



## **ExPreSS**

### **(Exam Preparation for Science and Social Studies)**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **1. What is the ExPreSS Program?**

ExPreSS is a two-week summer science and social studies tutorial program for high school students provided through the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE). The purpose of the program is to help students meet assessment requirements for a high school diploma by passing the science and social studies Georgia High School Graduation Test (GHS GT). ExPreSS is not to replace a local school or district's summer program, but to offer some additional assistance, helping schools/districts to support students in passing the GHS GT and to improve graduation rates.

#### **2. Who is eligible to participate in the ExPreSS Program?**

Eligibility criteria:

- High school juniors and first-time test takers of the GHS GT who did not pass either the Science or Social Studies GHS GT
- Students in good standing in attendance and behavior
- Eleventh grade students who score within two standard errors of measurement (SEM) below the "MEETS" standard cut (i.e., Basic Proficiency for Science or Pass on Social Studies) on the spring 2009 administration of Science or Social Studies GHS GT. This means students whose scores fell between 184-199 (GPS) or 488-499 (QCC/GPS) on the Science GHS GT or those with scores between 490-499 (QCC/GPS) on the Social Studies GHS GT.
- Students with parental consent who have completed a letter of intent to participate

#### **3. How will students be selected and placed into a host site?**

Graduation coaches, counselors, or a school's designee will assign students based on criteria outlined in question 2. The application will be on-line. The time frame for submitting applications is from May 6 to May 10. Each high school is required to indicate participation on the electronic application, even if the school is not sending any students to the program. The selected participants will be based on priority set up by quintiles that is sent to the GaDOE by the local school. Upon completion of this process a listing of students that will attend a particular site will be given to the site administrator and a student's local school. Students who have been selected will need to fill out information and have it signed by student, and parent or guardian.

**4. Where will the ExPreSS Program be available?**

Twenty-nine high schools across the state from each of the 16 RESA areas have agreed to serve as host sites called Regional Education Centers. Each district and high school will receive an electronic copy of the list of sites.

**5. How long will the ExPreSS Program last?**

The program will be held Monday through Friday from June 8-19, from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm.

**6. If students need remediation in both science and social studies, will there be time during the ExPreSS Program for them to receive tutoring in both or will they have to choose one or the other?**

Students will choose one subject (science or social studies) for participation in the ExPreSS Program and the June 19 GHSGT re-test.

**7. If students need to retake both science and social studies tests, will they be able to take both on June 19?**

Students will only be allowed to participate in one test during the 2009 ExPreSS, either science or social studies. They can take the other subject/s GHSGT during the July 2009 administration.

**8. Will the science and social studies retests still be offered in July 2009 during the designated retest window?**

The July 2009 administration will still be available as planned. However, students who participate in the ExPreSS Program for either science or social studies will not be able to take the same subject GHSGT in the July 2009 administration as they did for the ExPreSS June 19, 2009 administration. Students taking the same subject GHSGT in both June and July administrations will have the July 2009 administration invalidated.

**9. If students are unsuccessful with the June 19 test administration, will they be eligible to test again during the district's scheduled administration date in July 2009?**

Students who participate in the ExPreSS Program for either science or social studies will not be able to take the same subject GHSGT in the July 2009 administration as they did for the ExPreSS June 19, 2009 administration.

**10. Is there a limit to the number of science and social studies teachers nominated?**

ExPreSS teachers were selected through a nomination and review process. A limited number were selected, based on subject-area and regional needs.

**11. How many teachers are allowed to participate per district?**

The number of teachers invited to participate will be based on budget considerations and the number of students registered in the different regions.

**12. How many students are allowed to participate per district?**

The number of student participants is based on subject area and regional needs, using GHSGT data.

**13. Will I have a GaDOE contact person?**

Every host site will have a former high school principal who will serve as their contact person at the GaDOE. This is the person you should contact if you have any questions or comments.

**14. What if a student is absent during the ExPreSS Program?**

To achieve the maximum benefit from this GaDOE summer school experience, students need to attend in full each day. Daily attendance will be monitored. Teachers should contact their students prior to June 8 and welcome them to the program. If a student is absent, the teacher will contact the student to inquire as to the nature of the absence. Teacher will inform the site supervisor who will email the GADOE contact person if the student is removed from the program due to his/her absence(s).

**15. What happens if a student misbehaves?**

Appropriate behavior is expected at all times during the GaDOE ExPreSS Program, including all classes, activities and transportation associated with the program. Displaying inappropriate behavior as defined by the site discipline policy may result in immediate dismissal from the ExPreSS Program. If a student is removed for any reason, the site supervisor will email their GaDOE contact person and give them the reason for the removal.

**16. Will transportation be provided for Express students?**

Systems will receive a fixed amount of funding to provide student transportation to ExPreSS sites. Systems will provide transportation based on local needs.

**17. Will a student be allowed to leave early or check in late?**

Students are expected to be in class for the entire 4 hours of instruction.

**18. Will a student be able to leave once he/she has finished the GHSGT?**

Students must remain in the classroom throughout the entire testing period. They can only leave when the test coordinator or his/her designee has accounted for and secured all the tests from the host site.

**19. Who is responsible for securing substitutes? How will the substitutes be paid?**

The GaDOE will work with host sites in developing a pool of highly qualified and effective science and social studies teachers. The site based administrator will be responsible for securing the subs in case of a teacher absence. The ExPreSS teacher will lose one day's pay for each absence. Those funds will be used to pay the substitute.

**20. If we have inclement weather or any other extenuating circumstances that preclude the host site from opening, how will this be handled?**

Call your GaDOE contact person immediately.

**21. Are there lessons plans and pacing guides available for the teachers?**

The GaDOE Science and Social Studies Program Managers will provide lesson plans and pacing guidelines for each subject area. These lesson plans **must** be followed to ensure that we have uniformity in the curriculum. How a teacher decides to deliver the curriculum is left up to his/her individual teaching style. Differentiated instruction is encouraged to meet the learning needs of all the students within the classroom. Benchmark assessments will be given to the teachers to provide them with a diagnostic look at where their students are at the end of the first week.

**22. Will we have opportunities to get more information prior to the beginning of the program?**

We will be conducting a webinar for all site based supervisors as well as district office personnel. The dates of this webinar will be announced shortly.

**23. Who is responsible for administering the GHS GT?**

Your designated local test coordinator will be the person responsible for ensuring that tests are ordered, accommodations are made (if necessary), tests are accounted for and sent back, and the teachers are trained on the expectations of test administration. Teachers will serve as test administrators. To eliminate the perception of bias, science teachers should administer the Social Studies GHS GT and social studies teachers should administer the Science GHS GT. If only one teacher is at a host site, then the host supervisor will assist in administering the test.

**24. Who secures and pays for an interpreter or special materials for special needs students?**

The GaDOE will pay for an interpreter and the materials needed for special needs students covered under ADA. However, if a local school district sends a special needs student that requires a paraprofessional or additional personnel, then that student's district will incur the cost of that person(s).