Virginia's GED Credentialing™ Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) Administrators

Effective January 1, 2014, Virginia transitioned its GED® credentialing process from the issuance of paper transcripts and GED® certificates to a paperless electronic transcript system. As with any new process, there will be changes and questions. This FAQ will assist adult education administrators to answer questions. Utilizing this new service, the state expects to significantly reduce test-taker turn-around time for obtaining GED® documents.

What is GED Credentialing™?

GED Credentialing™ is a full-service program which Virginia uses to outsource all fulfillment requests for transcripts and certificates. The service includes fulfillment for new graduates and historical requests dating back to 1947.

What does GED Credentialing™ mean for my program?

GED Credentialing™ is an end-to-end service for Virginia's GED® programs that eliminates the administrative burden of fulfilling requests for secure duplicate transcripts and certificates.

Free service: Virginia chose to use GED Credentialing™ as part of the 2014 GED® program. GED Credentialing™ is provided to the Department of Education at no additional cost.

Full-service: Virginia's contract with GED Credentialing™ provides service for both first-time and historical transcript requests.

Convenient: The Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education and regional and local GED® programs will no longer have to provide and maintain fulfillment functions within their offices.

Secure: GED Credentialing™ uses the services of Parchment, a secure, electronic transcript fulfillment for high schools nationwide.

What does GED Credentialing™ cost programs?

GED credentialing services are completely free to Virginia's GED® programs as part of the 2014 GED® initiative.

What does GED Credentialing™ cost students?

Students receive their initial transcript and certificate for free after completing the 2014 GED® test, upon request. Parchment does not automatically mail these to graduates. For each repeat or historical request, the individual or organization that makes the request (e.g., past student, employer, school, employment verification firm) pays a $15 fee.

Can a GED® program use GED Credentialing™ for new transcripts and certificates only and continue to fulfill historical requests themselves?

No, GED Credentialing™ is an all-inclusive service. Virginia must use GED Credentialing™ for both new and historical transcripts and certificates.

Is my program required to use the service?

Yes. Virginia has contracted with GED Testing Service to provide Virginia test-taker requests for the Virginia GED® certificate and the Smart Transcript from GED Testing Service.

Does GED Credentialing™ fulfill a national credential?

No, GED Credentialing™ fulfills requests for Virginia's GED® certificates and the Smart Transcript from GED Testing Service. The Virginia Department of Education remains the issuing agency, and the certificates feature Virginia's official signatures and design.

Is GED Testing Service fulfilling the transcript and certificate requests in-house?

No, GED Testing Service is partnering with Parchment, a secure electronic transcript (eTranscript) exchange. For more information, visit http://www.parchment.com/.

What do test takers receive from GED Credentialing™ after they pass the 2014 GED® test?

As soon as test takers pass the GED® test, they receive a secure, electronic PDF of their transcript (Smart Transcript) delivered to their email address. The test taker must request an electronic copy of their Virginia GED® certificate. A 2014 tester has an option of ordering a professionally printed GED® certificate free of charge; the certificate is not automatically sent to the GED graduate as in previous years.

What is a Smart Transcript?

The Smart Transcript is an electronic transcript that not only provides a Virginia test-taker's scores, but also includes links to the GED Testing Service website with additional information regarding what the GED® test measures, what the scores mean, and what skills the test taker demonstrated on the test. This includes information about earning a GED® Passing Score and the GED® Passing Score with College Ready or College Ready + Credit.

Will historical requests also receive a Smart Transcript?

All GED® test takers will receive a Smart Transcript. GED Credentialing™ uses Smart Transcripts to fulfill all transcript requests, including historical requests. Smart Transcripts are customized based on the GED® test series and explain the scoring and types of content tested on the 2014 GED® test and older versions of the GED® test.

How do test takers request their historical transcripts?

Test takers can sign in to the GED Credentialing™ website (which went live January 1, 2014) to easily and securely order their duplicate transcripts or certificates. If a match is found in the database, an electronic transcript will be delivered within 24 hours. If a match is not found immediately, a manual search will be done, and it may take a few days to fulfill the request. The test taker will be notified when this situation arises.

How far back in time does this historical information exist?
With a few exceptions, GED Credentialing™ has Virginia test-taker data dating back to 1947.

Can students send their transcript and certificate to colleges and employers?
Yes, students can forward the free electronic transcript they received in their email inbox directly to potential colleges and employers; however, first check with the postsecondary institution or employer to see if they will accept them electronically from a personal email account.

Will the Virginia Department of Education continue to handle phone, fax, or e-mail requests for transcripts and certificates?
No. Effective January 1, 2014, all requests for duplicate transcripts and certificates must be handled through GED Credentialing™. Our office no longer has the capability of producing an official copy of either the transcript or certificate.

How does GED Credentialing™ access the jurisdiction's data and historical records?
In order to fulfill historical transcript requests, GED Testing Service will work with Virginia to safely and securely acquire all student data including:

- A copy of all electronic data, and

- Original copies of all physical data (such as paper, microfiche, or card stock)

Who owns Virginia's data?
All data is still owned by Virginia. Parchment merely stores the data in order to fulfill transcript and certificate requests on behalf of the Department of Education. If Virginia should cancel its agreement with GED Credentialing™, GED Testing Service will return all data to the jurisdiction free of charge.

How is Virginia's data stored?
All electronic data is stored through a secure website while physical records are stored at a secured facility where some requests may be sent for manual fulfillment.

Are the electronic transcripts and certificates secure?
All Virginia GED® credentialing documents, including transcripts and certificates, are secure. The electronic delivery system uses Parchment's patented Blue Ribbon™ Security system, which is more secure than delivering a physical, paper copy.

What security system is used to protect the integrity of Smart Transcripts and certificates?
GED Credentialing™ uses Blue Ribbon™ Security, a secure delivery system developed and patented by Parchment. Blue Ribbon™ Security guarantees the document sent to the recipient has not been altered. Each electronic transcript and certificate contains a certificate code, which is then validated against Parchment's database to verify all content is the same as the original document that was sent out. The recipient can easily

assess the integrity of a transcript or certificate by noting the presence of a blue ribbon indicating the document is authentic and trustworthy or a red X indicating the document has been altered.

Do colleges and employers know about the Blue Ribbon™ Security?

Parchment currently works with over 4,000 colleges, and over a third of all high school certificates are delivered by Parchment using this security process. Virginia Community Colleges can sign up for Parchment's FREE Receive service to easily obtain the secure, electronic credentials. Every electronic transcript will contain a cover letter explaining the Blue Ribbon™ Security to colleges and employers.

What do my students do if they do not have Internet access to order their credentials?

Beginning January 2, 2014, test takers can call **(888)-906-4031** and receive phone support to order duplicate transcripts and GED® certificates.

How does one of my students sign up or get more information about GED Credentialing™?

If you or your students are interested in learning more about GED Credentialing™ and the Smart Transcript, contact Dr. Beverly Godwin at 804-786-7644 or the GED Hotline at the Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center, 877-376-9433. For more information you can also go to the GED Credentialing™ Web site at https://ged.com/life_after_ged.