

Montana Board of Public Education Executive Summary

Date: September 2023

Presentation	HiSET Annual Report
Presenter	Katie Madsen
Position Title	Adult Education State Director/HiSET State Administrator Office of Public Instruction
Overview	Overview of high school equivalency testing for 2022
Requested Decision(s)	None
Related Issue(s)	None
Recommendation(s)	None



Montana
Office of Public Instruction
Elsie Arntzen, State Superintendent
opi.mt.gov



High School Equivalency 2022 Summary

Katie Madsen – Adult Education State Director/HiSET State Administrator

Overview

Provide the Board of Public Education with an update of the HiSET High School Equivalency (HSE) exam published by PSI, the HiSET test vendor.

Update

In October 2022, the HiSET test vendor changed from ETS to PSI. As a result of the transition, HiSET testing throughout the state of Montana experienced significant challenges that involved additional time and effort to troubleshoot ongoing issues. This impacted the ability of the HiSET test vendor to adequately address problems, implement solutions, furnish accurate score reports and data requested, or deliver timely communication. As a result, the OPI State HiSET Administrator scheduled weekly meetings with the HiSET vendor and the OPI/HSE staff worked to manually validate the accuracy of all testing data received.

Historically, the number of completers and passing rates have remained consistent in Montana since transition to the HiSET in 2014. **However, it is important to note that the HiSET test vendor has not yet provided official testing data for 2022.** The OPI remains committed to finding solutions for HSE testing in Montana. It is imperative that the clients served, those seeking a HSE credential, have access to HSE exam options. Ultimately, attainment of the HSE credential is often critical for employment, admission to postsecondary education or the military, release from incarceration, compliance with court orders, etc.

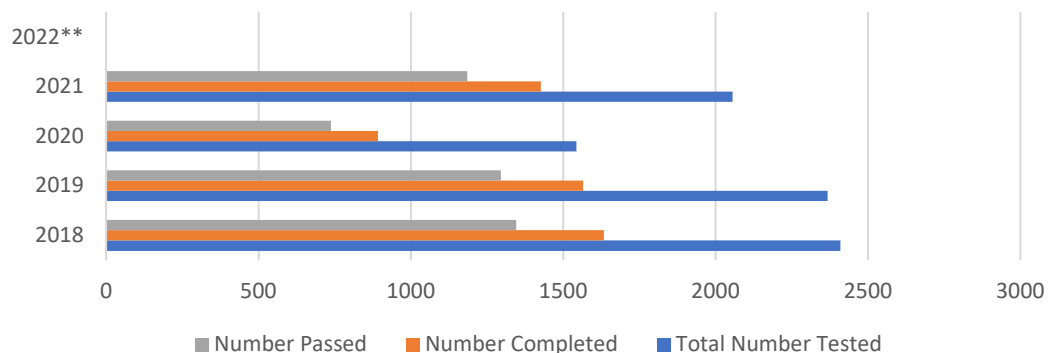
Year to Year Comparison of Examinees														
Total Number Tested					Completed					Passed				
2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
				**					**					**
2,409	2,368	1,543	2056		1,634	1,565	892	1427		1,346	1,295	738	1185	
					67.8%	66.1%	57.8%	69.4%		82.4%	82.7%	82.7%	83.0%	

*Passing rates are reflective of the best attempt.

****2022 official testing data not yet provided by the HiSET vendor.**



Year to Year Comparison of Examinees



****2022 official testing data not yet provided by the HiSET vendor.**

HiSET Details

The cost of the HiSET varies based on version. The computer-based test is \$53.75 for all five subtests, \$10.75 per test. The paper-based test is \$75.00 for all five subtests, \$15.00 per test. An individual must take and pass all five subtests to receive a high school equivalency. This testing fee is paid directly to HiSET through an online registration process. The price includes two free retests, within 12 months of the original purchase, if necessary. The individual test center fee varies from center to center. Test centers in the state of Montana charge up to \$5 per subtest.

The HiSET exam is offered in two formats, a paper-based testing system (PBT) and a computer-based testing system (CBT). There are 12 test centers that exclusively offer PBT, 20 test centers that exclusively offer CBT, and 7 that offer both PBT and CBT. Computer based testing is the wave of the future and we are encouraging the test centers to move toward computer-based testing. With computer-based testing, the examiners have a more secure testing environment and testers receive immediate test results.

As a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, HiSET testing is also offered via a secure virtual platform/proctoring service. The HiSET Exam at Home is identical in content, format, and on-screen experience to exams taken at a test center. There is a \$17.50 fee per subtest for this delivery method, but this additional testing option offers increased flexibility for individuals seeking their high school equivalency.



Montana Demographics/Statistics

Test taker demographics have changed slightly over the course of the past several years.

Percent of Completers Tested by Age									
	2018	Passing Rate – Best Attempt	2019	Passing Rate – Best Attempt	2020	Passing Rate – Best Attempt	2021	Passing Rate – Best Attempt	2022**
16-18	45.7%		46.9%		46.4%		47.4%		
19-24	30.0%		30.4%		31.0%		32.6%		
25-29	8.9%		7.9%		7.6%		7.1%		
30-34	6.6%		6.3%		6.5%		5.3%		
35-39	3.1%		4.0%		4.0%		3.2%		
40-49	4.0%		2.9%		2.8%		3.7%		
50-59	1.3%		1.5%		1.3%		0.6%		
60+	0.3%		0.3%		0.3%		0.2%		
Total Number of Completers	1,634	82.4%	1,565	82.7%	892	82.7%	892	83.0%	

*Passing rates are reflective of the best attempt.

**2022 official testing data not yet provided by the HiSET vendor.

The breakdown of examinees by the following categories has remained relatively consistent over the course of the past several years.

Gender	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022**
Male	56.9%	59.2%	56.6%	58.2%	
Female	43.1%	40.8%	43.4%	41.8%	

**2022 official testing data not yet provided by the HiSET vendor.



Completers Reported by Race								
	Percent Response Rate	American Indian	Asian	African American	Pacific Islander	White	Other	Chose not to respond
2018	99.3%	16.7%	0.7%	2.0%	0.7%	71.1%	4.9%	9.8%
2019	99.1%	18.1%	0.9%	2.6%	1.4%	69.8%	4.5%	10.4%
2020	98.3%	16.4%	0.7%	1.8%	0.7%	73.7%	4.2%	8.4%
2021	99.2%	20.1%	1.2%	2.5%	0.8%	68.9%	4.4%	9.7%
2022**								

*Response rate of this particular section varies. Of the examinees reporting, the majority have consistently classified themselves as white.

****2022 official testing data not yet provided by the HiSET vendor.**

Reported Education Level									
	Percent Response Rate	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th
2018	69.7%	1.1%	0.3%	1.2%	5.7%	17.6%	29.1%	37.6%	7.4%
2019	67.5%	0.3%	0.7%	0.9%	6.4%	18.1%	28.6%	36.3%	8.7%
2020	64.7%	1.6%	0.9%	1.0%	7.5%	14.2%	29.6%	35.0%	10.2%
2021	62.0%	0.8%	0.5%	0.7%	5.2%	15.5%	28.2%	41.1%	8.0%
2022**									

*Response rate of this particular section varies. Of the examinees reporting, the majority have consistently had some high school (9-12) education.

****2022 official testing data not yet provided by the HiSET vendor.**

Reported Employment Status					
	Percent Response Rate	Part-time	Full-Time	Unemployed	Not in the labor force
2018	71.0%	25.3%	20.3%	30.6%	23.7%
2019	69.7%	26.7%	22.5%	29.9%	20.9%
2020	68.0%	22.6%	28.3%	30.1%	18.9%
2021	65.1%	24.3%	25.2%	26.4%	24.1%
2022**					

****2022 official testing data not yet provided by the HiSET vendor.**



One of the more interesting statistics offered from the demographic information gathered is the following reasons for taking the HiSET exam.

Reported Reasons for Taking the test												
	Tech	2-yr College	4-yr College	Get a Job	Keep Current Job	RM	SAT	Public Assist	Mil	Early Release	Court Order	Other
2018	12.1%	11.1%	15.8%	20.5%	1.8%	3.5%	21.1%	0.1%	2.7%	1.0%	1.5%	8.7%
2019	11.9%	10.4%	15.1%	19.7%	2.6%	2.0%	21.8%	0.1%	4.4%	0.6%	2.4%	8.9%
2020	11.3%	10.0%	16.4%	18.3%	2.3%	2.8%	20.4%	0.6%	4.7%	0.4%	1.7%	11.1%
2021	13.8%	10.6%	14.8%	15.0%	1.9%	2.9%	21.4%	0.1%	4.6%	1.7%	2.4%	10.9%
2022**												

****2022 official testing data not yet provided by the HiSET vendor.**

Abbreviations
 Tech = Technical School
 RM = Role Model
 SAT = personal satisfaction
 MIL = Military

Reported Ways of Preparing for the Test							
	Percent Response Rate	Hard Copy Book	eBook	Computer Software	Online	Prep Class	Did Not Prepare
2018	64.7%	23.3%	1.3%	1.8%	30.0%	50.5%	20.5%
2019	63.1%	24.2%	0.9%	1.9%	31.2%	48.0%	21.5%
2020	58.0%	22.2%	1.0%	1.7%	35.4%	42.0%	21.9%
2021	57.3%	20.7%	1.2%	1.7%	37.0%	45.7%	21.3%
2022**							

*Response rate of this particular section varies. Of the examinees reporting, the majority have consistently reported online prep or prep classes prior to taking the exam.

****2022 official testing data not yet provided by the HiSET vendor.**

Note: Data compiled from Annual Statistical Reports on the HiSET Exam published by the HiSET vendor.