

**STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES  
High School Equivalency Assessment**

**Request**

The State Board is asked to approve the High School Equivalency RFP Committee recommendations for High School Equivalency Assessments for the first year of a three-year contract (year one with up to two annual renewals). This will allow the awarding of the North Carolina State Board of Community Colleges High School Equivalency Diploma as sanctioned by the State Board of Community Colleges.

**Background**

Since the inception of the high school equivalency program, North Carolina has used an assessment from the same sole source vendor, American Council on Education, (ACE), for awarding the high school equivalency diploma. ACE developed the General Educational Development (GED<sup>®</sup>) test in 1942 to measure high school-level academic skills and to provide credentials for military personnel and veterans who had not completed high school.

In 2011, ACE partnered with Pearson VUE publishing to develop a new computer-based assessment with a substantial increase in cost. College presidents were greatly concerned that both the cost of the new assessment as well as its lack of a paper-based version would result in additional access barriers to North Carolina students. In 2013, two other vendors developed a high school equivalency assessment. With the additional possibilities, the presidents requested the System Office pursue additional options that would allow students more flexibility for educational attainment and awarding of earned credit.

Therefore, the North Carolina Community College System released a Request for Proposals for high school equivalency assessments. Requests for proposals were issued July 11, 2014. The deadline date for vendors to submit proposals was August 20, 2014. An evaluation committee composed of three System Office staff and three local community college representatives met on September 3, 2014, to begin the evaluation process. The evaluation process was completed on October 1, 2014, and Recommendation to Award to all three vendors was sent to State Purchasing and Contracts for final approval. NCCCS received the Certification to Award to all three vendors, CTB/McGraw-Hill, Educational Testing Services, and GED Testing Services LLC, from State Purchasing and Contracts on Monday, November 17, 2014.

**Rationale**

Each community college chooses the high school equivalency assessment(s) that best suits the needs of that college and the learning community it serves. The System Office provides the contracts for the assessments and support services for the colleges. Colleges will be able to select one or multiple assessments.

Fees charged for the Assessments are paid by the examinees directly to the Vendor. Vendor fees can be found in Exhibit A.

**Method of Procurement**

In accordance with the procurement practice of the State of North Carolina, approval is being sought by outside purchasing authorities. Approval of the contract by the State Board is contingent upon approval by State Purchasing and Contracts. Vendors were selected through a competitive bid process, RFP Number 50-NCCCSO71114.

**Contact Person**

Randy Whitfield  
Associate Vice President  
College and Career Readiness

**Exhibit A  
Examinee Costs**

**CTB McGraw-Hill**

DESCRIPTION	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
Practice HSEA	\$10/battery	\$11/battery	\$12/battery
Actual HSEA	\$52/battery	\$52/battery	\$52/battery
HSEA Retest	2 free per subject	2 free per subject	2 free per subject
Duplicate Diplomas	\$15 per duplicate	\$15 per duplicate	\$15 per duplicate
Additional Transcripts	\$15 per additional	\$15 per additional	\$15 per additional
Other Costs	N/A	N/A	N/A

**Educational Testing Services**

DESCRIPTION	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
Practice HSEA	\$0	\$0	\$0
Actual HSEA	\$50 (\$15 per subtest)	\$50 (\$15 per subtest)	\$50 (\$15 per subtest)
HSEA Retest	\$0 with conditions	\$0 with conditions	\$0 with conditions
Duplicate Diplomas	\$15 per duplicate	\$15 per duplicate	\$15 per duplicate
Additional Transcripts	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Costs	\$10 reschedule fee	\$10 reschedule fee	\$10 reschedule fee

**GED Testing Service LLC**

DESCRIPTION	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
Practice HSEA	\$4 or \$6	\$4 or \$6	\$4 or \$6
Actual HSEA	\$80 (\$20 per subtest)	\$80 (\$20 per subtest)	\$80 (\$20 per subtest)
HSEA Retest	2 free	2 free	2 free
Duplicate Diplomas	\$15	\$15	\$15
Additional Transcripts	\$15	\$15	\$15
Other Costs	N/A	N/A	N/A