Minnesota Adult Basic Education (ABE)

GED® Testing Center Contact Hours Policy

**Policy Development Date: July 1, 2001**

**Policy Implementation Date: July 1, 2001**

**Latest Policy Revision Date: March 25, 2014**

Policy Overview

Background

***Policy Purpose***

This policy is meant to support GED® testing centers operated by ABE consortia and their members. The two issues that this policy addresses are: 1) The rising costs of GED® testing have caused significant increases in fees to examinees, and 2) Due to rising testing costs, some GED® testing centers have closed creating a problem of access to GED® testing by Minnesota adults. The intent of this policy is to provide revenue to an ABE consortium for the sole purpose of supporting GED® testing centers that are operated by a member of an ABE consortium.

**Policy Definition**

***Starting January 1, 2014***

Starting January 1, 2014, approved ABE consortia may count the hours that a program participant spends testing at a Minnesota GED® testing center that is operated by a member of an ABE consortium. However, hours may be counted only for examinees that were enrolled and that received instructional help (with a Personal Education Plan, or PEP) at the ABE consortium prior to taking the official GED® test.

Starting January 1, 2014, the maximum number of hours that may be counted for a single examinee is 445 minutes, which can be rounded to 7.5 hours. Only time for an eligible test-takers’ first attempt in each content area may be counted. Re-testing time may not be counted.

***Prior to January 1, 2014***

From July 1, 2001, to December 31, 2013, approved ABE consortia may count the hours that a program participant spends testing at an official Minnesota GED® testing center. However, hours may be counted only for examinees that were enrolled and that received instructional help (with a PEP) at the ABE consortium prior to taking the official GED® test.

From 2002 to 2013, the maximum number of hours that may be counted for a single examinee is 7.5 hours. Only actual test-taking time may be counted. Re-testing time may not be counted.

**Policy Details**

***Eligible Participants***

Testing hours for examinees that are "walk-ins" to the testing center and who were not previously enrolled learners at the ABE consortium may not be counted by the consortium.

If the only contact the GED® test-taker has had with ABE is completing the demographic booklet and/or viewing the calculator video, he/she does **not** qualify for the consortium in counting the 7.5 testing hours. In order to qualify for counting GED® testing hours, a test-taker must be enrolled as an ABE student in activities that include assessment, instruction and goal setting.

***Required Documentation***

The counting of testing hours by a consortium is contingent upon having a written agreement between the consortium and the ABE member organization that is operating the GED® testing center. The agreement shall include a description of how hours are reported to the consortium and the ratio/quantity of funds transferred to the organization operating the testing center. A consortium may have an agreement with more than one testing center and with testing centers in other consortia, as long as each GED® testing center is operated by a member of an ABE consortium. Written agreements are not needed when the consortium has its own fiscal agent organization operated the GED® testing center.

ABE consortia should keep a separate spreadsheet recording each eligible individual examinee and the date(s) on which they tested at a testing center. Consortia can then use this spreadsheet for two purposes: 1) To satisfy a consortium hours audit, and 2) To add the aggregated hours to their annual performance report Table A.

MDE added a separate line to the Table A in the Minnesota ABE data system for GED® testing hours. This separate reporting of testing hours will provide a clear idea of the "cost" of this policy and the amount of revenue it generates.

***Financial Requirements***

Since the intent of this policy is to support GED® testing centers operated by consortium members, it is not appropriate for consortia to view this source of funds as additional ABE funding for instructional service. Testing centers do not receive contact hour aid directly from the state, so consortia must be the fiscal agent for this pot of money. Therefore, the state ABE office suggests that only a small administrative cost (such as 5% - 8%) should be charged by the consortium on these funds. This administrative charge should not exceed 15%.

If a GED® testing center that is operated by a member of an ABE consortium needs no additional fund support, no testing hours should be gathered and reported.

***For More Information, Questions and Contacts***

This policy, along with other ABE policies and resources, can be found online at the [Minnesota ABE LINCS Website](http://www.mnabe.org) (www.mnabe.org).

For questions or consultative assistance regarding this policy, please contact the state ABE office:

Jim Colwell, GED Administrator

(651) 582-8437

jim.colwell@state.mn.us

Brad Hasskamp, ABE Policy and Operations Specialist

(651) 582-8594

brad.hasskamp@state.mn.us