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ACE AND PEARSON COLLABORATE TO TRANSFORM GED TEST, ALIGNED WITH COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS, BASED ON GED 21ST CENTURY INITIATIVE

Enhanced GED Testing Program Will Validate Career- and College-Readiness

Washington D.C. (March 15, 2011)— The American Council on Education (ACE) and Pearson today announced the creation of a ground-breaking new business that will drive the future direction, design, and delivery of the GED® testing program. Building on the goals of the GED 21st Century Initiative, the two partners will combine their collective expertise and resources to develop a new GED Test aligned with Common Core State Standards that will assure colleges, universities and prospective employers that adults who have passed the GED Tests are prepared to compete and succeed in a global economy.

The GED Test is used by all 50 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, U.S. insular areas, Canadian provinces and territories, the U.S. military, and federal correctional institutions for the purpose of awarding a high school graduation equivalency credential. Nearly 800,000 GED Tests are taken each year, and in 2009, more than 470,000 individuals were awarded their high school credential.

The new business, modeled to represent a public-private partnership, will retain the GED Testing Service name. The new GED Testing Service will build on its past experience in adult and continuing education by harnessing the considerable resources of Pearson, the world's largest education and testing company, with the nearly 70-year history of ACE to expand access to the GED Test, ensure its quality and integrity, and adapt the GED Test to 21st century testing practices. The three primary components of the GED 21st Century Initiative will include:

- A new, more rigorous GED Test aligned with Common Core State Standards designed to ensure career- and college-readiness;
- A national test preparation program featuring an expanding array of innovative and personalized learning resources; and,
- A transition network that connects GED test-takers to career and postsecondary educational opportunities.

“This bold, far-sighted and innovative partnership will provide a new, fresh approach toward solving an old and pernicious problem—the incredible waste of human talent represented by the millions of Americans who lack a high-school diploma,” said ACE President Molly Corbett Broad. “Collaborating with a global leader in education and testing to launch a new GED Testing Service will allow us to achieve the goals of ACE’s college-ready GED initiative in the fastest and most efficient manner possible. The resources provided through this partnership will dramatically extend access to the GED credential for



News Release

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American adults and ensure the future quality of the GED Test. This partnership will also enable ACE to focus our efforts on learning pathways and policies that support adult learners.”

“More than 39 million adult Americans lack high school credentials and that number continues to grow at an alarming rate. Earning \$7,000 less each year than those with high school credentials, these adults and their families will endure a lifetime of hardship. The lost lifetime earnings for the drop-outs from the class of 2007 alone, add up to a \$329 billion hole in the US economy,” said Randy Trask, senior vice president at Pearson. “We recognize that the government and concerned foundations cannot address this problem alone, and we believe that creating this unique partnership is the first step in transforming our national efforts to give adults a second chance at earning their high school credential and pursuing further education or earning a sustaining wage.”

“The rich heritage and knowledge from GED Testing Service and ACE combined with Pearson’s resources and marketplace expertise in education is a powerful combination that is sure to benefit millions of test-takers,” said GED Testing Service Executive Director and ACE Vice President Nicole Chestang. “We are confident this new partnership will greatly enhance our offerings. In the meantime, as the new GED Test is developed, current GED testing operations will continue, and states will receive full, unfettered access to services and test delivery.”

The new GED Testing Service is to be based in Washington, D.C., with additional offices in Minneapolis, Minn. The new entity will be governed by a board of directors comprised of four executives from each of the two partner organizations and is expected to be fully operational within 30 days.

About ACE: *Founded in 1918, ACE (www.acenet.edu) is the major coordinating body for all the nation's higher education institutions, representing more than 1,600 college and university presidents, and more than 200 related associations, nationwide. It provides leadership on key higher education issues and influences public policy through advocacy.*

About Pearson: *Pearson is the world's leading learning company, providing educational materials and services, business information through the Financial Times Group, and consumer publishing through the Penguin brand. Pearson serves learners of all ages around the globe, employing 36,000 people in more than 70 countries, and is listed on the London and New York stock exchanges. For more information, visit www.pearson.com.*

About the current GED® Testing Service: *GED Testing Service (www.GEDtest.org) is a program of ACE which develops, delivers, and safeguards the GED Test, setting the policy for and ensuring compliance of test administration. GED testing is administered by each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia, the Canadian provinces and territories, the U.S. insular areas, U.S. military and federal correctional institutions. To date more than 18 million individuals have passed the GED Test and opened doors to opportunities in postsecondary training, education and careers.*

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