

NEWS RELEASE

Delaware Department of Correction
Commissioner Terra Taylor



Dozens of incarcerated students earn High School diplomas as academic year draws to a close

Department of Correction and Department of Education host commencement ceremonies to recognize, celebrate student achievement

Dover, DE – 27 students dressed in cap and gown were awarded their high school diplomas Thursday during commencement ceremonies held in the prison chapels of Baylor Women’s Correctional Institution (BWCI) in New Castle and Sussex Correctional Institution (SCI) in Georgetown. Graduates were joined by 100 family members and community supporters, correctional officers and staff, prison education teachers, Department of Education leaders, and fellow incarcerated residents who came together to celebrate their hard work and achievement.

This week’s high school graduates are among the 42 incarcerated students ranging in age from 18 to 64 who earned [Groves Adult High School diplomas](#) across Delaware’s four state prisons during this past academic year.

Because many individuals enter prison without graduating from high school, assessments are used to measure education and literacy levels and guide enrollment in prison education courses that best address individual needs, help them meet grade-level benchmarks, drive completion of a high school diploma or GED, and set them on course to earn additional academic and vocational credentials. Incarcerated students may set a goal to earn a GED, a nationally recognized high school equivalency certification, by demonstrating that they meet basic state eligibility requirements in mathematics, science,

reading language arts and social studies. Across Delaware prisons during the 2025-2026 school year, nearly 100 incarcerated students passed certification exams and earned a GED. Students may also choose to pursue a Groves Adult High School diploma which represents a more rigorous years-long course of academic studies by completing required classes and accumulating credits just as in a traditional high school setting. Together, these student achievements prove that it is never too late to complete high school and pursue continuing education to build new skills.

“I want you to know that I believe in you because, in my life, the people I respect and admire most are those who have set a goal and achieved it, especially those who have faced unimaginable and unintended challenges and overcome them,” Delaware Secretary of Education Cindy Marten said during the BWCI commencement ceremony. “You have experienced things that so many people have never experienced, and you met the challenge. What I know about you is that you are able to see beyond your current circumstances and believe something into being. You set this goal, you claimed it, you worked for it, and you made it happen. We are very proud of you.”

Delaware’s prison education program is administered by the Delaware Department of Education (DOE). Statewide more than 30 Delaware DOE teachers and support staff are assigned to Delaware prison facilities to provide instruction that is designed to equip incarcerated learners with academic, vocational, and life skills to achieve personal success, reduce recidivism, and provide a meaningful pathway to reentry employment. Prison education features Adult Basic Education, English as a Foreign Language, GED preparation, Groves Adult High School instruction, Life Skills, special education services, and vocational training.

“Completing high school requires commitment and hard work, and especially for incarcerated students it requires resilience,” said Department of Correction Commissioner Terra Taylor. “Education is so important to achieving your full potential in life and it is absolutely vital to successful reentry. Creating opportunities for education, self-improvement, and personal growth within our facilities are priorities for the DOC and we congratulate the graduates who have achieved their educational goals. We also extend our sincere thanks to the Department of Education and the dedicated teachers who share our commitment to rehabilitation and second chances and who devote their careers to helping incarcerated men and women create new bright pathways for their lives.”

Several student graduates participated in the commencement ceremonies by sharing personal reflections and performing poetry and song. One BWCJ Groves High School graduate wrote and shared a poem inspired by her educational experience; it reads, in part:

We heard that plenty of times. Whether it had been from another or the voices in our head.

When we laid in our beds, tears rolling down our face, backs against the wall, feeling out of place.

Shaking, dreams wasted, time passing, motivation taken, but we didn't stop.

Some of us couldn't spell, grew up in jail, fighting to create a name, doing drugs to ease the pain.

We kept trying, we never gave up.

The struggles I'm facing, the chances I'm taking sometimes might knock me down, but No I'm not breaking.

Just gotta keep going, and I, I gotta be strong.

Always gonna be an uphill battle.

Ain't about what's waiting on the other side. It's The Climb.

Read today's news release at: [Dozens of Incarcerated Students Earn High School Diplomas as Academic Year Closes - State of Delaware News](#)

Learn more about Delaware Prison Education at <https://education.delaware.gov/families/college-career-life/prison-education/>.



SCI Groves Graduation



BWCI Groves Graduation



BWCI Groves Graduation 2



BWCI Groves Graduation (Secretary Marten)



BWCI SCI Groves Graduations

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