

# NYC CAMPAIGN TO SAVE GED TESTING!

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**New York needs a robust and rational GED preparation and testing system, now more than ever.** 1.3 million adults in New York City do not have a high school diploma. This group suffers from an unemployment rate of 16 percent, far higher than for the general population. For more New Yorkers to succeed in the workforce, adult education and training must be a priority for public policy and investment. The test of General Educational Development (GED) is a key gateway to postsecondary education, training, and employment. A strong GED system is crucial for New York's human capital development and our economic recovery.

**Substantive improvements to the GED system are just getting underway with growing support.** The NYC GED Testing Initiative is developing new tools to ensure that GED test takers know where to enroll in prep programs, are prepared to take the exam, and are assured a testing seat. There is growing recognition of the need for these improvements and mounting support from providers, advocates, and public officials at the city and state levels.

## PROPOSED CUTS TO GED TESTING

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) plans to **eliminate \$1.15 million for GED testing sites** across the state. All GED testing contracts would be suspended as of July 1, 2010. This means that NYSED will no longer reimburse contracted test centers the \$20 per test administered. While the state reimbursement only partially offsets the full cost of GED testing, the funding provides core support for GED testing sites and provides the basis for leveraging other operating funds. State-funded New York City testing centers provide a total of almost 38,000 GED testing seats each year.

## DEVASTATING IMPACT

- **Drastically reduced GED testing:** The state cuts will result in a drastic reduction of GED testing capacity in New York City. Students enrolled in GED preparation programs that are not linked to test centers will have limited access to GED testing, and members of the general public will have virtually no access to testing.
- **Fewer GED diplomas:** Far fewer New Yorkers will take and pass the GED exam.
- **Fewer people to jobs and college:** New Yorkers who are locked out of GED testing will be delayed or derailed from a path to postsecondary education and career advancement.
- **Going backwards:** These cuts will damage the progress underway to improve the GED system. NYSED and the NYS Board of Regents have expressed support for key reforms, yet the decision to cut GED testing directly undermines the forward movement.
- **Economic damage:** The long-term economic harm to the City and State from cutting GED testing will far outweigh short-term budget savings. Businesses will suffer from a hiring pool that lacks basic skills, and New York's tax revenue will suffer from a smaller workforce and tax base.

## WHAT WE WANT

We call on the Governor and the State Legislature to take the following actions to ensure the viability of New York's GED testing system:

1. **Restore \$1.15 million in funding to GED testing sites in the 2010-11 New York State Adopted Budget.**
2. For the period of time until the 2010-11 State Budget is adopted, NYSED should announce that it will **honor and fund the existing GED testing site contracts in New York City**, to ensure that operations remain on track through December 31, 2010. This requires a commitment of **approximately \$350,000**.

## WHO WE ARE

The New York City Campaign to SAVE GED TESTING! is a cross-sector alliance of agencies and networks that call on New York State leaders to sustain state funding for GED testing in New York City. The Campaign formed in response to NYSED's plan (announced in March 2010) to eliminate funding for GED testing sites across the state. The NYC Campaign to SAVE GED TESTING! is coordinated by the Campaign for Tomorrow's Workforce, in partnership with the New York City GED Testing Initiative, and supported by many key organizations listed below.

## CONTACT

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**CAMPAIGN SUPPORTERS**

*[List in formation]*

Campaign for Tomorrow's Workforce

Community Service Society

Literacy Assistance Center

Neighborhood Family Services Coalition

United Neighborhood Houses