



2023-2024 Policy Guidelines for Pre- and Post-Testing Students

In

Adult Education and Family Literacy Act

Adult Education & English Language Learning Programs

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Wisconsin Technical College System
2023-2024 Policy Guidelines Pre- and Post-Testing Students
in
Adult Education and Family Literacy Act-Funded
Adult Education (AE) & English Language Learning (ELL) Programs

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Wisconsin Technical College System Policy Guidelines for Pre- and Post-Testing Students Adult Education and Family Literacy Act-Funded AE/ELL Programs

Introduction and Context

Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) funded Adult Education (AE) and English Language Learning (ELL) programs are required to use United States Department of Education (USED)-approved nationally standardized tests to provide evidence of students' academic functional level at program entry and at exit for all students in AEFLA-funded programming. Testing is administered for the instructional areas of reading, writing, and mathematics, and, for ELL learners in areas of listening, speaking, writing, and/or reading. Programs are expected to measure and report the educational level of all students. Initial testing and all post-testing must utilize the state-designated assessments as described in this policy. Although there are several possible ways to demonstrate measurable skill gain allowable within WIOA, this policy focuses on standardized pre- and post-testing only.

Students in WTCS AEFLA-funded programming should be assessed in all core academic areas (reading, writing, and mathematics). At a minimum, students must be assessed in at least two of these areas, and a minimum of one post-test. Accurate data regarding students' functional levels at entry and exit is important, as it provides local programs with information regarding their success in helping students achieve learning gains. The data is also the basis for some state and federal accountability reporting and is included in the Outcome-Based formulas used to calculate some of the funding available to colleges. For this reason, continuous improvement in the percentage of students both pre- and post-tested should be the goal of every AEFLA-funded program. The state target for post-testing (to which all programs need to contribute) is 57%. The test scores reported in the Client Reporting System must be based on the standardized tests listed below as per this policy. WTCS staff will intercede with programs whose post-testing percentages fall below this figure to identify corrective actions that are needed.

Standardized testing should be a part of a program's intake and assessment process that assesses students' overall academic situation and informs goal setting and overall planning to meet each student's education and/or employment goals. Standardized tests should be administered in a distraction-free, consistent testing environment, providing an atmosphere that allows all students a fair opportunity to demonstrate their functional level as accurately as possible.

Any adult education student who is not assessed using an approved standardized test may not be counted in performance reports to the US Department of Education's Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (although data on all adult education instruction must be reported to the WTCS office as per WTCS Client Reporting guidelines).

◆ AEFLA-FUNDED ADULT EDUCATION (AE) AND ADULT SECONDARY EDUCATION (ASE) ◆

SECTION 1: NRS-APPROVED ASSESSMENTS AND TESTING PARAMETERS (AE/ASE)

There are now two NRS-approved assessment series that can be administered for AE/ASE – the TABE 11/12 Series and the CASAS GOALS¹ Reading 900 Series/CASAS GOALS Math 900 Series. (Note that there is a separate CASAS Life and Work Reading/Listening series that may be used to assess ESL/ELL students in

¹ Greater Opportunities for Adult Learning Success (GOALS)

reading, listening, and linguistic comprehension and practical application, but which are not approved for use in the WTCS for ABE or ASE students.)

1-A: The Tests for Adult Basic Education (TABE)

The Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) will be used by all AEFLA-funded programs for the purpose of determining student academic progress. NOTE: The Spanish version of the TABE is not accepted for reporting by the US Department of Education.

Only TABE editions 11 & 12 should be used. As updated versions of the TABE (or other approved) tests become available, the WTCS Office will provide guidance on the implementation and use of these instruments for NRS reporting purposes.

TABE 11 & 12 basic information:

- **Corporate Owner of the TABE: Data Recognition Corp. (Ripp, Marcus MRipp@DataRecognitionCorp.com)**
- **Subject areas:** Basic skills - Reading, Math, Language
- **Assessment Types:** Diagnostic, Summative, Formative
- **Delivery Format:** Paper and Pencil, Online (Insight)
- **Scoring:** Hand, Local and Online Scoring

TABE 11/12 information can be found at <https://tabetest.com/students-2/tabe-1112/>.

Programs should alternately administer the two parallel forms (i.e., 11 and 12) to ensure valid results when retesting the same students. The WTCS state office will monitor the appropriate use of alternating pre- and post-test forms and will intercede with programs which are not properly alternating forms to ensure correct test administration. Please note that programs may not mix TABE and CASAS assessments for a single student's pre- and post-assessment – two TABEs (a pre and a post) or two CASAS tests (a pre and a post) are necessary per student.

Programs should attempt to have all levels of the TABE tests available for use due to the wide variation in the functional levels of students entering ABE programs.

Content Levels for the TABE tests:

Content Level	Correlating Grade Level Range
L (Limited literacy)	0-1.9
E (Easy)	2.0-3.9
M (Medium)	4.0-5.9
D (Difficult)	6.0-8.9
A (Advanced)	9.0-12.9

Please note that this table shows the content levels. TABE 11 & 12 no longer reports grade levels; however, it does report NRS levels (along with scale scores). The USED NRS content levels still make a grade level correlation, for example, NRS content levels 1 – 4 are equivalent to grade levels 0.0 thru 8.9, NRS level 5 is equivalent to grade levels 9.0 – 10.9, and NRS level 6 is equivalent to grade levels 11.0 – 12.9. These reporting changes to TABE 11/12 are rather intuitive, but it is still important to understand the correlation between content level ↔ grade level.

Additionally, it is critical for AE/ELL programs to recognize or interpret the variance in rigor of material on each of the L, E, M, D, A levels of TABE. For example, an NRS level 6 level derived from a D level test (middle school and early high school level material) is not the same as an NRS level 6 derived from the A level test (high school material). A test seeking to assess grade level 6.0 using D level content would demonstrate how a “typical” 12th grader would perform when tested on middle school or early high school level content – for a “typical” 12th grader, this content would be easily understood and successfully completed. True high school level material is contained on the A level test, and students need to progress to this level of test and show some mastery before they are deemed ready for postsecondary programs. As students begin to indicate mastery at one level, test programs should not hesitate to move the student to the next testing level.

For Adult Education or other programs that include students functioning at various levels of academic ability, it is required to *first* administer the TABE Locator Test. The Locator results will indicate which level of TABE to use for the full assessment. (Note: This applies to the paper/pencil version of the test – the PC TABE and online version locate/place students automatically). For WTCS AEFLA-funded programs, the Locator must be used for the purpose of accurately identifying the most appropriate level of the test (Level L-E-M-D-A) for the individual student. TABE 11 & 12 has one Locator Test—divided into three sections—one each for reading, mathematics, and language. The entire Locator Test takes about an hour to complete. Each Locator sub-test will determine the appropriate content level of test that the student should take. NOTE: Instructional and testing staff should not assume that each student arrives to be tested with the same level of performance in each content area.

The only time the Locator is not required is when TABE is being used as a screening tool for an educational program that requires a certain level of functional ability (such as a postsecondary occupational program). Instead, select the appropriate level of TABE commensurate with the content difficulty for the program. For example, if screening for a nursing program that requires an indication of high school level skill mastery, select TABE Level A.

1-B: Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS)

The CASAS GOALS Reading/Math series may be used by all AEFLA-funded programs to assess AE students in the core academic subjects of reading and mathematics. Details specific to the CASAS testing process are generally similar to those of the TABE, but several specific requirements are included in the following sections. Additional information (e.g., NRS levels/scoring, test forms, testing methods, ordering instructions, training requirements, etc.) can be found in the appendices of this policy. Source information regarding these CASAS assessments, as well as access to training resources and online ordering, are available on the CASAS website: <https://www.casas.org/home>

SECTION 2: ADMINISTERING TESTS AND ASSESSING TEST RESULTS (AE/ASE)

2-A: Using Tests to Measure Student Growth

As programs plan to measure student growth as they function within a particular test level (for instance, the M level), the following alternating combination of forms is the first consideration:

<u>Pre-Test</u>	<u>Post-Test</u>
TABE 11M	TABE 12M
<u>OR</u>	
TABE 12M	TABE 11M

In each of these recommended pre- and post-test combinations, the program would be testing with different forms of TABE that are on the same scale to measure gains. The student is not taking the same set of test

questions in these scenarios – that is the point of alternating forms. In the occasional instance where a student is tested, leaves the program for a few months, and then returns and is inadvertently tested with the same form, the WTCS Client Reporting System will reject the record unless there has been a six-month period between the two tests. This is based on Data Recognition Corporation’s recommendation to avoid the “practice effect”.

As students demonstrate skills that indicate they are ready to be assessed using the next level of test (in this case, the D level), a Level D post-test should be administered. Because all levels of TABE are calibrated on the same scale, results may be compared across levels. Here are two examples of a student progressing on the TABE test difficulty scale. In each example a student takes their initial pre-test and then (reading from left to right) four subsequent (post) tests.

Pre-Test	Post-Test	Post-Test	Post-Test	Post-Test
TABE 11M	TABE 12M	TABE 11D	TABE 12D	TABE 11D
		<u>OR</u>		
TABE 11M	TABE 11D	TABE 12A	TABE 11A	TABE 12A

If a returning student has been post-tested in April or May that test score can be carried forward and re-reported in the fall as a pre-test. This carrying forward of the post-test should be done on an individual basis considering the student’s situation. Programs should recognize that when carrying a test score forward from the spring to use as a pre-test in the fall, there is a possibility that the student’s skills will have deteriorated during summer absence.

Educational Functioning Level Tables, which provide general descriptive data regarding skill levels as well as comparative data re-scale scores and NRS levels, are attached at the end of this document. (See Appendix B)

NOTE: USED guidance now makes it clear that Measurable Skill Gains for AE students (not ELL) who are in NRS Level Six in a subject area will now be indicated not by post test score but by achievement of a high school credential or transition into a postsecondary course. This means that post-test scores for AE students (not ELL) in the Level Six range will no longer be used to indicate completion of Level Six – only a high school credential or postsecondary enrollment will indicate completion of Level Six for ABE students.

2-B: Training Staff to Assess Effectively

Local program administrators are responsible for the implementation of these *Policy Guidelines for Pre- and Post-Testing Students in Adult Basic Education*. Processes for pre- and post-testing students should be clearly articulated by program leaders during staff development sessions. They should also be shared in writing with all ABE/ELL staff.

Local staff involved in gathering, analyzing, compiling and reporting data for the NRS should be trained in the following topic areas:

- NRS policy, accountability policies, and data collection process
- Definitions of measures
- Conducting assessments

Staff development must be provided for all staff involved in testing students under this policy. Training sessions will usually be part of a local program in-service or pre-service activity, or a part of a new employee training sequence. Refresher training should be provided regularly.

Adult educators who have a general knowledge of measurement principles and are willing to abide by the assessment standards of the American Psychological Association may administer the WTCS-approved tests (TABE, TABE CLAS-E, and the BEST tests). These professional standards require administrators to follow specific guidelines, such as keeping tests in a secure place and administering them only as directed. For additional information, see the Purchaser's Qualification Statement published on the Data Recognition Corporation (DRC) website.

Programs are required to prepare teachers and other staff who will be administering the testing process in not only these policies, but also in the specific policies and procedures related to the testing instrument as designated in the specific test products test directions. To become an assessor for TABE, TABE CLAS-E, BEST, or BEST Plus 2.0, individuals must successfully complete an online or in-person training provided by the state, the product vendor, or the local program. After successfully completing the training, participants should successfully administer and score three learner assessments under the supervision of a qualified assessor before independently administering an assessment.

If you would like to schedule a training session for your staff members, contact:

Assessment Solutions Representative for Data Recognition Corporation
Michele Ruskowski, 1-224-407-0729 | mruskowski@datarecognitioncorp.com

Professional development plans for teachers and staff should be updated with training requirements as appropriate. All programs must keep records identifying which of their staff have been trained in pre- and post-testing, and by whom. Summary information regarding these records needs to be available to WTCS staff as well as to evaluation team members during regularly-scheduled evaluations.

SECTION 3: TESTING PROCESS GUIDELINES AND TESTING ACCOMODATIONS (AE/ASE)

3-A: Testing Process Overview and Ethical Test Administration

Processes for pre- and post-testing students should be clearly defined by each program, should be in writing and should be shared with AE staff. A post-test is expected to be administered after 30 to 59 hours for ASE and 40 to 60 hours for AE instruction, following DRC recommendations. For the CASAS GOALS Reading/Math Series, the guidelines state that post-testing should not be administered until at least 40 instructional hours have been completed, and it recommends post-testing should take place after 70-100 instructional hours have been completed.

All newly enrolled students in funded programs must be pre-tested once they receive 12 or more hours of instruction. It is not recommended to pre-test a new student at the program orientation or intake as an initial experience in the program. When scores are reported to WTCS, the most recent post-test score may be "rolled over" or used as the entry level score for students who are continuing across program years (i.e. a late May post-test may be used as a fall entry level score) except in the case when test versions are changing, such as the change from TABE 9/10 to TABE 11/12 – the different versions of the tests are not able to be effectively correlated, and so a 9/10 pre-test cannot be correlated to a 11/12 post-test.

- The tests should be timed according to the limits set by the test company, and other recommended or required conditions established by the company should be respected.

- The room in which the tests are administered should be quiet and allow the test takers to concentrate without noise and distractions.
- Test sites should be properly monitored.

For students who are going to take General Education Development (GED) tests, the appropriate TABE post-test (math, reading, etc.) should be administered at, or prior to, the time that the GED predictor test is administered. Do not wait for students to complete their GED tests before attempting to administer post-tests.

AEFLA programs must maintain an ethical policy of using the proper level of test for the student’s ability and not choosing a test level based on what generates the highest measured improvement. As students progress from one level of test (for instance, TABE D) to the next level (TABE A) there may be a moderate reduction in NRS level, but this is normal and will not significantly affect the program’s overall data. Do not continue to use a particular test until the student maxes out the NRS level on it (for instance, using a D until the student is getting a 6), or the student may experience a drop in their level when they move up to the next rigor level.

Staff should use their judgment on whether to ask students with severe test anxiety to take TABE tests. Exceptions to the standard student testing approach is only allowable with TABE and should be infrequent and needs to be documented in the student’s file. Except for this instance, all students in impacted programs should be informed of the expectation that they will take an occasional test to track their education growth and to meet the requirements of the program. Please contact the WTCS staff if other significant concerns regarding testing arise.

3-B: Appropriate Testing Accommodations

Testing accommodations must be readily available. Testing accommodation is a change made to the test administration procedure to provide equal access for students with disabilities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. If an accommodation is employed, it is important that the selected accommodation minimize any advantage or disadvantage of completing the test. Specifically, if the accommodation under consideration is not used in instruction, then it should not be used in the testing situation. The WTCS Disability Services Education Director or district designee will be responsible for approving and/or providing the appropriate testing accommodations administered by WTCS districts. Community Based Organizations (CBOs) should contact the WTCS Disability Services Education Director for issues related to accommodations procedures and test forms.

Additional accommodation suggestions may be available from the Data Recognition Corporation Evaluation Consultant.

Large-print, Braille, and audio editions of TABE Forms 11/12 are available from Data Recognition Corporation, but please note that the Braille and audio editions are not yet approved for NRS use.

SECTION 4: DATA REPORTING (ABE/ASE/ELL)

4-A: Understanding Data Reporting Requirements

It is required that each program report assessment information to the WTCS Client Reporting System. For fiscal year 2023-24, to report student performance level, programs need to submit the test version, the form used, the topic areas tested, the scale scores achieved (students’ raw scores must be properly converted to scale scores as per the test instructions), the NRS levels, and the date the assessment was given.

Gain is only measured within discrete instructional areas -- for instance, Math – and not across different subject areas. The local AEFLA provider submits the scale score and other required information to the WTCS.

The WTCS Office double-checks the scale score/NRS level correlation and aggregates this data into program-level and state-level reports indicating whether NRS gains have been made.

Student test data should be recorded within five (5) business days into the local program's data system. The data required to be sent to the WTCS Office should be entered in the provided data fields and submitted (at a minimum) four times per grant year by the four quarterly deadline dates established systemwide each year. Note that the WTCS Client Reporting System generates a series of edit reports after data is transmitted to the WTCS Office. These edit reports are used to identify errors and verify the accuracy of data. Programs will receive automatic notice if there are errors in the data submissions.

Students in WTCS AEFLA-funded AE programming may be assessed in all of the three core academic areas (reading, writing, and mathematics), although this testing should be staggered in order to avoid test fatigue. At a minimum, however, students must be assessed in at least one of these areas. Additionally, test administrators should be aware that if the CASAS GOALS assessments are being used, the only core academic areas that can be tested are reading and math as there is no NRS-approved writing assessment method within the CASAS GOALS series. If multiple skill areas are assessed and the student has different abilities in different areas, the WTCS default is to assume the student will begin instruction in their weakest area (as well as the other areas if appropriate). Although there will be some exceptional cases where programs do not choose to immediately help students in their weakest core subject area, the WTCS Office assumes that normally programs will help students in their weakest area. For NRS reporting purposes, placement in educational functioning levels is determined by the lowest pretest scaled score.

4-B: Using the WTCS Client Reporting System for Reporting Student and Assessment Data

The Client Reporting System (CRS) is a computerized reporting system designed to consolidate and coordinate client data reported to the State Office through the demographic, course, and grant activity records. The Client Reporting System (CRS) records contain information about persons served through grants financed by state administered funds, and students who are enrolled in WTCS courses. For all purposes related to this reporting system, the term "grant" includes projects, project activities, and grant activities. General reporting requirements are detailed in the Client Reporting User's Guide and other appropriate places. However, for purposes of measuring student pre/post testing information, colleges and CBOs are to submit student enrollment and assessment records for each client quarterly. This data will be used for state and federal reporting, data analysis, and other activities at the state level.

Quarterly data submissions are required of all AEFL grant recipients. Quarterly submissions will be due on the following dates:

- By October 14, 2023 for reporting period July 1 – September 30
- By January 14, 2024 for reporting period October 1 to December 31
- By April 14, 2024 for reporting period January 1 – March 31
- By July 14, 2024 for reporting period April 1 – June 30

Please share these timelines and information with all instructional and testing staff.

4-C: Using the CRS S7 Record to Report Client Basic Education Testing Levels

The reporting of pre- and post- assessment results for AEFLA-funded basic education is captured via the S7 record for activities in basic education grant clients. The S7 record is used to document client progress as required for AEFL federal grant reporting. The S7 record is only required for AEFLA-funded adult education grant participants and there should be one S7 record submitted for each applicable basic education test

administered. Adult education clients who are enrolled in courses not supported by AEFLA grants do not require S7 submissions.

There should be an S7 record submitted for each test that a student takes. For example: If a student is tested 4 times in Reading and 5 times in Math, there will be nine S7 records submitted for that student.

Testing results and other related documentation need to be available for state and federal review. In addition, testing policies and procedures will be discussed extensively during on-site reviews and evaluations as well as at regular professional development events.

Complete information on the use of the S7 record (and other issues regarding use of the CRS) is available at: [Client Reporting System | \(wtcsystem.edu\)](http://wtcsystem.edu). State staff is also available to assist programs with questions or concerns.

◆ AEFLA-FUNDED ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING (ELL) PROGRAMS ◆

SECTION 1: NRS-APPROVED ASSESSMENTS AND TESTING PARAMETERS (ELL/ESL)

1-A: Overview of English Language Learning (ELL) Assessments

The Center for Applied Linguistics Basic English Skills Test (BEST), Best Plus 2.0, Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS) Life and Work Reading 80 Series, Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS) Life and Work Listening 980 Series, and TABE Complete Language Assessment System – English (TABE CLAS-E) assessments will be used by all AEFLA-funded programs for the purpose of determining student academic progress in (ELL) programs for students in NRS Levels 1-6. The CASAS Life and Work Reading/Listening Series are NRS-approved and were recently included as an additional assessment method that can be used in AEFLA-funded programs. Note that students can be placed into advanced ESL using Best Literacy, but the test does not assess skills beyond this level, so students cannot exit Advanced ESL with this test. Therefore, as students enter this level use of another assessment is recommended.

Proof of appropriate training by authorized representatives from CTB-McGraw Hill and The Center for Applied Linguistics in use of the test will be required before approval for NRS use. Specific information on TABE CLAS-E, BEST Literacy, CASAS Life and Work Reading/Listening Series, and Best Plus 2.0 pre- and post-testing intervals and NRS scale score tables are included in Appendix B of this document.

When testing an individual's speaking and listening levels, TABE CLAS-E and Best Plus 2.0 oral assessments will be used. TABE CLAS-E is offered both as paper/pencil and online versions. Additionally, the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS) Life and Work Listening 980 Series are NRS-approved and now available to use for assessment. The tests will be administered only by trained and CAL/CTB McGraw-Hill-authorized test administrators, and test administration will strictly follow the procedures established by both CAL and Data Recognition Corporation. The oral interview may be used as a screening device to identify examinees for which the Literacy Skills Section may be appropriate.

For testing reading and writing, the existing BEST Literacy Skills assessment (Test Forms B, C, and D) and TABE CLAS-E will be used. For TABE CLAS-E, Test Forms A and B should be used. Additionally, the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS) Life and Work Reading 80 Series is NRS-approved and now available to use for assessment. The Literacy Skills Section may be administered either individually or to groups. The forms should be used in alternating fashion as explained in the test manual. The WTCS Office will monitor the appropriate use of alternating pre- and post-test forms and will intercede with programs which are not properly alternating forms to ensure correct test administration.

The CASAS Life and Work Reading/Listening Series requires an intake process to be conducted using either a Locator (e-test) or an Appraisal (paper). The pre- and post-tests that will be used are the Life and Work Reading (60 min.) and the Life and Work Listening (49-52 min.). Post-testing should not be conducted until a minimum of 40 instructional hours has been reached, and CASAS recommends post-testing after 70-100 instructional hours have been completed. Additional information, including test forms and testing frequency, can be found in the appendices of this policy. Source information regarding these assessments can also be found on CASAS website: <https://www.casas.org/home>

NRS Test Benchmarks for Educational Functioning Levels which provide general descriptive data regarding skill levels as well as comparative data re scale scores and grade levels are attached at the end of this document. (See Appendix B)

Resources for Assessment Information and Assistance

BEST Plus: Center for Applied Linguistics, the publisher of the BEST Plus, has information available at their [web site \(www.cal.org/aea/\)](http://www.cal.org/aea/).

CASAS: CASAS, the publisher of the CASAS assessments, has information available at their [web site \(www.casas.org\)](http://www.casas.org).

TABE: Data Recognition Corporation (DRC), the publisher of the TABE, has information available at their [web site \(www.tabetest.com\)](http://www.tabetest.com).

To schedule a TABE training for staff, please contact the Assessment Solutions Representative for Data Recognition Corporation

Michele Ruskowski, 1-224-407-0729 | mruszkowski@datarecognitioncorp.com

SECTION 2: ADMINISTERING TESTS AND ASSESSING TEST RESULTS (ELL/ESL)

2-A: Training Staff to Assess Effectively

Local program administrators are responsible for ensuring that these *Policy Guidelines for Pre- and Post-Testing Students in ELL Programs* are implemented, and that local staff development is provided. Processes for pre- and post-testing students should be clearly defined by each program, should be in writing and should be shared in writing with ELL staff.

Adult educators who have a general knowledge of measurement principles and are willing to abide by the assessment standards of the American Psychological Association may administer pre and posttests. These professional standards require test administrators to follow specific guidelines, such as keeping tests in a secure place and administering them only as directed.

Programs will have to prepare teachers and other staff who will be administering the testing process in not only these policies but also in the policies and procedures specific to the testing instrument. Professional development plans for teachers should be updated with training requirements as appropriate.

Staff development must be provided for all staff involved in testing students under this policy. Training sessions will usually be part of a local program in-service or pre-service activity, or a part of a new employee training sequence. All test administrators of the Best Plus 2.0 and TABE CLAS-E tests must have completed and passed training from CAL certified trainers or, for TABE CLAS-E, from system-office designated trainers and/or Data Recognition Corporation staff. The state office coordinates with the state Best Plus 2.0 and TABE CLAS-E trainers to ensure that Best Plus 2.0 and TABE CLAS-E trainings are offered at different regions of the state as needed. All programs must keep records of which of their staff have been trained by whom and when. Trainers must copy the state ELL director with a list of the names and their affiliation for each person trained.

Training requirements and ordering instructions for CASAS Life and Work Reading/Listening Series assessments can be found in the appendices of this policy. Source information regarding training requirements and test administration, as well as access to online supplies ordering, can be found on CASAS website: <https://www.casas.org/home>

SECTION 3: TESTING PROCESS GUIDELINES AND TESTING ACCOMODATIONS (ELL/ESL)

3-A: Testing Process Overview and Ethical Test Administration

Processes for pre- and post-testing students should be clearly defined by each program, should be in writing and should be shared with ELL staff. Testing publishers discourage frequent testing/re-testing. Please abide by the publisher guidelines, with pre-tests administered at 12 or more hours of instruction and a post-test is expected to be administered after 60-75 hours of instruction in any of the core subject areas. If using the CASAS Assessment Series, the policy prescribes post-testing after 70-100 hours of instruction. If the hours for a course of instruction exceed the recommended number of hours, post-testing may most appropriately take place at the end of the instructional session. *(NOTE: post-testing intervals for those programs using TABE CLAS-E are listed in APPENDIX A of these guidelines.)*

All newly enrolled students in funded programs must be pre-tested with an approved standardized assessment; a minimum of two pre-assessment must be administered for educational functioning level placement. A minimum of one post-test must be administered. It is not recommended to pre-test a new student at the program orientation or intake as an initial experience in the program. The student's last post-test should be "rolled over" or used for continuing students. If the program senses continuing students have lost significant language skills since their last post-test a new pre-test may be administered. *(NOTE: Pre-testing must be completed in at least two skills areas (i.e., speaking and reading) to accurately and comprehensively assess an individual's fluency.)*

The tests should be administered according to the procedures set by the test companies, the Center for Applied Linguistics and Data Recognition Corporation. Every staff person authorized to administer tests should have the BEST and TABE CLAS-E manuals and a written copy of local program procedures as well as state guidelines.

3-B: Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The federal statutes that pertain to administering adult education programs with regard to persons with disabilities are the WIOA Title II, the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Sections 504 and 508, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

These regulations require programs to assure program accessibility, use of auxiliary aids and services, and provide reasonable accommodations as appropriate at no cost to the student. The WTCS Disability Services Education Director or district designee will be responsible for approving and/or providing the appropriate testing accommodations administered by WTCS districts. Community Based Organizations should contact the WTCS Special Needs Education Director for issues related to accommodations procedures and test forms. All adult education programs must have procedures in place that refer students to the appropriate staff member, agency, or organization for issues related to identifying students with disabilities or other special needs, testing accommodations, procedures, and appropriate documentation required.

3-C: Reasonable Accommodations

A reasonable accommodation refers to any change to a classroom environment or task that permits a qualified student with a disability to participate in the classroom process, to perform the essential tasks of the class, or to enjoy benefits and privileges of classroom participation equal to those enjoyed by adult learners without disabilities.

Adult students with disabilities are responsible for providing documentation of a disability to support a request for a reasonable accommodation. Documentation may include such items as: a physician's report, a diagnostic assessment from a certified professional, educational records (to support a record of a disability), a vocational rehabilitation report, or report from other qualified service providers. The documentation should

describe the nature and extent of the disability and suggest the kind of accommodations the student may need to participate effectively.

Please see the chart following this policy section for common accommodations approved by test publishers. The accommodations listed are suggestions only. Accommodations must be based on the needs of an individual learner and not on a disability category. Language differences, cultural differences and lack of educational opportunity in and of themselves are not reasons to grant testing accommodations. It is not appropriate to assume that an applicant needs an accommodation, nor is it appropriate to suggest accommodations to an applicant prior to a formal request or notification of the need for an accommodation.

Testing Exceptions: All students must participate in pre- and post-testing with a few exceptions:

- A. Second language learners for whom standardized testing does not yield a valid pre-test score can be placed at the ESL level 1 (please note that a minimum valid score from an NRS-approved assessment must be recorded in Client Reporting for these learners)
- B. Learners with disabilities that cannot be tested and no appropriate accommodation is available (e.g. students with visual loss and not fluent in Braille) can be exempted and must be marked in the student's file in Client Reporting.

Staff should use their judgment on whether to ask students with severe test anxiety to take TABE tests. Exceptions to the standard student testing approach is only allowable with TABE and should be infrequent and needs to be documented in the student's file. Except for this instance, all students in impacted programs should be informed of the expectation that they will take an occasional test in order to track their education growth and to meet the requirements of the program. Please contact the WTCS staff if other significant concerns regarding testing arise.

SECTION 4: DATA REPORTING (ABE/ASE/ELL)

4-A: Understanding the Role of Standardized Test Data in Local Instructional Placement

Pre- and post-testing provides a valuable measure of student skill gain using nationally-normed and standardized tests. This testing is an indispensable part of the National Reporting System process, and AEFLA-funded AE and ELL programs must incorporate this testing and report the indicated data as part of their WTCS Client Reporting process.

When programs are making instructional placement decisions, pre- and post-test data must be used as one factor in deciding course placement and the type and level of instructional materials to be used with individual students, but it is not required that test scores be used solely for these purposes. Multi-factor assessment and instructor judgment are also good indicators for student placement, and if these factors indicate a different level than the pre-test does this is not something to be unduly concerned about. For example, if a BEST or TABE CLAS-E test indicates the student is functioning at SPL 4 but other local factors show that the student should be at SPL 3, programs must use the standardized BEST or TABE CLAS-E data for required reporting, but they may place the student at SPL 3 for instruction.

Use of Informal Assessments

The Wisconsin Technical College System encourages local adult education agencies to use a variety of informal assessments to assist in informing instruction. The use of teacher-made tests, unit tests, portfolios, applied performance

assessments, and teacher and learner observations should be encouraged to monitor learning and to inform instruction on a regular, ongoing basis.

◆ DISTANCE EDUCATION POLICY ◆

I. INTRODUCTION

This policy defines distance education for WTCS AEFLA adult education programs in Wisconsin and provides guidelines for programs to record and report adult learners' distance education hours, including instruction and testing to the appropriate WTCS reporting system. This policy defines how programs can offer courses to distance education learners, defines proxy contact hours, identifies the methods to be used for recording contact hours and proxy hours, outlines information for reporting distance education activities to WTCS, and specifies assessment options specifically for NRS-related pre/post assessments (including the TABE, CASAS and BEST/BEST-plus assessments) and does not apply to GED testing. **WTCS AEFLA-funded adult education programs must follow the processes described in this document to report distance education participation.**

II. DEFINITION AND REQUIREMENTS

a. Distance Education

The federal Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education defines distance education for adult education programs as follows:

Distance education is a formal learning activity where students and instructors are separated by geography, time, or both for the majority of the instructional period. Distance learning materials are delivered through a variety of media including, but not limited to, print, audio recording, webinars, videotape, television broadcasts, computer software, web-based interaction, and other virtual or online technologies. Teachers support distance learners through communication via mail, telephone, e-mail, or other web-based technologies or software.*

* Completion of instructional activities in a computer lab for face-to-face classes does not qualify as distance education and should be reported as face-to-face instruction.

b. Identifying Distance Education Learners

The WTCS Office will determine, through providers' reporting, if a participant will be identified for federal AEFLA reporting as a distance learner for the program period. Participant hours in both distance (proxy hours) and face-to-face classroom activities must be reported through the appropriate WTCS reporting system. WTCS will evaluate all participant hours and classify a distance education learner for federal AEFLA reporting as those participants whose overall contact hours, received as proxy hours, are greater than 50 percent.

c. Distance Education Curricula

WTCS college providers should only use Adult Education Team-approved curricula for reporting distance education activities. ***Submit curricula for course approval utilizing the standard approval process in Course Management.***

d. Contact Hours by Proxy

Attendance in adult education activities that occur in a distance education format will be recorded as "Proxy" contact hours in the WTCS reporting system. Proxy contact hours can be met in a variety of ways including, but not limited to contact through mail, email, telephone, video, web/teleconference, and other ways where participants and program staff can engage and where

learner identity is verifiable. In distance education offerings, programs should compute and report the number of proxy hours equal to the number of contact hours a student would receive in a face-to-face delivery of the offering. **Providers should contact the WTCS staff if technical assistance or guidance is needed to ensure that program activities meet distance education guidelines.**

e. Identifying and Reporting Distance Education Hours

AEFLA participants must have at least twelve contact hours with the adult education program before they can be counted for federal reporting purposes. Contact can be a combination of face-to-face and distance education. Learners with fewer than twelve hours of contact should still be reported through the appropriate WTCS reporting system. All contact hours must be documented and verifiable.

f. Proxy Hours Record

NRS guidelines require that proxy contact hours be recorded using one of three specified models: clock time, instructor verification or learner mastery. These models are appropriate for different type of curricula, the WTCS Adult Education team has granted flexibility to programs to use more than one proxy hour model.

- **Clock-time:** This model assigns contact hours based on the elapsed time that a learner is connected to and engaged in an online or stand-alone software program that tracks time. The software must provide a mechanism to time-out or logout participants after a preset period of inactivity.
- **Instructor Verification:** This model assigns a fixed number of hours of credit for each assignment based on the instructor’s determination of the extent to which a learner engaged in, or completed, the assignment. Contact hours for the instructor verification model are determined and established through a study conducted by the local program according to the following plan:
 - Distance learning materials/resources are chosen;
 - A sample of classes track how long they spend teaching the content, on a unit-by-unit basis;
 - Average times for each unit are calculated from sample classrooms and that time is assigned for proxy contact hours for that unit; and
 - Training is conducted for each new set of educational materials added.
- **Learner Mastery:** This model assigns a fixed number of hours equal to the number of face-to-face contact hours of credit based on the participant’s demonstrated mastery of the content of a lesson. This model requires previous engagement by the participant on curriculum and materials related to the test. A high percentage of correct responses on the mastery test earn the credit hours attached to the material.

III. ASSESSMENT OF DISTANCE LEARNERS

Distance learners must be assessed under the same guidelines as all adult learners in Wisconsin. Eligible individuals must be pre-tested using any of the NRS compliant tests (i.e., CASAS, TABE 11, 12, TABE Clas-E). All participants must be post-tested after the appropriate number of hours of instruction specified by the test developer, at the end of the semester, or upon completion of defined curricula. The WTCS Pre- and Post-Testing Adult Education Assessment Policy applies fully to distance learning participants and no

distance learning participants will be included in state and federal reporting that do not have assessment results in accordance with the state's policy.

WTCS Pre- and Post-Testing Adult Education Assessment Policy

All eligible individuals for adult education and literacy, including distance education participants must be assessed in accordance with the WTCS Assessment Policy Guidelines.

- All pre- and post-assessments must be administered in a proctored setting. If the program is unable to conduct in-person testing, providers may be able to report measurable skill gains (MSG) using other measures available to AEFLA programs under the MSG indicator.
- All eligible individuals must be pre-tested prior to 12 hours of instruction.
- Distance education participants are subject to the same post-test instructional hour intervals as traditional learners.

Providers can request the option to implement **virtual test proctoring**. Providers that seeking approval for virtual test proctoring must identify, document and submit a **“Virtual Assessment Protocol”** to Grants@wtcsystem.edu for approval and must receive written approval from the grant/program manager prior to conducting any virtual assessment(s). Virtual assessment protocols must ensure that:

1. the student who is testing can be properly identified;
2. the approved test (i.e., any test determined in the WTCS Pre/Post Assessment Policy) is properly secured, and; the virtual proctor can properly administer the test. Test security measures would require that only secure electronic versions of a test are administered by a virtual proctor and are deemed secure by the test publisher.

IV. PARTICIPANT COMPETENCIES

Distance education may not be the right solution for every adult education learner. Identifying the type of adult populations (e.g. ABE, ASE, ELL,) to be served and their required minimum NRS-levels, as well as other required competencies, are essential first steps in offering an effective distance education program. For adults to be successful using distance education, they require the appropriate language, reading, mathematics, and writing skills that will enable them to follow written directions, work independently, and communicate effectively. The selected distance education curricula must also be appropriate for the targeted learner population both in content, context and level of technical complexity.

The following competencies should be considered when evaluating the appropriateness of distance education for adult learners. While these competencies are not as easily measured as reading, math, and language skills, they may be ascertained through a thorough and comprehensive intake and interview process.

- Motivation
- Self-direction
- Time management skills
- Organizational skills
- Network of support
- Telephone and Internet Access
- Technology knowledge

Technology access and skill should be considered when evaluating the appropriateness of distance education activities utilizing online/web technology.

- Email Account
- Demonstrated ability with basic technology use, such as sending and replying to e-mail; using a Web browser; downloading, opening, and saving electronic files; and filling out Web-based fields and forms.
- Regular access to computer technology with Internet access and use of a personal or publicly available computer.

V. RESOURCES FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

WTCS is committed to supporting programs in developing and expanding distance education opportunities. Distance education delivery requires thorough planning and professional development as teaching in a distance education format requires different skills and competencies than face-to-face instructional programs. Program staff may request further technical assistance and training by contacting the Adult Education staff at WTCS.

APPENDIX A

WI Approved Assessment Instruments

Instrument/ Publisher Contact	Approved Forms	Approved Tests	Appropriate NRS Levels	Pre- and Post-Testing Intervals (Publisher Recommended)
<p>BEST Literacy</p> <p>[Basic English Skills Test Literacy] <i>Tests reading and writing proficiency</i></p> <p>Daniel Lieberson Dlieberson@cal.org, 202-355-1531</p>	Forms B, C, and D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reading and Writing only (paper) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All ESL NRS Levels 	60 Hours minimum, or at end of instructional session; 80-100 hours in lowest pre-test subject area recommended before post-testing.
<p>BEST Plus</p> <p>[Basic English Skills Test Plus] <i>Tests oral proficiency</i></p> <p>Daniel Lieberson Dlieberson@cal.org, 202-355-1531 BEST Plus User Support best-plus@cal.org 866-845-2378</p>	Forms A, B and C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Oral proficiency only (paper and computer-adaptive delivery format) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All ESL NRS Levels 	60 Hours minimum in lowest pre-test content area, or at end of instructional session; If the hours for a course of instruction exceed the recommended number of hours, post-testing may most appropriately take place at the end of the instructional session (Daniel Lieberson, <i>BEST Plus</i> Project Manager Center for Applied Linguistics dlieberson@cal.org , 202-355-1531
<p>CASAS GOALS</p> <p>Reading 900 Series Math 900 Series</p>	<p><u>Reading GOALS Forms:</u> 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908</p> <p><u>Math GOALS Forms:</u> 913, 914, 917, 918</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reading GOALS 900 series (e-test and paper) ▪ Math GOALS 900 series (e-test and paper) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All Adult Education/ASE NRS Levels 	40 hours minimum, recommended after 70-100 hours completed. <u>CASAS Support:</u> Jane Eguez jeguez@casas.org 800-255-1036 . 125 Marty Gustafson mgustafson@casas.org 800-255-1036 x146
<p>CASAS Life and Work</p> <p>Reading 80 Series Listening 980 Series</p>	<p><u>Reading Forms</u> Life Skills: 27, 28 Life and Work: 81, 82, 81X, 82X, 83, 84, 85, 86, 185, 186, 187, 188 Reading for Citizenship: 951, 952 <u>Listening 980 Forms:</u> 981L, 982L, 983L, 984L, 985L, 986L</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reading 80 series (e-test and paper; test booklet available for Level A only) ▪ Listening 980 series (e-test and paper; test booklet available for Level A only) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All ESL NRS Levels 	40 hours minimum, recommended after 70-100 hours completed. <u>CASAS Support:</u> Jane Eguez jeguez@casas.org 800-255-1036 . 125 Marty Gustafson mgustafson@casas.org 800-255-1036 x146

<p>TEST OF ADULT EDUCATION, TABE and TABE Online</p> <p>TABE 11&12 includes three content areas— Reading, Math, and Language.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematics is now comprised of one test; split into a calculator and non-calculator sections. • An improved Locator Test, which includes all three content areas, will be more predictive in placing students 	<p>Forms 11 & 12</p> <p>*Locator is required*</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reading ▪ Language ▪ Math <p>paper and computer- based delivery format</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All ADULT EDUCATION/AS E NRS Levels 	<p>A Locator Test is strongly recommended.</p> <p>DRC recommends 50-60 hours of instruction when testing with an alternate form (i.e. 11M to 12M) for students that test into NRS levels 1-4 (ADULT EDUCATION) with a minimum of 40 hours.</p> <p>For students testing into NRS levels 5 and 6 (ASE Low and High) 30-59 hours of instruction is recommended.</p> <p>If the pre- and post-test are for students with the same level and use the same form: 120 hours.</p> <p>Random and/or frequent testing is discouraged.</p>
<p>TABE CLAS-E</p> <p>[TABE Complete Language Assessment System- English]</p> <p>Mike Johnson</p> <p>MJohnson@DataRecognitionCorp.com</p> <p>630-789-4586</p>	<p>Forms A and B</p> <p>*Locator is required*</p> <p>*Seamless transition to TABE11-12*</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reading ▪ Listening ▪ Writing ▪ Speaking <p>(paper)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All ESL NRS Levels 	<p>A Locator Test is strongly recommended.</p> <p>For alternate form testing CTB recommends 100-140 hours of instruction (i.e., A2 to A2)</p>

APPENDIX B

NRS Test Benchmarks for Educational Functioning Levels

Updated: Summer 2018

These are the leveled scores for the approved tests utilizing the Educational Functioning Level Descriptors for Adult Basic Education, as established by the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE). The level descriptors outline Language/English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics and English as a Second Language (ESL) skills at the 12 levels for ABE students according to pre- and post-tests (levels ABE 1-6 and ESL 1-6). The ABE levels include Language/English Language Arts and Mathematics descriptions of student abilities at each level.

Adult Education

Educational Functioning Level	Test Benchmarks
Beginning ABE Literacy (Level 1)	TABE (11–12) scale scores (grade level 0–1.9): Reading: 300 - 441 Mathematics: 300 – 448 Language: 300 - 457
Beginning Basic Education (Level 2)	TABE (11–12) scale scores (grade level 2–3.9): Reading: 442-500 Mathematics: 449-495 Language: 458-510
Low Intermediate Basic Education (Level 3)	TABE (11–12) scale scores (grade level 4–5.9): Reading: 501-535 Mathematics: 496-536 Language: 511-546
High Intermediate Basic Education (Level 4)	TABE (11–12) scale scores (grade level 6–8.9): Reading: 536-575 Mathematics: 537-595 Language: 547-583
Low Adult Secondary Education (Level 5)	TABE (11–12) scale scores (grade level 9–10.9): Reading: 576-616 Mathematics: 596-656 Language: 584-630
High Adult Secondary Education (Level 6)	TABE (11–12) scale scores (grade level 11–12): Reading: 617 – 800 Mathematics: 657 – 800 Language: 631 – 800

English as Second Language

Educational Functioning Level	Test Benchmarks
<p>Beginning ESL Literacy</p>	<p>BEST² Plus 2.0: 88-361 BEST Literacy: 0–20 (SPL 0–1)</p> <p>TABE CLAS-E³ scale scores⁴: Total Reading and Writing: 225-394 Total Listening and Speaking: 230-407</p>
<p>Low Beginning ESL</p>	<p>BEST Plus 2.0: 362-427 BEST Literacy: 21-52 (SPL 2)</p> <p>TABE CLAS-E scale scores: Total Reading and Writing: 395-441 Total Listening and Speaking: 408-449</p>
<p>High Beginning ESL</p>	<p>BEST Plus 2.0: 428–452 BEST Literacy: 53–63 (SPL 3)</p> <p>TABE CLAS-E scale scores: Total Reading and Writing: 442-482 Total Listening and Speaking: 450-485</p>
<p>Low Intermediate ESL</p>	<p>BEST Plus 2.0: 453 – 484 BEST Literacy: 64 – 67 (SPL 4)</p> <p>TABE CLAS-E scale scores: Total Reading and Writing: 483-514 Total Listening and Speaking: 486-525</p>
<p>High Intermediate ESL</p>	<p>BEST Plus 2.0: 485–524 BEST Literacy: 68-75 (SPL 5)</p> <p>TABE CLAS-E scale scores: Total Reading and Writing: 515-556 Total Listening and Speaking: 526-558</p>
<p>Advanced ESL</p>	<p>Best Plus 2.0: 525–564 (exit 565 and higher) BEST Literacy⁵: 76-78 (SPL 6)</p> <p>TABE CLAS-E scale scores: Total Reading and Writing: 557-600 Total Listening and Speaking: 559-600</p>

² BEST = Basic English Skills Test

³ TABE CLAS–E = Test of Adult Basic Education Complete Language Assessment System – English

⁴ Refer to the TABE CLAS–E Technical Manual for score ranges for individual reading, writing, listening and speaking tests. Table shows only total scores.

⁵ Students can be placed into advanced ESL using Best Literacy but the test does not assess skills beyond this level so students cannot exit Advanced ESL with this test. Retesting of students who enter this level with another assessment is recommended.

APPENDIX C

CASAS Assessment Series Tables & Information

Reading GOALS Series – EFL and Score Ranges

NRS Educational Functioning Level		Reading GOALS Scale Score Ranges	Life and Work Reading Scale Score Ranges
EFL	ABE		
1	Beginning ABE Literacy	203 and below	200 and below
2	Beginning Basic Education	204 - 216	201 - 210
3	Low Intermediate Basic Education	217 - 227	211 - 220
4	High Intermediate Basic Education	228 - 238	221 - 235
5	Low Adult Secondary Education	239 - 248	236 - 245
6	High Adult Secondary Education	249 and above	246 and above

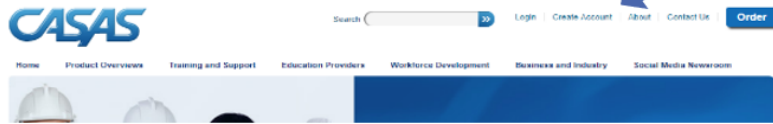
Math GOALS Series - EFL and Score Ranges

Old NRS Educational Functioning Level		Life and Work Math Scale Score Ranges	New NRS Educational Functioning Level		Math GOALS Scale Score Ranges
EFL	ABE/ASE		EFL	ABE/ASE	
1	Beginning Literacy	200 & below	1	Beginning Literacy	193 & below
2	Beginning Basic	201 - 210	2	Beginning Basic	194 - 203
3	Low Intermediate	211 - 220	3	Low Intermediate	204 - 214
			4	Middle Intermediate	215 - 225
4	High Intermediate	221 - 235	5	High Intermediate	226 - 235
5	Low Adult Secondary	236 - 245	6	Adult Secondary	236 & above
6	High Adult Secondary	246 & above			

Training Requirements & Instructions

How to Enroll in CASAS Trainings

- Go to the CASAS homepage and create an online account.



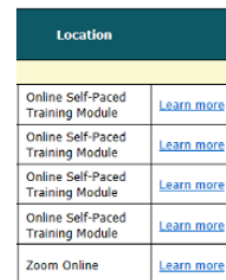
- Once you're logged in, click on the Training Registration button.



- Click "Learn More" then select "Enroll in this Workshop"

- After adding all of the trainings you need, select "Complete Registration"

- Confirmation will be sent to your email account



Location	
Online Self-Paced Training Module	Learn more
Online Self-Paced Training Module	Learn more
Online Self-Paced Training Module	Learn more
Online Self-Paced Training Module	Learn more
Zoom Online	Learn more

Training Requirements



COMPUTER-BASED

- Implementation Basics Training
- Online Implementation Agreement for New Programs
- [eTests](#) Proctor Certification
- [eTests](#) Coordinator Certification



PAPER-BASED

- Implementation Basics Training