

**Guelph, ON, April 25, 2024 /Press Release/ -- Reflections on the ending of the GED in Canada**

In any robust education system we need a variety of options to meet the multiple needs, challenges, life situations and goal paths of all learners.

The GED credential was created as a second chance high school equivalency opportunity for adults who needed an alternative to the traditional JK-12 system. Last year TVO ILC, Ontario's sole provider of the General Educational Development (GED) testing, announced that the GED test will no longer be available in Canada.

Adults choose to complete their high school or GED later in life for many reasons. Not having one's high school remains a significant barrier to employment, or to being accepted into an apprenticeship program. For many adults, it is something that always bothers them. They may carry trauma and regret related to earlier learning experiences. They may want to complete their high school to feel the satisfaction and pride of accomplishing an important personal goal. They may view it as being a good role model to their children.

The GED was an excellent alternative for some individuals who found a more traditional classroom environment and course structure challenging. It appealed to some younger people who left high school with few credits, and who didn't yet qualify for the Prior Learning Assessment Recognition credits ('PLARS') that many older adults returning to high school are awarded. This meant that the GED could sometimes be a faster and more direct route for people seeking a high school equivalency credential.

Until very recently, community based literacy programs like Action Read in Guelph provided GED support through both small groups and one-to-one tutoring. The GED was not as time bound or heavily structured as high school courses. This made the GED a particularly appealing and effective option to learners who are juggling multiple jobs and family obligations, who have the capacity to be self-directed, or for learners who need more intensive and or customized support, such as individuals with social anxiety or with a learning disability.

In terms of options, UGDSB Continuing Education is an excellent program for some adults. Continuing Education can offer PLARS credits so that adults can fast-track getting their diploma. They offer a variety of high quality instructors and classes, during the day and evening. Courses are very structured and time-bound, which can be helpful for many learners.

That said, not having an alternative to the GED leaves a significant gap and barrier for some adult learners. A few provinces have announced that

they are replacing the GED with a new program called the 'Canadian Adult Education Credential'. To date, Ontario has not announced any such program.

It is my sincere hope that the province will offer a well-supported and publicized replacement to the GED in the coming months. In the meantime, Action Read will continue to provide free programs to adults who need a boost in meeting their other literacy, numeracy, employability and digital literacy goals.