



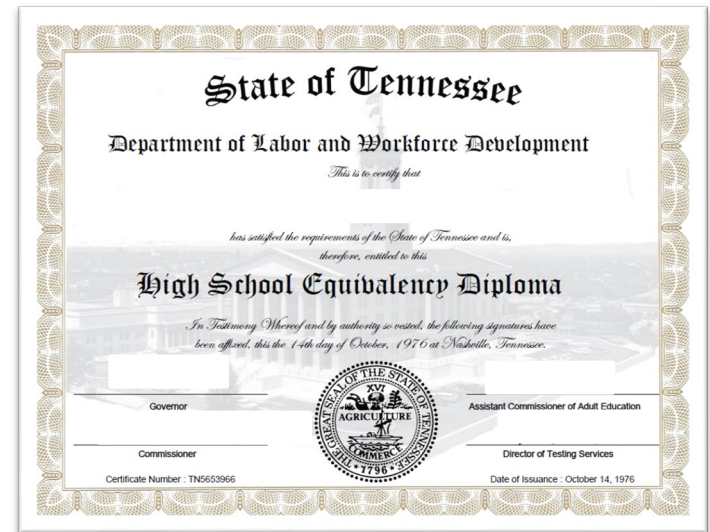
Department of  
**Labor & Workforce  
Development**

Adult Education

# Alternate Pathways to a TN High School Equivalency Diploma

# What is a High School Equivalency (HSE) Diploma?

- Official TN secondary school credential
- Allows entry into postsecondary, training, jobs, promotions
- ~430,000 working-age Tennesseans without HS diploma or equivalent
- TDLWD oversees HSE preparation programs and diplomas
- Currently, HiSET® exam is only option



# Lois M. DeBerry Alternative Diploma Act

- TCA 4-3-1422. Lois M. DeBerry Alternative Diploma Act -- Assessments that lead to high school equivalency credential.
- (a) This section shall be known and may be cited as the "Lois M. DeBerry Alternative Diploma Act."
- (b) The department of labor and workforce development is authorized to make recommendations relative to assessments that lead to the award of a high school equivalency credential. The state board shall review the recommendations of the department. Any recommendation approved by the state board of education shall be considered a high school equivalency assessment and the successful completion of such assessment shall lead to the award of a high school equivalency credential. The department, as needed, may consult with or request assistance from other state agencies in performing its duties under this section.

# Why do AE Students Seek a HSE Diploma?

## Tennesseans' Reported Reasons for Taking the HiSET

Tech	2-Year	4-Year %	Get a Job	Postsecondary & Work
18%	18%	15%	14%	65%



# HSE Leads to In-Demand Jobs

- 120 TN occupations with high employer demand
  - 12 require no formal educational credential
  - 63 require HS diploma or equivalent
  - 11 require some college or non-degree credential
  - 6 require associate's degree
  - 25 require bachelor's degree
  - 3 require master's degree or higher
- 90% require HS or higher
- 38% require higher than a HS diploma

*Source: TN Academic Supply for Occupational Demand Report 2022*

# HSE Leads to Higher Wages

## Median Earnings:

- \$17.29 = Jobs not requiring HS diploma
- \$19.33 = Jobs requiring HS diploma
- \$19.29 = Jobs requiring some college or non-degree credential
- \$23.47 = Jobs requiring associate's degree
- \$31.71 = Jobs requiring bachelor's degree

*Source: TN Academic Supply for Occupational Demand Report 2022*

- 16.7% = increase in earnings 6 months after earning HSE
- 32.3% = increase in earnings 12 months after earning HSE

*Source: TN Department of Labor & Workforce Development Adult Education Impact Analysis*

# HSE & Labor Force Participation

- Participation rate correlates strongly with education attainment
- 50% = No HS diploma
- 67% = HS diploma
- 75% = Postsecondary credential less than bachelor's
- 84% = Bachelor's degree or higher

*Source: TN Department of Labor & Workforce Development and Bureau of Labor Statistics*

# How is Current Diploma Pathway a Problem?

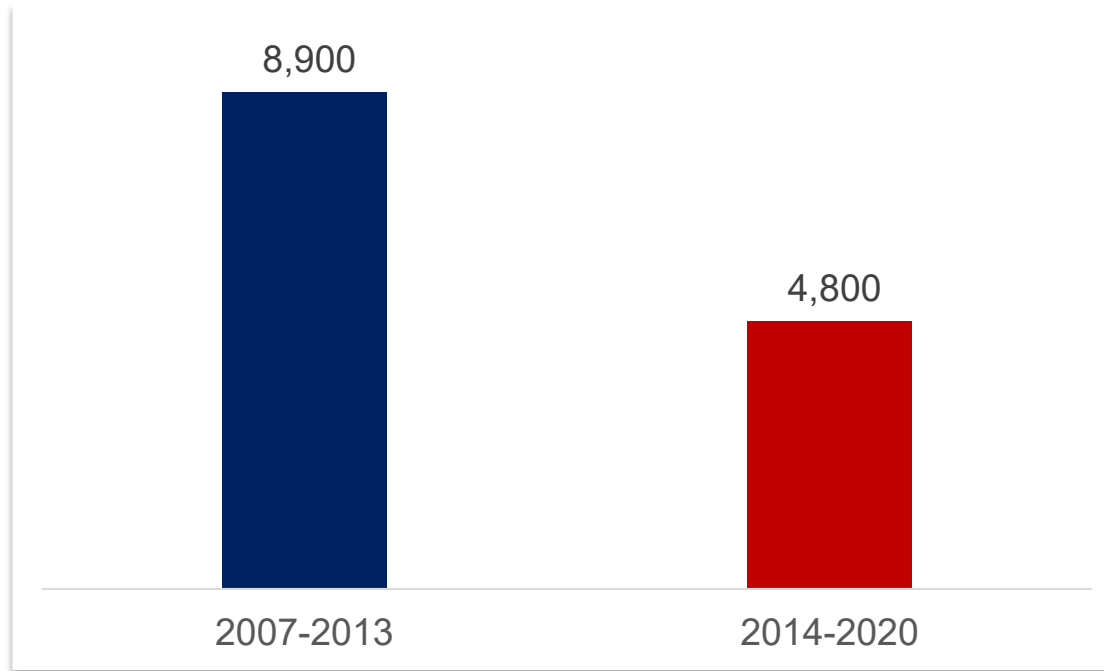
- Only option currently approved for diploma is HiSET® exam
  - 5-subject, multiple-choice (plus a written essay), time-limited, standardized test, just like the GED®
- Passing the HiSET can be a barrier for students
- High-stakes, timed, standardized tests are difficult
- Research shows that high-stakes testing increases stress and lowers test performance
- Students are eager to have other options
- Other states have created alternate pathways



# HiSET Outcomes

- GED and HiSET were redesigned and aligned with Common Core in 2014

Average Yearly HSE Diplomas Earned in TN



# The Current Pathway is Narrow



- We can broaden the workforce pipeline by creating alternate pathways for attaining a HSE diploma

# Broaden the Workforce Pipeline

## HiSET



# Checklist

## Complete ONE of the following:

- Pass the HiSET exam (all 5 subjects)
- Attain a TCAT diploma or program certificate

## Or, demonstrate math, reading, writing, science, and social studies competencies by completing the following:

MATH	READING	WRITING	SCIENCE	SOCIAL STUDIES
<i>Complete ONE:</i>	<i>Complete ONE:</i>	<i>Complete ONE:</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Attain a score of 8 or higher on HiSET math exam	<input type="checkbox"/> Attain a score of 8 or higher on HiSET reading exam	<input type="checkbox"/> Attain a score of 8 or higher on HiSET writing exam AND a score of 2 or higher on HiSET essay	<input type="checkbox"/> Attain a score of 8 or higher on HiSET science exam	<input type="checkbox"/> Attain a score of 8 or higher on HiSET social studies exam
<input type="checkbox"/> Attain level 4 or higher on TABE math test	<input type="checkbox"/> Attain level 4 or higher on TABE reading test	<input type="checkbox"/> Attain level 4 or higher on TABE language test		
<input type="checkbox"/> Attain level 4 (silver) or higher on ACT WorkKeys "Applied Math" AND "Graphic Literacy"	<input type="checkbox"/> Attain level 4 (silver) or higher on ACT WorkKeys "Workplace Documents"			

# Contact Info

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