



GED Testing Service Statement in Response to the Nebraska Appleseed Report: *Low GED® Participation Adds to Nebraska's Workforce Challenge*

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GED Testing in Nebraska: Preparing Adult Learners for the Workforce and Beyond

The recent [Nebraska Appleseed report](#) about GED testing gives the impression that the only valid metric worth monitoring is the number of GED participants and completers. However, outcomes and what GED graduates do with their credential is essential to how we measure success. Nebraska GED graduates have recently had outstanding outcomes, and are better prepared than ever to compete for today's jobs and for college and career training programs.

Since 2014, GED grads have demonstrated the value of their hard work in earning a GED credential by enrolling and persisting in college and career training programs at much higher rates. Within just three years, more than 45 percent of grads have enrolled in local college programs. Even more impressively, they are remaining enrolled from semester to semester at a rate of more than 90 percent. This is in stark contrast to the shockingly low 29 percent persistence rate prior to 2014.

The report also mentions the move to a computer-delivered test, away from paper. The switch to a computer based test mimics that of our changing society where basic computer skills are a necessity and technology is integrated in almost every aspect of our personal and professional lives. Adult learners need to have basic computer literacy in order to succeed in today's jobs, and they likely will need to start their journey by filling out a job or college application on computer.

The change to computer-delivered testing has also helped streamline the registration process. People may now schedule a test whenever they choose, take test subjects at their own pace, look at only one test question at a time, and receive unofficial results in hours.

The Appleseed report mentions that Nebraska's GED participation and completion rates fell between 2013 and 2015. Similar trends have been seen across the country, even in states that continue to rely heavily on paper testing and offer multiple high school equivalency tests. These trends have been heavily influenced by macroeconomic factors, such as historically high graduation rates and historically low unemployment that we continue to see.

In this economic environment more students are likely to be working while studying, and are more prone to stopping and starting their studies to pursue jobs. Contrary to popular belief, there are many

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low-skill jobs that don't require a worker to have a GED or high school diploma. This means that adult education programs now have to work harder to keep students enrolled, preparing to pass the GED test, and continue to have the same number of GED graduates. These students struggle, not with the content on the GED test, but more frequently with basic support needs like reliable and safe transportation, or affordable child care during class or study times.

At GED Testing Service we regularly conduct research and engage with adult learners to discover what barriers they face when pursuing a high school equivalency credential. We use this information to continue to enhance the program to help learners succeed. We have developed free study tools, resources and motivational messaging that encourages test takers to start and finish their testing despite these internal and external factors.

We do agree with some of the report's recommendations to improve the high school equivalency landscape in Nebraska. Adult education is a huge component to the success of adult learners and any increase in investment on the state level would further support the mission to improve their lives in and out of the classroom.

Our work at GED Testing Service has been and will continue to focus on providing a valuable credential that is a gateway to better jobs and better long-term economic opportunities for Nebraska adult learners and their families. We 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.

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