



**For Immediate Release**

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**Maine replaces GED with new high school equivalency exam**

*The State Education Department's action came in response to concerns from the adult education community about readiness to move to a fully computer-based test by 2014 as would be required with the current exam provider*

AUGUSTA – In an effort to better support the college and career readiness of all Mainers, the State has chosen a new high school equivalency assessment provider.

Beginning in 2014, Maine will offer the [ETS](#) high school equivalency test program, known as HiSET, which covers the same content areas as the current GED and allows test-takers to demonstrate proficiency of the academic skills expected by employers and post-secondary institutions.

“For adults without a high school diploma, earning a high school credential can open doors to more job opportunities, the potential for better earnings and the option to seek a college education,” said Governor Paul R. LePage. “Employers are looking to hire skilled workers, and the high school equivalency provides yet another option for Mainers to be competitive when pursuing these opportunities.”

Maine opted to move away from the GED in response to that provider’s projected three-fold cost increase and decision to deliver the new version of their test by computer only starting in 2014. Leaders in the adult education community expressed concerns that the 76 testing sites across the state were not prepared for that transition.

In addition to the new test delivery format and more rigorous questions had Maine stuck with GED, any scores from GED subject area tests taken before January of 2014 would not count toward completion, meaning students would have to start all over again.

Instead, ETS was chosen by the State through a competitive RFP process because they offered both a paper-based and computerized test. As soon as testing sites are

technologically prepared to transition over to solely computerized-testing, they hope to do so, said Maine Department of Education Adult Education Director Gail Senese.

The new assessment offered by ETS will cost the State \$50, but have no cost to the test-taker. Up to two retests are included within 12 months at no additional cost.

Those who are already underway with the current GED battery will be able to integrate their sub-test scores into the new assessment, but Senese said the State is encouraging Mainers to move forward on completion so they can move on with their employment and post-secondary goals.

“Maine DOE and local adult education program staff throughout Maine share a deep commitment to serving adult learners and providing, at no cost to test-takers, extensive test preparation and college and career advisement,” said Senese. “The move to ETS’ HiSET will allow all of us to continue our learner-focused approach and ultimately strengthen Maine’s families, communities and economy.”

While “GED” and “high school equivalency assessment” are used interchangeably, more and more states are moving away from that provider as others have entered the market. In recent months, New Hampshire, Iowa, Louisiana, Montana and Tennessee have joined Maine in choosing HiSET.

Adult educators lauded Maine DOE’s leadership in seeking a new provider and their eventual selection.

“The decision to use the ETS HiSET put a lot of local programs’ minds at ease and our students’ learning first,” said Maine Adult Education Association President and Auburn Adult Education Director Bill Grant. “To go out to RFP and select ETS is a great example of the State being fiscally responsible with taxpayer funds, while ensuring education standards remained high. The State selected a rigorous and respected test that is reasonably priced, and was mindful of the spending required by local school departments for new testing materials and technology for testing.”

For more information about earning a high school equivalency credential, visit [www.maine.gov/doe/adult](http://www.maine.gov/doe/adult).

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