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State Superintendent of Schools

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TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Nancy S. Grasmick *Nancy*

DATE: September 21, 2010

SUBJECT: High School Diplomas by Examination – Annual Report

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**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this action is to receive the Department of Labor Licensing and Regulation's (DLLR) first annual report on the National External Diploma (EDP) and the GED Testing Programs (Attachment 1).

**BACKGROUND:**

In its 2008 session, the Maryland General Assembly passed Senate Bill 203 to transfer the Correctional and Adult Education programs from the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to DLLR on July 1, 2009. In accordance with this statute, Section 11-807 of the Labor and Employment Article, Annotated Code of Maryland, requires that the Secretary of DLLR consult with the State Board of Education in drafting regulations that govern EDP and requires the Board to award diplomas to individuals meeting the requirements of Subtitle 8 of Title 11. Section 11-808 of the Labor and Employment Article further requires that the regulations governing the award of high school diplomas through examination (GED Tests) be adopted jointly by the Secretary of DLLR and the Board.

At the June 23, 2009 meeting of the State Board of Education, Tom Perez, Secretary of the Department of Labor Licensing and Regulation (DLLR), President James DeGraffenreidt, and State Superintendent of Schools, Nancy S. Grasmick entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (Attachment 2) that established the roles and responsibilities of DLLR and the State Board relative to the joint awarding of high school diplomas by examination through either the EDP or the GED Testing Program.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

One of the responsibilities of DLLR is to provide an annual report that includes the results of the EDP and GED Testing programs, as well as any changes to the quality control processes and procedures. The report shall include the number of diplomas awarded; GED waiver requests granted; the result of any monitoring visits to GED testing or EDP sites; and, professional development provided to state and local EDP staff, GED Chief Examiners, or state GED staff. The report shall also disclose any GED Test Center irregularities, GED test compromises, or the closing of a GED Testing Center when a violation of test security procedures occurs.

**ACTION**

The Board is requested to receive the report.

NSG/kmo  
Attachments

Annual Report to the Maryland State Board of Education

**Maryland's High School Diploma by Examination for Adults**

**The General Educational Development Testing Program and the National External Diploma Program**

**September 2010**

On June 23, 2009, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR) executed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding the two Maryland high school diploma programs for adults: the Maryland GED Testing Program and the National External Diploma Program. These programs transferred from MSDE to DLLR on July 1, 2009, as a result of the passage of Senate Bill 203 by the 2008 General Assembly. Although the programs are now administered by DLLR, the diplomas issued pursuant to these programs bear the signatures of the President of the Maryland State Board of Education (Board) and the Secretary of DLLR.

The MOU requires, among other things, that DLLR submit an annual report to the Board on the status of the GED Testing Program and the National External Diploma Program. In accordance with this requirement, DLLR is pleased to submit the first annual report that details key program activities undertaken since the programs transferred to DLLR.

**THE GED TESTING PROGRAM**

**Assurances**

**General Assurances:** The Maryland GED Testing program, administered by DLLR's Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning, Office of Adult Education and Literacy Services since July 1, 2009, upholds and maintains all policies and procedures prescribed by the GED Testing Service at the American Council on Education (ACE). These policies and procedures include: adhering to the minimum age to test; the number of times a candidate can take the GED

Tests within a calendar year; maintaining a secure database of candidate information; awarding credentials based on the minimum earned score requirement; testing candidates between the ages of 16-18 who have officially withdrawn from school; verifying the identity of the candidate prior to testing; advertising the location of test centers and the test dates; and publicly acknowledging the role of the State Board of Education as a partner and signatory of the high school diploma programs for Maryland's adult learners.

Additional MOUs: The GED Testing Program Jurisdictional Memorandum of Understanding is maintained annually between the GED Testing Service at ACE and the Office of the Secretary at DLLR. Additionally, agreements are established and maintained with all local test centers to conduct GED Testing on a pre-scheduled basis in compliance with all ACE and DLLR policies and procedures, and the centers are monitored on an on-going basis. GED Examiners are required to execute these agreements.

Separating Testing and Instruction: GED testing centers are monitored annually for compliance with the policies and procedures set forth by the GED Testing Service regarding separation of instruction and testing. Separation of GED instruction and GED testing is ensured by monitoring that examiners are not engaged in instruction. The GED Testing Office staff maintains integrity by not engaging in adult education activities.

### **Diplomas Issued**

During the 2010 fiscal year, July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010, DLLR issued 5,021 diplomas to adults who passed the Tests of General Educational Development (GED).

The number of diplomas issued in Fiscal Year 2010 is lower than the previous fiscal year (5,474). The principal cause of this decrease is due to the closing of two testing centers during the year. First, the Baltimore City Community College (Harbor Campus) permanently closed the building that was used to administer GED examinations on December 31, 2009, and did not identify alternative space for the GED testing function. This center had accommodated as many as 80 candidates in a month. The result was a decrease of approximately 500 testers during the year. The second closure was at the Workforce Technology Center in Baltimore. This test

center was closed in February and March 2010 due to testing administration irregularities (discussed in further detail below). The test center reopened in April 2010.

Although there was a decrease in the number of diplomas issued, the overall state pass rate increased from 58 percent to 60 percent in Fiscal Year 2010.

### **GED Waiver Requests Granted**

The following waivers were requested and granted: two fee waivers and one waiver of the 3-month waiting period. No other requests were received.

### **Disability Accommodations**

Persons with documented disabilities may apply for reasonable testing accommodations. The requests are reviewed internally by a Specialist trained to make a disposition according to GED Testing Service guidelines. During the year, 100 of these requests were received, and 94 were granted. The accommodations allowed included extended time, private testing rooms, audio-cassette instructions, a sign language interpreter, and use of a calculator for the entire test.

### **Testing Center Irregularities**

During the year, there were 15 cell phone violations in GED testing centers. General directions read each day before the start of testing inform candidates of the policy and consequence of using electronic devices, including cell phones, during the testing. Candidates in violation of the policy have their test materials collected immediately and are dismissed from the test center.

### **GED Test Compromises**

As described above, the Workforce Technology Center in Baltimore was closed in February and March of 2010 due to testing administration irregularities. Specifically, DLLR's GED Administrator learned that the Center's Chief Examiner made grammatical corrections to the essay component of the exam for one candidate. The matter was reported to the GED Testing Service, which directed that the Center be closed until assurances could be provided that the problem was corrected.

The GED Testing Service accepted DLLR's explanation that this was an isolated incident, and that reminders of the importance of exam security were sent to all examiners. The Chief

Examiner in question tendered her resignation, and the test center reopened with a new Chief Examiner in April 2010.

### **Closing of GED Testing Centers due to Security Violations**

The Workforce Technology Center in Baltimore was closed in February and March of 2010 due to the testing administration irregularities described above.

### **Monitoring Visits to GED Testing Sites**

There were 18 testing centers in Fiscal Year 2010. GED Testing Office staff visited 11 of the centers as part of routine compliance visits. During these visits, staff examined test security procedures and observed the administration of several tests.

### **Changes to Quality Control Processes and Procedures**

The GED Testing Office transitioned to DLLR with five full-time permanent employees, two full time vacancies, and two part-time clerical vacancies. The most critical vacancy was the GED Administrator position. The person who ultimately filled the position was the unit's Senior GED Specialist. It should also be noted that the head of the Adult Literacy branch at MSDE, who was the direct supervisor of the GED Administrator, did not transition with the unit to DLLR. The person who assumed leadership of the unit – although a long-time MSDE employee – had no previous experience with GED Testing Office operations. The lack of continuity in leadership led to initial challenges in providing oversight of the test centers and the testing operations. Similarly, the absence of two GED specialists and two key clerical positions led to delays in test scheduling, scoring, and in the printing and distribution of diplomas. There were simply not enough staff to keep pace with the workload as then defined.

**Immediate Changes:** In order to address these core deficits, DLLR took the following actions to immediately improve the Office's existing operations:

- Within weeks of the transition to DLLR, GED exams had to be rescheduled at three test centers because those centers received incorrect rosters from the GED Testing Office. In this case, the GED Testing Office failed to verify that the correct rosters were sent to the test centers, and the chief examiners failed to verify that the roster of

candidates scheduled to take the exams were paired with the correct version of the tests. Since there was no “formal” practice within the GED Testing Office to prevent such an occurrence, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Adult Learning issued a directive requiring the GED Administrator to verify rosters and exam versions prior to the scheduled test date. The incident was not repeated.

- DLLR contacted the GED scoring contractor (Oklahoma Scoring – an official scoring service approved by the ACE GED Testing Service) and requested that they increase their level of support. Specifically, although Oklahoma Scoring had previously taken on the function of scanning all of the GED answer sheets a few years earlier, the GED Office staff retained responsibility for scanning certain sections of the test sheets (the demographic sections). By allowing the contractor to perform virtually all of the scanning, a significant percentage of the staffs’ time could be devoted to other functions.
- The process of mailing the completed examinations from the Test Center to Oklahoma Scoring has been streamlined. At first, all exams were mailed (via FedEx) to DLLR upon completion. DLLR then forwarded the exams (again via FedEx) to Oklahoma Scoring at the end of each month. DLLR reformed this process and cut as many as two weeks off of the processing time by sending completed exams to Oklahoma Scoring in several batches throughout the month.
- Two part-time Field Examiners (employed on a contractual basis) were hired to provide administrative assistance in the GED Testing Office.
- DLLR’s Office of the Secretary has assigned an executive assistant to the GED Testing office for approximately 14 hours per week.
- The number of examiners also decreased in Fiscal Year 2010. Fewer examiners translated into fewer people available to administer exams. This has produced smaller class sizes and decreased flexibility in offering exam dates. Currently, 60 Examiners are employed to administer the GED Tests at the public test centers, Job Corps and correctional facilities. Recruitment of an additional 25 Examiners is underway.

With these immediate changes in place, the GED staff members were able to reduce the time associated with processing test results from 65 days to 19 days. Addressing these operational challenges was a major focus of the Governor's StateStat process. The ability to timely execute this critical function was discussed during DLLR's monthly StateStat meeting. It was also discussed as part of the services provided to inmates during bi-weekly StateStat meetings of the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services.

Projected Changes: DLLR conducted a comprehensive business process analysis of the GED Testing Office during FY 2010. The following are highlights of the recommendations that the agency will pursue within the coming months:

- Hire a full-time clerk (temporary or contract employee) whose job will include answering the phone, filing, and covering the customer service window from 10am – 1pm.
- Redefine the duties of the office secretary to include higher level program assistant functions.
- Hire a second full-time staff specialist and redefine their duties, especially as related to special testing populations/centers, to have a more client-centered approach. These duties would be similar to the account representatives in Workforce Development.
- Revisit the testing review processes for the Chief Examiner and Examiners (remaining consistent with ACE standards) so that they can play a greater role in validating testing forms prior to shipment to Oklahoma Scoring.
- Find training opportunities for the unit supervisor(s) to attend leadership development programs/classes.

### Legislation

During the 2010 Maryland General Assembly, Senate Bill 966 was passed. This Bill, effective October 1, 2010, repeals the three month waiting period following withdrawal from high school to take the GED Tests. In December 2009, COMAR 13A.03.03 was repealed and COMAR 09.37.01 was enacted to transfer the regulations pertaining to "Alternate Ways to Earn a High School Diploma" from MSDE to DLLR. No other legislative or regulatory changes have been made to the GED Testing process.



## **MGETS**

The GED Testing Office maintains an accurate, secure historical file of scores, transcripts and credentials within its primary database – MGETS (the Maryland GED Testing System). The GED Office maintains MGETS within all state and federal laws regarding privacy. No information is released without the written authorization of the testers.

MGETS was initially procured by MSDE as a replacement for its outdated record keeping system and diploma printing hardware. The core database functionality of MGETS was developed in what the MGETS vendor labeled Release 1.5. DLLR set aside funds to support the completion of Release 1.5 (approximately \$128,000) and worked with the vendor to bring MGETS to a testing/validation phase.

In September 2009, MGETS Release 1.5 went live. The initial implementation of Release 1.5 resulted in delays to scheduling of tests and reporting of results. The delays are because DLLR is reliant on the vendor to make any necessary changes to the program when there is a problem. The reporting of test results, which was occurring in excess of 50 days from the time of testing during the fall of 2009, has been reduced to 19 and 22 days respectively for the months of May and June 2010. Also with the changes to MGETS, diplomas are printed and mailed separately following the mailing of test results. MGETS possesses the ability to capture candidate demographic information, as well as detailed information about the candidate's performance on the GED. The additional information will allow analysis of the GED candidate pool and will provide data for longitudinal education studies.

DLLR's Office of Information Technology (OIT) continues to work with the vendor to identify and debug critical aspects of the program. Some of these bugs have resulted in the MGETS system shutting down for days at a time. While DLLR continues to search for a funding stream to ensure the vendor's availability to troubleshoot the system, the agency is also looking for alternatives to MGETS should there continue to be problems.

## **Professional Development**

The State GED Administrator attended the annual GED Administrator Conference to ensure that Maryland's GED Testing program is currently implementing all policies and procedures set forth

by the ACE GED Testing Service, and to obtain information regarding future GED initiatives (computer-based testing and new test series).

## **THE NATIONAL EXTERNAL DIPLOMA PROGRAM**

### **Assurances**

Maryland's administration of the National External Diploma Program remains in compliance with all processes and procedures of the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) National External Diploma Program (NEDP). All NEDP implementation utilizes the standards and materials issued by CASAS, in accordance with DLLR's annual payment of site fees. The Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning provides oversight of the 15 Maryland EDP sites and maintains a close working relationship with the CASAS NEDP to ensure all policies and procedures of Maryland's program are in compliance with the NEDP. CASAS remains the sole source of all student and practitioners' materials. Other assurances are as follows:

- In the awarding of FY 2011 local EDP grants, all grantees signed assurances to ensure the continued integrity of the diploma.
- All Maryland NEDP sites were required to undergo rigorous desk audits by local, regional and state monitors throughout the year.
- Policies to ensure program compliance remain in place regarding privacy and educational records for all NEDP clients. No personal information is released to third parties without written authorization of the clients.
- Current and accurate EDP files are maintained in the Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning at DLLR and are available for inspection by the Maryland State Board of Education.
- EDP candidates may not be concurrently enrolled in classroom instruction. EDP sites are monitored to ensure no instruction occurred during the assessment phase of the program. EDP Advisors and Assessors may not be involved in the instruction of their EDP clients.
- Candidates continue to be required to demonstrate 100% mastery of the NEDP competencies. Multi-levels reviews of a candidate's mastery continue to be conducted prior to the awarding of a diploma.

### **NEDP Results**

Six hundred (600) diplomas were awarded to adults who successfully completed the requirements of the National External Diploma Program (NEDP). Data presented at the 2010 national NEDP conference showed that Maryland's 2009 NEDP graduates numbered 584. This represented 34 percent of all the NEDP graduates – making Maryland a leading producer of EDP graduates in the nation.

### **National Leadership**

Maryland is represented on the NEDP Transcript Revision Committee established by CASAS to make appropriate upgrades to the NEDP transcript. Maryland is also represented on the CASAS National Policy Council that reviews CASAS assessment policy to ensure compliance with the National Reporting Service (NRS) of the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE). Maryland continues to partner with CASAS/NEDP to revise the National EDP to ensure the rigor of the program reflects the higher standards of high school graduates nationally and in Maryland. Finally, Maryland is currently participating in a pilot project of the NEDP to revise the writing assessment component of the NEDP.

### **Legislation**

No changes in the NEDP program were suggested or implemented during the 2010 legislative session.

### **Professional Development**

Trainings are conducted by nationally certified staff each year and reported to the National EDP to maintain national certification of all Maryland NEDP Advisors and Assessors. Professional development highlights for Fiscal Year 2010 are as follows:

- Nineteen (19) EDP staff representing all of Maryland's 15 NEDP sites attended the Statewide Consensus/Directors meeting on November 2, 2009.
- A training of newly hired local NEDP staff is conducted by certified NEDP trainers annually. At the end of the three day training, newly hired staff members are evaluated to ensure they meet or exceed NEDP standards. Six EDP staff members were trained by

Maryland's NEDP certified trainers April 20 – 22. Also, six newly-hired staff received certification as advisor/assessors.

- Maryland NEDP staff attended the two day annual MAACCE conference in May and participated in a variety of workshops related to adult education and NEDP.
- Maryland's Deputy Assistant Secretary for Adult Learning and the state coordinator of the Maryland NEDP attended the CASAS Summer Institute June 16 – 19 and participated in meetings of the CASAS National Policy Council, the NEDP Transcript Committee, and various workgroups related to the NEDP and other CASAS assessments.

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
BETWEEN  
MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, LICENSING, AND REGULATION  
AND  
MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING** is made this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of June, 2009, between the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation (“DLLR”) and the Maryland State Board of Education (“Board”).

**RECITALS**

Whereas, the Maryland General Assembly has transferred certain responsibilities for administering the Adult Education and Literacy programs from the Board and the Maryland State Department of Education to the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation effective July 1, 2009;

Whereas, the Maryland General Assembly has by statute directed DLLR and the Board to work together on certain aspects of these programs;

Whereas, Section 11-807 of the Labor and Employment Article, Annotated Code of Maryland, requires that the Secretary of DLLR consult with the Board in drafting regulations that govern the National Adult External High School Program (EDP), and requires the Board to award diplomas to the individuals meeting the requirements of Subtitle 8 of Title 11;

Whereas, Section 11-808 of the Labor and Employment Article, Annotated Code of Maryland, requires that the regulations governing the award of high school diplomas through examination (GED) be adopted jointly by the Secretary of DLLR and the Board;

Whereas, the National External Diploma Program (NEDP) is an international proprietary assessment of the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) and is administered in Maryland under a state license;

Whereas, the General Education Development (GED) Tests are an international proprietary assessment of the GED Testing Service (GEDTS) of the American Council on Education (ACE) and administered in Maryland under a state license;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, in consideration of the mutual promises and covenants herein, the parties agree as follows:

1. The Maryland High School Diploma by assessment, awarded through the GED Tests and the National EDP program will bear the signatures of the State Board President and the Secretary of DLLR.

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
BETWEEN  
MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, LICENSING, AND REGULATION  
AND  
MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

2. DLLR shall ensure that the Board has the opportunity to participate in the development of any proposed changes to legislation or regulation concerning the GED or EDP programs by providing the Board with draft language for the change at least two months in advance of its submission in order to ensure adequate time for joint consultation and consideration.
3. The Board will consider and vote on matters relating to the programs in a manner and time sequence that will not unduly delay their efficient operations.
4. DLLR and the State Board shall jointly determine minimum test scores and any other necessary qualifications for earning the high school diploma by assessment.
5. DLLR will work with the State Board and its designee at the Maryland State Department of Education to outline procedures for the joint awarding and signing of diplomas.
6. DLLR agrees to ensure the integrity of the Maryland High School Diploma by complying with the attached Assurances for Quality Control.
7. DLLR shall present a report on the oversight and implementation of the EDP and GED programs at a State Board meeting, at least once yearly.
8. The DLLR shall submit a written annual report to the Maryland State Board of Education including the results of the NEDP and GED testing program, as well as any changes to the quality control processes and procedures. The report shall include diplomas awarded, GED waiver requests granted, the results of any monitoring visits to GED testing or to EDP sites, professional development provided to state and local EDP staff, GED Chief Examiners, or state GED staff. The report shall also disclose any GED Test center irregularities, GED test compromises or the closing a GED Testing Center when a violation of test security procedures occurs. The first report shall be submitted on or before September 30, 2010.

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
BETWEEN  
MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, LICENSING, AND REGULATION  
AND  
MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

IN WITNESS HERETO, the parties have executed this Memorandum by their duly authorized officials

**For Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation**

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Name: Ch. E. Py  
Title: Secretary, Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation  
Date: 6/23/09

**For Maryland State Board of Education**

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Name: J. D. G. [Signature]  
Title: President, Maryland State Board of Education  
Date: 6/23/2009

**For Maryland State Department of Education**

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Name: Nancy S. [Signature]  
Title: State Superintendent of Schools  
Date: 6/23/09



**Assurances for Quality Control of  
Maryland's High School Diploma by Examination  
*National External Diploma Program (NEDP)*  
and  
*General Educational Development (GED)***

**Purpose**

To establish assurances for quality control that support the validity and reliability of the Maryland High School Diploma awarded by examination jointly awarded by the Maryland State Board of Education and the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation.

**Background**

The National External Diploma Program (NEDP) is administered nationally by the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS), a highly regarded and recognized leader in adult assessment and accountability. CASAS is the sole source of both student materials and materials used for certification of NEDP practitioners. The GED is administered internationally by the GED Testing Service (GEDTS) of the American Council on Education (ACE). States contract with each national entity to receive the right to administer the assessments. Both have established national standards and procedures with which states must comply.

**Assurances**

The Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation agrees to these assurances in order to ensure the high quality and integrity of the Maryland High School Diploma by complying with the following assurances. The Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation, Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning will:

**General Assurances**

- Establish and maintain internal and external processes and procedures that comply with the national accrediting organizations for the GED and the EDP.
- Establish and maintain the necessary national, state, and local agreements necessary to ensure the integrity of the jointly awarded high school diploma.
- Ensure that all testing centers and local EDP sites adhere to all applicable NEDP and GEDTS policies and procedures as well as state laws and regulations governing GED testing and EDP.
- Collaborate with the Maryland State Board of Education in the development of any changes to state legislation or COMAR affecting a Maryland High School Diploma by Examination.
- Ensure that the programs operate in compliance with state and federal laws and regulations regarding privacy and educational records, including but not limited to Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232(g) .

**Assurances for Quality Control of  
Maryland's High School Diploma by Examination  
*National External Diploma Program (NEDP)*  
and  
*General Educational Development (GED)***

- Maintain an accurate historical file of scores, transcripts and credentials for GED and EDP and make them available to MSDE as needed.
- Monitor and ensure the separation of GED instructional and testing programs.
- Monitor and ensure the separation of the adult education instructional and EDP assessment programs.
- Monitor each local GED testing center and local EDP assessment program at least annually and maintain monitoring reports.
- Ensure that the awarding of subcontracts and the selection of grantees maintains continuing compliance with NEDP and GED Testing Services requirements and maintain the integrity of the diploma.
- Acknowledge the State Board as appropriate in all media announcements, billboards, websites and other print and electronic media as it relates to its role with the GED and EDP programs.
- Submit an annual report to the Maryland State Board of Education regarding results of the NEDP and GED testing program, as well as any changes to the quality controls processes and procedures. The report shall include diplomas awarded, GED waiver requests granted, the results of any monitoring visits to GED testing or to EDP sites, professional development provided to state and local EDP staff, GED Chief Examiners, or state GED staff. The report shall also disclose any GED Test center irregularities, GED test compromises or the closing of a GED Testing Center when a violation of test security procedures occurs.

**Assurances – GED Testing**

- Oversee test administration to comply with the American Council on Education's (ACE) policies and procedures.
- Protect confidentiality of test scores and credentials.
- Provide prompt notification of test scores and results to candidates.
- Comply with ACE's requirements for administering tests, scoring, and notifications.
- Ensure GED Examiners, Chief Examiners, and state administrator meet national certification requirements and receive the professional development necessary to maintain certification.
- Update the State Board of Education on ACE policies and procedures related to test administration.
- Provide appropriate accommodations for eligible applicants with special needs.
- Provide adequate staff in the GED Office and Test Centers.

**Assurances for Quality Control of  
Maryland's High School Diploma by Examination  
*National External Diploma Program (NEDP)*  
and  
*General Educational Development (GED)***

**Assurances – EDP**

- Oversee EDP to comply with the National External Diploma Program (NEDP) policies and procedures.
- Ensure that CASAS is the sole source of both student materials and materials used for certification of NEDP practitioners.
- Maintain national certification of all local NEDP staff with annual professional development conducted by NEDP certified trainers.
- Ensure newly hired local NEDP staff are trained and evaluated according to NEDP standards by NEDP certified trainers.
- Ensure that local organizations receiving grant funds to provide NEDP services are required, as a condition of the grant, to meet certain NEDP standards and comply with certain assurances regarding their administration of the program.
- Ensure that all candidates continue to demonstrate 100% mastery of all NEDP competencies.
- Conduct multi-level review of mastery on every candidate work prior to awarding a diploma.

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Secretary, Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation:

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Thomas E. Perez*  
*6/23/09*