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Newport News Public Schools hosts GED open houses Wednesday and Thursday

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NEWPORT NEWS—

As part of GED Awareness Week, Newport News Public Schools will host GED open houses at its adult learning centers Wednesday and Thursday.

Open to residents of any locality, the sessions will provide information about finishing your studies for a high school diploma or obtaining a GED. A variety of options are available to accomplish those things, according to NNPS Executive Director for Youth Development Cynthia Cooper.

The first open house will be Wednesday, 1 to 4 p.m., at the Jackson Learning Center, 4600 Huntington Ave. Another session will be held Thursday, 3 to 6 p.m., at the Denbigh Learning Center, 606 Denbigh Blvd, Suite 301.

Attendees can take a practice test to qualify for a free GED exam, take a quick math or writing brush-up seminar, and learn workforce development skills.

Staff will be on hand to provide information about ways adults can use the centers to further their education and look for jobs. Representatives from the Peninsula Workforce Development Center are expected to be there as well.

"Most people who've been out there already know that it's very difficult to make a living without any sort of high school credential," Cooper said. "So what we try to stress is we will come up with a program to suit your needs.

"We have schedules available in the morning, in the afternoon, in the evening. We have them uptown, we have them downtown."

Dropout rates are steadily trending downward in Newport News. They went from 14.3 percent in 2008 to 13 percent in 2009, and then down to 11.8 percent in 2010, Cooper said.

Officials want to get the community familiar with where the centers are and what resources are there.

"There are some folks that are discouraged about a GED credential," Cooper said. "Somehow there are some myths out there that it's kind of a slacker's credential, that people will look askance at them if they get that. And there is just information to the contrary out there."

A high rate of employers locally recognize the GED as being equivalent to a high school diploma, and many state

colleges as well, Cooper said.

There is also an external diploma program that doesn't require standardized testing, and an online option for completing a high school diploma.

"A lot of opportunities, a lot of different things — just come talk to somebody about what we can do to get you moving," Cooper said.

Newport News GED open houses

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