



## **2024-2025 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**  
2024-2025 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

## Introduction and Context

Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) funded programs are required to use United States Department of Education (ED) National Reporting System (NRS) approved nationally standardized tests to provide evidence of students' educational functioning level. This Assessment Policy fulfills the DE requirement that each state receiving Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title II funding annually develops, publishes, and implements a written assessment policy. That DE requires states to describe which assessments local programs will use, when they are to administer pre-tests and post-tests, as well as the assessment training, administration, and reporting requirements. The state assessment policy aims to provide guidance to each funded provider in developing a local written assessment policy and procedures document that adheres to the state policy.

It is expected that programs will adhere to the assessment policies identified in this document. Although there are several ways to demonstrate Measurable Skill Gain allowable within WIOA, this policy focuses on standardized pre- and post-testing only. This policy does not address other types of classroom- or program-based assessments. Programs are encouraged to continue to use multiple ways to assess progress and achievement and use this information to inform teaching and provide learners with feedback.

**Note:** For the purpose of aligning the Assessment Policy with definitions used in NRS reporting:

Adult Education (AE) = AE Educational Functioning Levels 1-4

Adult Secondary Education (ASE) = ASE Educational Functioning Levels 5-6

English Language Acquisition (ELA) & Integrated Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) = English as a Second Language (ESL) Educational Functioning Levels 1-6

## Purposes and Uses of Assessment

Adult learners enter programs with a wide range of educational backgrounds, experiences, and proficiency levels. The purpose of educational assessment is to determine the skill levels of a learner. This determination establishes the learner's educational functioning level at the time of the assessment and after a period of instruction that is suitable for taking a post-test. These initial assessments are the basis for placing students in the appropriate educational functioning level, which is the baseline on which programs measure federally recognized student learning gains.

Consistent and accurate administration and interpretation of assessments are necessary to ensure placement of learners in appropriate instructional levels that encourage classroom engagement, student retention, and educational functioning level gains.

Each assessment identified and outlined for use within Wisconsin has been selected because it meets the following criteria:

- Is appropriate for measuring literacy and language development of adult learners,
- Has standardized administration and scoring procedures,
- Has alternate, equivalent forms for pre- and post-testing, and
- Is aligned to the NRS educational functioning levels and is approved by the United States DE.

## Use of Informal Assessments

The WTCS encourages local AEFLA funded providers to use a variety of informal assessments and multiple measures to assist in informing instruction. The use of teacher-made tests, unit tests, portfolios, applied performance assessments, and teacher and learner observations are allowable, in combination with the approved assessments, to monitor learning and inform instruction regularly. These assessments are not to be reported to the WTCS Office.

## Eligible Individuals & AEFLA

Only eligible individuals can be served under AEFLA. Eligible individuals served through AEFLA must be assessed. Section 203(4) of WIOA defines eligible individuals as an individual:

- A. Who has attained 16 years of age;

- B. Who is not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law; and
- C. Who is:
  - i. Basic skills deficient which is defined by WIOA to mean, with respect to an individual who is a youth, that the individual has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level on a generally accepted standardized text; or who is a youth or adult, that the individual is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society;
  - ii. An individual who does not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and has not achieved an equivalent level of education; or
  - iii. An English language learner.

Wisconsin does have a state law requiring secondary school attendance. In Wisconsin, s.118.15(1), Wis. Stats., defines compulsory school attendance and requires, with limited exceptions, all persons between the ages of 6 and 18 years to attend a secondary public, private, or tribal school for the full period and hours that the school is in session until the end of the school term in which the person becomes 18 years of age.

Because of Wisconsin's compulsory school attendance state law, persons under the age of 18 can only be considered an eligible individual under WIOA and served by the WTCS AEFLA grant program under the following exceptions:

Exception	Statutory Reference	Statutory Language
At Risk	118.15(1)(b)	Upon the child's request of the school board and with the written approval of the child's parent or guardian, any child who is 16 years of age or over and a child at risk, as defined in s. <a href="#">118.153 (1) (a)</a> , may attend, in lieu of high school or on a part-time basis, a technical college if the child and his or her parent or guardian agree, in writing, that the child will participate in a program leading to the child's high school graduation. The district board of the technical college district in which the child resides shall admit the child.
Previously Justice Involved Juveniles	118.15(1)(cm)	Upon the child's request and with the approval of the child's parent or guardian, any child who is 17 years of age or over shall be excused by the school board from regular school attendance if the child began a program leading to a high school equivalency diploma in a juvenile correctional facility, as defined in s. <a href="#">938.02 (10p)</a> , a secured residential care center for children and youth, as defined in s. <a href="#">938.02 (15g)</a> , a juvenile detention facility, as defined in s. <a href="#">938.02 (10r)</a> , or a juvenile portion of a county jail, and the child and his or her parent or guardian agree under subd. <a href="#">2.</a> that the child will continue to participate in such a program.

To participate in an AEFLA grant, At Risk or Previously Justice Involved Juvenile students must be enrolled in at least one course in the program year they are served. The course must be approved by the state superintendent under s.118.33(3m), Wis. Stats., for the purpose of satisfying a high school graduation requirement.

All newly enrolled students must receive an initial assessment using an approved NRS assessment before they receive 12 hours of service in order to be counted as a participant or reportable individual under AEFLA. Any adult education student who is not assessed using an approved standardized test will not be counted in performance reports to the DE, although data on all adult education instruction that occurs must be reported to the WTCS Office as per WTCS Client Reporting guidelines. A student becomes a participant once they have received 12 or more hours of service while a reportable individual received less than 12 hours of service.

## Wisconsin AEFLA Approved Assessments

English Language Acquisition Assessments approved for use in Wisconsin.

Test Series	NRS Approval Through June 30, 2025	NRS Approval Through June 20, 2027	NRS Approval Through July, 2030
<i>Basic English Skills Test (BEST) Plus 3.0.</i> Internet: <a href="http://www.cal.org">www.cal.org</a> .			✓
<i>Basic English Skills Test (BEST) Literacy 2.0. Levels 1-4.</i> Internet: <a href="http://www.cal.org">www.cal.org</a>			✓
<i>Basic English Skills Test (BEST) Plus 2.0 and BEST Literacy .</i> Internet: <a href="http://www.cal.org">www.cal.org</a>	✓		
<i>Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) Listening STEPS.</i> Internet: <a href="http://www.casas.org/">www.casas.org/</a> .			✓
<i>Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) Reading STEPS.</i> Internet: <a href="http://www.casas.org/">www.casas.org/</a>			✓
<i>CASAS Life and Work Series.</i> Internet: <a href="http://www.casas.org/">www.casas.org/</a> .	✓		
<i>Test of Adult Basic Education(TABE) CLAS-E Forms D &amp; C .</i> Internet: <a href="https://tabetest.com/">https://tabetest.com/</a>		✓	
<i>Test of Adult Basic Education(TABE)Clas – E Forms A &amp; B.</i> Internet: <a href="https://tabetest.com/">https://tabetest.com/</a>	✓		

## Adult Education and Adult Secondary Education Assessments approved for use in Wisconsin

Test Series	NRS Approval Through June 30, 2025	NRS Approval Through February 5, 2025	NRS Approval Through July 13, 2026	NRS Approval Through June 20, 2027	NRS Approval Through July, 2030
<i>Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) Math GOALS Series.</i> Internet: <a href="http://www.casas.org/">www.casas.org/</a> .					☑
<i>Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) Reading GOALS (900 series)</i>		☑			
<i>Test of Adult Basic Education(TABE)11/12.</i> Internet: <a href="https://tabetest.com/">https://tabetest.com/</a> .	☑				
<i>Test of Adult Basic Education(TABE) 13/14.</i> Internet: <a href="https://tabetest.com/">https://tabetest.com/</a> .				☑	
<i>ACT WorkKeys Applied Math.</i> <a href="https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/act-workkeys/act-workkeys-assessments/nrs-approval.html">https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/act-workkeys/act-workkeys-assessments/nrs-approval.html</a> Levels 1-6			☑		
<i>ACT WorkKeys Workplace Documents.</i> Levels 2-6 Internet: <a href="https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/act-workkeys/act-workkeys-assessments/nrs-approval.html">https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/act-workkeys/act-workkeys-assessments/nrs-approval.html</a>			☑		



## Understanding the Role of Standardized Test Data in Local Instructional Placement

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 appropriate indicators for student placement.

If these factors indicate a different level than the pre-test does, programs should place the student in the appropriate level for instructional purposes but report the assessment score. For example, if a BEST or TABE CLAS-E test indicates the student is functioning at level 4, but other local factors show that the student should be at level 3, programs must use the standardized BEST or TABE CLAS-E data for required reporting, but they may place the student at level 3 for instruction.

If multiple skill areas are assessed and the student has different abilities in each area, the WTCS recommends that the student begin instruction in their weakest area (as well as the other areas if appropriate). For NRS reporting purposes, placement in educational functioning levels is determined by the lowest pretest scaled score.

## Testing Considerations

Standardized testing should be a part of a program's processes which assess students' overall academic abilities and informs goal setting and overall planning to meet each student's education and/or employment goals. Below are a series of considerations to support local testing practices.

- a. All programs are required to *first* administer a Locator Test to determine which placement test to use. The locator may not be used for placement. Please refer to guidelines set forth by each individual assessment.
- b. Testing publishers discourage frequent testing/re-testing.
- c. The state target for post-testing is 57%. WTCS staff will monitor provider pre/post test rates through the monthly AEFLA Data Reporting and Performance Accountability report and contact providers as needed based on results.
- d. Programs may not mix assessments. For example, if a provider pretests using TABE 11/12 or TABE CLAS-E, they cannot posttest with Casas or Best Literacy. They must posttest with TABE. If a provider pretests with TABE 11/12, they cannot posttest with TABE 13/14. There may be some exceptions if a learner tests out of range. Please see sections for each standardized assessment within this document for more information
- e. When a post-test is administered, it must be in the same pre-tested subject area(s) and with the same test series.
- f. For GED/HSED students, programs should administer the appropriate posttest at or prior to the time that the GED Ready test is administered.
- g. Processes for pre- and post-testing students should be clearly defined by each program, should be in writing and should be shared with local program staff, and available to the WTCS Office upon request.
- h. Programs must follow assessment recommendations for pre and post testing intervals found in Appendix B. Learners are not eligible to post-test until they complete a minimum number of instructional hours per content area. Test publishers generally recommend a higher number of hours be attended before post-testing to better ensure testers are prepared to make an educational functioning level gain. Exceptions to these testing intervals are limited and acceptable under special circumstances such as:
  - a. The learner is exiting the program permanently; or
  - b. Evidence indicates readiness to demonstrate measurable skill gain.
- i. If a program wants to post-test a student before the minimum instructional time has elapsed, the rationale must be documented. Please consult with the WTCS Office when necessary.
- j. 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. Programs offering high intensity courses (e.g., class meets more than 15 hours per week) may choose to test at the end of a semester, term, quarter, or other substantial block of instruction, even though the instructional intervention is more than 100 hours of instruction.
  - a. Allow exceptions for courses with different schedules and intensity, e.g., allow more time for courses that meet infrequently or not intensively and for very intensive courses wait longer than the recommended number of hours to posttest.
  - b. Programs offering low intensity courses with less than 70 hours in a semester, quarter, term, or other block of instruction, may choose to posttest at the end of the instructional period.

## Re-Reporting Test Results & Retesting

All AEFLA funded providers may re-report the latest NRS approved assessment results from the previous fiscal year as long as the test dates are between January 1 and June 30. These carry-over test results can meet the AEFLA requirement

of a pre-test in the new fiscal year to alleviate over-testing learners and support continuity of services between two fiscal years. Any NRS approved assessment results with a test date prior to January 1 of the previous fiscal year are deemed expired for Wisconsin AEFLA.

Under the following circumstances, a learner must be re-tested before being placed into classes:

- When test versions are changing, such as the change from TABE 11/12 to TABE 13/14. The different versions of the tests are not able to be effectively correlated, and so a 11/12 pre-test cannot be correlated to a 13/14 post-test.
- A test score is invalidated due to cheating.
- A scale score falls within the test publisher's required range for re-testing.
- A CASAS or BEST Plus 3.0 pre-test results in the EFL "Completed ESL 6." Learners must be re-tested on an ABE assessment (CASAS GOALS or TABE 11/12).

## Testing Exemptions

Exemptions from pre and post testing should be rare. Any testing exemptions should be noted in the student's personal education plan. Learners served in AEFLA programs should be informed of the expectation that they will take an assessment to track their education growth and to meet the requirements of the AEFLA program.

Multi language learners for whom standardized testing, including locator, does not yield a valid pre-test score can be placed at the lowest ESL level. Please note that a minimum valid score from an NRS-approved assessment must be recorded in Client Reporting for these learners.

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.

If a student is not able to take the assessment due to a severe cognitive disability, they should not be required to take the test but should still receive services.

## Disruption to Testing

In case of a disruption in assessment due to any statewide or national emergency, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the program must contact the WTCS Office Adult Education team and request permission to delay assessment.

## Data Reporting Requirements

Accurate data regarding students' educational functional levels provides local programs with information to document learning gains. The data is also the basis for federal accountability reporting and is included in the Outcome-Based Funding formulas used to calculate funding. All AEFLA-funded providers must report assessment data through the WTCS Client Reporting process. Please refer to the [WTCS Client Reporting Manual](#) for additional guidance on data reporting. Student test data should be recorded within five (5) business days into the local program's data system. Quarterly data submissions are required of all AEFLA grant recipients. Quarterly submissions will be due on the following dates:

- By October 14, 2024 for reporting period July 1 – September 30
- By January 14, 2025 for reporting period October 1 to December 31
- By April 14, 2025 for reporting period January 1 – March 31
- By July 14, 2025 for reporting period April 1 – June 30

## Training Staff to Assess Effectively

All staff who administer standardized assessments must be trained in proper test administration practices for each instrument that the program utilizes.

- a. Staff who administer pre and posttests must be trained according to guidelines from each standardized assessment used.
- b. Local program administrators are responsible for ensuring that these *Policy Guidelines for Pre- and Post-Testing Students* are implemented, and that local staff development is provided.
- c. 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.
- d. Local staff involved in gathering, analyzing, compiling, and reporting data for the NRS should be trained in the

below topic areas. The WTCS Office regularly conducts professional development opportunities and technical assistance around these topics, including the AEFLA 101 Drop-in Meetings.

- NRS policy, accountability policies, and data collection process
  - Definitions of measures under WIOA such as Measurable Skill Gains
  - Administering assessments as outlined by the test publishing company
- e. 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 specific policies and procedures related to the testing instrument as designated in the specific test products test directions.
  - f. To become an assessor for the Wisconsin approved assessments, individuals must successfully complete an online or in- person training provided by the state, the product vendor, or the local program.
  - g. 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.
  - h. The state office coordinates with the assessment tool trainers to ensure that training is offered at least once a year. Local providers should also schedule training with certified trainers depending on their local staffing needs.
  - i. Professional development plans for teachers and staff should be updated with training requirements as appropriate. 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.
  - j. All programs must keep records identifying which of their staff have been trained in pre- and post-testing, and by whom. Summary information about these records must be made available to WTCS Office staff for program monitoring.

### **Resources for Assessment Information and Assistance**

- BEST Plus: Center for Applied Linguistics, the publisher of the BEST Plus, has information available 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 | [mruskowski@datarecognitioncorp.com](mailto:mruskowski@datarecognitioncorp.com)
- ACT WorkKeys. Information on training can be found at their [website](#).

## **Ethical Test Administration and Security**

AEFLA providers must maintain an ethical policy of test administration. The WTCS requires that administrators and testing personnel follow these practices and ensure that additional staff are aware of and follow said practices.

- It is important to utilize the proper level of test for the student's ability and not choose a test level based on what generates the highest measured improvement.
- The local adult education program administrator assumes responsibility for overseeing the security of all assessment materials - including paper/pencil and online applications and devices.
- The local adult education program administrator must maintain a specific test security policy that discusses the proper handling and use of test materials.
- Testing materials must be stored in a locked, preferably fireproof, file cabinet accessible to necessary staff.
- No unauthorized personnel should be allowed access to testing materials.
- Discussing information related to the content of specific test items or test forms is prohibited.
- Entire assessments, individual questions, or possible answer choices may not be copied under any circumstances or used as practice in any capacity or for any purpose. Any specific test questions or information contained within the tests are not to be made available to the public. Federal copyright law prohibits unauthorized reproduction and use of copyrighted test materials. Reproducing test materials is a violation of federal copyright law.
- Testing personnel must ensure that they follow all test administration directions and language.
- All rooms used for test administration must be quiet, orderly, comfortable, and have adequate seating, lighting, and temperature.
- Any information regarding the content measured on the test or test-taking strategies displayed in the room must be covered or removed.
- The testing room should be configured so the proctor can easily view the testing materials or the computer screens of all test takers.
- Testing personnel must remain in the testing room throughout an entire test session. Proctors must ensure that test-takers follow all testing rules during the testing session.
- A proctor may never disclose any personally identifiable information about test-takers to anyone beyond what is required while completing proctoring responsibilities.

## **Paper Testing**

The following applies to paper assessments:

- The provider will maintain an inventory of all assessment materials and will supply information about it as requested. If test booklets have been marked in or torn, agencies should shred these test booklets.
- If an agency is transitioning to a new test series, it is recommended that agencies shred old test booklets and destroy related testing materials including CDs.
- Agencies may not retain test materials for use as practice tests or for instructional purposes.
- Destruction of unusable, defaced, or outdated testing materials in the local assessment inventory must follow assessment publisher guidelines.

## **Online Testing**

The following applies to online testing:

- Test proctors are not to initiate online assessments on registered testing machines prior to the beginning of the test administration.
- Registered machines not used during the test administration (e.g., test takers are absent) must remain closed.
- After each test administration, the registered testing machine must be closed.
- Seating should be arranged approximately three feet apart to discourage viewing other test-takers' computer screens.
- All computer workstations should be set up prior to scheduled test administrations.

## **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities or Other Special Needs**

The federal statutes that pertain to administering adult education programs regarding 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.

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 without changing what a test is intended to measure. Accommodation must be based on the needs of an individual learner and not on a disability category.

- a. 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 accommodation, nor is it appropriate to suggest accommodations to an applicant prior to a formal request or notification of the need for accommodation.
- b. Providers are responsible for providing appropriate accommodations to students as needed. All adult education programs must have procedures in place that refer students to the appropriate member, agency, or organization for issues related to identifying students with disabilities or other special needs, testing accommodations, procedures, and appropriate documentation required.
- c. If accommodation is employed, it is important that the selected accommodation minimize any advantage or disadvantage of completing the test. The accommodation must be specific to the disability and address only documented limitations. Inappropriate accommodations may lead to inaccurate test results.
- d. Any accommodation must be available across pre- and post-testing to ensure that the interpretation of learner performance on each assessment is comparable.
- e. Adult students with disabilities are responsible for providing documentation of a disability to support a request for reasonable accommodation. The documentation should describe the nature and extent of the disability and suggest the kind of accommodation the student may need to participate effectively. 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.
- f. It is prohibited for local test administrators to change the format of any approved assessment such as enlarging the text or font or transcribing the test into braille.
- g. It is recommended that local providers offer universally available accommodations to test administration procedures which may lower barriers for individuals with hidden disabilities and those who do not have disability documentation.

The following accommodations (list is not exhaustive) do not affect the administration of the test and may be used by all students or be required for equal access to the tests.

- Magnifying glasses/lenses/sheet
- Clear and/or colored overlays
- Straight-edge (ruler), blank card or card with cutout window
- Blank adhesives note tags/flags
- Highlighters
- Visor
- Earplugs

Please see Appendix A for common accommodations approved by test publishers.

## Using Tests to Measure Student Growth

There are a number of ways to assess ability (standardized tests, teacher-designed tests, project and homework portfolios, teacher evaluations, etc.). However, standardized tests provide the best way to assess growth in ability. Changes in scale scores on equivalent forms taken at the beginning and end of a course are the most direct evidence, though growth may be defined in other ways.

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.

	<a href="#">Pre-Test</a>	<a href="#">Post-Test</a>
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<a href="#">Option 1</a>	<a href="#">TABE 11M</a>	<a href="#">TABE 12M</a>
<a href="#">Option 2</a>	<a href="#">TABE 12M</a>	<a href="#">TABE 11M</a>

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 tests questions in these scenarios – that is the point of alternating forms.

In the 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
		<i>OR</i>		
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, the student’s skills may have deteriorated during summer absence.

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

In some instances, programs may also select the next level higher TABE test while following the same recommended hours above for alternate form testing. For example, if a student pretests and scores at the highest NRS level for that TABE level, then he or she could posttest with the next higher TABE level, such as 11M as the pretest and 11D as the posttest. These types of decisions should be based on the qualified instructor’s knowledge of that student.

## English as a Second Language Testing Considerations

### Pre and Post Testing

- All ELA and IELCE students must be pre- and post-tested in order to document educational gains.
- Programs must use the same assessments for pre and post testing. Post testing must use alternative forms of the tests to document progress in the ELA course with the exception of BEST Plus which is a computer adaptive test that changes with each administration. Please see the next section for possible exceptions when post testing.
- It is a good practice to test English language learners' literacy and oral communication skills. A minimum of two pre-assessments must be administered for educational functioning level placement. (i.e., speaking and reading) to assess an individual's fluency accurately and comprehensively. Chosen topics must reflect what the student will be studying.
- A minimum of two post-tests in the same area that was pretested must be administered. Under limited circumstances, posttests in one area is allowable if it reflects the instructional focus.

### Testing Exceptions

Students should be pre- and post-tested with the same assessment. Exceptions include the following:

- If the student's pre-test score on either the CASAS Life & Work or BEST Plus 3.0 places them in the Exit Criteria range, they should either be administered another ELA assessment that reflects the need for ELA services or be transitioned to ABE, ASE, or post-secondary as appropriate. Post-testing on one of these assessments when the pre-test revealed the Exit Criteria range is not necessary as the second assessment will reflect the student's level.
- If the student's pre-test on the BEST Literacy or CASAS Life & Work reveals ELA Advanced and a second ELA assessment's pre-test reveals the Exit Criteria range, the student should be transitioned to ABE, ASE, or post-secondary as appropriate.

### Exit from ESL Instruction

The guidelines for students who reach ESL Exit Criteria are slightly different for ESL students enrolled in IELCE programs and ESL students who are not enrolled in IELCE programs.

#### IELCE Section 243

All IELCE students must receive concurrent English language acquisition instruction and civics instruction. If an IELCE student tests at ESL Exit Criteria on an NRS-approved assessment, the program may choose to reassess the student with an ESL test of a different series (e.g., CASAS instead of TABE CLAS –E). If the student tests below ESL Exit Criteria on the second assessment, they may remain in ESL instruction until they test at ESL Exit Criteria on the second assessment. This only applies to IELCE-eligible students. If the student tests at ESL Exit Criteria on the second assessment, the English acquisition instruction requirement of the IELCE program may be met through an ABE or ASE course.

Federal IELCE funds may be used to pay for the ABE/ASE instruction even if the student is not enrolled in an ESL course. IELCE students may continue receiving contextualized English instruction as part of an ABE, ASE, or ESL course until they exit from the IET associated with the IELCE program. However, the ABE/ASE English Language Proficiency course must meet all the requirements of an ESL IELCE class (i.e., civics preparation, contextualized instruction, achievement of civics competencies, and workforce preparation if applicable). This only applies to IELCE-eligible students.

### English Language Acquisition

If an ESL student who is not enrolled in an IELCE program reaches ESL Exit Criteria on an NRS approved assessment, they should be transitioned to AE or post secondary as deemed appropriate. Students may be concurrently enrolled in ESL and ABE instruction as long as they:

- receive an NRS-approved test in both instructional categories,
- and are enrolled in classes that align with the Education Functioning Level determined by those tests.

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)

## **Adult Education and Adult Secondary Education Approved Assessments for use in Wisconsin**

The following assessments are approved for use in AEFLA supported Adult Education and Adult Secondary Education programs.

### **Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) Reading GOALS (900 series)**

The Reading GOALS series is aligned to the College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards for Adult Education (2013) and covers the full range of ability levels in the Standards from beginning literacy through high adult secondary. Tests measure the academic vocabulary and higher-order thinking skills contained in the Standards. Test content continues to be based on CASAS Competencies to maintain relevance for adult learners, including an emphasis on employment related topics required by WIOA. Students transitioning from Life and Work Reading (ESL students) to the GOALS series must take a pretest in the new GOALS series. Pre- and post-test results must always be in the same test series.

#### **Locator:**

- a. It is required to administer the GOALS Locator (104R and 104M).
- b. Intake screening for new ABE students should be done only for writing, and not for oral skills before deciding about administering a Locator.

#### **Scoring:**

Examinees who score at the low-end range do not receive a scale score. Those who score in the low-end range of a Level B, C, or D test should take the next lower test form for a scale score and NRS level. If a student scores at the low end range on a Level A test, CASAS suggests additional instruction before retesting the student on a Level A test. 8.

#### **Pretest and Posttests:**

- a. Examinees who score at the high conservative estimate/diamond range on a pretest form should retest at the next highest test level.
- b. Examinees who score at this range on a post-test also should retest at the next highest test level. If it is not possible to administer another post-test because the semester is over or the student is unavailable, programs may use the post-test score, even if it falls within the conservative estimate/diamond range.

### **CASAS Math Goals 2**

The Math GOALS 2 series serves Adult Basic Education and Adult Secondary Education programs. Agencies can use the Math GOALS 2 series in any instructional program that focuses on mathematics instruction. Math GOALS 2 offers tests at five levels, thus enabling the series to cover in greater depth the full range of ability levels in the College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards for Adult Education (2013) and the NRS Educational Functioning Level (EFL) Descriptors for Adult Basic Education mathematics standards. Math GOALS 2 measures academic mathematics and higher-order thinking skills contained in the CCR Standards. Test content continues to be based on CASAS Competencies to maintain relevance for adult learners, including an emphasis on employment-related topics required by WIOA.

- Students may use a calculator throughout the entire math test.
- CASAS eTests provides an on-screen calculator, but students may use physical calculators (not graphing calculators) while testing on CASAS eTests, if preferred.
- Programs that use paper-based tests should provide students with a calculator.
- Students may not use a personal calculator nor their cell phone calculator.
- Examples of appropriate calculators are Texas Instruments TI-30XS, TI-108 and TI 503SV, Casio SL-300SV, and other approved calculators for use on high school equivalency exams such as the GED, HiSET, and TASC assessments

#### **Locator**

- a. Both the Form 920M Math GOALS 2 Locator and the Form 919M Math GOALS 2 Appraisal accurately place students into the correct pretest.
- b. The Form 920M Locator is a 15-minute test with 14 questions.
- c. Both the Locator and the Appraisal are available in CASAS eTests and as paper tests.
- d. Programs may use the Locator ONLY for placement into a pretest. Agencies will not be able to order paper Locators without having ordered paper pre/post-tests from the same series.
- e. Programs should choose the Appraisal if it will be used alone for placement and will not be followed up



by a pretest. The Appraisal can never be used as a pretest or post-test.

### **Pre and Post Testing**

The series provides two parallel forms of pre- and post-tests at each of five test levels. These levels provide necessary placement opportunities to ensure the most accurate diagnostic information to guide mathematics instruction. It is essential that pre- and post-testing always occurs within the same series to ensure test reliability and validity. Agencies cannot pretest students on the current Math GOALS series and post-test on the new Math GOALS 2 series.

### **Retesting**

- Examinees who score at the inaccurate range marked with an asterisk (\*), do not receive a scale score. Those who score in the inaccurate range of a Level B, C, D or E test should take the next lower test form to receive a scale score and NRS level. If a student scores at the inaccurate range on a Level A test, CASAS suggests additional mathematics instruction before retesting the student on a Level A test.
- If someone pretests and scores in the high-end conservative-estimate range marked with a diamond (◆), CASAS recommends but does not require retesting at the next higher level. Agencies may choose to use the diamond score. However, the conservative estimate score may underestimate the student's ability. The student can be retested at the next higher level to receive a more accurate score.
- Examinees who score at this range on a post-test may choose to either use the diamond score or retest at the next highest test level.

## **The Tests for Adult Basic Education (TABE)**

The following information pertains to TABE 11/12 and 13/14.

### **Locator**

- It is required to *first* administer the TABE Locator Test to accurately identify the most appropriate level of the test (Level L-E-M-D-A) for the individual student. 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). The TABE Word List may be used to if you are unsure if a student could successfully complete the Locator test and may need to be placed directly into Form L (not available online)
- TABE 11/12 has one Locator Test which is divided into three sections- for reading, mathematics, and language. TABE 13/14 has added a writing section. 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.

### **Pre and Post Testing**

- TABE 11/12 includes Reading, Language, and Mathematics. TABE 13/14 adds a Writing subtest. Students are required to be tested in at least two subject areas that are aligned with student program and educational goals. Exceptions to this should be rare and well documented. Examples may include a learner whose goal requires instruction in only one subject area.
- Programs are required to post test in at least one of the areas that was pretested, however, programs can choose to post test in more than one area depending on the instructional focus.
- The appropriate TABE post-test (math, reading, etc.) should be administered at, or prior to, the time that the GED Ready test is administered. Do not wait for students to complete their GED tests before attempting to administer post-tests. If a student completes one or more GED subtests, they would not need to complete a TABE post-test.
- Programs should alternately administer the two parallel forms (i.e., 11 and 12) to ensure valid results when retesting the same students.
- 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 AE 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 and 13 & 14 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.

- 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.

### Transition to TABE 13/14

TABE 13/14 forms will be available in January 2025. Forms 11/12 will expire on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, however, programs should make every effort to ensure a smooth transition from 11/12. It is highly recommended that programs begin using 13/14 in the spring 2025 semester.

### ACT WorkKeys

WorkKeys assessments have four forms at the same level. When post-testing with WorkKeys, an alternate form must be used each time the learner post-tests until all four forms have been administered to the learner. If the learner has used all form forms, the first repeat form should not be used again unless 30 days have passed since that form was last administered. Using the same WorkKeys form back-to-back when fewer than 30 days have passed since the form was last used is not allowed and is a test administration error.

Unless the assessment title shows "NRS," it is not an approved form to use. The NRS-approved test forms are to be used with your adult education testing population.

Contact ACT WorkKeys for information on paper and online testing. Review the ACT WorkKeys Accessibility Supports Guide for information about accommodations and/or supports

The following resources are available to learn more about NRS testing:

<https://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/ACT-WorkKeys-National-NRS-Quick-Start-Guide.pdf>

- [Occupational Profile database](#)
- [Matching your WorkKeys Foundational Skills to Jobs](#)
- [ACT WorkKeys Assessments NRS webpage](#)
- [ACT WorkKeys Site Administrators webpage](#)
- [Applied Math Assessment](#)
- [Workplace Documents](#)

Assessment ACT Customer Support is available Monday-Friday (7:00 AM - 7:00 PM) Central Time at 800.967.5539 or [workkeys@act.org](mailto:workkeys@act.org)

## English as a Second Language Approved Assessments for Use in Wisconsin

The following assessments are approved for use in AEFLA supported English as a second language programs.

### Best Literacy 2.0 – NRS levels 1-4

For information on BEST Literacy: <https://www.cal.org/aea/bl/>

*BEST Literacy 2.0* is a print-based assessment that uses a variety of tasks to measure adult English language learners' ability to read and write in English. It is intended for use with adult English language learners, aged 16 years and older, who are enrolled in an educational program in the United States. The test may be administered to groups or individuals; the suggested maximum testing time is 1 hour.

#### Reading tasks

- Include identifying days, dates, times, and prices in announcements, emails, and websites; interpreting weather forecasts; identifying uses of household products; and understanding website information.

#### Writing tasks

- Include retelling community event details; making an invitation to a friend; completing an appointment form; providing a reason to support an opinion about community-related topics; and making reservations.

#### Test Administration

- *BEST Literacy 2.0* may be administered to groups or individuals in one hour or less. Each examinee is given one test booklet which contains instructions and the test questions. The test administrator verbally provides test directions and examinees then write their answers in the test booklet.
  - Users of *BEST Literacy 2.0* should thoroughly review the *BEST Literacy 2.0 Test Manual (February 2024)* to become familiar with the testing and scoring procedures. This information is also available for review through *BEST Literacy 2.0: Administration and Scoring Training*, CAL's self-access online training course. The online training course is optional and not required by CAL.

#### Scoring BEST Literacy 2.0

- All scoring is done after the testing is complete, either by the test administrator or by a designated test scorer. Scoring instructions are provided in the *BEST Literacy 2.0 Test Manual*.
  - Using the separate scoring sheet that corresponds to the appropriate examinee test booklet (Form 1, 2, or 3), the examinees responses are scored based on comprehensibility. The specific answers for the reading and writing sections (including yes/no questions, multiple choice, one-fact questions, form and table tasks, sentence completion, and extended writing tasks) are provided for the scorer on the scoring sheet.
  - The *BEST Literacy 2.0 Test Manual* contains a writing rubric and benchmarks to score the writing tasks. A raw score is calculated based on the combined scores of the reading and writing tasks. A scale score is determined using the conversion tables located in the *BEST Literacy Test 2.0 Manual*.

#### Literacy Screener

If a student lacks the literacy skills to be assessed with the BEST Literacy (for example, a student is not literate in his or her native language), then programs may administer the BEST Literacy Screener. If the student is not successful on the screener, a zero will be recorded in the data collection system as a pre-test score. The screener should only be administered once upon enrollment in the adult education program. Subsequent post-testing should use the BEST Literacy itself, not the screener.

#### Exit Criteria

For ELA students with either a BEST Literacy pre-test at the Advanced level or another ELA pre-test in the Exit Criteria range who are dually enrolled in a class requiring the TABE (i.e. ABE/ASE etc.), the student's placement and progress for NRS will be based on the EFL of the TABE assessment. SPECIAL NOTE: In all other instances of dual enrollment between ESL and ABE/ASE, the student's placement and progress will be based on the ELA assessment.

Students should be pre- and post-tested with the same assessment. Exceptions include the following:

- If the student's pre-test score on the BEST Literacy places them in the Advanced Level and additional ELA services are needed, a second ELA assessment should be given. It is not necessary to post-test on the BEST

Literacy as the second assessment will be used for student placement.

- For enrollment only in ELA, if the student's pre-test in the BEST literacy is at the Advanced Level and another ELA assessment reflects the Exit Criteria range, placement will be based on the BEST Literacy test. If a student's pre-test on the BEST Literacy reflects the Advanced ESL level and either the CASAS or BEST Plus assessment reflects an equal or lower level, placement will occur based on the CASAS or BEST Plus.

## Best Plus 3.0

For information on BEST Plus 2.0: <https://www.cal.org/aea/bp/>

The BEST Plus is only administered as a face-to-face computer adaptive interview that assesses a student's oral proficiency. The student responds to questions asked by the tester. The items reflect everyday American life at home, at work, and in the community.

CAL created BEST Plus 3.0 with the following updates:

- Alignment to the 2016 English Language Proficiency Standards for Adult Education (ELPs) and the 2017 National Reporting System Educational Functioning Levels (NRS EFLs).
- A new multi-staged adaptive format underlying the test.
- A new Part B section of the test with new question types, and a new category in the rubric that measures higher proficiency performances.
- Updated question types and images that reflect contemporary life in the U.S.
- A brand new, user-friendly test platform application with cloud-based data storage.
- An easy-access, cloud-based portal to manage the program's test data.

## CASAS Reading Steps

Reading STEPS offers tests at five levels, thus enabling the series to cover in greater depth the full range of ability levels in the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) for Adult Education (2016). Reading STEPS measures academic vocabulary and higher-order thinking skills contained in the ELP Standards. Test content continues to be based on CASAS Competencies to maintain relevance for adult learners, including an emphasis on employment-related topics required by WIOA.

### Locator

- Both the Form 620R Reading STEPS Locator and the Form 619R Reading STEPS Appraisal accurately place students into the correct pretest.
- Both the Locator and the Appraisal are available in CASAS eTests and as paper tests.
- Programs may use the Locator ONLY for placement into a pretest. Agencies will not be able to order paper Locators without having ordered paper pre/post-tests from the same series.
- Programs should choose the Appraisal if it will be used alone for placement and will not be followed up by a pretest. The Appraisal can never be used as a pretest or post-test.

### Pre and Posting

- The series provides two parallel forms of pre- and post-tests at each of five test levels. These levels provide necessary placement opportunities to ensure the most accurate diagnostic information to guide reading instruction.
- Students must be allowed up to the time listed to complete the test, but most students will finish the test in less time. Students may be given additional time as an accommodation under certain circumstances.
- It is essential that pre- and post-testing always occurs within the same series to ensure test reliability and validity. Agencies cannot pretest students on the current Life and Work Reading series and post-test on the new Reading STEPS series.
- Pre test if someone scores in the high-end conservative-estimate range marked with a diamond (◆), CASAS recommends but does not require retesting at the next higher level. Agencies may choose to use the diamond score. However, the conservative estimate score may underestimate the student's ability. The student can be retested at the next higher level to receive a more accurate score.
- Post-test: Examinees who score at this range on a post-test may choose to either use the diamond score or

retest at the next highest test level.

## Retesting

Examinees who score at the inaccurate range do not receive a scale score. Those who score in the inaccurate range of a Level B, C, D or E test should take the next lower test form to receive a scale score and NRS level. If a student scores at the inaccurate range on a Level A test, CASAS suggests additional reading instruction before retesting the student on a Level A test.

See Reading STEPS scale score ranges in Appendix B.

## CASAS Listening STEPS for ESL

Listening STEPS offers tests at five levels, thus enabling the series to cover in greater depth the full range of ability levels in the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) for Adult Education (2016). Listening STEPS measures academic vocabulary and higher-order thinking skills contained in the ELP Standards. Test content continues to be based on CASAS Competencies to maintain relevance for adult learners, including an emphasis on employment-related topics required by WIOA.

Listening STEPS tests contain three test item types: photo prompt questions, comprehension questions, and next-response questions. Test items are multiple-choice with three response choices at each level. Level A requires a test booklet; however, Levels B through E do not. For examples of the test item types, please see the Listening STEPS Test Administration Manual (TAM). Sample listening items are also available at [www.casas.org](http://www.casas.org).

### Test Administration

- For paper testing, administrators need test booklets (only at Level A), answer sheets, a CD player for students to hear the test questions, and pencils with erasers.
- Tests at Levels B through E are administered by CD without a test booklet. For online test administration, students need access using a computer, laptop, Chromebook, or iPad, and headphones.

### Locator

- Agencies have two placement test options. Both the Form 620L Listening STEPS Locator and the Form 619L Listening STEPS Appraisal accurately place students into the correct pretest. The Form 620L Locator is a 15-minute test with 14 questions. The Form 619L Listening STEPS Appraisal is a 30-minute test with 28 questions. Both are available in CASAS eTests and as paper tests.
- Programs may use the Locator ONLY for placement into a pretest. Agencies will not be able to order paper Locators without having ordered paper pre/post-tests from the same series.
- Programs should choose the Appraisal if it will be used alone for placement and will not be followed up by a pretest. The Appraisal can never be used as a pretest or post-test.

### Pre and Post Tests

- The series provides two parallel forms of pre- and post-tests at each of five levels. These levels provide necessary placement information and ensure the most accurate diagnostic information to guide English language instruction. Questions in Level A through D repeat the test item one time. Tests at Level E do not repeat test items, thus allowing a shorter testing time for completion of Level E tests.
- It is essential that pre- and post-testing always occurs within the same series to ensure test reliability and validity.

### Retesting

- Examinees who score at the inaccurate range marked with an asterisk (\*), do not receive a scale score. Those who score in the inaccurate range of a Level B, C, D or E test should take the next lower test form to receive a scale score and NRS level. If a student scores at the inaccurate range on a Level A test, CASAS suggests additional English language instruction before retesting the student on a Level A test.
- Pretest: CASAS recommends but does not require retesting at the next higher level if someone scores in the high-end conservative-estimate range marked with a diamond (◆). Agencies may choose to use the diamond score. However, the conservative estimate score may underestimate the student's ability. The student can

- be retested at the next higher level to receive a more accurate score.
- Post-test: Examinees who score at this range on a post-test may choose to either use the diamond score or retest at the next highest test level.
- Level B does not give a scale score until item 13, and Levels C, D, and E do not do so until item 14. Students still need to answer enough questions to assess their listening levels reliably. TABE CLAS-E

## **TABE CLAS-E Forms A & B and C & D**

TabE CLAS-E Forms A & B and C & D is a standardized assessment that provides teachers with a reliable, easy-to-use system that accurately identifies the instructional needs of their ESL students. It assesses English proficiency levels to accurately measure students' reading, listening, writing, and speaking skills and is appropriate for all levels of adult ESL.

Please refer to <https://tabetest.com/> for more information on administering forms C & D. Forms C & D are aligned to the new educational functioning level descriptors. Forms A & B are aligned to the older version of the educational functioning level descriptors.

The test formats include multiple-choice and constructed-response items that address a wide range of language skills. TABE CLAS-E is offered both as paper/pencil and online versions.

The content is engaging, culturally relevant, and motivates students to achieve their best. Test items include realistic illustrations, contextualized reading passages, and contexts encountered at home, in the community, and in the workplace. TABE CLAS-E is offered both as paper/pencil and online versions.

### **Test Administration**

An examiner may repeat the prompt for an item only once. Repeating a prompt multiple times or stating the prompt in the student's native language would provide that student an unfair advantage. See the Speaking Scoring Guide for more details.

### **Forms A & B**

Estimated times for each section are as follows:

- Reading—25 minutes per group
- Listening—20 minutes per group
- Writing—47 minutes per group
- Speaking (optional)—15 minutes per student

### **Forms C & D**

Estimated times for each section are as follows:

- Reading—26 items, 30 minutes
- Listening—27 items, 30 minutes
- Writing—28 items, 55 minutes
- Speaking—21 items, 25 minutes

### **Transition to Forms C & D**

TABE CLAS-E Forms C & D are available for use. Forms A & B will expire on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, however, programs should make every effort to ensure a smooth transition to C&D. It is highly recommended that programs begin using forms C & D in the spring semester and phase out Forms A & B during the fall 2024 semester.

### **Locator**

It is required to administer the Locator Test for accurate initial placement. The Locator Test is not designed to determine NRS Level. Its only function is to point to the most appropriate TABE CLAS-E testing level, and it should not be used for any other purpose.

### **Pre and Post testing**

TABE CLAS-E offers separate forms (Form A and Form B) for pre- and post-testing. You may alternate the order in which these forms are administered. More information can be found at <https://tabetest.com/tabe-clas-e->

[blueprint/#](#).

### **Exit from ESL program- TABE CLAS E Considerations**

When deciding if an adult student is adequately proficient in English to transition from an ESL program to an Adult Basic Education (ABE) program, programs should consider two types of exit criteria, either one of which may be useful in any particular context. When these criteria have been met, consideration of the student for exit or transition is appropriate. However, no exit or transition should be made on the basis of a single test performance in isolation.

**a. Recommended criterion for consideration for exit from ESL instruction**

A student who demonstrates Advanced ESL performance in at least 3 TABE CLAS–E subtests should be considered for exit from ESL instruction to adult basic education instruction.

**b. Alternative ESL Exit Criteria Based on Individual TABE CLAS–E Subtests or Totals Forms A & B**

When individual subtest performances are considered, it is appropriate to use a higher criterion than the Advanced ESL performance level.

Under these alternative criteria, we recommend use of the following cut scores for performance on TABE CLAS– E Level 4:

- Reading 588
- Writing 612
- Total Reading and Writing 600
- Listening 607 • Speaking 594
- Total Listening and Speaking 600

**Forms C & D**

- Reading 527
- Listening 533
- Writing 536
- Speaking 568

Note that a student can only achieve an NRS ESL Level 6 on a TABE CLAS–E Level 4 test. The language demands in lower level TABE CLAS–E tests are not sufficiently difficult to reach the “Advanced ESL” (NRS ESL Level 6) functioning level. If a student scores at NRS ESL Level 6 upon the first administration of the TABE CLAS–E Level 4 test, but has not reached the exit score, the student may still show gain if they meet the exit criterion on a second administration. However, if the student scores at the exit criterion or above on the first administration, a higher NRS ESL level could not be obtained on the second administration. In such cases, one should consult the relevant policy for transition to an ABE instrument, such as TABE 11/12.

## Distance Education Policy

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.**

## Distance Education Definitions & Requirements

### 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.

### 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.

### 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.**

### 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 numerous ways including 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.**

### 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 as a participant 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.

### 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 types 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.

## Assessment of Distance Education 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.

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](mailto: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:

- the student who is testing can be properly identified;
- 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 be administered by a virtual proctor and are deemed secure by the test publisher.

## Considerations for Distance Education

Distance education may not be the right solution for every adult education learner. Identifying the type of adult populations (e.g., AE, 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.

## **Distance Education Resources**

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.



<p><b>CASAS Steps Series and Math Goals</b></p>	<p>For learners who have documented disabilities, appropriately trained local assessment staff may provide accommodations in test administration procedures based on student documentation.</p> <p>Examples of testing accommodations for CASAS assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read aloud, sign, or translate test directions word-for-word</li> <li>• Read aloud or sign test display, question and answer choices, except when taking a test of reading comprehension. This would interfere with the construct being measured</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a scribe</li> <li>• Use an adaptive input device to respond to the test</li> <li>• Use a magnifier for paper-based tests</li> <li>• Use large-print paper tests and answer sheets Use a reading tracker/highlighter tool</li> <li>• Use of screen reader assistive technology and tactile graphics test booklets where appropriate</li> <li>• Use a talking calculator for math tests</li> <li>• Allow breaks while testing</li> <li>• Extend test-taking time</li> <li>• Allow flexible test scheduling</li> <li>• Provide a distraction-free testing space</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Casas Assessments Accommodations and Accessibility Guidelines</a> OR</p> <p>Email <a href="mailto:info@casas.org">info@casas.org</a> to be connected to an accommodations specialist.</p>
<p><b>ACT WorkKeys</b></p>	<p>Refer to this guide for information on accommodations and supports.</p> <p><a href="https://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/WorkKeysAccessibilitySupportsGuide.pdf">https://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/WorkKeysAccessibilitySupportsGuide.pdf</a></p> <p>Contact Information: <a href="https://www.act.org/content/act/en/contact-act.html">https://www.act.org/content/act/en/contact-act.html</a></p>

## APPENDIX B WI Approved Assessment Instruments and Testing Intervals

Instrument/ Publisher Contact	Approved Forms	Approved Tests	Appropriate NRS Levels	Pre- and Post-Testing Intervals (Publisher Recommended)
<p><b>Basic English Skills Test (BEST) Literacy 2.0.</b></p> <p>Publisher: Center for Applied Linguistics, 4646 40th Street NW, Washington, DC 20016-1859. Telephone: (202) 362-0700. Internet: <a href="http://www.cal.org">www.cal.org</a></p>	<p>Forms 1, 2, and 3 are approved for use in paper delivery format.</p>	<p>Reading and Writing</p>	<p>NRS 1-4</p>	<p>60 Hours minimum, or at end of instructional session; 80-100 hours in lowest pre-test subject area recommended before post- testing.</p>
<p><b>[Basic English Skills Test Plus] BEST Plus 3.0</b> - (waiting for updated information)</p> <p>Publisher: Center for Applied Linguistics, 4646 40th Street NW, Washington, DC 20016-1859. Telephone: (202) 362-0700. Internet: <a href="http://www.cal.org">www.cal.org</a></p>	<p>Forms 1 and 2 are approved for use on paper and through a computer-based delivery format with adaptive (Part A) and fixed form (Part B) sections.</p>	<p>Oral proficiency only (paper and computer-adaptive delivery format)</p>	<p>All ESL NRS Levels</p>	<p>CAL recommends that BEST Plus 3.0 be given as a posttest after a minimum of 40 hours or one semester of instruction following pre-testing. Learner- and program-related factors may warrant varying from these recommendations</p>
<p><b>CASAS Math GOALS 2</b></p> <p>CASAS Support: Jane Eguez <a href="mailto:jeguez@casas.org">jeguez@casas.org</a> 800-255-1036 . 125 Marty Gustafson <a href="mailto:mgustafson@casas.org">mgustafson@casas.org</a> 800-255-1036 x146</p>	<p>Math GOALS Forms: Level A 921M-922M Level B 923M-924M Level C 925M-926M Level D 927M-928M Level E 929M-930M</p>	<p>Math GOALS 900 series (e-test and paper)</p>	<p>All Adult Education/ASE NRS Levels</p>	<p>40 hours minimum, recommended after 70-100 hours completed.</p>

<p><b>Casas Listening Steps</b></p> <p>Publisher: CASAS, 5151 Murphy Canyon Road, Suite 220, San Diego, CA 92123–4339. Telephone: (800) 255–1036</p>	<p>The Locator Test and Forms 621/622, 623/624, 625/626, 627/628, and 629/630</p>	<p>Approved for use through paper-based testing and CDs, and through a computer- based delivery format.</p>	<p>ESL 1-6</p>	<p>Administer post-tests, using alternate forms, at the end of a semester, term, quarter, or other substantial block of instruction to document learning gains. Recommended to test after 70-100 hours of instruction. Testing should not occur before at least 40 hours of instruction.</p>
<p><b>Casas Reading Steps</b></p> <p>Publisher: CASAS, 5151 Murphy Canyon Road, Suite 220, San Diego, CA 92123–4339. Telephone: (800) 255–1036.</p>	<p>The Locator Test and Forms 621/622, 623/624, 625/626, 627/628, and 629/630</p>	<p>Approved for use through paper-based testing and through a computer-based delivery format.</p>	<p>ESL 1-6</p>	<p>Administer post-tests, using alternate forms, at the end of a semester, term, quarter, or other substantial block of instruction to document learning gains. Recommended to test after 70-100 hours of instruction. Testing should not occur before at least 40 hours of instruction.</p>
<p><b>TEST OF ADULT EDUCATION: TABE 13/14)</b></p> <p>Corporate Owner of the TABE: Data Recognition Corp. (Ripp, Marcus <a href="mailto:MRipp@DataRecognitionCorp.com">MRipp@DataRecognitionCorp.com</a>)</p>	<p>Forms 13 &amp; 14 *Locator is required*</p>	<p>Subject areas: Basic skills - Reading, Math, Language, Writing Assessment Types: Diagnostic, Summative, Formative Delivery Format: Paper and Pencil, online (Insight) Scoring: Hand, Local and Online Scoring</p>	<p>All ADULT EDUCATION/AESE NRS Levels</p>	<p><b>Alternate form testing</b> - <b>AE levels 1-4:</b> 50 to 60 hours of instruction - minimum of 40 hours - <b>AE levels 5–6.</b> 30 to 59 hours of instruction when post-testing students at <b>Same form testing:</b> - All AE levels 60 to 80 hours of instruction</p>
<p><b>TABE CLAS-E</b></p> <p>Mike Johnson <a href="mailto:MJohnson@DataRecognitionCorp.com">MJohnson@DataRecognitionCorp.com</a> 630-789-4586  <a href="mailto:mruszkowski@datarecognitioncorp.com">mruszkowski@datarecognitioncorp.com</a></p>	<p>Forms C &amp; D *Locator is required* *Seamless transition to TABE11-12*</p>	<p>Reading Listening Writing Speaking (paper)</p>	<p>All ESL NRS Levels</p>	<p><b>Alternate form testing,</b> -ESL levels 1-6 50-60 hours of instruction minimum of 40 hours,  <b>Same form testing:</b> -All ESL levels 60 to 80 hours of instruction</p>
<p><b>ACT WorkKeys</b> Internet: <a href="http://www.act.org">www.act.org</a>. Unless the assessment title shows "NRS," it is not an approved form to use.</p>	<p>Applied Math – Forms 014, 015, 016, 017  WorkPlace Documents: Forms 018, 019, 020, 021</p>	<p>Applied Math WorkPlace Documents Paper and computer- based</p>	<p>Applied Math – NRS 2-6 Workplace Documents : Levels 2-6</p>	<p>Recommended : 30 hours Minimum: 30 hours</p>

## Appendix C: AE/ASE NRS TEST Benchmarks for Educational Functioning Levels

### CASAS Math GOALS 2 Series - EFL and Score Ranges

NRS Educational Functioning Level		A/B Forms	C/D Forms
1	Beginning Literacy	Enter and Complete	
2	Beginning Basic	Enter and Complete	
3	Low Intermediate	Enter and Complete	
4	Middle Intermediate	Entry into level 4	Enter and Complete
5	High Intermediate		Enter and Complete
6	Adult Secondary		Entry into Level 6

### Old to New NRS Math EFLS and Scale Score Ranges

NRS EFL	Old AE/ASE EFL	Life Skills Math Scale Score	NRS RFL	New AE/ASE EFLS for Mathematics	Math GOALS Scale Score Ranges
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	High Intermediate	221-235	4	Middle Intermediate	215-225
5	Low Adult Secondary	236-245	5	High Intermediate	226-235
6	High Adult Secondary	246 & above	6	Adult Secondary	236 & above

### ACT WorkKeys: Applied Math and Workplace Documents

NRS Educational Functioning Level Benchmarks		
Education Functioning Levels	WorkKeys Workplace Documents Scale Scores on Workplace Document Forms 018, 019, 020, and 021	WorkKeys Applied Math Scale Scores on Applied Math Forms 014, 015, 016, and 017
Level 1: Beginning ABE Literacy	N/A	71-73
Level 2: Beginning Basic Education	73-74	74-78
Level 3: Low Intermediate Basic Education	75-77	79-82
Level 4: High Intermediate Basic Education	78-80	83-85
Level 5: Low Adult Secondary Education	81-82	86-87
Level 6: High Adult Secondary Education	83-90	88-90

**TABE 13 & 14 EFLS and Scale Score Ranges**

<b>Educational Functioning Level</b>	<b>TABE Test Benchmarks</b>
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



## Appendix D: ELA/IELCE NRS TEST Benchmarks for Educational Functioning Levels

Best Plus 3.0, Best Literacy (waiting for updated information), TABE Clas E Forms A & B

Refer to the TABE CLAS–E Technical Manual for score ranges for individual reading, writing, listening, and speaking tests for A & B and C & D. Table shows only total scores for A & B. For a copy, email [mruszkowski@datarecognitioncorp.com](mailto:mruszkowski@datarecognitioncorp.com).

Educational Functioning Levels	Test Benchmarks
Beginning ESL Literacy	BEST1 Plus 2.0: 88-361 BEST Literacy: 0–20 (SPL 0–1) TABE CLAS-E forms A & B scale scores: Total Reading and Writing: 225-394 Total Listening and Speaking: 230-407
Low Beginning ESL	BEST Plus 2.0: 362-427 BEST Literacy: 21-52 (SPL 2) TABE CLAS-E scale scores: Total Reading and Writing: 395-441 Total Listening and Speaking: 408-449
High Beginning ESL	BEST Plus 2.0: 428–452 BEST Literacy: 53–63 (SPL 3) TABE CLAS-E scale scores: Total Reading and Writing: 442-482 Total Listening and Speaking: 450-485

<sup>1</sup> BEST = Basic English Skills Test

<sup>2</sup> TABE CLAS–E = Test of Adult Basic Education Complete Language Assessment System – English

<sup>3</sup> Refer to the TABE CLAS–E Technical Manual for score ranges for individual reading, writing, listening, and speaking tests. Table shows only total scores.

<sup>4</sup> 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.

Low Intermediate ESL	BEST Plus 2.0: 453 – 484 BEST Literacy: 64 – 67 (SPL 4) TABE CLAS-E scale scores: Total Reading and Writing: 483-514 Total Listening and Speaking: 486-525
High Intermediate ESL	BEST Plus 2.0: 485–524 BEST Literacy: 68-75 (SPL 5) TABE CLAS-E scale scores: Total Reading and Writing: 515-556 Total Listening and Speaking: 526-558
Advanced ESL	Best Plus 2.0: 525–564 (exit 565 and higher) BEST Literacy4: 76-78 (SPL 6) TABE CLAS-E scale scores: Total Reading and Writing: 557-600 Total Listening and Speaking: 559-600 Casas Life & Work 221-235
Exit Range	Best Plus 2.0 above 565 Best Literacy – NA Tabe Clas E forms A & B: Total Reading and Writing – 600 Total Listening and Speaking - 600

### CASAS Reading STEPS Series – EFL and Score Ranges For ESL

<b>NRS Reading Educational Functioning Levels for ESL</b>	<b>Reading STEPS Scale Score Ranges</b>
1 Beginning ESL Literacy	183 and below
2 Low Beginning ESL	184-196
3 High Beginning ESL	197-206
4 Low Intermediate ESL	207-216
5 High Intermediate ESL	217-227
6 Advanced ESL	228-238
Exit Advanced ESL	239 and above

### CASAS Listening STEPS- EFL and Score Ranges For ESL

<b>NRS Educational Functioning Levels for ESL</b>	<b>Listening STEPS Scale Score Ranges</b>
1 Beginning ESL Literacy	181 and below
2 Low Beginning ESL	182-191
3 High Beginning ESL	192-201
4 Low Intermediate ESL	202-211
5 High Intermediate ESL	212-221
6 Advanced ESL	222-231
Exit Advanced ESL	232 and above

## Assessment Forms and Test Times

### Casas Reading Steps

Level	Form Numbers	Number of Items	Test Time*
A	621R-622R	33	30 minutes
B	623R-624R	36	50 minutes
C	625R-626R	36	75 minutes
D	627R-628R	36	75 minutes
E	629R-630R	36	75 minutes

### Casas Listening STEPS

#### Listening STEPS

Level	Form Numbers	Number of Items	Test Time*
Level A	621L-622L	33	28 minutes
Level B	623L-624L	36	45 minutes
Level C	625L-626L	39	52 minutes
Level D	627L-628L	39	56 minutes
Level E	629L-630L	39	38 minutes

\*Students must be allowed up to the time listed to complete the test, but most students will finish the test in less time. Students may be given additional time as an accommodation under certain circumstances.