

New NRS Assessments for FY 25

FAQS for Wisconsin Technical College Programs and AEFLA funded programs.

What current tests are changing? What are the new tests approved for use in Wisconsin?

FY 24 Test	Sunset date	Will be replaced for FY 25 by	Date to start using new assessments
TABE Clas E Forms A & B	June 30, 2025**	TABE Clas E Forms C & D (approved for 3 years)	When approved: Summer term (06/01/24)
TABE 11/12 Reading and Math, Language	June 30th, 2025*	TABE 13/14(approved for 3 years)	When approved: Summer term for new students OR up to the discretion of programs
Best Literacy (Reading and Writing)	June 30 th , 2025**	Best Literacy 2.0	Summer term for new students OR up to the discretion of programs
Best Plus 2.0 (oral interview – listening and speaking)	June 30 th , 2025**	Best Plus 3.0	Summer term for new students OR up to the discretion of programs
CASAS Math Goals	June 30 th , 2024	CASAS Math GOALS 2	Summer term for new students OR up to the discretion of programs
CASAS Life and Work Reading	June 30 th , 2025**	CASAS Reading STEPS CASAS Listening STEPS	Summer term for new students OR up to the discretion of programs
N/A	N/A	ACT WorkKeys Applied Math and Workplace Documents(approved for 3 years)	Summer Term 2025
CASAS Reading	February 5, 2025	New assessment not approved yet	

** TABE 11/12 and 13/14 will have an overlap of NRS approval of approximately 6-9 months which will allow current students to complete a post test on 11/12 before its retirement on June 30, 2025.*

***A notice announcing tests suitable for use in the National Reporting System for adult education announces an extension of the sunset period for ESL tests scheduled to sunset on June 30, 2024. This extension is intended to provide states with sufficient time to carry out the operational activities required for the transition to the new ESL assessments. The sunset period for ESL tests with expired NRS approvals is extended through June 30, 2025. Until that time, the current ESL educational functioning level descriptors and the new ESL educational functioning level descriptors will be in effect. For your reference, here is a link to a preview of the notice:*

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/06/20/2024-13426/tests-determined-to-be-suitable-for-use-in-the-national-reporting-system-for-adult-education>

What ACT WorkKeys assessments are approved for use in Wisconsin?

WorkKeys Applied Math - Measures critical thinking, mathematical reasoning, and problem-solving techniques for situations that occur in today's workplace.

WorkKeys Workplace Documents- Measures skills that individuals use when they read real workplace documents and use that information to make job-related decisions and solve problems.

Will the TABE CLAS-E and TABE 13/14 be a Wisconsin ABE/ASE and ELA assessment option for FY25?

DRC, the publisher of the TABE CLAS-E and TABE 11/12 submitted new forms of the TABE CLAS-E and TABE 13/14 for federal approval in fall 2023. More information about this assessment option will be provided upon federal approval.

Can I pre-test with the FY24 version of a test and post-test with the new version?

NO! Students must always be pre- and post-tested with the same test series.

For example, you cannot pre-test with **CASAS Life and Work Reading** and post-test with **CASAS Reading STEPS**. You cannot pretest with **Math GOALS** and post-test with **Math GOALS 2**. **You cannot pretest with TABE Clas – E Forms A & B and posttest with forms C&D.**

Will FY24 test scores carry over to FY25?

Of the FY24 tests, **TABE 11/12** (Reading and Math and Language) and **CASAS Reading GOALS** can carry over to FY25. Additionally, all ESL assessments set to expire on June 30th, 2024 will now expire on June 30, 2025 to give programs sufficient time to transition to the new assessments. Please see the table at the top of the document for more information.

Can you compare performance across different TABE tests?? (11/12 to 13/14 and the new Clas E forms)

TABE CLAS-E Forms C/D are aligned to the new ELP Standards, new NRS Descriptors and will have a new Scale Score range. Due to these changes, there will not be a direct comparison between Forms A/B. TABE 13/14 will follow the existing scale that is used for TABE 11/12 but there are small adjustments to the skills covered within each content area. **TABE 11/12 and 13/14 and TABE Clas E Forms A & B and C&D will have an overlap of NRS approval of about 6-9 months, allowing current students to complete a post test on on 11/12 or Clas E forms A& B before its retirement on June 30, 2025.**

Why are the tests changing?

All new ELA tests are aligned with the federal *English Language Proficiency Standards for Adult Education* (ELPS) and assess new NRS EFL descriptors. While the ELPS were released in 2016 and incorporated into the Wisconsin Technical College System standards in 2019, the pandemic delayed the piloting and federal approval of new ELA assessments until now.

What should I do with unused expiring tests? How do I order new tests?

CASAS eTests (Life and Work Reading and Math GOALS)

CASAS eTests units (WTUs or TEUs) never expire. You can apply your WTUs or TEUs to any CASAS test in your program's eTest account.

To add testing sessions for the FY25 tests, contact CASAS at golive@casas.org.

To order, access the online CASAS Catalog [HERE](#).

CASAS Paper Tests (Life and Work Reading and Math GOALS)

Paper test booklets expire on June 30, 2024, and must be shredded. Programs must purchase new paper test materials (including Appraisals and a minimum of one Test Administration Manual per test series per site) for CASAS STEPS and Math GOALS 2. To order, access the online CASAS Catalog [HERE](#).

BEST Literacy Tests

Paper test booklets expire June 30, 2024, and must be shredded. Programs must buy new BEST Literacy 2.0 test booklets for FY25. Programs must order directly from the publisher, the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL). Pricing information is found in the BEST Assessments Transition FAQs on [this page](#).

BEST Plus 2.0

Current BEST Plus 2.0 tests will NOT transfer to the new BEST Plus 3.0. Unused tests are not returnable or exchangeable. Programs must purchase new BEST Plus 3.0 tests for FY25. Programs must order directly from the publisher, the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL). Pricing information is found in the BEST Assessments Transition FAQs on [this page](#).

TABE tests

The cost of both the Online and Paper tests will be similar to existing pricing on TABEtest.com. More information on TABE 13/14 and TabE Clas-E is forthcoming.

In deciding which new tests to use for FY25, what are some key considerations about each new test?

CASAS Reading STEPS

Key considerations about Reading STEPS:

- Reading STEPS Level A can be administered as a consumable test booklet for students with very low literacy levels or minimal test-taking skills. Administering the Level A test via a touch-screen device is another option for low-literacy students. (Note: All CASAS eTests are touch-screen compatible.)
- Some test items, particularly those at higher levels, are more academic in nature than CASAS Life and Work Reading. This is because CASAS Reading STEPS is aligned with the *English Language Proficiency Standards for Adult Education*, standards. The goal of these standards is to assist adult English learners to achieve competency in English language acquisition and rigorous academic content to facilitate transition to post-secondary education, job training, or employment.

CASAS Listening STEPS

Key considerations about Listening STEPS:

- This test is best administered through CASAS eTests with students wearing headsets to hear the audio test items (microphones are not needed). The paper version is not recommended as it relies on CDs to provide the audio test items, and only one level can be administered at a time.
- CASAS Listening STEPS can be administered along with Reading STEPS to provide a more accurate picture of students' overall language proficiency than a reading test alone. If both Listening STEPS and Reading STEPS are administered as pre-tests, students should be placed according to the lower score and post-tested with the test with the lower score.
- Listening STEPS can be given to students who meet exit criteria on Reading STEPS to see if they still need ELA instruction for aural/oral skills before transitioning to ABE or workforce instruction.

BEST Literacy 2.0

Key considerations about BEST Literacy 2.0:

- BEST Literacy 2.0 test booklets are consumable and cannot be reused.
- BEST Literacy 2.0 can only be used to assess NRS levels 1-4. Students who pre-test at NRS Level 4 (Low Intermediate) will need to be re-tested with another test series (such as CASAS STEPS) or TABE Clas-E to show movement out of Level 4. This will incur additional expenses for programs. **Note that the original BEST Literacy tested NRS Levels 1-5, so this is a notable change.**
- The Wisconsin Technical College System will not provide training or technical assistance for BEST Literacy 2.0. All training and technical assistance must be provided by the publisher, the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), at the program's cost.
- Programs must order directly from the publisher, the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL).

BEST Plus 3.0

Key considerations about BEST Plus 3.0:

- BEST Plus 3.0 must be given one-on-one, and the tester scores each item via computer before giving the next. Scoring is done following a rubric. Testers must adhere strictly to the rubric and should recalibrate their skills annually.
- A paper-based version of BEST Plus 3.0 is available; however, it is not approved for use in Wisconsin as it only measures NRS levels 1-4 and is more time consuming to administer than the computer-based version.
- Programs must purchase all new tests for FY25 directly from the publisher.
- The Wisconsin Technical College System will not provide training or technical assistance for BEST Plus 3.0. All training and technical assistance must be provided by the publisher, the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), at the program's cost.
- Programs must order directly from the publisher, the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL).

CASAS Math GOALS 2

- The new test has 5 levels as opposed to only 2 in the original version. This will improve its placement accuracy and its ability to demonstrate student progress, as the new test is more tightly aligned with the *Wisconsin ABE/ASE Content Standards* and the *College and Career Readiness Standards*.

TABE Clas- E

- The framework of the test will be similar to the existing Forms A&B. It will have the same content areas; Reading, Listening, Writing and Speaking. New questions have been added and existing questions have been updated for out-of-date scenarios.

TABE 13/14

- TABE 13/14 will have the same content areas as the current test- Reading, Listening, Writing and Speaking for CLAS-E and Reading, Math, and Language. The content areas align to the Reporting areas for NRS scores.

ACT WorkKeys:

- WorkKeys Workplace Documents: Measures skills that individuals use when they read real workplace documents and use that information to make job-related decisions and solve problems. Learners can add the WorkKeys Graphic Literacy Assessment and earn their WorkKeys NCRC— an evidence-based credential awarded at four different levels that demonstrates the essential problem-solving and critical thinking skills needed for workplace success.

What training is needed to give the new tests?

CASAS TESTS

Contact the test publisher for training.

BEST LITERACY 2.0

Test administrators and scorers are required to read the BEST Literacy 2.0 Test Manual before administering and scoring the test. A strongly recommended (but optional) self-access online training course will be available from the test publisher for \$50 per person. Note that the Wisconsin Technical College System will not provide training or technical assistance for BEST Literacy 2.0 test administrators.

BEST PLUS 3.0

All BEST Plus 3.0 test administrators, including those currently certified to administer BEST Plus 2.0, will be required to complete BEST Plus 3.0 training. The test publisher will offer self-access online training courses for BEST Plus 3.0. This training will be free of charge through August 2024. After August 2024, the online course will be available for \$125 per person. The publisher will also offer live virtual training for \$325 per person. Note that the Wisconsin Technical College System will not provide technical assistance or training for BEST Plus 3.0 test administrators.

TABE Clas-E and TABE 13/14

Upon federal approval, DRC will host national webinar trainings for the new CLAS-E C/D forms and TABE 13/14 in the spring. DRC will provide training for Wisconsin for TABE 13/14 and CLAS-E C/D. The Wisconsin Technical College System will coordinate opportunities and programs are welcome to contact the test publishers to schedule training in their local areas as well.

ACT WorkKeys: Contact the [test publisher](#) to learn more about training opportunities.

Where can I learn more about the new tests? Can I see sample test items?

New TABE tests: Preparing students for testing with TABE or CLAS-E should remain like strategies currently used. The overall reading load for TABE 13/14 is reduced (shorter passages and question equates to less time spent reading per question) but the content of the test remains aligned to the rigorous CCR standards so breaking up the testing process between content areas is still advisable. Guidance will be provided for both CLAS-E and TABE to help programs select the correct test for post/progress testing.

ACT WorkKeys: For more information on ACT WorkKeys, please refer to their [website](#).

New CASAS tests: There is a wealth of information on the CASAS website including *Sample Test Items, Content Standard Blueprints, Competency Blueprints, and FAQs*. The chart below has links to learn more about each of the new tests.

New Test	Where to Learn More
CASAS Reading STEPS	https://www.casas.org/product-overviews/assessments/reading-steps
CASAS Listening STEPS	https://www.casas.org/product-overviews/assessments/listening-steps
BEST Literacy 2.0	https://www.cal.org/aea/faqs/ https://www.cal.org/aea/updates/
BEST Plus 3.0	https://www.cal.org/aea/faqs/ https://www.cal.org/aea/updates/
CASAS Math GOALS 2	https://www.casas.org/product-overviews/assessments/math-goals-2

What do the TABE reports look like?

All Reports (Individual and Group) will be the same format for CLAS-E and TABE. DRC will continue the option for nightly data extracts of testing data for local, state or curriculum partner use.

When will TABE 13/14 and TABE Clas -E Forms C&D be available?

The DRC has reported that new test forms will be available in late summer/early fall. Until they are available, programs should continue using TABE 11/12 and TABE Clas E Forms A & B.

What is the student time required to complete the TABE tests?

Testing times for both TABE and CLAS-E will be similar to existing tests. As mentioned above, TABE 13/14 reduces the expected reading load for students due to shorter passages and questions. DRC expects to monitor average testing times as they did with the launch of TABE 11/12 and submit reduced allowable testing times to the US Dept of Education based on the data collected after the launch.