**Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.**
**State Superintendent of Schools**

**TO:** Members of the State Board of Education

**FROM:** Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.

**DATE:** May 21, 2019

**SUBJECT:** Maryland High School Graduation Task Force – Diploma by Examination

## PURPOSE:

To provide the State Board with information on the Maryland High School Diploma by Examination.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Maryland High School Graduation Task Force was first convened in January 2018 at the request of the Board and Superintendent. The group was to make recommendations to the Board and Superintendent on the Code of Maryland Regulation (COMAR) 13A.03.02 *Graduation Requirements for Public High Schools in Maryland.* Specifically, the Task Force was asked to focus on three areas: credit and program requirements (number of credits, subject areas, and other requirements), assessments, and options for awarding high school diplomas. All decisions were informed by current research, data, and experts.

## SUMMARY:

Mr. Terry Gilleland, Jr., Director of Adult Education and Literary Services, Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation, will provide information on the Maryland High School Diploma by Examination and will explain how students are able to utilize earning a Diploma through this process.

## ACTION:

For information

# Maryland High School Graduation Task Force Recommendations
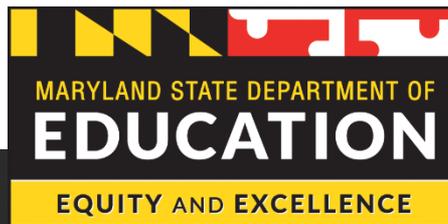
**STATE BOARD MEETING**

May 21, 2019

# Recommendation: 2.A  Diploma by Examination

○ Investigate and support ways students may earn a Maryland High School Diploma by Examination

Maryland State Board of Education

# Maryland High School Diploma by Examination

Current regulation:

D. Maryland High School Diploma by Examination.

(1) General Educational Development Testing Program. A Maryland High School Diploma by Examination may be awarded for satisfactory performance on approved general educational development tests if the student meets those requirements as defined in Labor and Employment Article, §11-808, Annotated Code of Maryland, and COMAR 09.37.01.04.

(2) Maryland Adult External High School Diploma Program. A Maryland High School Diploma by Examination may be awarded for demonstrating competencies in general life skills and individual skills on applied performance tests if the student meets those requirements as defined in COMAR 09.37.01.20.

# Maryland high School Diploma by Examination

**COMAR 09.37.01.04. Applicant Eligibility.**

An applicant is eligible to take the GED® Tests if the applicant:

A.      Resides in the State of Maryland at the time of testing;

B.      Is older than the age requirement for compulsory school attendance set by Education Article, §7-301, Annotated Code of Maryland; and

C.      Either:

(1) Meets both of the following requirements:

(a) Has not obtained a Maryland high school diploma or a high school certificate or diploma issued by another state or non-U.S. or correspondence school; and

(b) Has been officially withdrawn from a regular full-time public or private school; or

(2) Has obtained a Maryland High School Certificate of Program Completion in accordance with COMAR 13A.03 .02.09D.

**Annotated Code of Maryland, Labor and Employment Article, §11-808-High School Diploma by Examination - Eligibility Requirements - Exemption.**

*Additional Information:*

**Terry Gilleland, Jr.**

**Director of  Adult Education and Literary Services**
**Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation**

# OFFICE OF ADULT EDUCATION – OVERVIEW

The Office of Adult Education and Literacy Services is part of the Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning at the MD Department of Labor.  It transitioned from the Maryland State Department of Education in 2009, along with Correctional Education.

Adult Education and Correctional Education programs, in collaboration with Workforce Development programs, establish a comprehensive system of workforce creation and are key stakeholders in the implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

# ADULT INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

- **Service**
  - 24 Local Providers & State Correctional Education
  - Approximately 35,000 MD Residents Served
    - ABE/ASE
    - Family Literacy
    - Integrated English Literacy & Civics Education
- **Funding**
  - U.S. Department of Education (OCTAE)
  - Maryland Department of Labor

# Maryland High School Diploma

| Traditional High School | GED® Exam | National External Diploma Program | Adult High School Program |
|---|---|---|---|
| FY18 Diplomas Awarded | 3056 | 145 | N/A |
| FY17 Diplomas Awarded | 3294 | 235 | |

# ADULT HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

- **Service**
  - Pilot Program: Enacted 2017 Session
  - Joint Approval & Oversight with MSDE
    - Maximum 6 (Pilot): 1 Rural for Every 2 Urban
  - Two approved locations (Baltimore City)
  - Expressions of interest (DC Metro, Western MD)
- **Funding**
  - No funding stipulated in original legislation
  - FY20: $300k (Opportunity Zones)

- ## Service
  - Credentialing Oversight
    - WIOA Title II Program Partners
    - Testing Center Training & Support
  - GED Option: Joint Oversight with MSDE

- ## Metrics (FY18)
  - 6569 Testers (vs. 7072 in FY17)
    - Overall decrease due to improved economy
  - 68% Pass Rate (vs. 79% Nat'l)*

\* Subsidy for first-time testers

# OFFICE OF ADULT EDUCATION CURRENT OPPORTUNITIES

- GED® Contract & New Partner Exploration
  - 2013: State Board agreed with Office of Adult Education to maintain sole provision of GED® Exam
  - 2014: One year contract, with five one-year extensions
  - 2019: Last year of contract
- Procurement Options
  - Sole Source: GED® only
  - RFP: GED® plus

# OFFICE OF ADULT EDUCATION PRESENTATION CONTACTS

- **Terry R. Gilleland, Jr., Director**
  - 410-767-1008
  - Terry.Gilleland@maryland.gov
- **Molly Dugan, GED® Administrator**
  - 410-767-0069
  - Molly.Dugan@maryland.gov
- **Ramona Kunkel, Education Program Specialist**
  - 410-767-0768
  - Ramona.Kunkel@maryland.gov

New Readers Press

# . State-by-State Look: HSE

## High School Equivalent Assessment Summary

| STATE | Educational Testing Service ETS-HiSET | GEDTS / PearsonVUE GED | CTB-McGraw-Hill TASC |
|---|---|---|---|
| Alabama | | X | |
| Alaska | | X | |
| Arizona | | X | |
| Arkansas | | DIPLOMA X | |
| California    HS Equivalency Cert. | X | X | X |
| Colorado    HS Equivalency Dip. | X | X | X |
| Connecticut | | DIPLOMA X | |
| Delaware | | X | |
| District of Columbia | | DIPLOMA X | |
| Florida | | DIPLOMA X | |
| Georgia | | X | |
| Hawaii    HS Equivalency Cred. | X | X | |
| Idaho | | X | |
| Illinois    HS Equivalency Cert. | X | X | X |
| Indiana | | | X |
| Iowa    HS Equivalency Dip. | X | | |
| Kansas | | DIPLOMA X | |
| Kentucky | | X | |
| Louisiana    HS Equivalency Dip. | X | | |
| Maine    HS Equivalency Cert. | X | | |
| Maryland | | DIPLOMA X | |
| Massachusetts HS Equiv. Cred. | X | X | |
| Michigan    HS Equivalency Cert. | X | X | X |
| Minnesota | | X | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Mississippi   HS Equivalency Dip.** | X | X | X |
| **Missouri  HS Equivalency Cert.** | X | | |
| **Montana   HS Equivalency Dip.** | X | | |
| **Nebraska** | | DIPLOMA X | |
| **Nevada   HS Equivalency Cert.** | X | X | X |
| **New Hampshire  HS Equiv. Cert.** | X | | |
| **New Jersey \*\*\*** | X | DIPLOMA X | X |
| **New Mexico  HS Equiv. Cred.** | X | X | |
| **New York     HS Equiv. Cred.** | | | X |
| **North Carolina   HS Equiv. Cred.** | X | X | X |
| **North Dakota** | | X | |
| **Ohio  HS Equivalency Cert.** | X | X | X |
| **Oklahoma HS Equiv. Cred.** | X | X | X |
| **Oregon** | | X | |
| **Pennsylvania  Commonwealth Secondary School Diploma** | X | X | |
| **Rhode Island** | | X | |
| **South Carolina** | | X | X |
| **South Dakota** | | X | |
| **Tennessee   HS Equivalency Dip.** | X | | |
| **Texas    HS Equivalency Cert.** | X | X | X |
| **Utah** | | X | |
| **Vermont** | | X | |
| **Virginia** | | X | |
| **Washington** | | X | |
| **West Virginia    HS Equivalency Dip.** | | | X |
| **Wisconsin** | | X | |
| **Wyoming  HS Equivalency Cert.** | X | X | X |
| **TOTAL** | **22** | **41** | **16** |

|  | **GED® TEST** | **HiSET® TEST** | **TASC TEST** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **PUBLISHER** | Pearson | Educational Testing Service (ETS) | Data Recognition Corporation / CTB |
| **TEST FORMAT** | Computer-based | Paper or computer-based | Paper or computer-based |
| **WHERE TO TEST** | Pearson VUE Testing Centers | State decisions | State decisions |
| **COST** | Varies by jurisdiction | Varies by jurisdiction | Varies by jurisdiction |
| **COST TO RETEST** | Discounted retests | Two retests of each subject free within 12 months with purchase of full test battery. $10 per retake if tests purchased individually. | Two retests free |
| **NUMBER OF TEST SUBJECTS** | Four | Five | Five |
| **TESTS** | • Reasoning Through Language Arts<br>• Mathematical Reasoning<br>• Science<br>• Social Studies | • Writing<br>• Reading<br>• Mathematics<br>• Science<br>• Social Studies | • Language Arts, Writing<br>• Language Arts, Reading<br>• Mathematics<br>• Science<br>• Social Studies |
| **RECEIPT OF SCORE REPORTS** | • Online scores within three hours of completion | • Immediate unofficial scores<br>• 3–5 business days for multiple choice scores<br>• 6–10 business days for essay score reports | • Immediate (within 3 hours) unofficial scores for computer-based tests<br>• 24 hours for complete scores for computer-based tests<br>• 10 days for official, paper-based, and writing test scores |
| **PASSING SCORE** | • Scores range from 100 to 200 for each content area<br>• Passing score 145 for each content area | • Combined scaled score of 45<br>• Passing score 8 for each of the five subtests | • Passing score 500 or above in each content area. The Writing test requires an additional two out of 8 possible points to pass. |

# Test-Specific Information

| | GED® TEST | HiSET® TEST | TASC TEST |
|---|---|---|---|
| **TEST SUBJECT** | Reasoning Through Language Arts (Reading) | Language Arts—Reading | Language Arts—Reading |
| **READING COMPETENCIES REQUIRED** | • Determine the details of what is explicitly stated and make logical inferences or valid claims that square with textual evidence<br>• Read and respond to questions from a range of texts that are from the upper levels of complexity, including texts at the career-and-college-ready level of text complexity | • Understand, interpret, and analyze a broad range of literary and informational texts | • Read informational text<br>• Identify key ideas<br>• Analyze claims<br>• Determine definition and context<br>• Infer conclusions |
| **READING CONTENT AND LENGTH** | • 75% Informational<br>• 25% Literary<br>• 450–900 words | • 60% Literary<br>• 40% Informational | • 70% Informational<br>• 30% Literary<br>• 10–15% Overall Vocabulary Acquisition and Use |
| **READING LENGTH OF TIME** | 60 minutes | 65 minutes | 75 minutes (English)<br>80 minutes (Spanish) |
| **READING NUMBER AND TYPES OF QUESTIONS** | • 51 questions<br>• Multiple choice (four options)<br>• Drag-and-drop<br>• Drop-down<br>• Fill in the blank | • 50 questions<br>• Multiple choice (four options) | • 48 (computer-based) or 49 (paper-based) Multiple choice<br>• 1 Constructed response<br>• 1 Technology-enhanced (computer-based) |

**New Readers Press®**
ProLiteracy's publishing division

www.newreaderspress.com

800.448.8878

# Test-Specific Information

| | **GED® TEST** | **HiSET® TEST** | **TASC TEST** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **TEST SUBJECT** | Reasoning Through Language Arts (Writing: Language) | Language Arts—Writing<br>• Part 1: Edit and revise text | Language Arts—Writing<br>• Part 1: Edit and revise text |
| **WRITING (LANGUAGE) COMPETENCIES REQUIRED** | • Edit text in context to eliminate errors and nonstandard usage | • Edit and revise written text<br>• Recognize correct written language<br>  - 22% Organization of Ideas<br>  - 43% Language Facility<br>  - 35% Writing Conventions | • Revise text structure<br>• Create divisions to achieve more effective text organization that provides a more unified and clear meaning |
| **WRITING (LANGUAGE) LENGTH OF TIME** | 35 minutes | 120 minutes split between Parts 1 and 2 | • 105 minutes, including 45 minutes for essay (English)<br>• 110 minutes, including 45 minutes for essay (Spanish) |
| **WRITING (LANGUAGE) NUMBER AND TYPES OF QUESTIONS** | • 51 questions<br>• Multiple choice (four options)<br>• Drag-and-drop<br>• Drop-down<br>• Fill in the blank | • 60 questions<br>• Multiple choice (four options) | • 50 (computer-based) or 51 (paper-based) Multiple choice<br>• 1 Constructed response<br>• 1 Technology-enhanced (computer-based) |

**NEXT: Language Arts-Writing (Part 2)**

# Test-Specific Information

| TEST SUBJECT | GED® TEST | HiSET® TEST | TASC TEST |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Reasoning Through Language Arts (Writing: Essay) | Language Arts—Writing<br>• Part 2: Essay | Language Arts—Writing<br>• Part 2: Essay |
| WRITING (ESSAY) COMPETENCIES REQUIRED | • Analysis of arguments and use of evidence<br>• Development of ideas and structure<br>• Clarity and command of standard English conventions<br>• Grammar<br>• Usage<br>• Capitalization<br>• Punctuation | • Generate and organize ideas by analyzing an issue, stating a position, and supporting the position with cited evidence | • Read and interpret complex text<br>• Anchor interpretations in text<br>• Contextual cues to interpret unfamiliar vocabulary<br>• Use information to support the ideas in writing<br>• Use skills and rules necessary for editing and revision |
| WRITING (ESSAY) CONTENT | • Draw relevant and sufficient evidence from a literary or information text to support analysis or reflection<br>• Use technology to produce writing, demonstrating sufficient command of keyboarding skills | • Persuasive essay with reasons to support the idea | • Evidenced based informative/explanatory or an argument/opinion essay that effectively uses source text to support claims<br>• 600–800-word source text |
| WRITING (ESSAY) LENGTH OF TIME | 45 minutes | 120 minutes split between Parts 1 and 2 | 45 minutes |
| WRITING (ESSAY) SCORING | • 3-point rubric<br>• 12-point scale<br>• Computer scorer | • Development of ideas<br>• Organization of ideas<br>• Language facility<br>• Writing conventions<br>• Human scorers | • Clarity of expression<br>• Clear and strategic organization<br>• Complete development of ideas<br>• Sentence structure, punctuation, grammar, word choice, and spelling<br>• Human scorers |

**NEXT: Mathematics**

# Test-Specific Information

| | GED® TEST | HiSET® TEST | TASC TEST |
|---|---|---|---|
| **TEST SUBJECT** | Mathematical Reasoning | Mathematics | Math |
| **COMPETENCIES REQUIRED** | • Know and apply procedure<br>• Math fluency<br>• Use math reasoning to solve problems | • Solve quantitative problems using fundamental concepts and reasoning skills<br>• Perform multi-step procedures | • Problem solving and mathematical modeling<br>• Justifying mathematical claims<br>• Analyzing mathematical reasoning<br>• Using technology item enhancements |
| **CONTENT** | Quantitative Problems<br>• 25% Rational numbers<br>• 20% Measurement Algebraic Problems<br>• 30% Expressions/equations<br>• 25% Graphs and functions | • 19% Numbers and Operations on Numbers<br>• 18% Measurement and Geometry<br>• 18% Data analysis, Probability and Statistics<br>• 45% Algebraic Concepts | • 26% Algebra<br>• 26% Functions<br>• 23% Geometry<br>• 13% Numbers and Quantity<br>• 12% Statistics and Probability |
| **LENGTH OF TIME** | 115 minutes | 90 minutes | • 105 minutes (English, two parts)<br>• 110 minutes (Spanish, two parts) |
| **NUMBER AND TYPES OF QUESTIONS** | • 46 questions<br>• Multiple choice (four options)<br>• Fill-in-the-blank<br>• Drop down<br>• Hot spot<br>• Drag-and-drop | • 55 questions<br>• Multiple choice (five options) | • 42 (computer-based) or 43 (paper-based) Multiple choice<br>• 11 Gridded response<br>• 1 Constructed response<br>• 1 Technology-enhanced (computer-based) |
| **CALCULATOR** | • TI-30XS online calculator<br>• Part 1: no calculator (5 questions)<br>• Part 2: calculator (41 questions) | • Simple calculator | • TI-30XS online calculator<br>• Part 1: no calculator (55 minutes English and Spanish)<br>• Part 2: calculator (50 minutes English; 60 minutes Spanish) |

**NEXT: Science**

# Test-Specific Information

| | GED® TEST | HiSET® TEST | TASC TEST |
|---|---|---|---|
| **TEST SUBJECT** | Science | Science | Science |
| **COMPETENCIES REQUIRED** | • Analyze, understand and extract information from a scientific text<br>• Make inferences based on scientific data<br>• Solve problems by applying scientific theory and processes | • Use science content knowledge<br>• Apply principles of scientific inquiry<br>• Interpret and evaluate scientific information<br>• Understand scientific concepts<br>• Distinguish among hypothesis, assumptions, and observations | • Assessment of conceptual knowledge of core ideas in the physical, life, and earth/space sciences<br>• Assessment of ideas such as cause and effect; scale, proportion, and quantity; systems and system models; energy and matter (flows, cycles, and conservation); structure and functions; stability and change<br>• Assessment of engineering practices such as defining and delimiting a problem, designing solutions to a problem, and evaluating and optimizing design solutions |
| **CONTENT** | • 40% Life Science<br>• 40% Physical Science<br>• 20% Earth and Space Science | • 49% Life Science<br>• 28% Physical Science<br>• 23% Earth and Space Science | • 36% Life Science<br>• 36% Physical Science<br>• 28% Earth and Space Science |
| **LENGTH OF TIME** | 90 minutes total | 80 minutes | • 75 minutes (English)<br>• 80 minutes (Spanish) |
| **NUMBER AND TYPES OF QUESTIONS** | • 34 questions<br>• Multiple choice (four options)<br>• Fill-in-the-blank<br>• Hot spot<br>• Drag-and-drop | • 60 questions<br>• Multiple choice (four options) | • 48 (computer-based) or 49 (paper-based) Multiple choice<br>• 1 Constructed response<br>• 1 Technology-enhanced (computer-based)<br>• 8 stimuli |
| **CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE** | None | None | 1 Constructed response item |

# Test-Specific Information

| | GED® TEST | HiSET® TEST | TASC TEST |
|---|---|---|---|
| **TEST SUBJECT** | Social Studies | Social Studies | Social Studies |
| **COMPETENCIES REQUIRED** | • Demonstrate a deep conceptual understanding of social studies themes<br>• Analyze evidence from source text | • Interpret social studies information, materials, and graphics<br>• Distinguish between fact and opinion<br>• Make simple inferences and predictions<br>• Identify cause and effect | Comprehension, application, analysis, and evaluation of social studies themes |
| **CONTENT** | • 50% Civics and Government<br>• 20% U.S. History<br>• 15% Economics<br>• 15% Geography and the World | • 35% U.S. History<br>• 35% Civics and Government<br>• 20% Economics<br>• 10% Geography | • 25% U.S. History<br>• 25% Civics and Government<br>• 20% Economics<br>• 15% Geography<br>• 15% World History |
| **LENGTH OF TIME** | 70 minutes | 70 minutes | • 75 minutes (English)<br>• 80 minutes (Spanish) |
| **NUMBER AND TYPES OF QUESTIONS** | • 35 questions<br>• Multiple choice (four options)<br>• Fill-in-the-blank<br>• Drop down<br>• Hot spot<br>• Drag-and-drop | • 60 questions<br>• Multiple choice (four options) | • 48 (computer-based) or 49 (paper-based) Multiple choice<br>• 1 Constructed response<br>• 1 Technology-enhanced (computer-based)<br>• 8 Stimuli |

STATE OF MARYLAND

**DLLR**

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, LICENSING AND REGULATION

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
500 North Calvert Street
4th Floor
Baltimore, MD 21202

October 2, 2018

Justin M. Hartings, Ph.D.
President
Maryland State Board of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Dear Dr. Hartings:

I am pleased to submit the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation's Annual Report on the oversight of the GED® testing program and the National External Diploma Program® for July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018.

The Department appreciates the partnership with both the Maryland State Board of Education and the Maryland State Department of Education. We look forward to the continuation of our collaboration for the betterment of Maryland's Adult Learners. I am pleased to report that both of the critical credentialing programs for adults maintain all state and national standards for issuing the Maryland High School Diploma, and we are prepared to accommodate the addition of the Adult High School Pilot Program.

Moreover, I am pleased to share that earlier this year, our Department improved the ease of access to reprints of transcripts and diplomas by engaging GED Credentialing™ Service. This change not only provides better constituent service to Marylanders, but improves the overall security of the transcript and diploma printing process. Additional details are in the accompanying report.

We look forward to our continued work with you to offer this valuable opportunity for adults and welcome the opportunity to respond to any questions or comments from the Board.

Best Regards,

Kelly M. Schulz
Secretary

**Annual Report to the Maryland State Board of Education**
**July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018**
**Maryland's High School Diploma by Examination for Adults**
**The GED® Testing Program and the National External Diploma Program**

The Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR) is pleased to submit the annual report that details key program activities of Maryland's implementation of the GED® Testing Program and the National External Diploma Program® (NEDP).

**Background**: On June 23, 2009, the Maryland State Board of Education, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), and DLLR executed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding the two Maryland High School Diploma programs for adults: The GED® testing program and the NEDP. The programs are administered by DLLR and the diplomas issued pursuant to these programs bear the signatures of the President of the Maryland State Board of Education and the Secretary of DLLR.

The MOU requires that DLLR submit an annual report to the Board on the status of the GED® testing program and the NEDP.

## THE GED® TESTING PROGRAM

### Assurances

General Assurances: The Maryland GED® testing program, administered by DLLR's Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning, Office of Adult Education and Literacy Service, upholds and maintains all policies and procedures prescribed by the GED® Testing Service and Maryland Regulation. The policies and procedures include: adhering to the minimum age to test; restricting the number of times a candidate may take the test; maintaining a secure database of candidate information; awarding credentials based on the minimum earned score requirement; testing candidates under the age of 19 who have officially withdrawn from school; verifying the identity of the candidate prior to testing; advertising the location of test centers and the test dates; and publicly acknowledging the role of the State Board of Education as a partner and signatory of the high school diploma programs for Maryland's adult learners.

Additional MOUs: The GED® Testing Jurisdictional Sole Source Contract is maintained annually between the GED® Testing Service (GEDTS), a joint venture of the American Council on Education and Pearson VUE, and the Office of the Secretary at DLLR. The contract requires that DLLR appoint a GED Administrator™ within the agency to ensure that the agencies, individuals, and vendors who administer the GED® test adhere to all policies and procedures for testing outlined by GED® Testing Service and Maryland jurisdictional requirements. The GED Administrator™ is responsible for the oversight of the GED® test within the jurisdiction.

All local test centers contract separately with Pearson VUE to conduct GED® Testing in compliance with GED® Testing Service and DLLR policies and procedures. Pearson VUE is a division of Pearson Education, Inc. that delivers many different tests through a comprehensive,

secure network of test centers. The centers are monitored by Pearson VUE and DLLR's GED®
Administrator on an ongoing basis. All GED® testing center administrators are required to
complete an online preparation program and exam prior to receiving certification to administer
the tests.

Separating Testing and Instruction: GED® testing centers are monitored for compliance with the
policies and procedures set forth by the GED® Testing Service regarding separation of
instruction and testing. Separation of instruction to prepare students to sit for the GED® tests
from the actual testing is ensured by the Director of Adult Education and Literacy Services at
DLLR. The GED® Administrator and the Chief of Adult Instructional Services oversee
monitoring that GED® Test Administrators are not engaged in instruction. The Office of Adult
Education and Literacy Services staff maintains integrity by not commingling testing with
instructional activity.

## Testing Methods

In January 2014, the GED® tests experienced a major change in content and format. The former
Series 2002 tests included 5 multiple choice sub-tests delivered in a paper and pencil format with
one essay question. In contrast, the four subject Series 2014 tests are administered only by
computer and include a variety of question types: multiple choice, fill in the blank and extended
response. The tests are aligned to the Maryland's College and Career-Ready State Standards, the
College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education, and standards used by individual
states such as Texas and Virginia. Passing standards for the tests were set by administering the
tests to a national sample of recent high school graduates in 2013.

After reviewing test data collected in the first 18 months of testing, GEDTS announced a
recalibration to the GED® test passing score in January of 2016 to be retroactive to testing from
January 1, 2014. The passing score on each test went from 150 to 145. This scoring adjustment
meant that many more students passed one or more modules and thereby many earned a high
school diploma. GEDTS also announced the addition of two new performance levels, College
Ready and College Ready plus Credit, replacing Passing and Honors. The three performance
levels allow the GED® program to measure the broad spectrum of a typical graduating high
school class. A graduating class represents a range of ability and performance from those
meeting the minimum requirements to those demonstrating college readiness, and those who
may even earn college credits during high school.

## Diplomas Issued Series 2014 GED® Test

From July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018, there were 6,569 test takers and 4,474 completers.
Completers are those individuals who completed all four modules of the new GED® tests. The
pass rate for this period was 68%, which remained the same as FY17.

The total number of diplomas issued via GED® testing in Maryland during FY18 was 3,056
compared with annual diploma numbers: 4,033 for FY14, 1,986 for FY15, 3,689 for FY16, and
3,294 for FY17.

## Waiver Requests

No fee waivers were offered.

## Disability Accommodations

Requests for accommodations are now processed directly by GEDTS. Persons with documented disabilities may apply for reasonable testing accommodations directly to GEDTS' Accommodation Division for formal review. During the time period July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018, 54 requests were submitted to GED Testing Service for review. 40 requests were approved, 14 were returned as incomplete, and zero were denied. The accommodations included extended time, private room testing, provision of scribe or computer modifications for those with vision and hearing impairments, uninterrupted testing with supervised breaks.

## Testing Center Irregularities

For computer-based testing, candidates must read and agree to Pearson VUE's *Test Candidate Rules Agreement* and they must leave the testing room immediately for any suspicion of misconduct such as cheating, disruptive behavior, accessing cell phones, or study guides. Incidents are reported directly to Pearson VUE by the Test Center Administrator before the close of the testing day.

## Testing Sites

The following public computer-based test centers offered the 2014 Series GED® tests in FY18:

1. Howard Community College, Columbia
2. College of Southern Maryland, LaPlata
3. College of Southern Maryland, Prince Frederick
4. College of Southern Maryland, Leonardtown
5. Anne Arundel Community College, Arnold
6. Anne Arundel Community College, Hanover
7. Digit All City, Baltimore
8. Digit All City, Catonsville
9. Western Maryland Consortium, Hagerstown
10. Hagerstown Community College, Hagerstown
11. Charles County Public Schools, Pomfret
12. Wor-Wic Community College, Salisbury
13. Chesapeake College, Wye Mills
14. Garrett College, McHenry
15. Allegany College, Cumberland
16. Community College of Baltimore County, Hunt Valley
17. Community College of Baltimore County, Randallstown
18. Cecil College, North East
19. Harford Community College, Bel Air

20. Frederick Community College, Frederick
21. Montgomery College, Germantown
22. Montgomery College, Rockville
23. Baltimore City Community College, Liberty Campus
24. Carroll Community College, Westminster
25. Prince George's Community College, Largo
26. Prince George's Community College, Hyattsville
27. Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation (Job Center), Linthicum

In addition, the following private sites offered the 2014 Series GED® tests in FY 2018:

- All State Corrections Facilities (13)
- Montgomery County Detention Center
- Anne Arundel County Correctional Center
- Baltimore County Detention Center
- Frederick County Detention Center
- Charles County Detention Center
- Wicomico County Detention Center
- Charles H. Hickey Juvenile Corrections Center
- Green Ridge Juvenile Corrections Center
- Freestate Challenge Academy, Aberdeen, MD

## Quality Control Processes and Procedures

- All public and private Test Center Administrators took and passed Pearson VUE's Test Center Administrator Exam prior to being granted approval to open as a test center. All Test Center Administrators must take and pass this test annually.
- All Testing Centers are monitored by the Office of Adult Education and Literacy Services for compliance with Maryland jurisdictional regulations.

## Legislation

During the 2018 Legislative Session of the Maryland General Assembly, House Bill 193 (Senate Bill 43) created an exemption for an individual from the requirement to not be subject to compulsory school attendance and to have withdrawn from school in order to be eligible to obtain a high school diploma by examination if the individual participates in a GED Option Program administered by the State Department of Education that creates a pathway to a high school diploma by examination for certain currently enrolled high school English language learner students under the age of 21 years.

Additionally, and subsequent to the passage of House Bill 1381 (Senate Bill 866) during the 2017 Legislative Session of the Maryland General Assembly, the Department continues to work collaboratively with the Maryland State Department of Education on the implementation of the Adult High School Pilot Program, which is a third alternative pathway to earning a Maryland High School Diploma. Goodwill of the Chesapeake has been jointly approved to open an adult

high school in Baltimore, which is slated to begin enrolling students in Spring 2019. A second solicitation began in August 2018 to secure additional participants.

## Maryland GED® Data Systems

Beginning January 2018, the Office of Adult Education and Literacy Services transitioned from onsite printing of transcripts and diplomas for GED® test passers. This service is now managed by GED Credentialing™ Service and offers students both printed and electronic options for diplomas and transcripts without having to travel to Baltimore for on-demand service. The diploma template remains identical to the template used when diplomas were printed internally.

As noted in prior reports, storage of student data files needed to be placed on a larger and more stable server. The Maryland GED Testing System (MGETS), which was the historical database of scores, transcripts, and credentials issued prior to the transition from paper-based to computer-based testing in 2014, remains securely stored by the Maryland Department of Information Technology (DoIT). However, with the transition of the on-demand service for transcripts and diplomas in January, the data files were transferred to GED Credentialing™ Service to support the issuance of transcripts and diploma reprints for students passing the exam prior to 2014. There is no change to data storage and retrieval for those students completing the GED® tests after the transition to computer-based testing, as that data was stored by GED Credentialing and retrieved by the state office, as needed. This transition not only provides better constituent service, but ensures both the reliability and security of the student databases.

GED Analytics™ is the GED Testing Service® online product, which provides various reporting metrics such as pass rates and volume of test takers by individual testing site or for the state totals.

## Professional Development

The GED® Administrator and additional staff from the Office of Adult Education and Literacy Services attended the annual GED® Testing Service Conference in July 2018. The State Administrator participates in regular conference calls and webinars sponsored by the GED® Testing Service and Pearson VUE. The State Administrator participates in the Maryland College Test Administrator (MCTA) meetings and annual conferences as well as the annual Maryland Association of Adult Community and Continuing Education (MAACCE) conference.

The Office of Adult Education and Literacy Services offers professional development training on navigating the obstacles to testing and the processes for registration and scheduling GED® testing to stakeholders such as American Job Center staff, local library system staff, Consolidated Adult Education and Family Literacy Services grantees, Department of Social Services staff, local school system student support staff, home instruction administrators, Youth Committees, local Literacy Councils, and other stakeholders.

# THE NATIONAL EXTERNAL DIPLOMA PROGRAM®

## Assurances

Maryland's administration of the National External Diploma Program® (NEDP) remains in compliance with all processes and procedures of the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) National External Diploma Program. All NEDP® implementation utilizes the standards and materials issued by CASAS in accordance with DLLR's annual payment of site fees. The Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning provides oversight to the 12 Maryland NEDP® sites and maintains a close working relationship with the CASAS/NEDP to ensure all policies and procedures of Maryland's program are in compliance with the NEDP®. CASAS remains the sole source of all student and practitioners' materials. Other assurances are as follows:

- In the awarding of FY18 local NEDP® grants, all grantees signed assurances to ensure the continued integrity of the diploma.
- Maryland NEDP® sites were required to undergo rigorous desk audits by local, regional and state monitors throughout the year.
- Policies to ensure program compliance remain in place regarding privacy and educational records for all NEDP® clients. No personal information is released to third parties without written authorization of the clients.
- Current and accurate NEDP® files are maintained in the Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning at DLLR and are available for inspection by the Maryland State Board of Education. NEDP® candidates may not be concurrently enrolled in classroom instruction.
- NEDP® sites are monitored to ensure no instruction occurred during the assessment phase of the program. NEDP® Advisors and Assessors may not be involved in the instruction of their NEDP® clients or the review of their portfolios.
- Candidates continue to be required to demonstrate 100% mastery of the NEDP® competencies. Multi-level reviews of a candidate's mastery continue to be conducted prior to the awarding of a diploma.

## NEDP Results

During FY18, 145 Maryland High School Diplomas were awarded to adults who successfully completed the requirements of the NEDP®. This is a decrease from FY17, when 235 Maryland High School Diplomas were issued to successful NEDP® students.

## National Leadership

Maryland continues to have representation at the national level and participates in the CASAS Summer Institute, which reviews CASAS assessment policies to ensure compliance with the National Reporting System (NRS) of the U.S. Department of Education Office of Career Technology and Adult Education (OCTAE). Maryland continues to work closely with CASAS/NEDP regarding policy changes and new program initiatives.

## Legislation

No changes to the Maryland NEDP® program were suggested or implemented during the 2018 legislative session.

## Professional Development

Professional development activities are conducted at the national, state, and local levels to maintain certification of all Maryland NEDP® Advisors and Assessors, and to promote consistency and reliability in program implementation. Professional development highlights for FY18 are as follows:

- Two new NEDP® staff trainees participated in the national NEDP® new staff training in Fall 2017; and four new staff trainees participated in the Spring. The training was provided by CASAS NEDP® national training specialist. One state trainer trainee served as a co-trainer during the Spring training

- Two Maryland NEDP® Advisors/Assessors participated in the national NEDP® implementation training as part of the state trainer certification process. The training is in progress through program year 2019

- Maryland NEDP® staff participated in the annual, state facilitated statewide professional development event for NEDP® Advisors/Assessors in April 2018. CASAS NEDP® national training specialist was the keynote speaker

- The Upper Shore region held a regional professional development meeting for NEDP® Advisors/Assessors in May 2018

- Maryland NEDP® Advisors/Assessors and state level staff participated in web-based NEDP® professional development activities listed below:

  - Tips for NEDP® Assessors, January 2018

  - Personal and Management Skills: A College & Career Readiness (CCC) Option, January 2018

  - How to Grow Your NEDP®, March 2018

  - The CCCI: Making Recommendations that Focus on the Future, May 2018

- The NEDP® state coordinator collaborated with NEDP® practitioners at the local and national level through web meetings and conference calls to promote best practices, consistency and reliability in program implementation

- Local NEDP® practitioner and state coordinator presented on NEDP topics at professional conferences, including Raising the Bar (April 2018) and Maryland Association for Adult Community and Continuing Education (MAACCE, May 2018)

- The NEDP® state coordinator attended CASAS NEDP® Summer Institute in June 2018.