



**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY  
WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION**

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**Policy Number and Title:**

Policy 2444.4  
Issuance of High School Equivalency Diploma

**Background:**

The General Educational Development (GED) Tests provide an average of over 5,000 West Virginians per year a method to document that they have acquired the academic skills equivalent to a high school education.

**Proposals:**

Revisions are being proposed to:

Make the policy more user-friendly.

Require applicants to register for the GED Tests in person at least five business days prior to testing. (See Section 3.1.)

Require first time testers to complete the local GED Testing Orientation Seminar, which includes at least completion of the demographic form, viewing of the calculator and alternate format video, calculator practice exercises, and the registration form as per the General Educational Development Testing Service's testing requirements. (See Section 3.1.)

Reflect the West Virginia Department of Education passing scores for the 2002 Series GED Tests which requires a minimum passing score of 2250 or above on the battery of five sub-tests and a standard score of not lower than 410 on any one of the five sub-tests. (See Section 4.1.)

Define the official dropout date "as the school day after the student's last day of attendance." (As outlined in WVDE Policy 4110--Attendance Policy) (See Section 5.1.)

Allow local superintendents to request that a 16, 17, or 18 year old, who does not meet all criteria for test eligibility but has extraordinary circumstances, be allowed to test; the State GED Coordinator will make the final decision concerning the request. (See Section 5.2.3., 5.3.3., and 5.4.1.)

Suspend residency requirements; all persons passing the GED test in West Virginia will be issued a West Virginia High School Equivalency Diploma. (See Section 6.1.)

Require all requests for a duplicate copy of the State of West Virginia High School Equivalency Diploma, including those for correctional purposes, military enlistment, job placement, or test verification, include a money order or a check for the printing/research fee, which is determined by the West Virginia Department of Education, GED Office. (See Section 7.1.)

**Impact:**

Policy 2444.4 provides guidance, technical assistance and assurance of compliance with the American Council on Education's requirements for the administration of the GED Tests. It includes guidelines for registration, requirements for first time testers, minimum passing scores, definition of the official dropout date, changes in eligibility requirements for 16-18 year olds, residence criteria for testing, and procedures for obtaining a copy of the State of West Virginia High School Equivalency Diploma.

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FILED

TITLE 126  
LEGISLATIVE RULE  
BOARD OF EDUCATION

2003 OCT 14 P 3:41

OFFICE WEST VIRGINIA  
SECRETARY OF STATE

SERIES 32  
ISSUANCE OF THE STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY  
DIPLOMAS  
BASED UPON PASSAGE OF THE GENERAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
(GED) TESTS  
(2444.4)

**§126-32-1. General.**

1.1. Scope. - The purpose of the State of West Virginia High School Equivalentcy Diploma Test is to provide those individuals who have not completed high school an opportunity to demonstrate that they have attained academic skills at a competent equivalent to those at the high school completion level as evidenced by satisfactorily passing the General Educational Development (GED) Tests.

1.1.1. The GED Tests mirror the core content and performance standards reflected at the national and state levels and demonstrate the attainment of developed abilities acquired through completion of a four-year high school program of study (Woodward, Katherine S., Alignment of National and State Standards, A Report by the GED Testing Service. American Council on Education, GED Testing Service, 1999.)

1.2. Authority. - West Virginia Constitution, Article XII, Section 2; West Virginia Code §18-2-5.

1.3. Filing Date. - ~~February 20, 1998.~~

1.4. Effective Date. - ~~March 22, 1998.~~

**§126-32-2. State of West Virginia High School Equivalentcy Diploma.**

2.1. The State West Virginia Department of Education issues a State of West Virginia High School Equivalentcy Diploma based upon satisfactory scores earned on the General Educational Development GED Tests. These tests are prepared by the General Educational Development Testing Service (GEDTS) and as an agent of the American Council on Education. The State of West Virginia High School Equivalentcy Diploma is

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issued only by the West Virginia State Department of Education only.

**§126-32-73. Applying for Testing.**

73.1. Until such time as the West Virginia GED Testing General Educational Development program registration is centralized, all applicants must pre-register for the GED Tests in person at least five business days prior to testing at the site designated by the local testing site.

3.2. First time applicants are required to complete the local GED Testing Orientation Seminar which includes at least completion of the demographic form, viewing of the calculator and alternate format video, calculator practice exercises, and the registration form.

3.3. A valid and current state-issued photo identification (i.e., driver's license, state alternative identification, military identification or a valid passport) with current name, birth date, proof of residency and preferably a Social Security number will be required prior to and during all testing sessions. Failure to present applicable photo identification will result in a loss of testing privileges until such identification is presented. (See also 6.1.)

**§126-32-34. Basis for Granting the State of West Virginia High School Equivalency Diploma.**

34.1. The State Department of Education requires that applicants taking the General Educational Development GED Tests achieve a minimum passing score of 2250 or above on the battery of five sub-tests and a standard score of not lower than 410 on any one of the five sub-tests. ~~of 225 points or above on the battery of five sub-tests and a standard score of not lower than 40 on any one of the five sub-tests.~~

34.2. Individuals ~~successfully completing~~ passing the General Educational Development GED Tests will receive their a State of West Virginia High School Equivalency Diploma.

34.3. The State Department of Education and GED Testing Service GEDTS require that the initial testing of the battery be completed within six weeks or no more than two consecutive complete test sessions (whichever is longer in duration). First time examinees are expected to take two or more subtests per testing session except as provided by the GEDTS accommodations policy.

34.4. Individuals who need to retest must successfully complete all five sections of the GED within three years of initial testing in order to receive their the State of West Virginia

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### High School Equivalency Diploma.

~~3.5. The proposed GED Test 2000 will not permit transference of prior series' scores due to proposed changes in format; therefore, all testing on earlier series of tests must be completed prior to the initiation of the GED 2000 series (approximate date December 1, 2000).~~

### **§126-32-45. Testing of Individuals 18 Eighteen Years of Age and Younger.**

~~4.1. Individuals who are 18 years of age and have been out of a traditional classroom situation (i.e. officially withdrawn, home-schooled and/or in an approved alternative education program [pursuant to West Virginia State Board Policy 2418]) for a period of three months before making application or whose original high school class has been graduated may be admitted to testing by providing written documentation from the last school/system attended stating that the student has been withdrawn and giving the withdrawal date from school and the original class graduation date.~~

5.1. For the purposes of GED testing, the official dropout date shall be defined "as the school day after the student's last day of attendance." (As outlined in W. Va. 126CSR81, West Virginia Board of Education Policy 4110, "Attendance".)

5.2. Individuals who are eighteen years of age are eligible to test by qualifying under any of the following categories:

5.2.1. The candidate has been officially withdrawn from a traditional classroom situation (i.e., officially withdrawn or home-schooled) for a period of three months prior to test registration as evidenced by written documentation from the last school/system attended. Documentation must include withdrawal date as indicated in Section 5.1, or home-schooled dates, and the original class graduation date; or,

5.2.2. The candidate's original high school class has graduated before the candidate makes application for GED testing as evidenced by written documentation from the last school/system attended. Documentation must include withdrawal date as indicated in Section 5.1 and the original class graduation date; or,

5.2.3. The candidate, at least eighteen years of age, who does not meet all criteria for test eligibility, but believes extraordinary circumstances exist, may request an exemption to take the GED Tests from the local school superintendent where the candidate resides. If the superintendent recommends that the eighteen year old be allowed to take the GED Tests, the superintendent shall mail or fax the recommendation to the State GED Coordinator for final approval. The superintendent, the eighteen year old,

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and the local GED Examiner will be notified in writing of the State GED Coordinator's final decision. If the exemption is granted, the candidate must officially withdraw from the last school/system attended as evidenced by written documentation from the last school/system attended, or the candidate must have been home-schooled as evidenced by written documentation from the county home-school monitor. Documentation must include withdrawal date as indicated in Section 5.1, or home-schooled dates, and the original class graduation date.

~~4.2. Individuals who are 17 years of age must be officially withdrawn from the school system and may make application for GED testing if:~~

5.3. Individuals who are seventeen years of age are eligible to test by qualifying under any of the following categories:

5.3.1. The candidate has been officially withdrawn from a traditional classroom situation (i.e. officially withdrawn or home-schooled) for a period of six months prior to test registration as evidenced by written documentation from the last school/system attended. Documentation must include withdrawal date as indicated in Section 5.1, or home-schooled dates, and the original class graduation date. The candidate must also provide a statement on official letterhead from a licensed employer, military recruiter, college admission officer, or vocational-technical director evidencing acceptance/promotion of the candidate once he/she acquires the State of West Virginia High School Equivalency Diploma based upon passage of the GED Tests; or,

~~4.2.1~~ 5.3.2. The candidate's original high school class has graduated before the candidate makes application for GED testing as evidenced by written documentation from the last school/system attended. Documentation must include withdrawal date as indicated in Section 5.1 and the original class graduation date. The candidate must also provide a statement on official letterhead from a licensed employer, military recruiter, college admission officer, or vocational-technical director evidencing acceptance/promotion of the candidate once he/she acquires the State of West Virginia High School Equivalency Diploma based upon passage of the GED Tests; or,

5.3.3 The candidate, at least seventeen years of age, who does not meet all criteria for test eligibility, but believes extraordinary circumstances exist, may request an exemption to take the GED Tests from the local school superintendent where the candidate resides. If the superintendent recommends that the seventeen year old be allowed to take the GED Tests, the superintendent shall mail or fax the recommendation to the State GED Coordinator for final approval. The superintendent, the seventeen year old, and the local GED Examiner will be notified in writing of the State GED Coordinator's final decision. If the exemption is granted, the candidate must officially withdraw from the last

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school/system attended as evidenced by written documentation from the last school/system attended, or the candidate must have been home-schooled as evidenced by written documentation from the county home-school monitor. Documentation must include withdrawal date as indicated in Section 5.1, or home-schooled dates, and the original class graduation date. The seventeen year old must also provide a statement on official letterhead from a licensed employer, military recruiter, college admission officer, or vocational-technical director evidencing acceptance/promotion of the candidate once he/she acquires the State of West Virginia High School Equivalency Diploma based upon passage of the GED Tests.

~~4.2.1. he or she has been out of a traditional classroom situation (i.e. officially withdrawn, home-schooled and/or in an approved alternative education program [pursuant to West Virginia State Board Policy 2418]) for a period of six months before making application or has been a member of a high school class that has been graduated, and~~

~~4.2.2. provided that written verification from the principal/school official of the last school/system attended stating the exact date of withdrawal from school has been sent directly to the testing site prior to any formal application for testing, and~~

~~4.2.3. an employer states in writing that there is pending /continuing employment for the applicant once a high school equivalency diploma is earned, or~~

~~4.2.4. an official of a college or university states in writing that the applicant will be accepted upon attainment of the equivalency diploma, or~~

~~4.2.5. seventeen (17) year old applicants for induction into the All Volunteer Armed Forces of the United States may be admitted to take the GED tests provided:~~

~~a. the Chief Examiner of an official GED center receives an individual request from the recruiting officer for the applicant to take the GED test. This request should be in the form of a letter from the recruiting officer asking admission of the applicant and stating in his/her request that the applicant meets all of the military requirements for induction except for achieving the appropriate scores on the GED test, and~~

~~b. the recruiting officer submits to the Chief Examiner a copy of a letter from applicant's parent or guardian granting him/her permission to enter the Armed Forces.~~

4.4. 5.4. Individuals who are sixteen years of age are eligible to test by qualifying under the following category:

5.4.1. The candidate, at least sixteen years of age who believes extraordinary

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circumstances exist, may request an exemption to take the GED Tests from the local school superintendent where the candidate resides. If the superintendent recommends that the sixteen year old be allowed to take the GED Tests, the superintendent shall mail or fax the recommendation to the State GED Coordinator for final approval. The superintendent, the sixteen year old, and the local GED Examiner will be notified in writing of the State GED Coordinator's final decision. If the exemption is granted, the candidate must officially withdraw from the last school/system attended as evidenced by written documentation from the last school/system attended, or the candidate must have been home-schooled as evidenced by written documentation from the county home-school monitor. Documentation must include withdrawal date as indicated in Section 5.1, or home-schooled dates, and the original class graduation date. The sixteen year old must also provide a statement on official letterhead from a licensed employer, military recruiter, college admission officer, or vocational-technical director evidencing acceptance/promotion of the candidate once he/she acquires the State of West Virginia High School Equivalency Diploma based upon passage of the GED Tests.

4.3. 5.5. Examinees sixteen (16), seventeen (17) or eighteen (18) years of age who are participating in residential federal programs, i.e. Job Corps, Mountaineer Challenge and/or other approved career-oriented federal residential programs, may be tested provided that they have been officially withdrawn from school with documentation at least 30 days prior to testing and have completed a vocational/prescribed training or have submitted a signed letter of intent to acquire further education and a letter of admission from an institution of higher learning. The individual must pass the test while in the program; otherwise, the examinee must meet the state policy guidelines. Examinees, at least sixteen, seventeen, or eighteen years of age, who are participating in the residential federal programs, (i.e., Job Corps, Mountaineer Challenge Academy and/or other approved career focused federal residential programs), may be tested provided that the following conditions are met:

5.5.1. The candidate has been officially withdrawn from a traditional classroom situation at least 30 days prior to testing as evidenced by written documentation.

5.5.2. The candidate has completed a vocational/prescribed training or has submitted a signed letter of intent to acquire further education along with a letter of admission from an institution of higher education.

5.5.3. This information shall be submitted to the GED Examiner at registration and/or with registration materials. If the candidate does not pass the GED Tests while in the program, to continue testing, the examinee must otherwise qualify under Sections 73.1., 3.2., 3.3., 4.1., 4.2., 4.3., 4.4., 5.1., 5.2., 5.3. and/or 5.4 of W. Va. 126CSR32, West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2444.4, "Issuance of High School Equivalent Diplomas".

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~~4.4. 5.6. Individuals who are 16 sixteen, 17 seventeen, or 18 eighteen years of age and who are residents of a West Virginia state-operated institutional correctional facilities may be admitted to testing if: take the tests while the examinee is under the control of the facility, or the individual must otherwise qualify under the afore stated guidelines to complete testing or to re-test upon release unless:~~

~~a. Court-ordered to continue testing, or~~

~~b. GED testing is part of a court-approved after-care plan.~~

~~4.4.1. a letter from the facility's principal or lead teacher is sent directly to the local test center prior to any testing stating: 1) that the individual has received counseling regarding educational and career opportunities; 2) that the individual will receive ongoing counseling regarding educational and career opportunities; and 3) that the individual has declined to participate in a traditional education program if released. Note: These materials must be sent directly to the local test center prior to any testing.~~

~~4.4.2. The test must be passed while the examinee is under the control of the facility; otherwise, the individual must qualify under the state policy guidelines to complete testing or to re-test upon release unless:~~

~~a. court ordered or~~

~~b. as a court approved part of an after-care plan.~~

~~4.5. 5.7. Adjudicated youth 16,17 or 18 years of age sixteen years old, seventeen years old, or eighteen years old, who are under the control of a court, detention center, group care facility, or probation or parole office may be admitted to GED testing on by the order of the court even if they are still enrolled in school.~~

~~4.5.1. 5.7.1. The e Education d Director (from state-approved group care facilities) or parole officer must submit an official a-written request to the local applicable Chief GED Examiner with the following documentation: an official court order or a letter from a judge, parole officer, or probation officer that states the individual shall be admitted for GED testing;~~

~~4.5.2. a letter from the education director or an officer of the court stating that the individual has received counseling regarding educational and career opportunities and assurances that the individual will receive ongoing counseling regarding educational and career opportunities, and~~

~~4.5.3. if the youth is 16 years of age, the request shall be sent to:~~

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~~Director of Linkage Services  
Child Protective Services  
Bureau of Social Services  
WV Department of Health and Human Resources  
Capitol Building 6, Room 850  
Charleston, West Virginia 25305.~~

~~4.6. Denial/approval by the Director of Linkage will then be submitted to the State GED Administrator for final approval/denial; the State GED Administrator will sign off and send the information directly to the Chief Examiner.~~

~~4.7. 5.7.2. All of these adjudicated youth must pass that take the GED Ttests while under the control of the group care facility; otherwise, or the examinees must otherwise qualify under the requirements of this policy the State testing policy guidelines to complete testing or to re-test, unless otherwise court-ordered.~~

### **§126-32-56. Residence.**

~~56.1. Persons physically residing within West Virginia for a period of 30 days with proof of a West Virginia mailing address are considered residents. Military personnel, employees of business or industry who have been moved physically into the State, persons confined in state and federal penitentiaries or hospitals, and persons taking part in educational or vocational programs and physically residing within the State have the privilege of being tested. If the applicant meets other State requirements, he/she is eligible for a West Virginia High School Equivalent Diploma. However, if the applicant wishes to have his/her test results sent to his/her home state for the purpose of securing High School Equivalent Diploma, rather than applying for a High School Equivalent Diploma from West Virginia, he/she may have that privilege. Persons meeting all criteria and showing themselves eligible under the State of West Virginia High School Equivalency Diploma guidelines shall be admitted to GED testing for the purpose of securing a State of West Virginia High School Equivalency Diploma. The candidate must present clear, current, state-issued photo identification (i.e. driver's license, state alternative identification, military identification or a valid passport). The GED Examiner may request further proof or other pertinent documentation as evidence of identity (i.e. birth certificate, Social Security card, etc.)~~

~~5.2. Non-residents may be tested and the results will be sent to the individual's home state for issuance of a diploma. There may be additional fees required by the individual's home state for the issuance of an equivalent diploma; these are the examinee's responsibility. It is up to the individual's home state whether to accept or to reject the individual's test scores for the purpose of issuing an equivalent diploma.~~

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~~5.3. Equivalent diplomas earned by military personnel are mailed to home addresses only.~~

### ~~§126-32-67. Transcripts of Scores.~~

~~67.1. The original copy of the transcript and diploma will shall be issued at no cost. Persons requesting a duplicate of their GED transcript and/or a copy of their State of West Virginia High School Equivalency Diploma as evidenced by passing the GED Tests diploma must do so for any reason, must do so in writing to the State GED Office. The request must originate from the graduate and include the name under which testing occurred, Social Security number, date of birth, place and year of testing, daytime phone number, a copy of a current and valid state-issued photo identification, an original signature and designation of as to whom the copy transcript is to be sent. In addition, a check or money order of \$5.00 for each transcript should be submitted to the State Department of Education, the research/printing fee, which is determined by the State Department's GED Office, must be included for each transcript requested. No requests, including those for correctional purposes, military enlistment, job placement, or test verification, will be honored without the research/printing fee. All requests should must be submitted to the State West Virginia Department of Education, GED Office, Building 6 Room 250, 1900 Kanawha Boulevard East, Charleston, WV 25305.~~

### ~~§126-32-7. Applying for Testing.~~

~~7.1. Until such time as the West Virginia General Educational Development Testing program registration is centralized, all applicants must pre-register for the GED Test in person at the local testing site. A valid photo identification with current name, birth date, proof of residency and preferably a Social Security number will be required prior to all testing sessions.~~

### ~~§126-32-8. Falsification of GED Tests Information and/or Center Violations.~~

#### ~~8.1. Falsification of Test Information or Personal Security Violations.~~

~~8.1.1. Any falsification of information and/or cheating on the GED Tests will result in penalties as outlined in the "West Virginia GED Security and Administrative Procedures," as directed by GEDTS regulations. ( West Virginia GED Examiners' Manual, Appendix 10, 2002.)~~

#### ~~8.2. Security Compromises in Centers.~~

~~8.2.1. Testing center violations will be dealt with following processed according to~~

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the procedures outlined in the "West Virginia GED Security and Administrative Procedures"

**§126-32-9. Testing Fees.**

9.1. Testing fees ~~limits~~ shall be established as outlined in the "West Virginia GED Security and Administrative Procedures." Changes of GED ~~T~~tests fees by local testing centers must be approved by the State GED Office.

**§126-32-10. All correspondence regarding this policy should be directed to:**

10.1. State GED State Coordinator Administrator  
GED Office  
West Virginia Department of Education  
Capitol Building 6, Room ~~230~~ 250  
1900 Kanawha Boulevard, East  
Charleston, West Virginia 25305-0330  
(304) 558-6315.

**§126-32-11. Severability.**

11.1. If any provision of this rule or the application thereof to any person or circumstances is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of this rule.

## FISCAL NOTE WORKSHEET

(Submit 4 Copies)

HD NO \_\_\_\_\_ DRAFT NO \_\_\_\_\_ BILL NO \_\_\_\_\_ RESOLUTION NO \_\_\_\_\_

SUBJECT Policy 2444.4 Issuance of High School Equivalent Diplomas FUND \_\_\_\_\_

SOURCE OF REVENUE:  GENERAL FUND  SPECIAL  OTHER (SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_

COST OF ESTIMATE BASED ON:  AN ORIGINAL ESTIMATE  BUDGET BILL  OTHER (SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_

INCOME ESTIMATE BASED ON:  AN ORIGINAL ESTIMATE  BUDGET BILL  OTHER (SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_

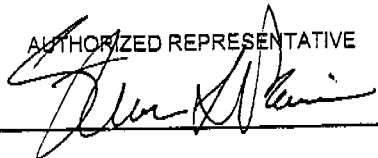
SHOW OVER-ALL EFFECT IN ITEMS 1 AND 2 & GIVE EXPLANATION OF BREAKDOWN BY FISCAL YEAR INCLUDING LONG-RANGE EFFECT

EFFECT OF PROPOSAL	ANNUAL		CURRENT	FISCAL YEAR	
	INCREASE	DECREASE		97-98	NEXT
1. ESTIMATED TOTAL COST	\$ - 0 -	\$ - 0 -	\$ - 0 -	\$ - 0 -	\$ - 0 -
PERSONAL SERVICES CURRENT EXPENSES REPAIRS/ALTERATIONS EQUIPMENT OTHER	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
2. ESTIMATED TOTAL REVENUES	\$ - 0 -	\$ - 0 -	\$ - 0 -	\$ - 0 -	\$ - 0 -

3. EXPLANATION OF ABOVE ESTIMATES (INCLUDING LONG-RANGE EFFECT):

DATE  
July 30, 2003

AGENCY  
West Virginia Department of Education

AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE  


**POLICY 2444.4: ISSUANCE OF HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY DIPLOMA  
COMMENT/SUGGESTIONS**

**COMMENT PERIOD ENDS: November 17, 2003**

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**Directions:** *Please use this form to provide comments/suggestions regarding revised Policy 2444.4.*

Individual/Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Business: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS</b>
<b>§126-32-1. General.</b>
<b>§126-32-2. State of West Virginia High School Equivalency Diploma.</b>
<b>§126-32-3. Applying for Testing.</b>
<b>§126-32-4. Basis for Granting the State of West Virginia High School Equivalency Diploma.</b>

**§126-32-5. Testing of Individuals Eighteen Years of Age and Younger.**

**§126-32-6. Residence.**

**§126-32-7. Transcripts of Scores.**

**§126-32-8. Falsification of GED Tests Information and/or Center Violations.**

**§126-32-9. Testing Fees.**

**§126-32-10. All correspondence regarding this policy should be directed to:**

**§126-32-11. Severability.**

**Please Mail the Completed Comment Sheet to:**  
**Debra Kimbler, State GED Administrator**  
**GED Office**  
**West Virginia Department of Education**  
**1900 Kanawha Boulevard East**  
**Building 6, Room 250**  
**Charleston, WV 25305-0330**  
**E-Mail Address: [dkimbler@access.k12.wv.us](mailto:dkimbler@access.k12.wv.us)**  
**Fax No.: (304) 558-4874**  
**Telephone No.: (304) 558-6315**