

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION – ADMINISTRATIVE RULE SUMMARY

Title/OAR #: 589-007-0500

Date: May 17, 2013

Staff/Office: Shalee Hodgson, Education Division Director and Marque Haeg, State GED Administrator

New Rule Amend Existing Rule Repeal Rule
Hearing Date: _____ Hearings Officer Report Attached
Prompted by: State law changes Federal law changes Other

Action Requested:

First Reading/Second Reading Adoption Adoption/Consent Agenda

PROPOSED/AMENDED RULE SUMMARY As the General Educational Development (GED) test transitions from a paper-based test (PBT) to a computer-based test (CBT) during 2012 and 2013, the method in which state fees are collected will change to coincide with the revised process that test-takers must use to pay for the GED tests.

With PBT, the state fee of \$35 is collected by local testing centers prior to commencing testing and covers the cost of the five subtests that comprise the GED test battery. With CBT, the test-taker registers, schedules the subtest(s), and pays for subtest(s) online. The cost of the subtest(s), along with state GED administration fee, is collected from the test-taker by the GED Testing Service (GEDTS) on a per subtest basis, and the state administration fee is then distributed to CCWD by GEDTS on a monthly basis. During 2012 and 2013, the state fee is \$7 per subtest for the five subtests for a total test-battery fee of \$35.

An initial GED certificate and transcript will be issued to the GED test-taker at time of completion. Duplicate certificates and/or transcripts may be secured upon payment of \$5.00 each until September of 2013.

BACKGROUND: Approximately 8,000 Oregonians completed a GED credential in 2012. The GED credential – whether called a diploma, a certificate or degree – is the most widely accepted and respected high school equivalency credential in the U.S., enabling individuals to secure and maintain employment, to enter post-secondary educational institutions, and to apply for federal financial aid.

A new GED series test will be introduced in 2014 that will be aligned with the Common Core State Standards and will have two levels of performance: 1) a high school equivalency certificate, and 2) College and Career Readiness (CCR) endorsements for those who score at the higher levels required for the CCR endorsements.

OAR 589-007-0500, GED Fees, establishes that individuals taking PBT GED tests shall be required to pay a \$35 state fee at the time they begin testing. GED test-takers then have three years to complete the five tests that comprise the GED test series, or upon implementation of a new test battery before the fee is reassessed. This \$35 fee supports the state administration of the GED program and includes the lease of secure GED materials used in administering the GED tests, the staff that support the program, and indirect costs.

Oregon GED testing centers must convert from PBT GED tests to CBT GED tests by December 31, 2013 as paper-based GED tests will no longer be supported after that date. As GED testing centers transition to a CBT delivery format, the process for collecting fees charged by GEDTS and support for state administration will change. GED test-takers will register for testing online and pay for testing using credit, debit and pre-loaded debit cards and vouchers. During 2013, the GEDTS will charge \$24 per subtest for the five subtests that comprise the GED test series (Language Arts: Reading, Language Arts: Writing, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies) and for tests that are retaken because they were failed or higher scores were required by post-secondary institutions, the armed services or for employment. State administration will add \$7 to each subtest and retaken test.

The current OAR addressing the GED fees charged test-takers speaks only to PBT. Since PBT GED testing will no longer be available beginning in January of 2014, and several GED testing centers have recently made the conversion to computer-based GED testing, the GED Fees OAR requires revision.

The upcoming changes are as follows:

2012 and 2013 GED testing centers may offer both PBT and CBT. For PBT, the state administrative fee to test-takers remains \$35 for the five subtests that comprise the GED tests. For CBT, test-takers are charged \$7 for each of five subtests and retaken tests.

2014 and 2015 All GED testing centers will provide only CBT GED tests. The GEDTS combines the Language Arts: Writing and Language Arts Reading subtest reducing the total number of GED subtests from five to four. Although the state administration fee increases from \$7 to \$8, the overall cost is reduced since there are fewer subtests.

Total GED costs, including state administrative fee, for CBT delivery are as follows:

Year	GEDTS Costs	State Admin Costs	Number of Subtests	Total Costs
2012-2013	\$24 per subtests	\$7 per subtests (\$35)	5	\$155
2014-2015	\$30 per subtests	\$8 per subtests (\$32)	4	\$152

ISSUES/CONCERNS THAT SURFACED DURING RULE WORK:

None

CHANGED SINCE LAST BOARD MEETING? (so members can focus on what's different)

- N/A; first read—hasn't been before board
- No; same as last month
- Yes – As follows:

FISCAL IMPACT:

National fees collected by GEDTS will rise at many test centers, however, the state fee will remain virtually the same through 2013. In 2014, the state fee will decrease. The state fee can be reduced because of decreased administrative burden to operate the state GED Administration Office.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

- Adopt administrative rule as prepared this month
- Adopt administrative rule next month
- No recommendation at this time

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State GED Fees

The State Board of Education authorizes the Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development (CCWD) to charge the following fees for the General Educational Development tests:

- (1) For paper-based GED tests through December 31, 2013:
 - (a) All persons taking the GED tests shall be required to pay a \$35 state administration fee at the time they begin testing;
 - (b) Persons seeking a GED equivalency certificate shall be issued that certification upon verification that the state fee has been paid and the requirements of OAR 589-007-0400 have been met;
 - (c) The \$35 state fee shall cover the cost of state administration for each test-taker until the transition to a new GED test which will occur on January 1, 2014.
 - (d) Upon GED completion requirements, an initial GED certificate and transcript will be issued at no costs. Duplicate certificates may be secured for \$5.00 until September of 2013.

- (2) For computer-based GED tests through December 31, 2013:
 - (a) All persons taking the GED tests shall be required to pay a \$7 state administration fee for each of five subtests that comprise the GED test and any retaken tests;
 - (b) State fees will be collected by GEDTS at the time a GED candidate registers online for the GED tests and will be distributed to CCWD on a monthly basis;
 - (c) A GED high school equivalency certificate will be issued upon successful completion of the five subtests.

- (3) For computer-based GED tests beginning on January 1, 2014 through December 31, 2015:
 - (a) All persons taking the GED tests shall be required to pay a \$8 state administration fee for each of four subtests that comprise the GED tests and any retaken tests;
 - (b) State fees will be collected by GED Testing Service at the time a GED candidate registers online for GED tests and will be distributed to CCWD on a monthly basis;
 - (c) A GED high school equivalency certificate will be issued upon successful completion of the four subtests.

Stat. Auth.: ORS 326.051 & 326.550

Stats. Implemented: ORS 192.440 & 326.550

Hist.: 1EB 130, f. 5-5-72, ef. 10-15-72; 1EB 258, f. 1-31-77, ef. 2-1-77; 1EB 6-1984(Temp), f. & ef. 3-7-84; 1EB 10-1984, f. & ef. 4-13-84; EB 12-1991, f. & cert. ef. 7-19-91; Renumbered from 581-046-0005; ODE 1-2001, f. 1-25-01, cert. ef. 1-26-01; DCCWD 1-2001, f. & cert. ef. 3-21-01, Renumbered from 581-041-0011; DCCWD 1-2009, f. & cert. ef. 7-6-09

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GED Fees

The State Board of Education authorizes the Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development to charge the following fees for the General Education Development (GED) Equivalency Certificate:

- (1) All persons taking the General Education Development (GED) tests shall be required to pay a \$35 state fee at the time they begin testing;
- (2) Persons seeking a GED Equivalency Certificate shall be issued that certificate upon verification that the state fee has been paid and that the requirements of OAR 589-007-0400 have been met;
- (3) Duplicate certificates and/or transcripts can be secured upon payment of \$5 each;
- (4) The State Board authorizes the Commissioner to waive the \$35 fee upon the recommendation of the Chief Examiner of a testing center after a finding that a person is indigent and unable to pay;
- (5) The \$35 state fee shall cover the cost of state administration for each test taker during a three-year period or until the transition to a new test battery in which prior tests taken are not included as part of the new battery; any person not completing the test battery within the three-year period or upon implementation of a new test battery shall be required to pay an additional \$35 state fee.

Stat. Auth.: ORS 326.051 & 326.550

Stats. Implemented: ORS 192.440 & 326.550

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