



testGEAR[®]

Implementation Guide

Get the most out of your testGEAR site license by incorporating one of these effective test prep implementation models in your school.

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Curriculum Enhancement

Many schools that administer state-mandated exit exams choose to implement testGEAR as a curriculum enhancement. The curriculum tested on these exams (for example, Regents, MCAS, FCAT, TAAS, OPT, CAHSEE, MME) is directly aligned to the curriculum taught at the high school.

Is Curriculum Enhancement right for your school?

Schools selecting the curriculum enhancement model often possess a receptive faculty willing to try new methods and strategies to increase student performance. Technology and access to the Internet is plentiful, either through multiple computer laboratories or though computers directly available in the classroom.

How is it implemented?

The Site Administrator identifies faculty responsible for teaching courses associated with the exit exam. These teachers are then trained on testGEAR product functionality, curriculum and reporting. The Site Administrator can train the teachers, or the teachers can take a one-hour free Orientation Teleconference session through Bridges.

Access to technology is assessed to determine a class schedule for using the computer lab. TestSCOPE reports are generated and distributed to each of the associated faculty so interventions on particular skill areas can be developed and additional tutoring arranged for struggling students.

On their first day, students should complete the registration process and BrainScan diagnostic test to ensure higher usage of testGEAR, since completing the BrainScan section is necessary to access the learning units.

Programmed Course

College-bound students already understand the need to prepare for SAT/ACT/PSAT. Using testGEAR in a test prep course offers students an academic credit for taking the course during the school day without requiring extra instruction by faculty.

Is a Programmed Course right for your school?

Good candidates for this model include schools that currently support preparing students for pre-collegiate exams by offering a test preparation course or have the flexibility to easily add courses. There should be sufficient Internet access in the school to provide a regularly scheduled course for an entire semester.

How is it implemented?

The Site Administrator verifies school policy about awarding academic credits for participating in a test preparation course. A grading rubric is defined according to the appropriate academic department. The Site Administrator then identifies the number of lab monitors needed to assist students using the course. These individuals are trained on product functionality and reporting, in order to answer questions and monitor progress. The Site Administrator coordinates with the registrar and technology manager to secure a computer lab with sufficient terminals. Students who would benefit from the course are made aware of its availability.

Registration can be done by taking the students through a step-by-step process. An LCD projector makes it easier to ensure that all students are on the same step. Students should complete the BrainScan the first or second day of class, since completing the BrainScan is necessary to access the learning units.

After-School Program

Motivated students willing to put in the time to prepare for an upcoming test would appreciate an after-school test preparation program. In this instance, the testGEAR online course is used in an organized and formal manner, supervised by a member of the school staff. Commonly, participation in the after-school college-bound program is voluntary and the exit exam school program is mandatory.

Is an After-School program right for your school?

Schools with the flexibility to offer an after-school program are usually open after normal school hours for a variety of community programs. In addition, technology needs to be sufficient and reliable to support the number of participating students.

How is it implemented?

The Site Administrator identifies the staff members who will monitor the after-school preparation program. These people are trained on product function, curriculum, and reporting for the course(s) they are using. They can be trained by the Site Administrator or by Bridges through a one-hour Orientation Teleconference session.

The Site Administrator then coordinates with the Building Administrator to arrange for a computer lab on designated evenings. Students are either encouraged to enroll in the program, or required to attend based on the purpose of the course. It is recommended that a written commitment be obtained from both the students and their parents in order to increase the likelihood that they will complete the entire program.

Some schools have even charged the students directly for the cost of the testGEAR course, since it is a program not being used during school hours.

Stand-Alone Program

Students may use their testGEAR program at school or at home without staff supervision. Some schools have opted to charge students directly for the cost of their testGEAR if college admissions test preparation is outside of their school mission.

Is a Stand-Alone program right for your school?

Schools comfortable and experienced with online learning make good candidates for this model. Technology and Internet access are readily available to students throughout the school day and not confined to a single computer lab. The Site Administrator is confident that students are motivated and able to direct their own learning (testGEAR makes independent study very straightforward). In addition, most of the student body has access to the Internet at home and their parents are aware of and committed to the importance of preparing for high-stakes exams. Historically, programs using the standalone model have a small number of students participating.

How is it implemented?

A Site Administrator, often from the guidance or college counseling department, is trained on the course functionality and content. Participating students are identified and receive ID cards. Some schools send a letter to parents explaining the program and obtaining their commitment to encourage their children to use the course at home. Students enroll in their courses and complete the BrainScan at a special event either during or after school. Students access their SMART curriculum outside of their school schedule, often during free periods, lunch, at home, or from the public library.

TestSCOPE reports are generated and sent to the Site Administrator who follows up with students on an individual basis.



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