

***New High School Equivalency (HSE) exam:
Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC)***

On November 28, 2012, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) to ensure that the State offers a High School Equivalency test that is both affordable and accessible.

An expert panel of three psychometricians and three experts in higher education and adult education scored the RFPs. On March 7, the Commissioner announced that the winning bidder was CTB/McGraw Hill with a new test called Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC).

Format of New Test:

The new test will:

- Be available in English and Spanish, Braille, and audio versions for visually impaired.
- Be composed of five subtests sections: English Language Arts Reading, English Language Arts Writing, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies.
- Use multiple choice items in Reading, Science, and Social Studies, complemented by gridded response items in Math, and an essay in Writing in 2014. Constructed-response and technology enhanced items will be added in 2015 and 2016.

The test will be **aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)** over the next three years (2014-2016), which will support a natural, gradual, and fair transition to CCSS. Introducing more rigorous item types (constructed-response and technology enhanced items in 2015 and 2016) allows for a transition from less rigorous CCSS aligned assessment in 2014 to more rigorous and deeply aligned CCSS assessment in 2015 and 2016. Transitioning to full CCSS alignment will also be accomplished by gradually increasing the rigor of the content each year.

The test will be **available in both paper based (PBT) and computer based (CBT) format**. A survey conducted by NYSED of test centers and preparation programs clearly demonstrated that there is insufficient capacity to deliver the test solely on computer in 2014. Consequently, NYSED decided to phase in the use of CBT. In the first year (2014), the vendor will provide up to 20% of the tests on computer. In the second year (2015) the vendor will provide up to 40% of tests on computer, and in the third year (2016), the vendor will provide up to 60% of the tests on computer. The actual number of tests available on computer will be solely determined by NYSED based upon surveys, a comprehensive readiness assessment, and the capability of the test centers to provide PBT test administrations. Test centers may offer only paper based tests, only computer based tests, or offer both.

Delivery of test:

Currently, NYSED supports the operation of approximately 269 test centers statewide through a network of both public and private sites, including: school districts, BOCES, CBOs, EOCs, community colleges, correctional facilities, county jails, OCFS facilities, and private residential facilities. NYSED will continue to supervise and administer test centers and will confirm with existing centers that they will continue to provide testing services for the new TASC test.

For more information about TASC, see the CTB website: www.ctb.com/tasc