



New York State Board of Regents  
Dr. John B. King, Jr.  
Commissioner of Education  
The State Education Department  
The University of the State of New York / Albany, NY 12234  
Office of Communications



## NEWS

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### **SED: CTB/MCGRAW-HILL AWARDED HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY DIPLOMA RFP**

New York State Education Department (SED) Commissioner John B. King, Jr. announced today that SED intends to execute a contract with CTB/McGraw-Hill to develop a new New York State High School Equivalency Diploma assessment to replace the General Educational Development (GED) test. GEDTS, a new for-profit entity created by the American Council on Education and Pearson Incorporated, has announced plans that will double the cost of the exam in 2014. The Governor and Legislature must include an appropriation for the development of the new assessment in the State Budget. King said that, in the long run, CTB/McGraw-Hill's new assessment will save the State money compared to the new pricing structure announced by Pearson.

"The members of the Board of Regents are concerned with two things: accessibility and rigor," New York State Board of Regents Chancellor Merryl H. Tisch said. "While the GED was run by a not-for-profit, the system worked fairly well. But a Pearson GED monopoly would put our students at the mercy of Pearson's pricing. We can't let price deny anyone the opportunity for success. That's why, rather than pay Pearson twice the current cost or limit the number of students who can take the exam, the Regents approved a competitive process to develop a new assessment."

King noted that New York's shift to the Common Core Standards (adopted by New York State along with 44 other states) requires a change in the pathway to a New York State High School Equivalency (HSE) Diploma.

"We need a more rigorous exam that reflects the change in the standards," King said. "A New York State equivalency test will help ensure access and rigor. And we're going to look at other pathways to high school equivalency. The Regents' goal is to ensure everyone has the opportunity to earn a high school diploma that reflects the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in college and a career."

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New York State law prohibits charging individuals to take HSE exams. The State budget traditionally includes an appropriation to cover the cost of administering the tests. The announcement by GEDTS that the new GED test, beginning in January 2014, will cost each candidate \$120 effectively doubles the cost that New York State currently pays to administer the GED test. In response to the increased cost and changes in the administration and content of the GED test beginning in January 2014, the Board of Regents approved a competitive RFP to identify an appropriately rigorous assessment for a HSE Diploma at the most reasonable price.

CTB/McGraw-Hill's new HSE assessment, Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC), will be a secure, reliable and valid assessment that meets the directions and specifications in the RFP and will be operational by January 2, 2014. The TASC will be aligned to New York's P-12 Common Core Standards as quickly as possible.

The TASC will be administered on CTB/McGraw-Hill's Online Assessment System (OAS). CBT/McGraw-Hill will use a phased-in approach for TASC computer-based testing over three years. The cost per test over the three-year contract, including phased-in computer based testing, is \$54 (not including reimbursement for test centers).

Final approval of the contract is subject to approval by the Office of the State Comptroller.