



GED Testing Service® Statement in Response to the Center for Public Policy Priorities Report *The Texas GED Problem Is Getting Worse*

January 10, 2018

GED Testing in Texas: Outcomes and Opportunities Also Matter

CPPP's recent [report](#) about GED® testing in Texas gives the impression that the only valid metric worth monitoring is the number of GED graduates. However, outcomes and what GED graduates do with their credential must be part of how we measure the success of the program. The report rightly points out that in today's economy adults need to be able to gain skills and training beyond just a high school equivalency degree in order to support TX's current and future economy. Our focus on outcomes and stronger bridges to higher education is why we made changes to the GED test in 2014.

Since 2014 GED grads are significantly more likely to be prepared for, enroll in, and persist in college and career training programs. Within just two years of launching the new program more than 41% of grads have enrolled in local college programs, and more than 90% remain enrolled from semester to semester. Surely this is a trend line that is heading in the right direction to help fill the jobs being created in Texas that require more than a GED or high school diploma. Put simply, outcomes data show that GED grads are succeeding like never before. Before 2014, 35% of grads enrolled in college programs but a shockingly low 29% remained enrolled from one semester to the next.

While some of the reasons for the current volume trend line were not mentioned in the report (historically low unemployment rates, historically high H.S. graduation rates, and a previous version of the GED test that was failing to properly prepare adults for the rigors of further education and 21st century jobs), we applaud and enthusiastically agree with most all of the recommendations from the report. In fact, we've been working diligently on several of these fronts over the past three years.

Last spring we partnered with the San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and Palo Alto College to launch an [outreach campaign](#) to increase the number of GED testers and further grow the number of GED grads enrolling in local college programs. Local business, higher education and community leaders in San Antonio recognized the need for a strong workforce. This is one example of our commitment and work with local TX communities to tackle this issue.

We are also engaging with Texas employers. Hundreds of thousands of adult learners have access to completely free GED preparation and testing if they work for employers like [Walmart](#), Taco Bell, KFC, Amazon, the TX Department of Transportation, and several others through the innovative [GEDWorks](#) program. Immediate family members of Walmart employees are also eligible for the free program. This program is engaging employers, enhances their recruitment and retention work, but most importantly it provides incentives and support for adults to pursue their GED credential.

We are also working to help GED grads bridge the historically large gap between GED and college certificate/degree programs. Several state community college systems across the U.S, including Colorado, Georgia, Virginia, and others allow GED grads to use their scores to bypass placement exams, bypass development courses, and in some cases even award college credit. These score levels, GED College Ready and College Ready +Credit, are an incentive and mechanism to move students more quickly into and through college programs. We have presented this opportunity to Texas higher education policymakers and are hopeful Texans will also be able to take advantage of these additional achievement levels to encourage more GED graduates to enroll in Texas colleges.

We at GED Testing Service will continue to work as active partners to assist the state in strengthening its workforce and enhancing the economic opportunities of those without a high school diploma. We also encourage policymakers, elected officials, the business community and higher education leadership to review the recommendations from the CPPP report and consider what they can do to help more adults have a brighter future.

*Randy Trask
President, GED Testing Service*

GED Outcomes and Score Levels Infographic:

