

# Missouri AEL Program Guidance

## New Compulsory Attendance Age

Senate Bill 291 (2009) revises section 167.031, RSMo, Missouri's compulsory attendance law. The revision amends 167.031.6 (2) and creates 167.031.7.

6. *As used in sections 167.031 to 167.051, the term "compulsory attendance age for the district" shall mean:*

*(1) Seventeen years of age for any metropolitan school district for which the school board adopts a resolution to establish such compulsory attendance age; provided that such resolution shall take effect no earlier than the school year next following the school year during which the resolution is adopted; and*

*(2) **Seventeen years of age or having successfully completed sixteen credits towards high school graduation** in all other cases. The school board of a metropolitan school district for which the compulsory attendance age is seventeen years may adopt a resolution to lower the compulsory attendance age to sixteen years; provided that such resolution shall take effect no earlier than the school year next following the school year during which the resolution is adopted.*

**7. For purposes of subsection 2 of this section as applied in subsection 6 herein, a completed credit towards high school graduation shall be defined as one hundred hours or more of instruction in a course. Home school education enforcement and records pursuant to this section, and sections 210.167 and 211.031, RSMo, shall be subject to review only by the local prosecuting attorney.**

These changes to the compulsory attendance law go into effect on **August 28, 2009**. Here are some important facts regarding the changes:

1. A 16 year-old enrolled in an AEL program before August 28, 2009 will not have to verify completion of 16 units of credit toward high school graduation; however you are encouraged to verify if he or she has dropped out of school.
2. A 16 year-old applying for AEL services on or after August 28, 2009 who dropped out of school before August 28, 2009 will not have to verify completion of 16 units of credit toward high school graduation, but will have to provide written verification from the last school attended that he or she dropped out before this date to be eligible for services. In the case of a home schooled student, a signed statement by the parent or guardian stating the student meets these requirements is sufficient.
3. A 16 year-old applying for AEL services who drops out on or after August 28, 2009 must verify he or she has completed 16 units of credit toward high school graduation before being allowed to enroll into an AEL program. This verification

(i.e. transcript) can be obtained from either the school district, the non-public school the student attended or from the student, providing the student has an official transcript.

4. A 16 year-old applying to take the GED® Tests on or after August 28, 2009, who dropped out of school before August 28, must obtain verification in writing from the last school attended that he or she dropped out before this date as well as written permission from an authorized school official (head principal or superintendent). In the case of a formerly home schooled student, written verification and permission from his or her parent or guardian is sufficient.
5. A 16 year-old applying to take the GED® Tests on or after August 28, 2009, who dropped out of school on or after August 28, must verify he or she has completed 16 units of credit toward high school graduation and obtain written permission from an authorized school official (head principal or superintendent).
6. A home schooled 16 year-old applying for AEL services or applying to take the GED® Tests that ends his or her home schooling after August 28, 2009, must verify the completion of 16 units of credit (100 hours or more of instruction in a course). A signed statement by the parent or guardian stating the student has met this requirement and is no longer being home schooled is sufficient.
7. A 17 year-old applying to take the GED® Tests will not be required to obtain permission to take the test from an authorized school official or from a parent or guardian if he or she was home schooled.

**Issued August 2009**