There’s an alternative to the GED
National program gives credit for life experiences

By JULIE ANDERSON
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NEWARK — There are a number of reasons why individuals may not be able to finish their high school education, and refusal to attend school is one of them — but there is another option.

Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES is one of the area’s only accredited programs offering the National External Diploma Program. It’s available to any resident of New York State who is 16 years old or older, and who is unable to attend school for a number of reasons, including repeated failure, not meeting the learning standards, or disabilities.

The NEDP has been a part of W-FL BOCES since 1993. Twenty-one of these 25 districts, including Geneva, Watkins Glen and Seneca Falls, participate. “It’s one of our best-kept secrets,” said the director of Career, Technical and Continuing Education at BOCES, John Boronkay, with a smile.

What exactly is the difference between a GED and the NEDP? There are many actually.

The GED has battled an identity crisis for a long time. It’s often referred to as the “Good Enough Diploma,” viewed as a way to meet minimum standards for graduation. However, many employers view it as a flimsy credential because it does not reflect an individual’s initiative or refocus on education.

The reality is that the GED is not finished for many students. It’s a standardized setup that includes diagnostic testing, attending classes and navigating a multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blanks type exam. For those who aren’t good test takers, it’s a challenge.

The NEDP is much different.

“Most of all, it’s not a test, but rather a program built around portfolio-based assessments. If those who have life experiences that show they are able to do — especially helpful for those who suffer from test anxiety,” Boronkay said.


This program is for motivated individuals who may not be able to finish their high school education for a number of reasons why. Some individuals meet with the assessors once a week for an hour for 10 weeks. Some have families. Also, the program is often in the evening hours.

“Many teachers know it seems well suited for those with learning disabilities or ADHD, because there is quality for multiple assessments,” Boronkay said.

“A program was a big challenge for me, but I was determined to get my high school diploma,” said Amanda. She is pleased keep in touch with her teacher and friend. I still have a diploma just like the real one. Employers regard the NEDP, the military and other places are recognized. It’s free.

The final step of the NEDP is a set of five task booklets created by Compromise Adult Student Assessment Systems, or CASAS. The booklets require the completion of other places are needed. Schools are helpful for those with learning disabilities or ADHD, because there is quality for multiple assessments.

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The best part of this program is for motivated individuals who may not be able to finish their high school education for a number of reasons why.

The annual budget vote and election of officials for the district will be held on May 7 at the library, 122 Broad St.

The meeting is open to the public. Voter must be at least 18, U.S. citizen and res- ident of the town school district. Absentee and absentee ballots are available for 30 days prior to the vote.

For details, call 946-9262 or e-mail library@countylibrary.org

Library trustees to present budget

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