

# Virginia Board of Education Agenda Item



**Agenda Item:** T

**Date:** May 24, 2012

<b>Title</b>	Report of the Adult Education and Literacy Advisory Committee to the Virginia Board of Education on Upcoming Changes on the Content, Access, and Costs of the Tests of General Educational Development (GED)		
<b>Presenter</b>	Dr. Thomas M. Brewster, Chair, Adult Education and Literacy Advisory Committee to Board of Education Randall Stamper, Director, Office of Adult Education and Literacy (OAEL)		
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**Purpose of Presentation:**

For information only. No action required.

**Previous Review or Action:**

No previous review or action.

**Action Requested:**

No action requested.

**Alignment with Board of Education Goals: Please indicate (X) all that apply:**

x	Goal 1: Expanded Opportunities to Learn
	Goal 2: Accountability of Student Learning
	Goal 3: Nurturing Young Learners
x	Goal 4: Strong Literacy and Mathematics Skills
	Goal 5: Highly Qualified and Effective Teachers and Administrators
	Goal 6: Sound Policies for Student Success
	Goal 7: Safe and Secure Schools
	Other Priority or Initiative. Specify:

**Background Information and Statutory Authority:**

This report addresses two of the Board of Education’s goals. OAEL’s response to the upcoming changes in the content of and access to the Tests of General Educational Development (GED) will ensure expanded opportunities for adult students to learn the content and skills necessary for success in the workplace and postsecondary education, including the strong literacy and mathematics skills necessary for success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy.

The GED tests will be revised to reflect the Common Core State Standards and will begin to be delivered in a computer-based format only beginning in 2014. At that time, the cost to take the test will increase significantly. Also of importance is the issue of access to GED testing sites. GED testing will be available at Pearson VUE/ GED testing centers only. Consequently, the number of testing sites in the Commonwealth will decrease significantly in the short term. The implications of these changes on

Virginia's adult education and literacy system are being addressed by OAEL through priorities identified in state and federal funding streams, additional funding recently approved by the General Assembly to offset the increase in testing fees, extensive professional development plans, and pilot sites that will initiate computer-based testing this summer.

**Summary of Important Issues:**

Changes to GED testing and the testing program and the programmatic, organizational, and funding implications of those changes.

**Impact on Fiscal and Human Resources:**

The Governor requested and the General Assembly approved \$385,000 to help offset the increase in costs to test takers. Funds will be provided to testing centers to pay for testing for those who are test ready.

**Timetable for Further Review/Action:**

N/A

**Superintendent's Recommendation:**

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board receive this report.

# Virginia's Response to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century GED Initiative

Dr. Thomas Brewster

Chair, Adult Education and Literacy Advisory Committee

Randall Stamper

Director, Office of Adult Education and Literacy



# The 21<sup>st</sup> Century GED® Initiative

- Last year, GED Testing Service merged with Pearson VUE, forming an LLC.
- Significant changes are being made to both the content and delivery of the GED tests.
- The cost of taking the tests will double in Virginia.
- VDOE will no longer set the cost of the tests.

# Computer-Based Testing

- Conversion to computer-based only must be complete in all states before January 1, 2014.
- Test delivery will only be available at approved Pearson VUE testing centers.
- There are currently 29 Pearson VUE centers in Virginia.
- There are currently 80 official GED testing sites and over 200 satellite sites in Virginia.

# Computer-Based Testing

- The cost of computer-based testing will rise.
  - Current paper-based cost = \$58.00 in Virginia
  - Computer-based cost = \$24.00/section (\$120.00 total)
- GED/Pearson VUE will set the cost of the tests beginning January 2014.

# Computer-Based Testing – VDOE Response

## ● Begin conversion in June 2012

- *Two existing Pearson VUE centers will pilot computerized GED testing over the summer.*
- *Costs and logistics will be summarized and provided to all testing centers. Funds for conversion will be provided through Race to GED grants.*
- *High volume testing centers are being prioritized for a phased conversion after the pilot.*
- *Existing GED testing centers and Pearson VUE centers will have first opportunity to become computer-based GED testing centers.*
- *We are working on a plan to increase computer-based testing access beyond the 29 existing Pearson VUE centers by focusing on existing paper-based testing centers, One Stop Centers, and community colleges.*
- *The Governor requested and the General Assembly approved \$385,000 to help offset the increase in costs to test takers. Funds will be provided to testing centers to pay for testing for those who are test ready.*

# The 2014 GED® Test – Content

- Scheduled for release January 1, 2014
- Based on common core state standards ([corestandards.org](http://corestandards.org))
- More rigorous than the current 2002 series of the tests
- Those who have incomplete and non-passing results on the current test version will lose those scores when the 2014 test is released.

# Content – VDOE Response

- Implement comprehensive training program in 2012-2013
  - *Professional development packages for teachers, examiners, and administrative staff*
  - *Focus on new content, testing procedures, and computer literacy skills*
- Continue training and preparation through 2013-2014
- Blanket outreach campaign to alert those who have taken part or all of the tests but who have not passed – finish now or lose scores

# Implications of Changes

- Computer training for students and teachers
- New materials and teacher training for 2014 test
- Cost to testers – Practice and Official Tests
- Costs to convert to Pearson VUE
- Availability of Pearson VUE centers/access to testing
- ISAEP program
- Alternative test options being investigated

# Questions?

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State GED Administrator

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Director

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