residence.

Section 215.120 Application Procedures

Eligible agencies, as defined in Section 215.110 of this Part, may submit an application for program approval to the State Board of Education. The application shall contain at least the following information and assurances.

a) Information

- 1) Name and address of the applicant agency, and the name, title, and phone number of a contact person for the program.
- 2) A description of the structure and content of the alternative education program, including at least:
 - A) the procedures for determining student placement;
 - B) the criteria and procedures for awarding credits for prior and current student achievement;
 - C) a description of the coursework, including course titles, content covered, methods of instruction, and any requirements which students must successfully complete in order to be eligible for a diploma (in addition to those required by these rules);
 - D) for programs based in whole or in part on student learning goals and objectives, a description of the procedure for establishing such learning goals and objectives, the method of evaluating student achievement, and requirements which students must meet in order to be eligible for a diploma (in addition to those required by these rules); and
 - E) a description of the required qualifications of program staff in relation to the instructional or administrative services they will provide under the program.

b) Assurances

Applications shall contain assurances that:

- 1) the program will not discriminate against any student on the basis of race, color, national origin, handicap, or sex;
- 2) facilities used to offer instruction will be maintained in compliance with applicable building, fire, and health safety regulations; and
- 3) the agency has attempted to establish relationships with local school districts as described in Section 215.110(a) of this Part, and that the agency has correspondence on file to document the failure of such efforts.

Section 215.130 Criteria for Program Approval

State Board of Education staff will review information provided pursuant to Section 215.120 of this Part on the basis of the following criteria:

- 1) The agency has established a system for assessing student performance and awarding credit, and, at a minimum, requires its students to receive at least a passing score on the "Test of General Educational Development" (GED) examination.
 - 2) The application contains the information and assurances required in Sections 215.110(b) and 215.120 of this Part.
- b) The State Superintendent of Education, based upon the criteria set forth in subsection (a) of this Section, will notify each applicant agency in writing:
- 1) that its application is approved, or
 - 2) that its application cannot be approved until deficiencies specified in the written notice have been corrected.

Section 215.140 Terms of Approval

Agencies whose programs have been approved by the State Superintendent pursuant to this Part are continually approved so long as the agency complies with the following conditions:

- a) The agency will maintain written evidence that its program is operating as approved by the State Superintendent and that students awarded diplomas have successfully completed the program as approved by the State Superintendent. Such written evidence shall include GED test results and the items specified in Section 215.120 of this Part.
- b) The agency will maintain written records of all students in the program. Such records shall at least include the information specified in the definition of "Student Permanent Record" provided in 23 Ill. Adm. Code 375.10 (Student Records) and shall be maintained as provided in Section 50-4(e) of the Illinois School Student Records Act (Ill. Rev. Stat. 1985, ch. 122, par. 50-4(e)).
- c) The agency will permit the State Board of Education to conduct on-site evaluations of the approved program and its attendant records at least once every three years.

Section 215.150 Award of Diplomas

Students who successfully complete programs approved pursuant to this Part and who are beyond the age of compulsory school attendance shall be entitled to receive a diploma, which the State Board of Education shall provide to the applicant agency. The diploma shall include language indicating that it has been awarded pursuant to the authority granted in Section 2-3.81 of The School Code and in conformance with the requirements of this Part.