

**CITY OF GLENDALE**  
**INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATION**

**DATE:** April 9, 2025

**TO:** Members of the Civil Service Commission

**FROM:** Paula Adams, Chief Human Resources Officer

**BY:** Alicia Taylor, Human Resources Analyst

**SUBJECT:** High School Graduation or Equivalent Language

Over the past several months the usage of appropriate language on our job specifications, and in turn our job bulletins, regarding high school diploma equivalency has been discussed during Commission meetings. Based upon these discussions, Chair Hatamian requested to bring forth this report outlining detailed information regarding high school diploma equivalency.

A high school equivalency credential provides an opportunity for those that did not graduate from high school a chance to earn a high school equivalency certificate. After passing a state authorized test, individuals will receive a certificate that is recognized by their state as the equivalent to a high school diploma. There are two main high school equivalency exams, the GED (General Educational Development) and the HiSET (High School Equivalency Test). However, there are other State, Board, and/or Department of Education equivalency certificates that most employers widely accept, including the following:

- **General Educational Development (GED) Certificate**

The GED is a widely recognized program that tests proficiency in four subjects: Mathematics, Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies.

- **High School Equivalency Test (HiSET)**

The HiSET is another alternative for those who did not complete high school, testing the same subjects as the GED, but with a slightly different format.

While the GED is available in 48 states, the HiSET is available in 24, and some states offer both exams.

- **Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC)**

While the TASC was once an option, it has been phased out in many states, with the GED or HiSET taking its place.

- **Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE):**

The TABE is typically used for assessing the academic skills of adults seeking to enter adult education programs but can sometimes be used as a high school equivalency. It's used in California's adult education programs, including those offered by community colleges and technical institutes.

- **12 Semester Units of College-Level Work**

Some states, like California, may accept a certain number of college-level coursework units (like 12 semester units) as equivalent to high school credits, potentially leading to a high school equivalency.

- **Certification from State or School Authorities**

Certain certifications from the State Department of Education, local school boards, or high school authorities can also be used as an equivalent. For example, some states offer continuation education programs for students who are at risk of not graduating, which can lead to a diploma or certificate.

- **California High School Proficiency Examination (CHSPE):**

The CHSPE was the California proficiency test from 1974 to 2023. The CHSPE program was discontinued in 2023 and replaced by the CPP, which is administered by the HiSET and GED.

- **California Proficiency Program (CPP)**

The CPP has replaced the California High School Proficiency Exam (CHSPE). The CPP utilizes the State Board of Education approved HiSET subtests for language arts and mathematics to measure proficiency.

Based upon recent feedback received from the Commission, our current language reads:

*“Graduation from high school or attainment of a State Board of Education issued certificate of proficiency, or attainment of a GED certificate, CHSPE certificate, HiSet certificate, or CPP certificate.”*

To prevent any confusion to the applicant, the Human Resources Department proposes to keep the language simplified on class specifications, and in turn our job bulletins, to read:

*“High school diploma or equivalent.”*

It is important to note that the human resources analysts have not had any concerns or issues in applying the generalized language of high school diploma or equivalent. Additionally, if an analyst needs to verify a high school equivalency certificate, they can consult or check with the California Department of Education to confirm whether the

certificate is recognized and accepted in California. Should an applicant be disqualified for any reason related to their qualifications, per the Civil Service Rules, they have the ability to appeal to the Civil Service Commission.

While this is a note and final item, we'd welcome any considerations the Commission would like us to incorporate.