

# Committing to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belongingness in the Classroom and Beyond

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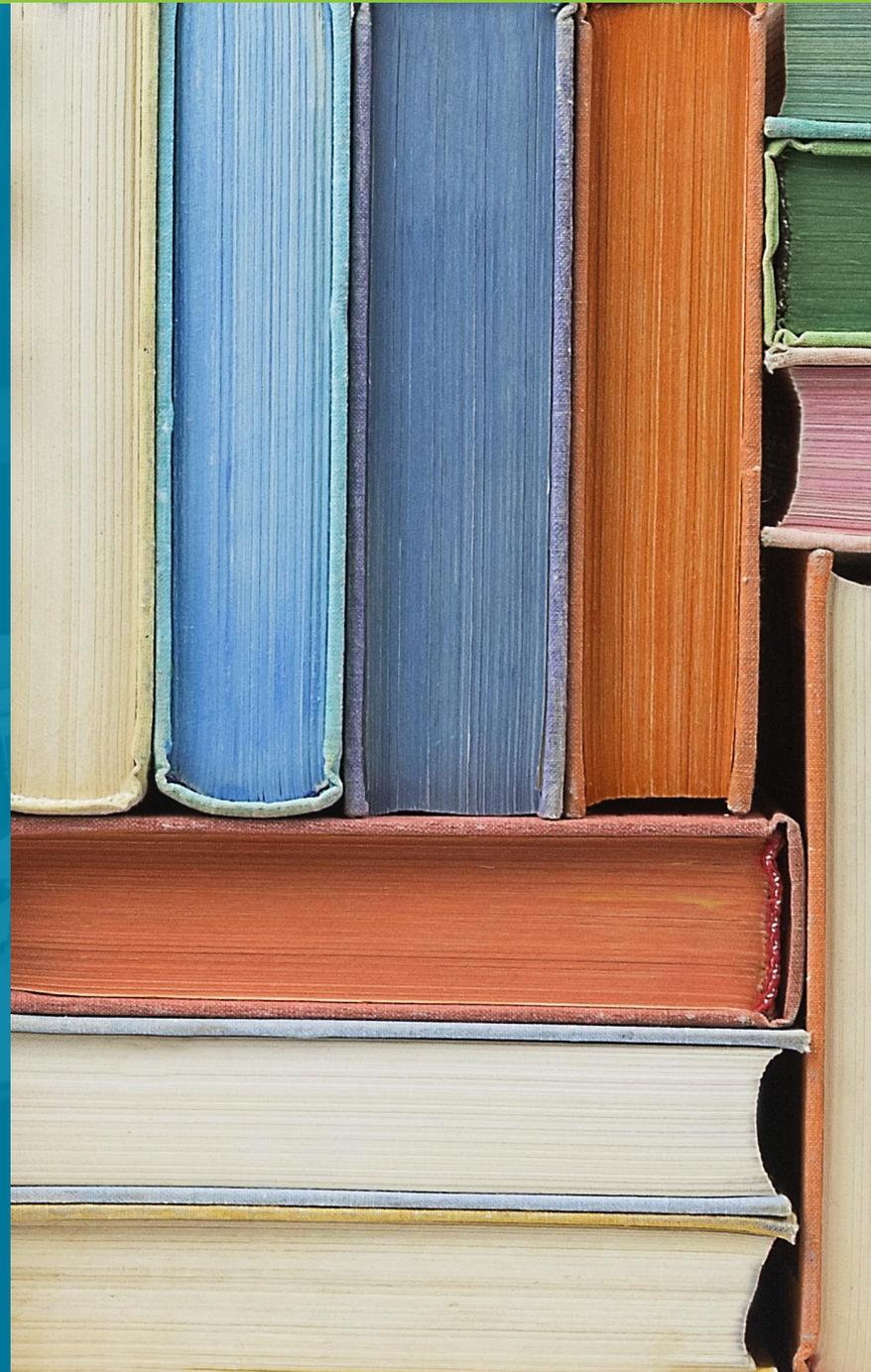
“

*We should all know that diversity makes for a rich tapestry, and we must understand that all the threads of the tapestry are equal in value no matter what their color.*

”

— *Maya Angelou*

# Education, Advocacy, and Engagement





“

“If we want people to fully show up, to bring their whole selves including their unarmored, whole hearts—so that we can innovate, solve problems, and serve people—we have to be vigilant about creating a culture in which people feel safe, seen, heard, and respected.”

”

— *Brene Brown, Dare to Lead: Brave Work. Tough Conversations. Whole Hearts.*

# Internal Discussion Groups, Workshops, and Committees

## Discussion Groups/Committees:

- Formation of the GEDTS DE&I Team
- Monthly roundtable meetings for all staff
- Bi-weekly meetings for GEDTS affinity groups

## Workshops:

- History of Racism in America
- History of Racism in Education
- Microaggressions
- LGBTQIA+ Awareness & Allyship

# **GEDTS Engagement with Pearson Global DE&I Initiatives**

## **Pearson Bold**

- Pearson's Global Black employee resource group
- Mission to advocate for the advancement of Black employees within Pearson and support education efforts
- More than 200 members that include allies, advocates, and executive sponsors representing a global reach and optimization of DE&I initiatives and efforts

## **Global Content and Editorial Policy Committee (GCEP)**

- Launched in 2021 with a focus on empowering employees to create diverse, equitable, and inclusive content

# GEDTS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Framework

- **Internal discussions, focus groups, and committees**
  - Ongoing series of educational workshops, Black and Latino Alliance (BALA), New Employee Meet & Greet, participation on Pearson's GCEP (Global Content and Editorial Policy) committee, leadership within Pearson's Global Black Employee Resource Group, Bold (Adora Beard, Co-Chair)
- **Diverse leadership and representation through recruitment, hiring, and employee development**
  - Participation in recruitment fairs sponsored by employee resource groups, working with HR to develop more inclusive hiring practices, GED Transformation Team, the addition of GED Board Members
- **External partnerships and alliances**
  - Official partnership with Aztec Software to support community GED program in Kansas City, Kansas, the launch of the GED Mentoring Program with a local adult education program (GED employees mentoring local GED students)
- **Culturally-competent marketing, communications, and social impact**
  - Highlighting student and educator stories that reflect the diversity of the GED community, acknowledging cultural heritage months, implementing editorial and content guidelines to eliminate racial bias

# Diverse Representation/ Recruitment & Retention



# Representation, Recruitment, and Retention

## Developing inclusive recruitment and hiring practices

- Job posting sites
- Examining "culture fit" and other common hiring considerations that could be culturally biased

## Improving retention

- Creating work environments that are accepting and encourage individuality
- Support professional development
- Strengthen processes to encourage diverse advancement

## **GED Board of Directors and Transformation Team**

### **GED Board of Directors**

Added members to create a board that is more reflective of our employees, educators, and students.



### **GED Transformation Team**

Created in 2021 as a group of experts from diverse backgrounds who advise the organization on how to enhance the GED test program through the lens of equity and inclusion.

# External Partnerships and Alliances



# GED Community Partnership Program



**The GED Community Partnership Program was created to connect more learners from historically marginalized populations to preparation and support for the GED credential. This program aims to increase access to a high school equivalency diploma, while investing in community organizations that provide education, training, and other support services.**

- In partnership with Aztec Software, the program launched in late 2021
- The program provides GEDTS & Aztec Software study tools, technology, and test vouchers to support community organizations offering GED preparation.
- Participating organizations go through a vetting process that includes identifying the organization's needs, learners served, current outcomes, and other factors.

# Made Men

**Made Men Incorporated, a not-for-profit organization based in Kansas City, Kansas is our first official partner.**



- Made Men was founded in 2012 by Nelson Gabriel to "empower individuals and communities to succeed through education, training, and connections to sustainable resources."
- The organization offers GED preparation, life skills courses, connections to workforce skills training, parenting classes, and is an authorized Pearson VUE test center.
- Made Men is located in downtown Kansas City, Kansas, in a zip code with nearly 40% (39.4%) of individuals living below the poverty level.
- The organization has an 88% GED pass rate among GED program participants.

# First Graduates of the GED Community Partnership Program



John C.



Asia W.



Clayson W.

# Made Men 2022 GED Commencement Ceremony



# Mentorship Program

## GED DE&I Mission Statement

The GED credential was created as a second chance opportunity for many adults who have been marginalized or needed an alternative to the traditional K-12 system. We will continue to raise the voices of historically marginalized and underserved learners, including those from Black, Latino and Indigenous communities. We will advocate for our learners, who teach each of us valuable lessons on what we stand to gain by investing in their future.

## Mentorship Mission Statement

The GED Mentorship program is designed to give students an opportunity to be mentored by GED employees and stakeholders to develop career and life skills to achieve success in the world. In support of GED Testing Service's learner centric initiatives, the mentorship program will build a supportive community and provide learning opportunities that enable meaningful stakeholder and student connections.

## Mentorship Vision Statement

Our vision is to help guide learners to develop healthy, strong relationships that allow them to reach their full potential. We believe that Mentorship is a valuable way to develop leadership and communication skills, expand networks, gain confidence, and develop pathways that lead to success. This program compliments our organizational Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion efforts to create student alliances that foster insight and feedback from the perspective of the learner and lends itself to outcomes relevant to the production of GED products and services.

# Inclusion and Belongingness



**Belongingness**



**Worthiness**



**Competence**

## **Mindset, Life Skills, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

Developing an inclusive environment and climate for students is critical. Co-creating administrative structures and practices fosters success for all learners.

# Mentorship Program

Mentorship will foster an inclusive climate and a sense of belonging. We can **learn and grow together**, share experiences and knowledge, and elevate the adult education community

We want to enable mentees to become aware of their assets, developmental areas, and to value their strengths.

## Metrics:

- Engagement
- Progress
- Cultural impact
- Impact to GED products and services

# GED® Playbook

## GED Transformation Team Consensus

- **The GED learner must feel valued and appreciated in order to motivate them through their journey.**
- **Do we UNDERSTAND the VALUE of the relationship between the educator and the student? It's critical! Is it cohesive?**
- **Cohesive standards may vary, but is there a way to offer generalized guidelines...enough to fit every single locality?**

## Who should use the *GED® Playbook*?

- Adult Education Program Directors and Managers**
  - ✓ **Those who oversee and manage the GED adult education programs**
- Teachers**
  - ✓ **Those who provide, prepare and plan lessons and are employed by GED education programs or community-based organizations**
- Tutors**
  - ✓ **Those who work independently and provide one-on-one instruction to GED students**

# **GED® Playbook**

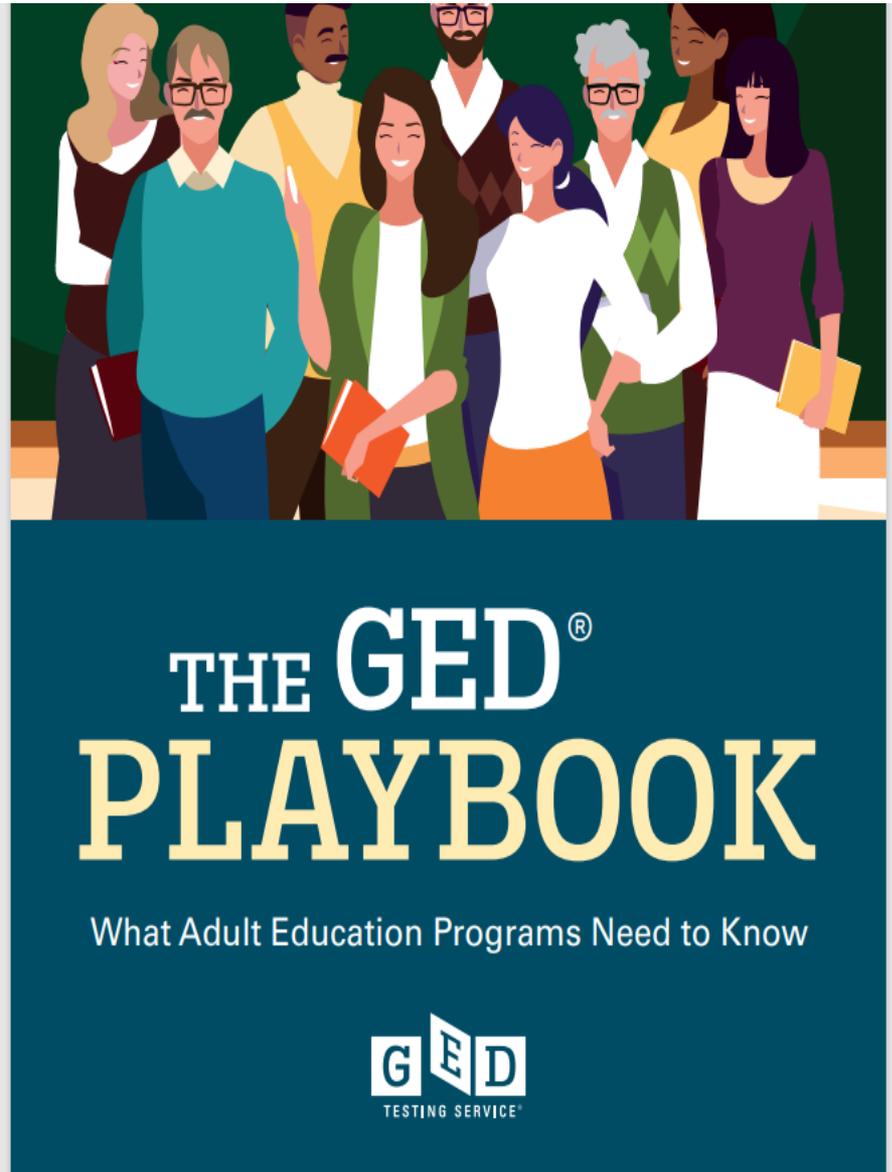
**Conference Launch!**

The *GED® Playbook* is for the Adult Education Program Directors, Managers, and Instructors

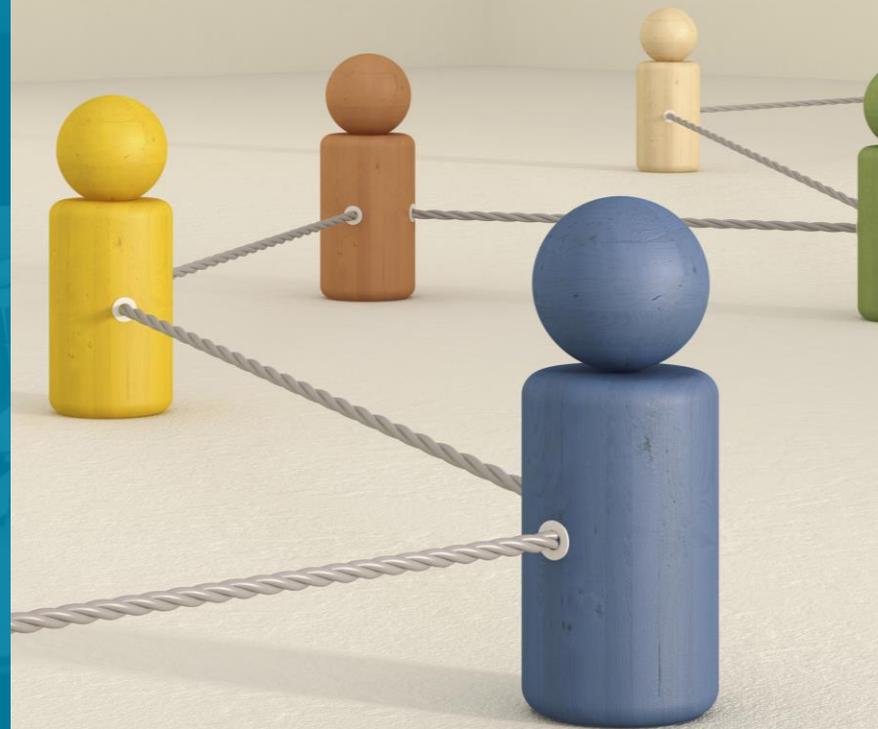
It is intended to be a starting point to assist in navigating and understanding the GED program and to help better serve the adult learner.

The playbook refers people to the GED.com website as much as possible.

A roadmap for establishing a learner-centric model of standards and guidelines of what programs and educators (especially new managers/instructors) can do to align with GEDTS' learner centered focus.



# Culturally Competent Communications



# Marketing, PR, and External Communications



Updated our company "About Us" page with a new mission statement



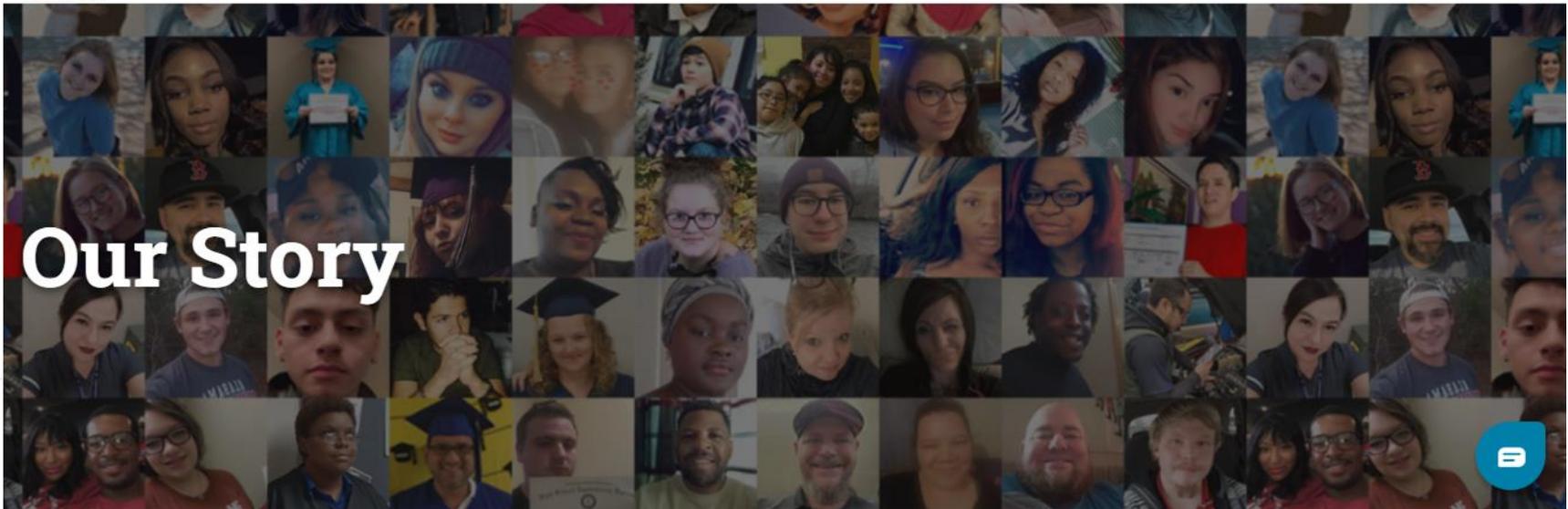
Created a DE&I mission statement



Created social media campaigns to celebrate our learners and highlight culturally significant events



Updated our internal review process for external communications, including PR and Marketing



### Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

The GED credential was created as a second chance opportunity for many adults who have been marginalized or needed an alternative to the traditional K-12 system. We will continue to raise the voices of historically marginalized and underserved learners, including those from Black, Latino and Indigenous communities. We will advocate for our learners, who teach each of us valuable lessons on what we stand to gain by investing in their future.



## Changing Lives

From lawyers to astronauts, actors to nurses, the GED alumni network spans over 90 countries with graduates from all backgrounds and age groups. For more than 75 years, GED grads have opened the door to life-changing opportunities and are proud to be role models to their families, friends and the next generation of students. We are committed to helping all students change their lives for the better.



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*"We believe that everyone, no matter their creed, challenge, or circumstance, should have the opportunity to pursue the college and career of their dreams."*



# Takeaways & Recommendations



## What We Learned:

- Creating safe spaces is essential to "doing the work" and having the difficult conversations
- You need the buy-in and support of your leadership
- Diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging must be the job of everyone, not just a few (everyone has a role)
- Your stakeholders must also be committed to this work
- Be open about your journey
- The learning process is ongoing

# Q&A

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