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MARYLAND PROCEDURAL MANUAL

Basic Skills and English Language Acquisition Assessment Practices

FY 2026

Contents

LIST OF TABLES

OVERVIEW

PURPOSES OF ASSESSMENT

The purpose of assessment is to provide valid information for making educational decisions. The primary decisions are those made by the learner and teacher regarding the learner's needs, goals, and progress; however, many other types of decisions based on assessment results extend beyond the classroom. For example, program directors at the local, state, and/or federal levels can use assessment results to:

- Document continuous program improvement,
- Guide program management and activities,
- Guide professional development planning and implementation,
- Set standards,
- Monitor the quality of education,
- Inform policymaking,
- Reward or sanction various practices,
- Justify funding, and
- Communicate performance results to various constituencies.

Assessment can be used for both accountability and instruction. Measurement issues become more important as the stakes attached to the assessments increase. When an assessment is used for accountability, it must be *standardized.*

> A standardized assessment differs from an *informal* test in that the latter does not follow a fixed set of conditions. For instance, in a standardized reading test, the same materials are read by different learners, following the same procedures, answering the same questions, and observing the same time limits. The purpose of the standard conditions is to try to hold constant all factors other than the ability under study so that the inference drawn about that ability is *valid*, that is, true or correct.
>
> Standardized tests are particularly useful for making comparisons among programs. They let us compare a person's ability at one time to that person's ability at a second time, as in pre- and post-testing. They also permit comparisons among programs. However, for the test to give valid results for making such comparisons, they must be administered according to the standard conditions.[1]

Results from the standardized test are reported using scale scores correlated to the NRS Educational Functioning Levels (EFL) with specific cut scores corresponding to the NRS competency performance descriptors. Progress in an EFL is measured by administering a pre-test and post- test and comparing the results.

[1] T. Sticht (1999). Testing and Accountability in Adult Education. El Cajon, CA: Applied Behavioral & Cognitive S Sciences, Inc.

Validity and Reliability

All NRS approved assessment instruments have undergone rigorous test development and validation procedures. An assessment is considered valid if it accurately measures the skills and abilities for which it was developed. Reliability means the test is administered to a large number of students, and the test gives the same results consistently over time regardless of age, ethnicity, gender, location etc.

Programs performing assessment must use Maryland's Assessment Policy in conjunction with the publisher's official examiner's manual to ensure reliability and validity in assessment practices. Providers shall follow all guidelines in the publisher's manuals including replicating the test security, environment, and directions and keep the most current copy of the manuals for each test used by the program.

Use of Informal Assessments

In addition to the required, standardized tests for accountability, the Maryland Department of Labor (MD Labor) encourages local providers to use a variety of informal assessments to assist in informing instruction and progress toward educational goals. These may include:

- Performance samples- such as writing samples, journals, worksheets, audiotapes, projects, and demonstration of a task.
- Informal reading inventory.
- Learner self-evaluation.
- Learning plans and logs.
- GED Ready®.
- Additional standardized tests.
- Computer-generated assessments – such as by topic or subject area.
- Textbook tests.
- Teacher-designed tests; and
- Interviews and teacher observation – dated anecdotal record.

Keep in mind that a participant's test score is just one piece of information that demonstrates what the person can do in a specific and carefully defined area. While test and test scores are important, it is also important to remember that any one test score is just that – one test score.

SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT POLICY

Maryland's Assessment Policy can be found under Current Policies 2023: Basic Skills and English Language Assessment Policy

All assessments approved for use in WIOA funded programs in Maryland are appropriate for NRS reporting. The use of these standardized tests is designed to assess learning along a continuum from beginning literacy and English language acquisition through completion of secondary level skills. Programs should select the test instrument that best meets the learner's goals and instructional focus of the program.

Subsequent sections of this document cover additional details on assessment including general assessment practices, training requirements, accommodations for individuals with disabilities, a description of Maryland approved assessment instruments, quality control procedures, and supplemental materials.

For Information and Assistance

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Websites:

- LACES website (http://www.labor.maryland.gov/lwis/)
- NRS website (http://www.nrsweb.org/)
- CASAS website (http://www.casas.org/)
- TABE website (http://tabetest.com/)
- ACT WorkKeys website (https://www.act.org

GENERAL ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

PARTICIPANTS TO BE ASSESSED

All students in the Maryland adult education programs, including those enrolled in distance learning classes, will be assessed with the state designated assessments CASAS, TABE, and TABE CLAS-E. Local workforce providers will assess youth program participants and adult customers as appropriate.

All participants must be included in the appropriate state database (LACES for Title II and MWE for Title I providers.) Title II participants are required to have a valid pre-test and 12 contact hours to be counted for federal reporting.

Assessment results must be reported in the database in a timely manner.

ASSESSMENTS APPROVED FOR NRS REPORTING

The following assessments are approved for learners in Maryland:

Table 1: Maryland Approved Assessments

ABE Tests	NRS Expiration Date	Sunset Date*
ACT Work Keys Workplace Documents	7/13/2026	6/30/2027
ACT WorkKeys Applied Math	7/13/2026	6/30/2027
CASAS Reading GOALS	2/5/2025	6/30/2026
CASAS Reading GOALS 2	7/13/2030	6/30/2031
CASAS Math GOALS 2	7/13/2030	6/30/2031
TABE 13 & 14	6/20/2027	6/30/2027

ESL TESTS	NRS Expiration	Sunset Date*
CASAS Reading STEPS	7/13/2030	6/30/2031
CASAS Listening STEPS	7/13/2030	6/30/2031
TABE CLAS-E	6/20/2027	6/30/2027

*Generally, tests with expiring NRS approval dates that occurred during a program year have been permitted for use in the NRS until the end of that program year.

Assessments within these test systems:

- Are appropriate for measuring literacy and language development of adult learners.
- Have standardized administration and scoring procedures and alternate equivalent forms for pre- and post-testing; and
- Have evidence linking them to NRS educational functioning levels.

Table 2: Scale Scores for NRS Maryland Approved Assessments Related to NRS Educational Functioning Levels

ABE NRS EFL	*ACT WorkKeys Scale Score Ranges*		*CASAS GOALS Scale Score Ranges*			*TABE 13/14 Scale Score Ranges*		
	Workplace Documents	**Applied Math**	**Reading**	**Reading 2**	**Math 2**	**Reading**	**Math**	**Language**
ABE Level 1	N/A	71-73	203 and below	203 and below	192 and below	300-441	300-448	300-457
ABE Level 2	73-74	74-78	204-216	204-216	193-203	442-500	449-495	458-510
ABE Level 3	75-77	79-82	217-227	217-227	204-213	501-535	496-536	511-546
ABE Level 4	78-80	83-85	228-238	228-238	214-224	536-575	537-595	547-583
ABE Level 5	81-82	86-87	239-248	239-248	225-235	576-616	584-630	584-630
ABE Level 6	83-90	88-90	249 and above	249 and above	236 and above	617-800	657-800	631-800

ESL NRS EFL	*CASAS STEPS Scale Score Ranges*		*TABE CLAS E (Forms C/D) Scale Score Ranges*			
	Reading	**Listening**	**Reading**	**Writing**	**Speaking**	**Listening**
ESL Level 1	183 and below	181 and below	200-354	210-384	170-338	200-348
ESL Level 2	184-196	182-191	355-388	385-414	339-402	349-389
ESL Level 3	197-206	192-201	389-437	415-437	403-436	390-427
ESL Level 4	207-216	202-211	428-448	438-461	437-475	428-457
ESL Level 6	228-238	222-231	488-580	501-670	543-760	489-620
Exit Advanced ESL	**239 and above**	**232 and above**	527	536	568	533

Per WIOA Section 3(5), individuals are regarded as Basic Skills Deficient if they are (1) (Title I-youth with English language, reading, writing or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test, or (2) Title II-youth or adults who are unable to compute or solve problems or read, write or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, as a family member, or in society.

TRAINING FOR ADMINISTERING ASSESSMENTS

MD Labor requires all Title I and Title II assessment administrators, including Youth Program service providers, to be properly trained before administering standardized assessments. Programs must comply

with all training requirements established by the test publisher, including education and other minimum requirements.

State assessment trainers will train new staff including Intake/Assessment Specialists, Instructional Specialists, and designated workforce staff. These staff will then deliver administration and interpretation procedures for all approved assessments to local programs. Training must include NRS policy, accountability policies, and data collection; definition of performance measures; and guidelines for assessment administration.

Program staff who administer CASAS assessments are required to complete training prior to administering any CASAS assessments. The online training modules were updated and made available July 1, 2020. Modules 1 and 3 are required for programs using paper testing, Programs implementing eTests should complete Modules 1 and 2. Module 4, Test Results and Reports, is recommended for all programs but not required. Programs implementing remote test proctoring are required to complete the Remote Proctor Testing Certification. All training is available on the CASAS website under the Online Training tab. CASAS provides update webinars that are recommended for assessment staff.

Programs using TABE must complete the two-part TABE Certification and TABE Online training videos if implementing TABE Online. Training is located on the DRC website under TABE Resources.

Programs using WorkKeys are required to take the training specific to the NRS approved tests, *Test Coordinator Training* and *Proctor Training* found on the WorkKeys Training Website

Table 3: Staff Training Schedule

WHO	BY WHOM	WHEN	
		Initial	Update
WIOA Title II Intake/Assessment	Online Training	Upon hire	Every two years
WIOA Title II Instructional Specialists	Online Training	Upon hire	Every two years
WIOA Title II ELA Lead Teachers	Online Training	Upon hire	Every two years
WIOA Title II Local Program Staff	Online training if administering assessments and Intake/Assessment Specialist, Instructional Specialist and/or ELA Lead Teacher ELA Lead Teacher	Upon hire	Every two years

WIOA Title I Local Program Staff	Online Training and Intake/Assessment Specialist, Instructional Specialist and/or ELA Lead Teacher from a Title II program	Prior to delivering assessment	Every two years

State and local program staff are responsible for maintaining a record for each assessment training that they conduct. This includes original agendas, sign-in sheets, and evaluations in hard copy or electronic form. State adult education staff will enter state training data, and local WIOA Title II program staff will enter local program training data in the LACES staff training record. WIOA Title I providers must be prepared to share training data on staff upon MD Labor or USDOL request.

ASSESSMENT RESOURCES

For any assessment used, staff members with assessment duties will maintain and obtain guidance from **current** copies of the following:

- CASAS Resources Catalog (assessment materials and other resources).
- CASAS Test Administration Manual for any CASAS assessment used.
- CASAS Remote Testing Guidelines.
- TABE 13 &14 Resources, www.tabetest.com.
- TABE 13 &14 Test Administration Manual.
- TABE 13 &14 TABE Remote Proctoring Guidance
- TABE CLAS-E Teacher's Resource Guide
- National External Diploma Program (NEDP) Diagnostic and Assessment Manual, if providing the NEDP participants; and
- Administering the ACT Work Keys Assessments National Testing Webpage
- ACT WorkKeys Test Administration Manual

Programs should monitor the test developers' websites for resources, updates, and information about new tests in development. Only NRS approved assessments may be used for testing.

OTHER ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

For Title II programs, at least seventy percent (70%) of learners must have a valid matched pair of pre- and post-tests for the fiscal year.

In accordance with the Code of Federal Regulations (2 CFR Part 200.333 - 200.337), Maryland requires participating programs to retain assessment records in the learners file and maintain the file in hard copy or electronic form for at least three years, following the date on which the final cost report charged to a program year's allotment is submitted. If a litigation, claim, or audit is started before the expiration of the three-year period, the records then must be retained until all litigation, claims or audit findings involving the records have been resolved and final action has been taken.

All learner records shall be secured in locked files. With the increased concern about identity theft, sensitivity to the availability of personal information, and legal requirements as reflected in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), it is extremely important that programs maintain strict adherence to data security issues. Intake and assessment forms, related paperwork, and other documents that may contain information such as learners' Social Security numbers should be shredded or otherwise appropriately destroyed after the three- year storage time limit.

ACCOMMODATION FOR DISABILITIES AND OTHER SPECIAL NEEDS

Under Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and related regulations, WIOA Title I and II providers must provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities, unless providing the accommodation would cause undue hardship[2]. Accommodations are not designed to lower expectations for performance; rather, they are designed to mitigate the effects of a disability and to level the playing field. An individual with a record of a substantially limiting impairment may be entitled to a reasonable accommodation or reasonable modification if needed and related to the disability.

In those circumstances where a WIOA Title I or II provider believes that the proposed accommodation would cause undue hardship, the provider has the burden of proving that the accommodation would result in such hardship based on consideration of all factors set forth in the definition in 29 CFR 38.4 (rrr) (1). The decision must be accompanied by a written statement of the recipient's reasons to the individual or individuals who requested the accommodation. If a requested accommodation would result in undue hardship, the provider must, after consultation with an individual with a disability (or

[2] In accordance with 29 CFR 38.4 (rrr), "undue hardship" means significant difficulty or expense incurred by a WIOA Title I or Title II provider, when considered in light of the following factors 29 CFR 38.4 (rrr)(1): (A) The nature and cost of the accommodation needed, taking into consideration the availability of tax credits and deductions, and/or outside funding for the accommodation. (B) The overall financial resources of the facility or facilities involved in the provision of the reasonable accommodation, including: (1) The number of persons aided, benefited, served, or trained by, or employed at, the facility or facilities; and (3) The number, type and location of the recipient's facilities: (D) The type of operation or operations of the recipient, including: (1) The geographic separateness and administrative or fiscal relationship of the facility or facilities in question to the recipient; and (2) Where the individual is seeking an employment-related accommodation, the composition, structure and functions of the recipient's workforce; and (E) The impact of the accommodation upon the operation of the facility or facilities, including: (1) The impact on the ability of other participants to receive aid, benefits, services, or training, or of other employees to perform their duties; and (2) The Impact on the facility's ability to carry out its mission. The provider must make the decision that the accommodation would cause such hardship only after considering all factors listed above.

individuals with disabilities), take any other action that would not result in such hardship, but would nevertheless ensure that, to the maximum extent possible, individuals with disabilities receive the service provided. All documentation related to accommodation should be retained in the learner file.

Unless making the modification fundamentally alter[3] the nature of the service, program, or activity, the provider must also make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination based on disability.

Educational testing must take into consideration both the principles of standardization (e.g., Test administration procedures required by test publishers) and inclusion for all participants. WIOA Title I and II providers are required to document any accommodation requests and any meeting regarding the disposition of requests in accordance with Section 188 rules.

Procedures for Identifying Learners Who Require Accommodations

Identification typically occurs during intake, although accommodations may be provided at any time during program services. Disabilities may be initially observed or self-reported but must be supported by proper documentation.

Proper Documentation

Documentation must provide a comprehensive evaluation, a specific diagnosis, and objective evidence of a substantial functional limitation. The diagnostic report must include specific recommendations for accommodation(s), as well as a detailed explanation of why each accommodation is recommended. The evaluator(s) must describe the impact the diagnosed disability has on a specific major life activity as well as the degree of recommendations with specific test results or clinical observations. This evaluation must be made by a qualified professional whose credentials are appropriate to the disability. The name, title, and professional credentials (e.g., degrees, areas of specification, license or certification, employment) must be clearly stated in the documentation.

Scale scores for individuals who are provided accommodation should be referenced according to the same standards as participants who are tested without an accommodation; however, interpretation of results should take into consideration the accommodation used (e.g., the examinee scored at the ABE Level 5 in the math assessment when permitted to use a calculator).

- Assessment accommodations are based upon the nature of the disability or special need and can include, but are not limited to:
- Braille Test Edition — for learners who are proficient in this mode of access to written material. Test administrators must transfer Braille answers to a scorable answer document.

[3] In accordance with 29 CFR 38.4 (z) regulations, "Fundamental alteration" means (1) A change in the essential nature of a program or activity, including but not limited to an aid, service, benefit, or training; or (2) A cost that a recipient can demonstrate would result in an undue burden.

- Large Print Edition — an enlarged copy of the regular print edition. Learners who use the large print edition should be allowed to mark their answers on a large print answer sheet.
- Repeated Directions — The test administrator may repeat the directions for learners who have difficulty following or attending to directions.
- Assistive Technology — Can include but is not limited to a computer, tape recorder, calculator, abacus, grip for a pencil, visual magnification device, communication device, mask or market to maintain place, speech synthesizer, and electronic reader.
- Answers Recorded —If unable to write, provisions must be made for the test administrator to record the learner's answers on the scorable answer document. Scribes and others supporting a learner's test-taking must be neutral in responding to the learner during test administration. Assistance in test administration must not give away the answers. The learner's responses must accurately represent his or her own choices.
- Extended Time/Adjusted Time — Time may be adjusted for certain learners, such as those who have short attention spans or who may be unable to concentrate for long periods of time on a given task. The test administration time may have to be altered considerably to allow for intermittent short breaks during the testing period, or it may be determined appropriate to administer the test in a number of short sessions. Testing may also be stopped and continued at a later time if a learner's behavior interferes with testing. The elapsed time must be documented, and the test administrator must closely monitor that test security is maintained. The time of day the test is administered may also be adjusted.
- Communication Assistance — A test administrator who is fluent in the cuing or signing modality routinely used by the learner should be available to repeat or clarify test directions.

Detailed information about accommodation and alternate test forms are available on the test publisher websites.
www.casas.org
http://wwwtabetest.com
https://www.workkeys.act.org

GUIDELINES FOR EACH ASSESSMENT

All learners must be assessed at entry and post-tested at least once during the fiscal year, provided they accumulate sufficient instructional hours to warrant post-testing. If a learner continues instruction after a post-test has been administered, that post-test can be used as the pre-test for the learner's next test battery.

PLACEMENT TESTS

An appraisal or locator is used to determine the correct level of pre-test to administer. All programs are required to administer an appraisal or locator unless the participant:

- Has had a current appraisal or locator (within 12 months):
- Has limited literacy skills or has limited ability to understand or speak English, determined at intake by staff observation or self- reported with appropriate documentation; or

Students who are placed at an instructional level that is not appropriate for their ability may be frustrated or bored and exit the program prematurely. An accurate pre-test helps provide accurate baseline information to inform instruction and monitor progress. Appraisals and locators may not be used as the pre- or post-tests.

ALTERNATIVE PLACEMENT OPTION

In an effort to reduce barriers for participants seeking to achieve specific goals not measured by NRS assessment, Maryland has approved the use of an alternative placement option effective PY 25-26. Alternative placement tests are not used to measure a pre- or post-test gain, and learners placed through this option are not eligible to earn MSG 1a which requires pre-and post-testing using an NRS assessment. Those assessed with alternative placement tests must still meet all eligibility requirements outlined in WIOA (203)4.

Programs may consider alternative placement for the following MSG Types:
MSG 1d – Passing a subtest of the State-recognized High School Equivalency examination.
MSG 2 – Documented attainment of a secondary school diploma.
MSG 4 – Satisfactory progress towards milestones (typically for Workplace Literacy programs).
MSG 5 – Passing and exam required for an occupation or showing progress in technical or occupational skills (typically for IET programs).

Effective August 1, 2025, programs that prepare students to pass any subtest of the approved High School Equivalency (HSE) exams in Maryland (MSG Type 1d or 2), including the GED® Test, may use the following options, provided that the local program can document relevant courses of study, such as tutoring, boot camps or intensive classes in the subject area that the student needs to complete.

GED Ready Test Completion:

- **If a student has passed 3 out of 4 GED Tests:**

  The student must either

  - Complete a GED Ready Test in the remaining subject OR

        - Provide documentation of an unsuccessful attempt at the GED Test in that subject
    - **If a student has passed 2 out of 4 GED Tests:**

      The student must complete a GED Ready Test in one of the remaining subjects with a minimum score of 134.
    - **If a student has passed 1 out of 4 GED Tests or has not taken any GED Tests,** programs must apply for a waiver to consider alternative placement.
    -

T**he GED Ready® or GED® Test must be no older than 12 months at the time of enrollment to be used as an alternative placement test.**

Programs planning to use alternative placement for IET or Workplace Literacy programs, must submit their proposed plan to AELS prior to the start of class. For additional information, refer to the Alternative Placement section of the *Basic Skills and English Language Assessment Policy*.

PRE-TESTING AND POST-TESTING FOR ALL ASSESSMENTS

The scale score results of placement testing will indicate the appropriate level pre-test to administer

Table 4: Pre-testing and Post-testing Timeframes

WHAT	WHEN	PURPOSE

<table>
<tr><td>Pre-test</td><td colspan="2">1. Pre-testing must be completed prior to the commencement of instruction or training services.
2. Post-test scores obtained at the end of a semester or other reporting period may serve as a pre-test for the next reporting
period, provided that the interim does not exceed six (6) months. Learners who have dropped out or “stopped- out” of an instructional program for more than four (4) months, must be administered a new pre-test upon return to assure proper placement in the program. That pre-test should be the same level but a different form from the previous pre-test.
3. Students do not need to be assessed in all the areas described
in the level descriptors. The local program must decide the skill areas most relevant to each student’s needs or the program’s curriculum and assess students in these areas. Initial placement may be set using any subject area of pre-tests given.</td><td>Determine entry EFL Guide instruction</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Post-test</td><td rowspan="3">1.</td><td>Hours of Instruction between Pre-test and Post-test</td><td rowspan="3">Determine update EFL Guide instruction</td></tr>
<tr><td>Recommended</td><td>Minimum</td></tr>
<tr><td>70-100 hours</td><td>CASAS, 40 hours
TABE, ABE levels 1-4, 40 hours
TABE, ABE levels 5-6, 30 hours
TABE CLAS-E, 40 hours
WorkKeys, 30 hours</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">2. If more than one skill area was assessed during entry pre- testing, a Measurable Skills Gain may be measured with a post-test in any subject area in which a participant was pre-tested.</td></tr>
</table>

Note: Programs should schedule post-testing when a student has progressed sufficiently to show progress. While the policy allows testing at 40 hours, continuously testing at exactly 40 hours can lead to test fatigue.

MD National External Diploma Program® Learners

Learners interested in the National External Diploma Program® (NEDP), are administered a CASAS appraisal test or locator, to determine readiness for enrollment in the Diagnostic Phase. To maximize resources, only clients whose appraisal scores are at the C or D level when administering CASAS Reading or at the D or E level when administering Math GOALS 2 will begin in the NEDP. Learners who do not qualify should be referred for remediation and retested when they have improved their skills. Appraisal tests can never substitute for NEDP diagnostic instruments measuring basic skills in math, reading, and writing. Learners must achieve the required minimum score in math, reading, and writing to advance from Diagnostics to Generalized Assessment (CASAS C or D Reading GOALS score of 236 or higher, Math GOALS 2 score of 226 or higher on a D/E/ level test, and a holistic score of 3 or higher for the CASAS Written Prompt.) Learners who do not meet the threshold should be referred for remediation. NEDP learners in Generalized Assessment are not required to be reassessed every year and do not need to be post-tested to show a level gain. Learners may advance from ABE Level 5 to 6 by entering Generalized Assessment.

RARE Post-Testing Time Exception

Research supports Maryland's recommended 70-100 instructional hours prior to post testing. Shorter pre-test to post-test time periods do not allow for learner gain and can result in over testing, affecting validity. Rare exceptions to the minimum of 40 (CASAS); 40 (TABE 13&14, all levels except ABE 5-6); 30 (TABE 13&14 ABE Levels 5-6) 30 (WorkKeys) instructional hours prior to post- testing are allowable on a per learner basis only. **Complete documentation supporting the reason for any exception must be maintained at the local level.** Programs will be monitored on the use of exceptions and appropriate actions taken for excessive use or misapplication of exception provisions. Rare exceptions could include a teacher's observation that a learner has made measurable progress in fewer than the minimum instructional hours based upon several learner-demonstrated factors. A teacher may also determine that it is appropriate to administer a post-test if a learner indicates that he must exit class prior to the minimum instructional hours and has demonstrated measurable progress.

Matched Pair

The combination of a pre-test and post-test constitutes a matched pair. For a matched pair in a test battery to be valid in reading, math or listening, the post-test must:

- Be in the same test series (CASAS GOALS, CASAS STEPS, TABE 13&14, WorkKeys) and skill area.
- With exceptions, not be more than one test form level greater than the pre-test, and

Be a *different* form number from the pre-test.

Table 5: Examples of a Matched Pair

PLACEMENT TEST	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST OPTIONS

CASAS Reading *GOALS* Appraisal, 900 R Locator, 104R	CASAS Reading *GOALS* Level A, Form 901 R	CASAS Reading *GOALS* Level A, Form 902 R
TABE *Locator Test*	TABE: Level M Form 13	TABE: Level M Form 14

Purchasing Procedures

Assessment materials are copyrighted and shall not be duplicated. Duplication of copyrighted materials will expose programs to legal and financial penalties. Materials can be purchased directly from CASAS, DRC/CTB, or ACT using the following contact information:

CASAS
5151 Murphy Canyon Road, Suite 220
San Diego, CA, 92123-43439
Phone 800-255-1036
www.casas.org

Data Recognition Corporation/CTB
P.O. Box 881002
Indianapolis, Indiana 46208-1002
http://tabetest.com

American College Testing (ACT)
500 ACT Drive
Iowa City, IA 52243
Telephone: (800) 967-5539
workkeys@act.org

ACT WorkKeys Assessments

Table 6: ACT WorkKeys Approved Assessments

WorkKeys Assessment Choices	Reading	Math
Applied Math		●
Workplace Documents	●	

Overview

ACT WorkKeys Applied Math and Workplace Documents are approved by the National Reporting System (NRS) for measuring educational gains in adult education and are eligible for use under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) for all adult basic education programs.

The Applied Math assessment is approved for all levels of ABE. It measures critical thinking, mathematical reasoning, and problem-solving techniques for situations that occur in today's workplace. While individuals may use calculators and conversion tables to help with the problems on the assessment, math skills are still needed to think them through.

The Workplace Documents assessment is approved for ABE levels 2-6 and measures skills that individuals use when they read real workplace documents and use that information to make job-related decisions and solve problems. The documents include messages, email, letters, directions, signs, bulletins, policies, websites, contracts, and regulations.

Test Administration Procedures

Test administrators should have a copy of the test administration manual and follow the test publishers' instructions. There is no placement test for WorkKeys Assessments. A wide range of skills are covered in a single test form. Testing time is 55 minutes. WorkKeys recommends post testing after 30 hours of instruction. There are four test forms for each assessment. Test Administrator should use alternate forms of the test and avoid assigning the same form for one month (frequency bias). If an examinee tests within 30 days, the system automatically assigns a different WorkKeys test form. If outside of 30 days, the assessor would force the system to assign a different form.

Training Requirements

Programs using WorkKeys are required to take the training specific to the NRS approved tests, *Test Coordinator Training* and *Proctor Training* found on the WorkKeys Training Website. The website also includes several free on demand webinars including *Online Test Administration* and *Paper Test Administration.*

Table 7: ACT WorkKeys Tests and Scale Scores

ACT WorkKeys Applied Math			
TEST LEVELS (Easiest to Most Difficult)	**TEST FORM NUMBER**	**Test Times***	**# OF TEST ITEMS/ SCALE SCORE RANGE**
(Placement) Appraisal Locator	None		
ABE Level 1	014,015,016,01	55 minutes	34/71-73
ABE Level 2	7 (all levels)	(all levels)	34/74-78
ABE Level 3			34/79-82
ABE Level 4			34/83-85
ABE Level 5			34/86-87
ABE Level 6			34/88-90

ACT WorkKeys Workplace Documents			
TEST LEVELS	**Test Form Number**	**Test Times***	**# OF TEST ITEMS/ SCALE SCORE RANGE**
Placement Appraisal/ Locator	None used		
ABE Level 1			Not available
ABE Level 2	019,019,020,021	55 minutes	35/73-34
ABE Level 3			35/75-77
ABE Level 4			35/78-80
ABE Level 5			35/81-82
ABE Level 6			35/83-90

CASAS ASSESSMENTS

Table 8: CASAS Approved Assessments

CASAS Assessment Choices	Reading	Math	Listening
Reading GOALS	●		
Reading GOALS 2	●		
Math GOALS 2		●	
Reading STEPS	●		
Listening STEPS			●

CASAS assessments include the GOALS Series (Reading, Reading 2 and Math 2) for ABE learners, and the STEPS series (Reading and Listening) for ESL learners. The assessments measure learner skills from beginning to advanced literacy levels and can be used in ABE (Levels 1-6), ESL (Levels 1-6) EL/Civics, Family Literacy, and workplace programs. Most CASAS assessments are appropriate for learners with disabilities through use of appropriate accommodation, if needed. Both paper and e- testing formats are available. Web-based testing may be conducted on computers, Chromebooks, and iPads.

The GOALS series is aligned with the national College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) and CASAS Competencies. The Reading GOALS series (Levels A, B, C, and D) measures the rigorous academic vocabulary and higher-order thinking contained in the CCRS as well as content based on the CASAS Competencies. Reading GOALS 2, the newest CASAS assessment, will replace Reading GOALS, which sunsets 6/30/26. Both Reading GOALS 2 and Math GOALS 2 offers tests at five levels, covering the full range of CCRS ability levels in greater depth. Content is based on the CASAS competencies and includes an emphasis on employment-related activities.

The new CASAS STEPS series is aligned with the national English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards and CASAS Competencies. STEPS replaced the Life and Work Reading and Listening assessments that expired in June 2025. It includes five levels (A through E) which covers the full range of ELP ability levels in greater depth. Both Reading and Listening STEPS measures academic vocabulary and higher-order thinking skills contained in the ELP Standards. Content continues to be based on CASAS competencies and includes an emphasis on employment-related topics required by WIOA.

Test Administration Procedures

All staff who administer a *CASAS* test must have a copy of the test's current test administration manual and follow the test developer's published instructions. This includes explaining the purpose of the test and providing appropriate instructions to learners who are testing.

Paper test booklets are reusable. For paper testing either a General-Purpose answer sheet may be used for manual scoring or a TOPSpro Student Test Record to score with TOPSpro Enterprise. Programs may create their own answer sheet, but these must be thoroughly reviewed for accuracy and learner/staff ease of use. CASAS GOALS and STEPS e-Tests are approved for administration remotely. Programs should refer to the Remote Testing Guidelines on the CASAS website for specific instructions.

Training Requirements

Program staff with assessment and instruction responsibilities must register and complete online *CASAS Implementation Basics and ETests Implementation Basics* or *Paper Test Implementation Basics*. The training will serve to clarify and practice content from the online courses. Programs implementing remote test proctoring must also take the online *Proctor Remote Testing* Certification. Update/refresher training is required every two years.

Accurate Range

If an examinee gets very few items right or only a few wrong, the test may not be adequately measuring his or her ability. Learners 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, D or E should take the next lower test form for a scale score and NRS level. Learners who pre-test *below* the *accurate range*, where no scale score is available for the raw score, should be retested with the next lower-level test. If no lower level is available, CASAS advises further instruction before retesting. The student should be assigned the *lowest* scale score that is available for the test that was administered. Without a scale score, a learner's test scores cannot be entered into LACES.
Conservative estimate (diamond) scores may be used for pre- and post-testing. Retesting is not required. Some programs may wish to retest students at the next test level to see if they might score higher. Refer to the appropriate *CASAS* Test Administration Manual for more specific details on retesting options.

Table 9: CASAS GOALS Series Scale Scores Summary Chart

CASAS Reading GOALS **(Sunset date 6/30/2026)**				
TEST LEVELS (Easiest to Most Difficult)	**TEST FORM NUMBER**	**Test Times***	**# OF TEST ITEMS/ SCALE SCORE RANGE**	**Conservative Estimate (♦) Scores****
(Placement) Appraisal Locator	900R 104R	30 minutes 15 minutes	28/ -- 12	
Level A	901R/902R	60 minutes	39/ 203 and below	212
Level B	903R/904R	75minutes	40/ 204-216	225
Level C	905R/906R	75 minutes	40/ 217-227	238
Level D	907R/908R	75 minutes	40/ 228-238	263

CASAS Reading GOALS 2				
TEST LEVELS (Easiest to Most Difficult)	**TEST FORM NUMBER**	**Test Times***	**# OF TEST ITEMS/ SCALE SCORE RANGE**	**Conservative Estimate (♦) Scores****
(Placement) Appraisal **Locator**	919R 920 R	30 minutes 20 minutes	28/ -- 12	
Level A	921R/922R	35 minutes	33/ 203 and below	212
Level B	923R/924R	60minutes	36/ 204-216	225
Level C	925R/926R	70 minutes	36/ 217-227	238
Level D	927R/928R	70 minutes	36/ 228-238	263
Level E	929R/930R	70 minutes	33/ 249 and above	

CASAS Math GOALS 2				
(Placement) Appraisal **Locator**	919M 920M	30 minutes 15 minutes	28 14	
Level A	921M-922-M	50 minutes	33/171-203	203
Level B	923M-924M	65 minutes	36/193-213	213
Level C	925M-926M	75 minutes	36/204-224	224
Level D	927M-928M	75 minutes	36/214-235	235
Level E	929M-930M	90 minutes	36/225-253	255

* 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.

**Conservative estimate (diamond) scores may be used for pre- and post-testing. Retesting is not required. Some programs may wish to retest students at the next test level to see if they might score higher.

Note: The appraisal on the new GOALS Series no longer gives a scale score. The raw score is used to determine the next level test.

Table 10: CASAS STEPS Series Scale Scores Summary Chart

CASAS Reading STEPS				
TEST LEVELS (Easiest to Most Difficult)	**TEST FORM NUMBER**	**Test Time***	**# Test Items/ Scale Score Range**	**Conservative Estimate (♦) Scores****
(Placement) Appraisal **Locator**	 619R 620R	 30 minutes 15 minutes	 28 14	
Level A	621R-622R	30 minutes	33/160-196	196
Level B	623R-624R	50 minutes	36/184-206	206
Level C	625R-626R	75 minutes	36/197-216	216
Level D	627R-628R	75 minutes	36/207-227	227
Level E	629R-630R	75 minutes	36/217-247	251

CASAS Listening STEPS				
(Placement) Appraisal **Locator**	 619 L 620 L	 30 minutes 15 minutes	 28 14	
Level A	621L-622L	28 minutes	33/158-191	191
Level B	623L-624L	45 minutes	36/182-201	201
Level C	625L-626L	52 minutes	39/192-211	211
Level D	627L-628L	56 minutes	39/202-221	221
Level E	629L-630L	38 minutes	39/212-234	235

* 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.

**Conservative estimate (diamond) scores may be used for pre- and post-testing. Retesting is not required. Some programs may wish to retest students at the next test level to see if they might score higher.

TABE ASSESSMENTS

Table 11: TABE Approved Assessments

TABE ASSESSMENT CHOICES	*TABE 13 & 14 (ABE/ASE)*	*TABE CLAS-E C/D (ESL)*
READING	●	●
MATH	●	
LANGUAGE	●	
WRITING		●
SPEAKING		●
LISTENING		●

TABE 13 & 14

Overview

The Tests of Adult Basic Education are norm-referenced tests designed to measure ABE students' achievement of basic skills. TABE is available in both paper and computer (online and PC) format. The assessments are also appropriate for students with disabilities and offer braille, large print, and audio versions.

TABE 13&14, which replaced TABE 11&12, is based on the national College and Career Readiness Standards (CCR) for the three core subject areas: Reading, Mathematics, and Language. The test is also aligned with the two HSE exams. The new assessment retains the five test levels (Literacy, Easy, Medium, Difficult, and Advanced). TABE's parallel forms (131&14) offer alternate tests for retesting students.

TABE13&14 Reading content reflects mature, life and work-related situations highlighting overlapping objectives including word-meaning and critical thinking skills. Language focus on building communication skills necessary for functioning effectively and in daily life. Mathematics content reflects math application for routine tasks.

Test Administration Procedures

All individuals who administer a TABE test must be trained and have appropriate experience and credentials to handle and administer tests. Staff with responsibility for test administration must take the TABE Certification available on the DRC website. Programs using TABE Online must also take the Online Training.

Test administrators must have a copy of the test's current test administration manual and follow the test developer's published instructions. This includes explaining the purpose of the test and providing appropriate instructions to learners. Assessors administering the paper version of TABE should read directly from scripts provided in the Test Directions booklet.

TABE may be administered individually or in a group setting in paper and pencil form or through the Online Learning System, DRC Insight. All paper test books are reusable with the exception of Level L, which is consumable.

*Programs using TABE Online may also administer TABE through remote test proctoring using a web conferencing platform. Proctors must follow the Remote Proctoring Guidance available on tabetest.com.

Paper tests may be locally hand scored using an Answer Key available from DRC and converting raw scores into scale scores using the Scoring Guide. Programs who purchase TABE answer sheets may use the web-based scanning option; however, a scanner that is compliant with the DRC Scanning Portal is needed. The computer-based or scanning options provide the greatest ease of use, increased accuracy, and the availability of online reporting, which offers programs useful data.

Table 12: TABE 13&14 Maximum Allowable Testing Times

Level	Reading Part 1	Language	Math
E	100 minutes	50 minutes	60 minutes
M	100 minutes	50 minutes	60 minutes
D	100 minutes	50 minutes	60 minutes
A	100 minutes	50 minutes	60 minutes
Locator	35 minutes	20 minutes	Part 1- 10 minutes
			Part 2- 10 minutes

Pre and Post Testing

Recommendations for NRS Reporting

Alternate Form Testing- 50-60 hours of instruction is recommended when testing with an alternate form (i.e.13 M to 14 M) for NRS levels 1-4 with a minimum of 40 hours. For students testing into NRS Levels 5 and 6, 30-59 hours of instruction is recommended. The same recommendation is true if selecting the next level higher for a student who has shown exceptional progress or scored very high on a pre-test (i.e., 13 M to 14 D)

Same Form Testing- 60-80 hours of instruction is recommended when testing with the same form. (i.e., 13 M to 13 M)

Scores are most reliable for diagnostic and instructional purposes when they fall near the middle of the distribution of scores (40-75%) in the Standard Error of Measurement (SEM) range. A student may score out-of-range on the TABE test. If the student's pre-test was in the mid-range of a level, it is best to post-test them with an alternate form of the same level. This means they score one or more NRS levels below the targeted level for that subject test. There are no longer out-of-range scores on the high level for TABE 13&14. Also, when students score out-of-range they will not receive a scale score or NRS level. The Scoring Guide indicates N/A for scale score and O/R for NRS level. The student will need to be retested on a lower-level test to earn a score that is in range and can be entered in LACES.

TABE 13&14 scores may also have (+) or (-) visual indicators if a student scores at the high or low end of a NRS level. For example, a student scores a 501- on a TABE level D Reading test. This is the lowest score possible within NRS level 3. The 501-scale score is considered to be valid; however, it indicates that the student will need to learn the whole range of level 3 instruction to show a skills gain. It may be advisable to retest on a level M. A student receiving a score of 535+ is at the highest part of level 3 and will need the next highest TABE test to demonstrate growth.

Support Materials

- TABE 13 &14 Test Administration Manual (also available as a PDF through the INSIGHT Portal)

- TABE 13 &14 Test Directions (included in each packet of Test Books and is also available as a PDF through the INSIGHT Portal)
- TABE 13 &14 Scoring Guide (optional for programs that are using scanning only)
- Remote Proctoring Guidance for TABE 13 &14 via Web Conferencing System

Additional resources are available on the www.tabetest.com in the Resources tab

TABE Complete Language Assessment-English (TABE CLAS-E) Forms C/D

TABE CLAS-E assesses English proficiency levels to accurately measure reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills for adult, non-native speakers and test materials at four levels. The new test forms, C/D, replaced TABE CLAS-E A/B and align to the ESL/ELP NRS Level Descriptors with new and revised test items that have been field tested and reviewed by DRC Research Scientists. TABE CLAS-E is available in both paper and online formats. TABE CLAS-E Online is given on the DRC Insight™ testing platform. It is the only test in the adult market that assesses the four content areas or Rading, Writing, Listening and Speaking.

The skill and test areas can be administered in any order necessary for the testing program's needs, however the testing order below has been shown to work most efficiently based on trial administrations.

All individuals who administer TABE-CLAS-E must be trained and have appropriate experience and credentials to handle and administer tests.

Test administrators must have a copy of the test's current test administration manual and follow the test developer's published instructions. This includes explaining the purpose of the test and providing appropriate instructions to learners who are testing. Assessors should read directly from scripts provided in the *Test Directions* booklet.

A short Locator Interview and Locator test is given to ensure appropriate pre-test selection. The purpose of the Locator Interview is to determine which examinees should be tested with Level 1 and which examinees should go on to take the full Locator test.

Table 13: Scale Scores and Test Times for TABE CLAS-E C/D

ESL Educational Functioning Level	Reading	Writing	Listening	Speaking
ESL Level 1	200-354	210-384	200-348	170-338
ESL Level 2	355-388	385-414	349-389	339-402
ESL Level 3	389-427	415-437	390-427	403-436
ESL Level 4	428-448	438-461	428-457	437-475
ESL Level 5	449-487	462-500	458-488	476-542
ESL Level 6	488-580	501-670	489-620	543-760

GED® TESTS AND *GED READY®*

Learners who are planning to take the *GED®* test should be administered the *GED Ready®* to gauge instructional needs and predict *GED®* success. Also, programs and MD Labor's Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning (DWDAL) will be able to analyze these tests' data and their relationship to assessments, and other areas of interest. Programs will also benefit from having a readily available data source of *GED®* and *GED Ready®* results.

Policy: Programs must enter *GED Ready®* results and *GED®* results, as available, in LACES.

Exception: *GED®* results that are received after LACES closes for the fiscal year.

QUALITY CONTROL PROCEDURES

- All programs are required to follow the *Assessment Administration Standards* (see Appendix).
- All adult education programs must complete and implement an annual *Data Quality Checklist*.
- Scale score assessment results and other learner data must be entered into the LACES or MWE database in a timely manner, at least monthly, following the posted *Annual Data Entry Schedule*. Workforce staff must enter assessment information in the MWE database.
- The LACES Help Desk and Program Managers from the Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning will monitor the timeliness and accuracy of program data entry.
- Local adult education programs are required to generate LACES reports on a quarterly basis and take appropriate action to resolve errors.
- Data quality desk monitoring will be conducted, and technical assistance provided where needed.
- On-site data monitoring will be conducted by MD Labor –DWDAL staff.
- In accordance with the Code of Federal Regulations, Maryland requires Local Areas and WIOA Title II Adult Education Service Providers to retain assessment records in the learner's file and maintain the file in hard copy or electronic form for at least three years following the date on which the final cost report charged to a program year's allotment is submitted, or until all audit and litigation issues are resolved, whichever is later. If any litigation, claim, or audit is started before the expiration of the three-year period, the records then must be retained until all litigation, claims, or audit findings involving the records have been resolved and final action has been taken.
- Assessments must be ordered directly from the publisher.
- Programs will be monitored to ensure that the following misuses of tests do not occur:
    - Teaching to the actual test item.
    - Copying and distributing a test item or test booklet to unauthorized personnel or learners prior to or after test administration as a study guide.
    - Administering a lower-level test to artificially increase the learning gain between pre-tests and post-tests.
    - Administering pre-/post-tests in quick succession without sufficient time for instruction to allow for learning gains.
    - Reducing the amount of time allowed on a pre-test (e.g., less than 20 minutes) while increasing the amount of time on a post-test (e.g., 40-60 minutes).

- Deleting test answers on the pre-test to lower the score.
- Deleting accurate tests to manipulate learning gains.
- Altering test items or score information.
- Providing the answers to test questions.
- Translating test items and answers into another language.
- Excluding certain individuals or groups from pre- and post-testing.
- Duplicating or copying the test of one learner and replacing the identification number of another number.

APPENDICES

ASSESSMENT ADMINISTRATION STANDARDS CHECKLIST

Read each standard and indicate by a check that it is being implemented. Develop an action plan and timeline for any standard that is not being implemented.

Assessment Administration Standards

	Test Security	
A.1.	All test materials, whether paper-based or computer delivered, are kept in locked storage available only to those involved in test administration.	
A.2.	A system is in place to distribute and collect test materials for testing. Numbering of test booklets should be part of the system under most circumstances.	
A.3.	Test administrators are responsible for the security of all test materials in their possession.	
A.4.	All test booklets are periodically reviewed for condition. Those that are marked, torn, well-worn, etc., are discarded and replaced.	
	Test Selection	
B.1.	The appropriate MD Labor approved and required test – *CASAS*, *TABE*,or WorkKeys is selected for administration.	
B.2.	Staff responsible for test selection utilize/refer to current test catalogs or access the publisher's website for this information.	
B.3.	In addition to the appropriate MD Labor required test, other informal or standardized tests are administered on an as-needed basis.	
	Test Training	
C.1.	All staff who administer a test receive orientation to Maryland's Assessment Policy.	
C.2.	All staff who administer a specific test receive initial and update training on *how to administer it*.	
C.3.	All staff who administer a specific test receive training on *how to score it.*	
C.4.	All staff who administer a specific test have their test training dates entered in LACES or MWE.	
C.5.	All instructional staff receive training on interpreting test results to help guide instruction.	
C.6.	All instructional staff who receive training on interpreting test results to guide instruction have their training dates entered in LACES or MWE.	
	Test Preparation	
D.1.	The staff person administering the test has a copy of the test's current *Test Administration Manual* and follows the test developer's published instructions for administering the test.	
D.2.	All test materials (booklets, answer sheets, etc.) and supplies (pencils, transparencies, etc.) are assembled.	
D.3.	A clock or watch is available for the test administrator/proctor.	
D.4.	An overhead projector is provided if a transparency of the answer sheet will be used for demonstration.	
D.5.	A quiet, comfortable testing location with adequate space for each learner is provided.	

D.6.	The testing location is not in the same room where instruction is taking place.	
D.7.	No more than 25 learners per session are allowed when administering a *CASAS* test.	
D.8.	If more than 8 learners are testing, at least one proctor should assist the test administrator.	
D.9	Reasonable test accommodations are provided for individuals with documented disabilities.	
	Test Administration	
E.1.	The test administrator provides step-by-step verbal instructions to the learners, following the procedures in the test administration manual.	
E.2.	Learners are administered a placement (Appraisal/Locator) test to determine the appropriate pre- test to be administered. A placement test may be omitted under certain circumstances (see policies).	
E.3.	The placement and pre-test are *administered* by a staff person *other than* the classroom instructor, preferably the Intake Assessment Specialist or lead assessors/intake staff. (Under certain limited circumstances, a classroom instructor may administer placement and pre-tests.)	
E.4.	The placement & pre-test are *scored* by a staff person *other than* the classroom instructor preferably the Intake Assessment Specialist or lead assessors/intake staff. (Under certain limited circumstances, a classroom instructor may administer placement and pre-tests.)	
E.5.	MD Labor pre-test policy is observed: All learners are administered a pre-test.	
E.6.	MD Labor post-test policy is observed: Post-tests may be administered by the classroom instructor. Post-tests are administered after a learner has completed from 70-100 hours of instruction. Rare exceptions to the minimum of 40 (CASAS)/ 40 (TABE 13 &14 ABE levels 1-4)/ 30 (TABE 13&14 ABE Levels 5-6*) and 30 (WorkKeys)* nstructional hours prior to post- testing are allowed on a per-learner basis only, and complete documentation of the reason for any exception is maintained at the local level to support the exception.	
E.7.	The appropriate level of a test is administered, following the test publisher's guidelines.	
E.8.	An alternate, equivalent form of the test is used for pre- & post-testing (*matched pair*).	
E.9.	The test publisher's answer sheet is used **or**….	
E.10.	A locally-developed answer sheet is used. It has been checked for accuracy and ease of use	
	Test Outcomes	
F.1.	The results from a *matched pair* of MD Labor required pre-/post-tests are used to determine a learner's entry and update educational functioning levels (EFLs) according to NRS/MD Labor definitions.	
F.2.	If a learner is administered more than one pre-test, the lowest pre-test score determines the learner's entry level and is used as the baseline for determining update level.	
F.3.	A completed class or student profile is provided to the instructor or completed by the instructor to help guide instruction.	
F.4.	Test results are shared with the learner *but* actual test items are not reviewed.	
F.5.	Test answer sheets & scores are kept in the learner's file, which is maintained for a minimum of three years from the date of submission of the fiscal year's annual financial report.	
F.6.	Intake and assessment forms and other documents that may contain information such as learners' social security numbers are shredded or otherwise appropriately destroyed after the three-year storage time limit.	

MARYLAND GUIDELINES FOR DISTANCE LEARNING

Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a systematic process by which grant-funded adult education programs in Maryland can appraise distance learning systems as necessary and appropriate for their learning communities. By understanding the motivation and historical need for distance education for adult learners, and by accessing key definitions about students and access modalities, programs can build a foundation of support through distance learning. Utilizing these guidelines, programs can expect to derive an understanding of approved methods of distance education, including directives on evaluating online- and print-based applications and resources, submitting proxy hours forms for acceptance, and reviewing data on contact hours for reporting and evaluation.

Maryland Requirements for Distance Learning

Maryland Department of Labor's Office of Adult Education and Literacy Services requires all grantees to provide distance learning opportunities and to integrate digital literacy into their service models and program approaches. Distance learning opportunities are defined as activities in which learners are separated from instructors by time, geography, or both. Grantees must submit appropriate proxy hours forms to their program specialist for approval.

Programs must document, track, and report learners' participation in approved distance learning opportunities for entry into LACES. Distance learning hours entered into LACES count towards the recommended timelines for administration of post-tests.

Background

In fiscal year 2017, Maryland established a distance learning workgroup to explore digital learning options that would meet the needs of a changing student population. English language learners and ABE students, with skills below the high school level, represented the highest numbers of enrolled learners. There was a need to identify curricula that would provide the kind of rigor and instructional support that would lead to increased student achievement and meet the needs of the learner population. Additionally, since the more demanding requirements for instructional content that aligns with College and Career Readiness Standards require digital literacy and online learning skills, students may also require supplemental work beyond what might be adequately covered in the classroom alone.

Based on input from local providers, the state decided to focus on the implementation of a blended learning program. This approach combines both traditional and online instruction; learning goals are integrated, and instruction is monitored and supported in both face-to-face and online modalities. Blended learning provides greater flexibility to students regarding where, when, and how learning occurs. Data indicates that adult learners who engage in blended learning outperform learners who attend traditional classes or programs offered completely at a distance. In fact, regarding data collected from 2009 - 2018, the

completion rate for hybrid learners averaged 17.5 percent higher than the completion rate for face-to-face learners.[4] Particularly for beginning-level learners and those who need more guidance and support, this blended model of structured curricula with in-person instruction combined with distance education is more beneficial than using digital technologies alone.[5]

The COVID-19 pandemic, which necessitated a transition to fully remote educational delivery and content review, directed focus on the availability, interest, and need for distance learning. Online tools and environments afford an expanded view of learning and capture the potential for the development of new knowledge. Asynchronous online learning, HyFlex, hybrid, blended classrooms, and Remote In-Office Checks for clients in the National External Diploma Program® are all distance learning systems which demand preparation to yield production. As programs include more options for distance education, learners grow empowered and equipped with the determination and power of their preferences, thereby aiding their motivation and persistence in their adult education classroom.

Need for Distance Learning

This document defines activities approved for blended and distance learning for Maryland programs and provides guidelines for the reporting of adult learners' proxy contact hours to the National Reporting System (NRS) with the LACES system. The vast benefits and improved outcomes demonstrated through the inclusion of distance learning reflect its need. Distance learning allows programs to reach geographically remote students, and it allows students to work flexibly and at their own pace. Distance learning rewards educators and learners alike as systems can provide immediate feedback, and teachers can differentiate instruction based on individual learning needs. Programs and educators should be mindful of the limitations of distance learning on a per student, case-by-case basis, assessing readiness for distance learning, including access to and fluency with digital resources, to appropriately structure communities and systems of support.

Driven to engage with technology to advance their education and career goals, adult learners continue to shift their mindsets about digital skill building. Committed to exploring digital environments, adult learners also expressed greater appreciation for distance learning as their levels of confidence with digital technology and their rewards with technology use have improved.[6] As of 2021, 27% of adults living in households earning less than $30,000 a year are smartphone-only internet users – meaning they own a

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[4] Rosen, D., & Vanek, J. (2020). *The what, why, who, and how of blended learning for adult basic skills learners*. New Readers Press. https://www.newreaderspress.com/site/Additional%20Resources/ProLiteracy_BlendedLearningGuide_2020-11.pdf

[5] Murphy, R., Bienkowski, M., Bhanot, R., Wang, S., Wetzel, T., House, A., Van Brunt, J. (2017). *Evaluating digital learning for adult basic literacy and numeracy*. Menlo Park, CA: SRI International. Retrieved 15 June 2020 from https://www.sri.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/evaluating-digital-learning_1.pdf

[6] Cacicio, S., Shell, A. R., & Tare, M. (2022). Beyond frameworks: Supporting adult educators to leverage technology and customize the learning experience (Part 3 of 3). *Adult Literacy Education*, 4(1), 56-61. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1344708.pdf

smartphone but do not have broadband internet at home, representing a substantial increase from 12% in 2013.[7] With the pressure across many industry sectors to enhance operations through the use of technology, adult learners need the opportunity to practice their digital skills and learn new ones for personal and professional development.

[7] Vogels, Emily. "Digital Divide Persists Even as Americans with Lower Incomes Make Gains in Tech Adoption." Pew Research Center, 22 June 2021, www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/06/22/digital-divide-persists-even-as-americans-with-lower-incomes-make-gains-in-tech-adoption/

GENERAL DISTANCE LEARNING REQUIREMENTS

Definition of Distance Learning

Distance learning 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, videotape, broadcasts, computer software, web-based programs, and other online technology. Teachers support distance learners through communication via mail, telephone, email, or online technologies.[8]

Defining Distance Learners

For NRS reporting, a student is considered a distance learning student if the majority of attendance hours (51% or more) take place outside of the classroom and are counted as proxy hours. Both face-to-face hours and proxy hours will be included in the federal report. Final determination of the student's status is calculated at the end of the fiscal year.

Defining Classroom Type

See ***Definitions***.

Identifying and Reporting Contact Hours

Non-proxy contact hours are procured by time spent interacting face-to-face with the learner. It can also occur during student intake and orientation, which includes assessment, goal setting, counseling, and classroom-based skills training.
Proxy contact hours are procured by time students spend engaged in approved distance learning activities. The hours for each approved activity can occur by way of the following models:

- **Clock Time Model** assigns contact hours based on the elapsed time that a learner is connected or engaged in an online or stand-alone software program that tracks time. The system must track time and log out students after a preset period of inactivity. Proxy hours must have recorded time in the system and must be validated by the learning management system.
- **Teacher Verification Model**, which assigns a fixed number of hours of credit for each assignment based on teacher observation of the extent to which learners engaged in or completed the assignment.
- **Learner Mastery Model**, which assigns a fixed number of hours for credit based on the learner passing a test on the content of each lesson. Learners work with the curriculum and materials and when they feel they have mastered the material, take an assessment. A high percentage of correct answers (typically 70%) earns the credit hours attached to the material.

[8] "NRS Technical Assistance Guide | NRSWeb." Nrsweb.org, Mar. 2021, https://nrsweb.org/policy-data/nrs-ta-guide.

NRS Reporting for Students in Distance Learning

Students are required to have at least 12 hours of contact and a valid pre-test with the program before they can be counted for federal reporting.

All LACES data elements are required for reporting distance learning students. Adult education programs must maintain auditable records of proxy contact hours and enter data, at minimum monthly, to meet both state and federal reporting requirements. For NRS purposes, programs that choose to use proxy contact hours will enter these hours in LACES as "Instruction-Distance Learning." To meet the requirements for attendance hour verification, programs must maintain documentation of proxy hours earned, the curriculum used, and date completed. All programs are required to submit a Proxy Hour Request Form to their assigned MD Labor Adult Education Program Specialist before hours may be entered in LACES.

Assessment for Distance Learners

The Basic Education Skills and English Language Assessments Policy fully applies to all students. Distance learners must be assessed under the same guidelines as other learners and post-tested after the appropriate number of instructional hours; therefore, all standardized assessments must be administered in a proctored, face-to-face setting.

Approved Curriculum for Distance Learning

Curriculum should be selected according to the type, level, and goals of the learner. The Office of Adult Education and Literacy Services approves resources using the following criteria:

1. Alignment with College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education (CCRS);
2. Acceptable student interface;
3. Acceptable teacher or program interface;
4. Acceptable level of instructional value

If a program wishes to use an approved or not yet approved distance learning curriculum, the *Proxy Hour Request Form* must be submitted for approval to the program's assigned Adult Education Program Specialist at MD Labor.

Distance learning programs may be reviewed and added or removed on an annual basis.

While other curricula can be approved, Maryland Adult Education and Literacy Services recognizes the following as approved distance learning curricula:

Learner Mastery Model	
Learners must achieve 70% proficiency or greater for activities to receive reportable hours.	
Clock Time Model	
Aztec	Khan Academy
Burlington English	Learning Upgrade
CASAS Academy	McGraw Hill, Pre-GED Online
Cell-Ed	NEWSELA Essentials or Core Subject Products
Edmentum: PLATO	Pearson MyLab Series
EnGen	Reading Horizons
English Discoveries	Rosetta Stone
Essential Education: GED Academy	TABE Academy
i-Pathways	USA Learns
Teacher Verification Model	
Resources found through Internet searches, resources compiled into a single location within a learning management system (LMS) or webpage, and resources created by the instructor can be used for this model. *Records of previous classroom use and documented time of assignment completion must be included in the Proxy Hour Request Form for approval.	

NOTE: The Maryland Department of Labor has the discretion to add or remove programs from the pre-approved list in the future.

Funding for Distance Learning Programs

Programs may use available funding allocations to support the blended and distance learning program. Maryland will continue to explore high-quality online curricula that allow programs to have access to enriched learning experiences.

Instructor Training Requirements

Programs that wish to offer a blended or distance learning program must meet state required professional development standards and ensure that instructors participate in vendor-provided training for the online curriculum. Teachers and local leadership team members may need to develop new skills and as needed, train staff to build and enhance skills in areas of digital communication methods, digital course navigation and learning management system.

MD Labor provides training in planning and implementing blended and distance learning programs.

Proxy Hours Request Form Guidelines

The purpose of the *Proxy Hour Request Form* is twofold: ensure that programs are utilizing online platforms, programs, and applications with fidelity and intentionality and to keep a record of program selections. Forms should be submitted two weeks prior to the start of each grant cycle or two weeks prior to the start of implementation as needed. The Maryland Department of Labor will make an approval determination five business days after submission.

Proxy Hours Request Form

Forms should be submitted two weeks prior to the start of each grant cycle, or two weeks prior to the start of implementation, as needed. The Maryland Department of Labor will make a determination five business days after submission. Determinations for programs on the pre-approved Clock Time Model may require less processing time.

Program Name: Click or tap here to enter text.	**Date Submitted:** Click or tap to enter a date.	**Phone:** Click or tap here to enter text.
Submitted by: Click or tap here to enter text.		**Email:** Click or tap here to enter text.

Product Name: Click or tap here to enter text. **Publishe**r: Click or tap here to enter text. **ISBN (if applicable):** Click or tap here to enter text. **URL (if applicable)**: Click or tap here to enter text.	
Approximate Cost: Click or tap here to enter text.	
Product Description: Click or tap here to enter text.	
Target Learners:	☐ ABE ☐ ESL ☐ Both
Type of Product: Indicate the type of product. *Check all that apply.* ☐ Digital Literacy ☐ English Language Arts ☐ English as a Second Language (ESL) ☐ Integrated Education and Training	☐ Math ☐ Financial Literacy ☐ Occupational Literacy ☐ Other: (specify) _____

Product Level	ABE NRS EFL	CASAS GOALS Reading Scale Score Ranges	CASAS GOALS Math 2 Scale Score Ranges	TABE 13&14 Reading Scale Score Ranges	TABE 13&14 Math Scale Score Ranges	TABE 131&14 Language Scale Score Ranges	ACT WorkKeys Applied Math	ACT WorkKeys Workplace Documents
☐	ABE Level 1	203 and below	192 and below	300-441	300-448	300-457	71-73	N/A
☐	ABE Level 2	204-216	193-203	442-500	449-495	458-510	74-78	73-74
☐	ABE Level 3	217-227	204-213	501-535	496-536	511-546	79-82	75-77
☐	ABE Level 4	228-238	214-224	536-575	537-595	547-583	83-85	78-80
☐	ABE Level 5	239-248	225-235	576-616	584-630	584-630	86-87	81-82
☐	ABE Level 6	249 and above	236 and above	617-800	657-800	631-800	88-90	83-90

Product Level	ESL NRS EFL	CASAS STEPS Scale Score Ranges		TABE CLAS-E C/D Scale Score Ranges			
		Reading	Listening	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Listening
☐	ESL Level 1	183 and below	181 and below	200-354	210-384	170--338	200-348
☐	ESL Level 2	184-196	182-191	355-388	385-414	339-402	349-389
☐	ESL Level 3	197-206	192-201	389-427	415-437	403-436	390-427
☐	ESL Level 4	207-216	202-211	428-448	438-461	437-475	428-457
☐	ESL Level 5	212-227	212-221	449-487	462-500	476-542	458-488
☐	ESL Level 6	222-231	222-231	488-550	501-670	543-760	489-620

Appropriate Placement: Indicate how students are placed in the appropriate lesson/module in the software. *Check all that apply.*

☐ By placement test in the software

☐ By instructor based on the student's CASAS/ TAVE Student Performance by Competency Report

☐ Other: (specify)_____

Standards Alignment: Indicate product alignment. *Check all that apply.*

☐ College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) ☐ Common Core State Standards (CCS) ☐ Other: (specify)	
What reports will be available to monitor progress? *Check all that apply.* ☐ Assessments ☐ Contact hours ☐ Assignments complete/incomplete ☐ Other: *Click or tap here to enter text.*	
In what way will the grantee use data to ensure that the platform or instructional tool is effective with the targeted learner population? *Click or tap her to enter text.*	
How will the grantee ensure that instruction provided through the platform or instructional tool is supported by instructional staff? *Click or tap here to enter text.*	
Proxy hour type: *Check all that apply.*	☐ Clock Time ☐ Learner Mastery (LM) ☐ Teacher Verification (TV)
If TV, outline desired time allotments (i.e. per lesson, chapter) * Attach document if more space for outline is needed: *Click or tap here to enter text***.**	
**If LM, outline plan ***Attach document if more space for outline is needed: *Click or tap here to enter text*.	
Completed by Education Program Specialist Only Review Date: _____ Name of Reviewer*:* _____ Approved? ☐ Yes ☐ No Date: *Click or tap here to enter a date*. Initials: *Click or tap here to enter text.*	

DEFINITIONS

Asynchronous (or sequential): Instruction is not happening with teachers and students at the same time. Examples include email, blog, video, online discussion and comments, online courses, Twitter, Facebook, etc.

For funding purposes, the implementation of an asynchronous classroom structure is contingent upon several key factors to ensure effective student engagement and progress. It is the expectation of the Maryland Department of Labor that asynchronous classroom instruction will include best research-based practices in building classroom community through steady and frequent teacher feedback and peer-to-peer discussion.

To determine if your asynchronous classroom meets the requirements of the Maryland Department of Labor, please contact your assigned Adult Education Program Specialist.

Distance Education (DE) and Distance Learning (DL)

> **DE**: A broad term to cover all aspects of programming/instruction that allows for learning outside the classroom.
>
> **DL**: What learners are doing/working on.

Hybrid Learning: There are a variety of hybrid instructional models, but generally, this includes a combination of synchronous (in-person or online) and asynchronous instruction, which is added to intensify or accelerate learning.

Blended Learning (BL): A form of hybrid learning in which the asynchronous components and synchronous components are integrated and support each other.

HyFlex: An instructional model that allows students to choose how they participate in a class: in-person, synchronously online, or asynchronously online.

Proxy Hours (PH): DL contact hours that may be earned based on clock-time, student mastery, or teacher verification model, depending on how the DL platform is constructed and used by learners.

Pure DL: Delivered totally at a distance, including intake, assessment, and instruction.

Synchronous (learning, communication, etc.): Instruction is happening with teachers and students at the same time; interactions are conducted in real time, either in-person or online via Zoom, Google Meet, phone, etc.

EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONING LEVELS, TEST BENCHMARKS, AND FUNCTIONAL DESCRIPTORS

EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONING LEVEL DESCRIPTORS FOR ADULT BASIC EDUCATION (ABE)

ABE Level 1

Assessment Ranges	
CASAS scale scores: ● Reading GOALS: 203 and below ● Reading GOALS 2: 193 and below ● Math GOALS 2: 192 and below ACT WorkKeys scale scores: Applied Math: 65-71 Workplace Documents: 65-71	TABE (13-14) scale scores (grade level 0–1): ● Reading: 300–441 ● Language: 300–457 ● Mathematics: 300–448
Basic Reading and Writing	**Numeracy Skills**
Reading: Individuals ready to exit the Beginning Literacy Level comprehend how print corresponds to spoken language and are able to demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sound-letter relationships (phonetic patterns), including consonant digraphs and blends. In particular, students at this level are able to recognize and produce rhyming words, blend and segment onsets and rhymes, isolate and pronounce initial, medial, and final sounds, add or substitute individual sounds, and blend and segment single syllable words. They are able to decode two-syllable words following basic patterns as well as recognize common high frequency words by sight. Individuals are able to read simple decodable texts with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression. They are able to determine the meaning of words and phrases in texts with clear and explicit context. Individuals ready to exit this level are able to determine main ideas, retell key details, and ask and answer questions about key details in simple texts. Individuals are also able to use the illustrations in the text(s), whether print or digital, to describe its key ideas (e.g., maps, charts, photographs, cartoons). They also are able to use text features, both print and digital, to locate key facts or information. When listening to text above their current independent reading level, they are able to identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text, describe the connections between ideas	***The Mathematical Practices***: Students prepared to exit this level are able to decipher a simple problem presented in a context and reason about and apply correct units to the results. They can visualize a situation using manipulatives or drawings and explain their processes and results using mathematical terms and symbols appropriate for the level. They recognize errors in the work and reasoning of others. They are able to strategically select and use appropriate tools to aid in their work, such as pencil/paper, measuring devices, and/or manipulatives. They can see patterns and structure in sets of numbers and geometric shapes and use those insights to work more efficiently. ***Number Sense and Operations***: Students prepared to exit this level have an understanding of whole number place value for tens and ones and are able to use their understanding of place value to compare two-digit numbers. They are able to add whole numbers within 100 and explain their reasoning. They are able to apply their knowledge of whole number addition and subtraction to represent and solve word problems that call for addition of three whole numbers whose sum is less than 20 by using such problem-solving tools as objects, drawings, and/or simple equations. ***Algebraic Thinking***: Students prepared to exit this level understand and apply the properties of operations to addition and subtraction problems. They understand the relationship between the two operations and can determine the unknown number in addition or subtraction equations.

within a text, and examine the basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic. ***Writing***: Individuals ready to exit the Beginning Literacy Level are able to write basic sight words and familiar words and phrases as they compose simple sentences or phrases. This includes writing simple informative texts in which they supply some facts about a topic and narratives that include some details regarding what happened. They use simple transition and temporal words to signal event order (e.g., so, and, because, when, next, finally). With support, they are able to gather and use information from provided sources, both print and digital, to answer a simple research question.	***Geometry and Measurement***: Students prepared to exit this level can analyze and compare 2 and 3-dimensional shapes based on their attributes, such as their shape, size, orientation, the number of sides and/or vertices (angles), or the lengths of their sides. They can reason with two-dimensional shapes and with three-dimensional shapes to create composite shapes. They are able to measure the length of an object as a whole number of units, which are not necessarily standard units, for example measuring the length of a pencil using a paper clip as the length unit. ***Data Analysis***: Students prepared to exit this level are able to organize, represent, and interpret simple data sets using up to three categories. They can answer basic questions related to the total number of data points in a set and the number of data points in each category, and can compare the number of data points in the different categories.

ABE Level 2

Assessment Ranges	
CASAS scale scores: ● Reading GOALS: 204–216 ● Math GOALS: 194–203 ● Math GOALS 2: 193-203 ACT WorkKeys scale scores: Applied Math: 72-75 Workplace Documents: 72-76	TABE 13-14) scale scores (grade level 2–3): ● Reading: 442–500 ● Language: 458–510 ● Mathematics: 449–495
Basic Reading and Writing	**Numeracy Skills**
Reading: Individuals ready to exit the Beginning Basic Level are able to decode multisyllable words, distinguish long and short vowels when reading regularly spelled one-syllable words, and recognize the spelling-sound correspondences for common vowel teams. They also are able to identify and understand the meaning of the most common prefixes and suffixes. They can read common irregular sight words. Individuals are able to read level appropriate texts (e.g., texts with a Lexile Measure of between 420 and 820) with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression. They are able to determine the meaning of words and phrases in level-appropriate complex texts. Individuals ready to exit this level are able to determine main ideas, ask and answer questions about key details in texts and show how those details support the main idea. Individuals also are able to explain how specific aspects of both digital and print illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words of a text. They are able to compare and contrast the most important points and key details of two texts on the same topic. When listening to text above their current independent reading level, they are able to describe the relationship between ideas in a text in terms of time, sequence, and cause/effect, as well as use text features and search tools, both print and digital, to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently. They also are able to describe how reasons support specific points an author makes in a text and identify the author's main purpose or what the author wants to answer, explain or describe, as well as distinguish their own point of view from that of the author's.	***The Mathematical Practices***: Students prepared to exit this level are able to decipher two-step problems presented in a context, visualizing a situation using diagrams or sketches, and reasoning about and applying the correct units and the proper degree of precision to the results. They can explain their processes and results using mathematical terms and symbols appropriate for the level and recognize errors in the reasoning of others. They strategically select and use the appropriate tools to aid in their work, such as pencil/paper, measuring devices, manipulatives, and/or calculators. They are able to see patterns and structure in sets of numbers, including in multiplication or addition tables, and use those insights to work more efficiently. ***Number Sense and Operations***: Students prepared to exit this level understand place value for whole numbers to 1000 and can use that understanding to read, write, count, compare, and round three-digit whole numbers to the nearest 10 or 100. They are able to compute fluently with all four operations with whole numbers within 100. They use place value and properties of operations to explain why addition and subtraction strategies work, and can demonstrate an understanding of the inverse relationship between multiplication and division. They can solve one- and two-step word problems involving all four operations within 100 and identify and explain arithmetic patterns. They have an understanding of fractions, especially unit fractions, and can represent simple fractions on a number line. They understand and can explain equivalence of fractions, can recognize and generate simple equivalent fractions, and can compare two fractions with the same numerator or denominator by reasoning about their size. ***Algebraic Thinking***: Students prepared to exit this level apply the properties of operations to multiplication and division of whole numbers. They understand the relationship between multiplication and division and can determine the unknown number in multiplication or division equations.

Writing: Individuals ready to exit the Beginning Basic Level are able to write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons. They are able to write simple informative texts in which they examine a topic and convey information clearly. They also are able to write narratives with details that describe actions, thoughts, and feelings. They use transition and temporal words (e.g., also, another, more, but) to link ideas and signal event order. Individuals ready to exit this level are able to use technology to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others. They are able to conduct short research projects and summarize their learning in print. This includes taking brief notes from both print and digital sources, and sorting evidence into provided categories.	***Geometry and Measurement***: Students prepared to exit this level understand geometric shapes and their attributes. They can demonstrate an understanding that different shapes might share common attributes and can compare and classify two-dimensional shapes. They are able to partition shapes into parts with equal areas and express the area of each part as a unit fraction of the whole. They can use common U.S. and metric units for linear measurements and solve problems involving measurement and estimation of intervals of time, liquid volumes, and masses of objects. They understand the concept of area and can relate it to addition and multiplication to solve real-world problems. They understand, and can solve, real world and mathematical problems involving perimeter of polygons. ***Data Analysis***: Students prepared to exit this level are able to draw and interpret simple graphs, including scaled bar and picture graphs. They can solve one- and two-step problems using scaled bar graphs. They can generate measurement data by measuring lengths to the nearest half- and quarter-inch and display that data by making a line plot marked off in appropriate units.

ABE Level 3

Assessment Ranges	
CASAS scale scores: ● Reading GOALS: 217–227 ● Math GOALS: 204–214 ● Math GOALS 2: 204-213 ACT WorkKeys Scale Scores: Applied Math:76-79 Workplace Documents:77-80	TABE 13-14) scale scores (grade level 6–8): ● Reading: 536–575 ● Language: 547–583 ● Mathematics: 537–595
Basic Reading and Writing	**Numeracy Skills**
Reading: Individuals ready to exit the Low Intermediate Level are able to read fluently text of the complexity demanded of this level (e.g., a Lexile Measure of between 740 and 1010). They are able to use knowledge of letter-sound correspondences, syllabication patterns, and roots and affixes to accurately decode unfamiliar words. They are able to determine the meaning of words and phrases (e.g., metaphors and similes) in level-appropriate complex texts. Individuals ready to exit this level are able to make logical inferences, summarize central ideas or themes, and explain how they are supported by key details. They are able to explain events, procedures, or ideas in historical, scientific, or technical texts, including what happened and why. They are able to describe the overall structure of a text and compare and contrast the structures of two texts. Individuals ready to exit this level are also able to interpret information presented visually, orally or quantitatively to find an answer to a question or solve a problem. They display this facility with both print and digital media. Individuals are able to explain how authors use reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text and can integrate information from several texts, whether print, media, or a mix, on the same topic. They are able to describe how point of view influences how events are described. They are able to analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting similarities and differences. They are able to produce valid evidence for their findings and assertions. ***Writing***: Individuals ready to exit the Low Intermediate Level are able to write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point	***The Mathematical Practices***: Students prepared to exit this level are able to decipher multistep problems presented in a context and reason about and apply the correct units and the proper degree of precision to the results. They can visualize a situation using diagrams or sketches, see multiple strategies for solving a problem, explain their processes and results, and recognize errors in the work and reasoning of others. They can express themselves using mathematical terms and notation appropriate for the level and can strategically select and use tools to aid in their work, such as pencil/paper, measuring devices, and/or technology. They are able to see patterns and structure in sets of numbers and geometric shapes and use those insights to work more efficiently. ***Number Sense and Operations***: Students prepared to exit this level understand place value for both multi-digit whole numbers and decimals to thousandths, and use their understanding to read, write, compare, and round decimals. They are able to use their place value understanding and properties of operations to perform operations with multi-digit whole numbers and decimals. They can find common factors, common multiples, and understand fraction concepts, including fraction equivalence and comparison. They can add, subtract, multiply and divide with fractions and mixed numbers. They are able to solve multi-step word problems posed with whole numbers and fractions, using the four operations. They also have an understanding of ratio concepts and can use ratio language to describe a relationship between two quantities, including the concept of a unit rate associated with a ratio. ***Algebraic Thinking:*** Students prepared to exit this level are able to apply and extend their understanding of arithmetic to algebraic expressions, using a symbol to represent an unknown value. They can write, evaluate, and interpret expressions and equations, including expressions that arise from formulas used in real-world problems. They can solve real-world and mathematical problems by writing and solving simple one-variable equations and write a simple inequality that represents a constraint or condition in a

of view with facts and logically ordered reasons. They are able to produce informative texts in which they develop a topic with concrete facts and details. They convey information clearly with precise language and well-organized paragraphs. They link ideas, opinions and reasons with words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., another, specifically, consequently, because). They are also able to use technology (including the Internet) to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others. They are able to conduct short research projects, making frequent use of on-line as well as print sources. This includes the ability to draw evidence from several texts to support an analysis. They are able to summarize or paraphrase information from and provide a list of those sources.	real-world or mathematical problem. They can represent and analyze quantitative relationships between dependent and independent variables. ***Geometry and Measurement:*** Students prepared to exit this level have a basic understanding of the coordinate plane and can plot points and place polygons in the coordinate plane to solve real-world and math problems. They can classify two-dimensional shapes and use formulas to determine the area of two-dimensional shapes such as triangles. They can determine the surface area of three-dimensional shapes composed of rectangles and triangles and find the volume of right rectangular prisms. They are able to convert like measurement units within a given measurement system and use these conversions to solve multi-step, real-world problems. They are also able to solve measurement word problems that involve simple fractions or decimals. ***Data Analysis and Statistics***: Students prepared to exit this level have a basic conceptual understanding of statistical variability, including such concepts as center, spread, and the overall shape of a distribution of data. They can present data using displays such as dot plots, histograms, and box plots.

ABE Level 4

Assessment Ranges	
CASAS scale scores: ● Reading GOALS: 228–238 ● Math GOALS: 215–225 ● Math GOALS 2: 214-224 ACT WorkKeys scale scores: Applied Math:80-82 Workplace Documents:81-82	TABE (13-14) scale scores (grade level 6–8): ● Reading: 536–575 ● Language: 547–583 ● Mathematics: 537–595
Basic Reading and Writing	**Numeracy Skills**
Reading: Individuals who are ready to exit the High Intermediate Level are able to read fluently text of the complexity demanded of this level (e.g., a Lexile Measure of between 925 and 1185) They display increasing facility with academic vocabulary and are able to analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone in level-appropriate complex texts. Individuals are able to make logical inferences by offering several pieces of textual evidence. This includes citing evidence to support the analysis of primary and secondary sources in history, as well as analysis of science and technical texts. They are able to summarize and analyze central ideas, including how they are conveyed through particular details in the text. They also are able to analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between ideas or events and how major sections of a text contribute to the development of the ideas. They also are able to follow multistep procedures. Individuals are able to identify aspects of a text that reveal point of view and assess how point of view shapes style and content in texts. In addition, they are able to evaluate the validity of specific claims an author makes through the sufficiency of the reasoning and evidence supplied in the text. This includes analyzing how an author responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints. They are able to analyze how multiple texts address similar themes, including how authors acknowledge and respond to conflicting evidence or viewpoints and include or avoid particular facts. Individuals are also able to analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media as well as integrate and evaluate content from those sources, including quantitative or technical information presented visually and in words. They are able to produce valid evidence for their findings and assertions, make sound decisions, and solve problems.	***The Mathematical Practices***: Students prepared to exit this level are able to think critically, determine an efficient strategy (from among multiple possible strategies) for solving a multi-step problem, and persevere in solving challenging problems. They can express themselves using the mathematical terms and notation appropriate to the level. They are able to defend their findings and critique the reasoning of others. They are accurate in their calculations and use estimation strategies to assess the reasonableness of their results. They can create algebraic and geometric models and use them to answer questions and solve problems. They can strategically select and use tools to aid in their work, such as pencil/paper, measuring devices, calculators, and/or spreadsheets. They are able to see patterns and structure in number sets, data, expressions and equations, and geometric figures. ***Number Sense and Operations***: Students prepared to exit this level have an understanding of the rational number system, including how rational numbers can be represented on a number line and pairs of rational numbers can be represented on a coordinate plane. They can apply the concept of absolute value to find horizontal and vertical distances. They are able to apply the properties of integer exponents and evaluate, estimate, and compare simple square roots and cube roots. Individuals at this level also understand ratio, rate, and percent concepts, as well as proportional relationships. ***Algebraic Thinking***: Students prepared to exit this level understand the connections between proportional relationships, lines, and linear equations. They understand numerical and algebraic expressions, and equations and are able to use them to solve real-world and mathematical problems. They are able to analyze and solve linear equations and pairs of simultaneous

Writing: Writing in response to one or more text(s), individuals ready to exit this level are able to compose arguments and informative texts (this includes the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes). When writing arguments, they are able to introduce claims, acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence, and organize them logically in a manner that demonstrates an understanding of the topic. When writing informative texts, individuals are able to examine a topic through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant facts, concrete details, quotations and other information to aid comprehension. Individuals create cohesion in their writing by clarifying the relationships among ideas, reasons, and evidence; using appropriate transitions; and including a logical progression of ideas, and maintaining consistency in style and tone. Individuals are able to use specific word choices appropriate for the topic, purpose, and audience. They also are able to use technology to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources. They conduct short research projects, drawing on several sources. This includes the ability to draw evidence from several texts to support an analysis. It also includes the ability to locate and organize information, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and communicate the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism.	linear equations. Individuals at this level are able to define, interpret, and compare linear functions. ***Geometry***: Students prepared to exit this level can solve real-world and mathematical problems that involve angle measure, circumference, and area of 2-dimensional figures. They are able to solve problems involving scale drawings of 2-dimensional geometric figures. They understand the concepts of congruence and similarity with respect to 2-dimensional figures. They understand the Pythagorean theorem and can apply it to determine missing lengths in right triangles. ***Statistics and Probability:*** Students prepared to exit this level can summarize and describe numerical data sets in relation to their context, including determining measures of center and variability and describing patterns and/or striking deviations from patterns. They understand and can apply the concept of chance, or probability. They are able to use scatter plots for bivariate measurement data to describe patterns of association between two quantities (such as clustering, outliers, positive or negative association, linear or non-linear association).

ABE Level 5

Assessment Ranges	
CASAS scale scores: ● Reading GOALS: 239–248 ● Reading GOALS 2 ● Math GOALS 2: 225-235 ACT WorkKeys scale scores: Applied Math:83-85 Workplace Documents:83-85	TABE (13-14) scale scores (grade level 9–10): ● Reading: 576–616 ● Language: 584–630 ● Mathematics: 596–656
Basic Reading and Writing	**Numeracy Skills**
Reading: Individuals who are ready to exit Low Adult Secondary Level are able to read fluently texts that measure at the secondary level of complexity. This includes increasing facility with academic vocabulary and figurative language in level-appropriate complex texts. This includes determining the meaning of symbols and key terms used in a specific scientific or technical context. They are able to analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone. Individuals are able to make logical and well supported inferences about those complex texts. They are able to analyze the development of central ideas over the course of a text and explain how they are refined by particular sentences, paragraphs, or portions of text. They are able to provide an objective summary of a text. They are able to analyze in detail a series of events described in text and determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them. They also are able to follow complex multistep directions or procedures. Individuals are able to compare the point of view of two or more authors writing about the same or similar topics. They are able to evaluate the validity of specific claims an author makes through the sufficiency and relevance of the reasoning and evidence supplied. They also are able to identify false statements and fallacious reasoning. They are able to analyze how multiple texts address related themes and concepts, including challenging texts, such as seminal U.S. documents of historical and literary significance. In addition, they are able to contrast the findings presented in a text, noting whether those findings support or contradict previous explanations or accounts. Individuals are also able to translate quantitative or technical information expressed in words in a text into visual form (e.g., a table or chart) and translate information expressed visually or mathematically into words. Through their reading and research, they are able to cite strong and thorough textual evidence for their findings and assertions to make informed decisions and solve problems.	***The Mathematical Practices:*** Students prepared to exit this level are able to think critically, determine an efficient strategy (from among multiple possible strategies) for solving a multi-step problem, and persevere in solving challenging problems. They can reason quantitatively, including using units to solve problems. They are able to defend their findings and critique the reasoning of others. They are accurate in their calculations and use estimation strategies to assess the reasonableness of their results. They can create algebraic and geometric models and use them to answer questions and solve problems. They can strategically select and use tools to aid in their work, such as graphing calculators, spreadsheets, and/or computer software. They are able to make generalizations based on patterns and structure they discover in number sets, data, expressions and equations, and geometric figures and use these insights to work more efficiently. ***Number Sense and Operations***: Students prepared to exit this level can reason about and solve real-world and mathematical problems that involve the four operations with rational numbers. They can apply the concept of absolute value to demonstrate on a number line their understanding of addition and subtraction with negative and positive rational numbers. Individuals at this level can apply ratio and percent concepts, including using rates and proportional relationships to solve multistep real-world and mathematical problems. ***Algebraic Thinking***: Students prepared to exit this level are able to use algebraic and graphical representations to solve real-world and mathematical problems, involving linear equations, inequalities, and pairs of simultaneous linear equations. Individuals at this level are able to

Writing: Individuals ready to exit this level are able to compose arguments and informative texts. When writing arguments, they are able to introduce precise claims, distinguish the claims from alternate or opposing claims, and support claims with clear reasons and relevant and sufficient evidence. When writing informative texts, they are able to examine a topic through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic. They use appropriate and varied transitions as well as consistency in style and tone to link major sections of the text, create cohesion, and establish clear relationships among claims, reasons, and evidence. Individuals use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic. They are also able to take advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and display information flexibly and dynamically. They conduct short research projects as well as more sustained research projects to make informed decisions and solve problems. This includes the ability to draw evidence from several texts to support an analysis. It also includes the ability to gather and organize information, assess the credibility, accuracy, and usefulness of each source, and communicate the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism.	use linear functions to describe, analyze, and model linear relationships between quantities. ***Geometry:*** Students prepared to exit this level can solve real world and mathematical problems that involve volume and surface area of 3-dimensional geometric figures. They can use informal arguments to establish facts about various angle relationships such as the relationships between angles created when parallel lines are cut by a transversal. They apply the Pythagorean theorem to determine lengths in real-world contexts and distances in the coordinate plane. ***Statistics and Probability:*** Students prepared to exit this level can use random sampling to draw inferences about a population and are able to draw informal comparative inferences about two populations using measures of center and measures of variability for numerical data from random samples. They can develop, use, and evaluate probability models. They are able to use scatter plots for bivariate measurement data to interpret patterns of association between two quantities (such as clustering, outliers, positive or negative association, linear or non-linear association) and a 2-way table to summarize and interpret bivariate categorical data.

ABE Level 6

Assessment Ranges	
CASAS scale scores: ● Reading GOALS: 249 and above ● Math GOALS: 236 and above ● Math GOALS 2: 236 and above ACT WorkKeys scale scores: Applied Math:86-90 Workplace Documents:86-90	TABE 13-14) scale scores (grade level 11–12): ● Reading: 617–800 ● Language: 631–800 ● Mathematics: 657–800
Basic Reading and Writing	**Numeracy Skills**
Reading: Individuals who are ready to exit High Adult Secondary Level are able to read fluently at the college and career readiness level of text complexity (e.g., a Lexile Measure between 1185 and 1385). This includes increasing facility with academic vocabulary and figurative language sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level. They are able to analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone. Individuals are able to make logical and well-supported inferences about those complex texts. They are able to summarize the challenging ideas, concepts or processes contained within them. They are able to paraphrase texts in simpler but still accurate terms. Whether they are conducting analyses of complex primary and secondary sources in history or in scientific and technical texts, they are able to analyze how the ideas and concepts within them develop and interact. Individuals are able to assess how points of view shape style and content in texts with particular attention to distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement). Individuals are able to analyze how multiple texts address related themes and concepts, including challenging texts such as U.S. founding documents (Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights). In addition, they are able to compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources. Individuals are also able to integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media in order to address a question. Through their reading and research at complex levels, they are able to cite strong and thorough textual evidence for their findings and assertions to make sound decisions and solve problems. ***Writing:*** Writing in response to one or more text(s), individuals ready to exit this level are able to compose arguments and informative texts (this	***Mathematical Practices***: Students prepared to exit this level are able to think critically, make assumptions based on a situation, select an efficient strategy from multiple possible problem-solving strategies, plan a solution pathway, and make adjustments as needed when solving problems. They persevere in solving challenging problems, including considering analogous, simpler problems as a way to solving a more complex one. They can reason quantitatively, including through the use of units, and can express themselves using the precise definitions and mathematical terms and notation appropriate to the level. They are accurate in their calculations, use an appropriate level of precision in finding solutions and reporting results, and use estimation strategies to assess the reasonableness of their results. They are able to make conjectures, use logic to defend their conclusions, and can detect faulty thinking and errors caused by improper use of technology. They can create algebraic and geometric models and use them to answer questions, interpret data, make predictions, and solve problems. They can strategically select and use tools, such as measuring devices, calculators, spreadsheets, and/or computer software, to aid in their work. They are able to see patterns and structure in calculations, expressions, and equations and make connections to algebraic generalizations, which they use to work more efficiently. ***Number Sense and Operations:*** Students prepared to exit this level have extended their number sense to include irrational numbers, radicals, and rational exponents and understand and use the set of real numbers. They are able to assess the reasonableness of calculation results based on the limitations of technology or given units and quantities and give results with the appropriate degree of precision.

includes the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes). When writing arguments, they are able to create an organization that establishes clear relationships among the claim(s), counterclaim(s), reasons and evidence. They fully develop claims and counterclaims, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns. When writing informative texts, they are able to organize complex ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions through the effective selection and analysis of content. They use appropriate and varied transitions to clarify the relationships among complex ideas, create cohesion, and link major sections of the text. Individuals are able to maintain a formal style while they attend to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. They are also able to take advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and display information flexibly and dynamically. They conduct short research projects as well as more sustained research projects that require the synthesis of multiple complex sources to make informed decisions and solve problems. This includes the ability to draw evidence from several texts to support an analysis. It also includes the ability to gather and organize information, assess the credibility, accuracy, and usefulness of each source in answering the research question, noting any discrepancies among the data collected.	***Algebraic Thinking:*** Students prepared to exit this level understand the structure of expressions and can use that structure to rewrite linear, exponential, and quadratic expressions. They can add, subtract, and multiply polynomials that involve linear and/or quadratic expressions. They are also able to create linear equations and inequalities and quadratic and simple exponential equations to represent relationships between quantities and can represent constraints by linear equations or inequalities, or by systems of linear equations and/or inequalities. They can interpret the structure of polynomial and rational expressions and use that structure to identify ways to rewrite and operate accurately with them. They can add, subtract, and multiply polynomials that extend beyond quadratics. They are able to rearrange formulas to highlight a quantity of interest, for example rearranging Ohm's law, V = IR, to highlight resistance R. They are also able to create equations and inequalities representing relationships between quantities, including those that extend beyond equations or inequalities arising from linear, quadratic, and simple exponential functions to include those arising from simple rational functions. They are able to use these equations/inequalities to solve problems both algebraically and graphically. They can solve linear equations and inequalities; systems of linear equations; quadratic, simple rational, and radical equations in one variable, and recognize how and when extraneous solutions may arise. Students prepared to exit this level also have a basic understanding of functions, can use function notation properly, and use such notation to write a function describing a relationship between two quantities. They are able to evaluate functions for inputs in their domains and interpret linear, quadratic, and exponential functions that arise in applications in terms of the context. They are able to construct, graph, compare, and interpret functions (including, but not limited to, linear, quadratic, and exponential). They can sketch graphs given a verbal description of the relationship and identify and interpret key features of the graphs of functions that arise in applications in a context. They are able to select or define a function that appropriately models a relationship and to compare properties of two functions each represented in a different way (algebraically, graphically, numerically in tables, or by verbal description). ***Geometry:*** Students prepared to exit this level can solve problems involving similarity and congruence criteria for triangles and use volume formulas for cylinders, pyramids, cones, and spheres to solve problems. They can apply the concepts of density based on area and volume in modeling situations (e.g., persons per square mile, BTU's per cubic foot). ***Data Analysis and Statistics:*** Students prepared to exit this level can summarize, represent, and interpret data based on two categorical and quantitative variables, including by using frequency tables. They can compare

	data sets by looking at commonalities and differences in shape, center, and spread. They can recognize possible associations and trends in data, in particular in linear models, and distinguish between correlation and causation. They interpret one- and two-variable data, including those with linear and non-linear relationships. They interpret the slope (rate of change) and intercept (constant term) for a line of best fit and in the context of the data. They understand and account for extreme points of data in their analysis and interpret relative frequencies (joint, marginal, and conditional).

EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONING DESCRIPTORS FOR ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL)

ESL Level 1

Assessment Ranges		
CASAS scale scores ● Reading STEPS: 183 and below ● Listening STEPS: 181 and below		TABE CLAS-E C/D ● Reading: 200-354 Writing: 210-384 ● Speaking: 170-338 Listening: 200-348
Interpretive: The ability to process, understand, interpret and/or engage with level-appropriate literary and informational written spoken text to construct meaning (1,6,7,8)	**Productive: The ability to produce level-appropriate written and spoken text such that it meaningfully transmits meaning (3,4,7,9,10)**	**Interactive: The ability to process and produce level-appropriate written and spoken text interactively with the purpose of understanding, interpreting, engaging in and transmitting meaning (2,5)**
ELLs ready to exit this level can, with prompting and support (including context and visual aids): ● Identify a few key words and phrases from read alouds, visual images, and oral presentations using a very limited set of strategies. ● Recognize the meaning of a few frequently occurring words and phrases in simple oral presentations and read alouds about familiar topics, experiences, and events. They can recognize the meaning of some words learned through conversations, reading and being read to.	Ells ready to exit this level can, with prompting and support (including context and visual aids): ● Communicate simple information or feelings about familiar topics, events, or experiences. They can express a preference or opinion about a familiar topic. ● Show limited awareness of differences between informal and formal language use. ● Recognize and use a small number of frequently occurring nouns and verbs, use a narrow range of vocabulary and syntactically simple sentences, and understand and respond to simple questions.	ELLs ready to exit this level can, with prompting and support (including context and visual aids): ● Participate in short conversations and written exchanges about familiar topics and in familiar contexts. They can respond to simple yes/no questions and some wh- questions. ● Participate in short, shared research projects, gather information from a few provided sources, and label some key information.

ESL Level 2 (ELP Standards for AE Level 1)

Assessment Ranges		
CASAS scale scores ● Reading STEPS: 184 -196 ● Listening STEPS: 182-191		TABE CLAS-E C/D ● Reading: 355-388 Writing: 385-414 ● Speaking: 339-402 Listening: 349-389
Interpretive: The ability to process, understand, interpret and/or engage with level-appropriate literary and informational written spoken text to construct meaning (1,6,7,8)	**Interpretive: The ability to process, understand, interpret and/or engage with level-appropriate literary and informational written spoken text to construct meaning (1,6,7,8)**	**Interpretive: The ability to process, understand, interpret and/or engage with level-appropriate literary and informational written spoken text to construct meaning (1,6,7,8)**
● ELLs ready to exit this level can identify a few key words and phrases in oral communications and simple spoken and written texts using a very limited set of strategies. They can recognize the meaning of some words learned through conversations, reading, and being read to. ● ELLs ready to exit this level can, with support, identify a point an author or a speaker makes. ● Relying heavily on context, questioning, and knowledge of morphology in their native language(s), ELLs ready to exit this level can recognize the meaning of a few frequently occurring words, simple phrases and formulaic expressions in spoken and written texts about familiar topics, experiences or events.	● ELLs ready to exit this level can, with support, communicate information and feelings about familiar texts, topics, and experiences. ● ELLs ready to exit this level are able to express an opinion about a familiar topic, experience or event and give a reason for this opinion. ● ELLs ready to exit this level can show emerging awareness of differences between informal and formal language use. ● ELLs ready to exit this level are able to, with support, use a narrow range of vocabulary and syntactically simple sentences. They can, with support, recognize and use a small number of frequently occurring nouns, noun phrases, verbs, conjunctions, and prepositions and understand and respond to simple questions.	● ELLs ready to exit this level are able to actively listen to others. They can participate in short conversations and written exchanges about familiar topics and in familiar contexts. They can present simple information and respond to simple yes/no questions and some wh- questions. ● ELLs ready to exit this level are able to, with support, carry out our short, shared research projects. They can, with support, gather information from a few provided print and digital sources, label collected information, experiences, or events, and recall information from experience or from a provided source.

ESL Level 3 (ELP Standards for AE Level 2)

Assessment Ranges		
CASAS scale scores ● Reading STEPS: 197-206 ● Listening STEPS: 192-201		TABE CLAS-E C/D ● Reading: 389-427 Writing: 415-437 ● Speaking: 403-436 Listening: 390-427
Interpretive: The ability to process, understand, interpret and/or engage with level-appropriate literary and informational written spoken text to construct meaning (1,6,7,8)	**Productive: The ability to produce level-appropriate written and spoken text such that it meaningfully transmits meaning (3,4,7,9,10)**	**Interactive: The ability to process and produce level-appropriate written and spoken text interactively with the purpose of understanding, interpreting, engaging in and transmitting meaning (2,5)**
ELLs ready to exit this level can: ● Identify the main topic in oral presentations and simple spoken and written texts and retell a few key details using an emerging set of strategies. ● With support, identify the main argument an author or speaker makes and one reason an author or a speaker gives to support the argument. ● Determine the meaning of frequently occurring words, phrases, and expressions in spoken and written texts about familiar topics, experiences, or events.	ELLs ready to exit this level can: ● With support deliver oral presentations and compose simple written narratives or informational texts about familiar texts, topics, experiences, or events. ● Construct a claim about familiar topics, experiences, or event; introduce a familiar topic, experience, or event, give a reason to support a claim and provide a concluding statement. ● With support, recount a short sequence of events in order; introduce an informational topic, provide oner or two facts about the topic, and use common linking words to connect events and ideas. ● Show increasing awareness of differences between informal and formal language use; can adapt language choices to task and audience with	ELLS ready to exit this level can: Participate in conversation and written exchanges about familiar topics and texts; present information and ideas, appropriately take turns in interactions with others, and respond to simple questions and wh- questions. With support, carry out short individual or shared research project; gather information from provided print and digital sources, record information in simple notes and summarize data and information

	emerging control in various social and academic contexts. ● Begin to use some frequently occurring general academic and content-specific words. ● With support, use frequently occurring verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, and conjunctions; produce simple and compound sentences	

ESL Level 4 (ELP Standards for AE, Level 3)

Assessment Ranges		
CASAS scale scores ● Reading STEPS: 207-216 ● Listening STEPS: 202-211	TABE CLAS-E C/D ● Reading: 428-448 Writing: 438-461 ● Speaking: 437-475 Listening: 428-457	
Interpretive: The ability to process, understand, interpret and/or engage with level-appropriate literary and informational written spoken text to construct meaning (1,6,7,8)	**Productive: The ability to produce level-appropriate written and spoken text such that it meaningfully transmits meaning (3,4,7,9,10)**	**Interactive: The ability to process and produce level-appropriate written and spoken text interactively with the purpose of understanding, interpreting, engaging in and transmitting meaning (2,5)**
ELLs ready to exit this level can: ● Determine a central idea or theme in oral presentations and spoken and written texts, retell key details, answer questions about key details, explain how the theme is developed by specific details in texts, and summarize part of a text using a developing set of strategies. ● With support, explain the reasons an author or a speaker gives to support a claim and identify one or two reasons an author or a speaker gives to support the main point. ● Using context, questioning, and a developing knowledge of English and their native language(s) morphology, determine the meaning of general academic and content-specific words, and phrases and frequently occurring expressions in spoken and written texts about familiar topics, experiences, or events.	ELLs ready to exit this level can: ● With support, deliver short oral presentations and compose written informational texts about familiar texts, topics, or events. This includes developing the topic with a few details. ● Construct a claim about familiar topics; introduce the topic, provide sufficient reasons or facts to support the claim, and provide a concluding statement. ● When producing written and spoken texts, can, with support, recount a sequence of events with a beginning, middle, and end; introduce and develop and informational topic with facts and details, use common transitional words and phrases to connect events, ideas, and opinions, and provide a conclusion. ● Adapt language choices and style according to purpose, task and audience with developing ease in various social and academic contexts and show developing control of style and tone in spoken and written texts.	ELLs ready to exit this level can: Participate in conversations, discussions and written exchanges about familiar topics, texts, and issues; build on the ideas of others, express their own ideas, ask, and answer relevant questions, add relevant information and evidence, restate some of the key ideas expressed, follow rules for discussion, and ask questions to gain information or clarify understanding. With support, carry our short research projects to answer a question; gather information from multiple provided print and digital sources, paraphrase key information in a short written or oral report, include illustrations, diagrams, or other graphics as appropriate, and provide a list of sources.

	● Use an increasing number of general academic and content-specific words and expressions in their spoken and written texts. ● With support, use simple phrases and clauses; produce and expand simple, compound, and a few complex sentences.	

ESL 5 (ELP Standards for AE Level 4)

Assessment Ranges		
CASAS scale scores ● Reading STEPS: 217-227 ● Listening STEPS: 212-221		TABE CLAS-E C/D ● Reading: 449-487 Writing: 462-500 ● Speaking: 476-542 Listening: 458-488
Interpretive: The ability to process, understand, interpret and/or engage with level-appropriate literary and informational written spoken text to construct meaning (1,6,7,8)	**Productive: The ability to produce level-appropriate written and spoken text such that it meaningfully transmits meaning (3,4,7,9,10)**	**Interactive: The ability to process and produce level-appropriate written and spoken text interactively with the purpose of understanding, interpreting, engaging in and transmitting meaning (2,5)**
ELLs ready to exit this level can: ● Determine a central idea or theme in oral presentations and spoken and written texts using an increasing range of strategies. They can analyze the development of the themes/ideas, cite specific details and evidence from texts to support the analysis and summarize a text. ● Analyze the reasoning in persuasive spoken and written texts and determine whether the evidence is sufficient to support the claim; cite textual evidence to support the analysis. ● Using context, questioning and an increasing knowledge of English morphology, determine the meaning of general academic and content-specific words and phrases, figurative and connotative language, and a growing number of idiomatic expressions in	Ells ready to exit this level can: ● Deliver oral presentations and compose written informational texts about a variety of texts, topics, or events, developing the topic with some relevant details, concepts, examples, and information and integrating graphics or multimedia when appropriate. ● Construct a claim about a variety of topics; introduce the topic, provide logically ordered reasons or facts that effectively support the claim, and provide a concluding statement. ● When producing written and spoken texts, recount a longer, more detailed sequence of events, or steps in a process, with a clear sequential or chronological structure; introduce and develop an informational topic with facts, details, and evidence and provide a concluding section or statement.	ELLs ready to exit this level can: ● Participate in conversations, discussions, and written exchanges about a range of topics, texts, and issues; build on the ideas of others, express his or her own ideas, clearly support points with specific and relevant evidence, ask and answer questions to clarify ideas and conclusions, and summarize the key points expressed. ● Carry out both short and more sustained research projects to answer a question, gather information from multiple print and digital sources, and use search terms effectively; synthesize information from multiple print and digital sources, integrate information into an organized oral or written report, include illustrations, diagrams, or other graphics as appropriate, and cite sources appropriately.

spoken and written texts about a variety of topics, experiences, or events.	● Adapt language choices and style according to purpose, task and audience in various social and academic contexts and adopt and maintain a formal and informal style and tone in spoken and written texts, as appropriate. ● In their spoken and written texts, can also use a wider range of complex general academic and content-specific words and phrases. ● Use increasingly complex phrases and clauses, produce and expand simple, compound, and complex sentences, and use a variety of more complex transitions to link the major sections of speech and text and to clarify relationships among events and ideas.	

ESL Level 6 (ELP Standards for AE Level 5)

Assessment Ranges		
CASAS scale scores ● Reading STEPS: 228-238 ● Listening STEPS: 222-231		TABE CLAS-E C/D ● Reading: 488-580 Writing: 501-670 ● Speaking: 543-760 Listening: 489-620
Interpretive: The ability to process, understand, interpret and/or engage with level-appropriate literary and informational written spoken text to construct meaning (1,6,7,8)	**Productive: The ability to produce level-appropriate written and spoken text such that it meaningfully transmits meaning (3,4,7,9,10)**	**Interactive: The ability to process and produce level-appropriate written and spoken text interactively with the purpose of understanding, interpreting, engaging in and transmitting meaning (2,5)**
ELLs ready to exit this level can: ● Determine central ideas or themes in oral presentations and spoken and written texts using a wide range of strategies; analyze the development of the themes/ideas, cite specific details and evidence from texts to support the analysis and summarize a text. ● Analyze and evaluate the reasoning in persuasive spoken and written texts, determine whether the evidence is sufficient to support the claim, and cite specific textual evidence to thoroughly support the analysis. ● Using context, questioning and consistent knowledge of English morphology, determine the meaning of general academic and content-specific words and phrases, figurative and connotative language, and idiomatic expressions in spoken and written texts about a variety of topics, experiences, or events.	Ells ready to exit this level can: ● Deliver oral presentations and compose written informational texts about a variety of texts, topics, or events; fully develop the topic with relevant details, concepts, examples, and information, and integrate graphics or multimedia when appropriate. ● Construct a substantive claim about a variety of topics; introduce the claim and distinguish it from a counterclaim; provide logically ordered and relevant reasons and evidence to support the claim and to refute the counterclaim and provide a conclusion that summarizes the argument presented. ● Recount a complex and detailed sequential or chronological order; introduce and effectively develop an informational topic with facts, details, and evidence, use complex and varied transitions to link the major sections of speech and text and to clarify relationships among events and ideas,	ELLs ready to exit this level can: Participate in conversations, extended discussions, and written exchanges about a range of substantive topics, texts, and issues; build on the ideas of others, express their own ideas clearly and persuasively, refer to specific and relevant evidence from texts or research to support their ideas, ask and answer questions that prove reasoning and claims, and summarize the key points and evidence discussed. Carry out both short and more sustained research projects to answer a question or solve a problem; gather information from multiple print and digital sources, evaluate the reliability of each source, and use advanced search items effectively; synthesize information from multiple print and digital sources, analyze and integrate information into clearly organized spoken and written texts, include illustrations, diagrams, or other graphics, as appropriate and cite sources appropriately.

	and provide a concluding section or statement. ● Adapt language choices and style according to purpose, task, and audience with ease in various social and academic contexts; employ both formal and more informal styles and tones effectively in spoken and written texts, as appropriate. ● In their spoken and written texts, use a wide range of complex general academic and content-specific words and phrases. ● Use complex phrases and clauses and produce and expand simple, compound and complex sentences.	

GLOSSARY

Advancement: Learner advances from one NRS educational functioning level (EFL) to the next, based on the learner's performance.

Authentic Task: A task performed by learners that has a high degree of similarity to tasks performed in the real world.

Ceiling: The upper limit of ability that can be measured by a particular test.

Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS): A normed evaluation system designed to assess a number of specific skills.

Criterion-Referenced Test: A measurement of achievement of specific criteria or skills in terms of absolute levels of mastery. The focus is on the performance of an individual as measured against a standard or criteria rather than against performance of others who take the same test, as with norm-referenced tests.

Diagnostic Test: An intensive, in-depth evaluation process with a relatively detailed and narrow coverage of a specific area. The purpose of this test is to determine the specific learning needs of individual learners and to be able to meet those needs through regular or remedial classroom instruction.

Domain-Referenced Test: A test in which performance is measured against a well-defined set of tasks or body of knowledge (domain). Domain-referenced tests are a specific set of criterion- referenced tests and have a similar purpose.

Educational Functioning Level (EFL): A set of skills and competencies that learners at that level can accomplish in the areas of reading, writing, numeracy, speaking, listening, and functional and workplace areas. There are six levels for ABE, and six levels for ESL. To determine a learner's appropriate *Entry* and *Update* EFL, programs administer a standardized assessment.

Educational Functioning Level Gain: Learner completes or advances one or more EFLs from the lowest assessment score level measured on entry into the adult education program.

Grade Level Equivalent (GLE): The grade level that corresponds to a given score. Assessments that report performance in terms of GLEs provide a year and month score for each individual – 6.2 would be equivalent to sixth grade, second month.

Holistic Scoring: Scoring based upon an overall impression (as opposed to traditional test scoring which counts up specific errors and subtracts points on the basis of them). In holistic scoring the rater matches his or her overall impression to the point scale to see how the portfolio product or performance should be scored. Raters usually are directed to pay attention to aspects of a performance in assigning the overall score.

Informal Test: A non-standardized test that is designed to give an approximate index of an individual's level of ability or learning style; often teacher constructed.

Level Benchmarks: Guidelines for placing learners in educational functioning levels, based on their performance on standardized tests.

Measurable Skill Gain: Documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress towards such a credential or employment

Norm: Performance standard that is established by a reference group and that describes average or typical performance. Usually, norms are determined by testing a representative group and then calculating the group's test performance.

Norm-Referenced Test: An objective test that is standardized on a group of individuals whose performance is evaluated in relation to the performance of others; contrasted with criterion- referenced test.

Performance Assessment: An evaluation in which learners are asked to engage in a complex task, often involving the creation of a product. Learner performance is rated based on the process the learner engages in and/or based on the product of his/her task. Many performance assessments emulate actual workplace activities or real-life skill applications that require higher order processing skills. Performance assessments can be individual or group oriented.

Performance Criteria: A predetermined list of observable standards used to rate performance assessments. Effective performance criteria include considerations for validity and reliability.

Performance Standards (NRS): Numeric levels established for outcome measures in the state plan and local program proposal indicating the proportion of learners at each level who are expected to achieve each outcome.

Placement Test: The first test administered to a learner to determine the appropriate level pre- test to administer.

Portfolio: A collection of representative learner work over a period of time. A portfolio often documents a learner's best work and may include a variety of other kinds of process information (e.g., drafts of learner work, learner's self-assessment of their work). Portfolios may be used for evaluation of a learner's abilities and improvement.

Post-test: A test administered to a learner after some period of instruction, usually to compare scores with a pre-test and to measure learning gains or advancement in the program.

Pre-test: A test administered to a learner upon entry to determine initial placement.

Proxy Hours: Hours that a student is actively engaged in distance learning activities.

Published Test: A test that is publicly available because it has been copyrighted and published commercially.

Rating Scales: A written list of performance criteria associated with a particular activity or product which an observer or rater uses to assess the learner's performance on each criterion in terms of its quality.

Raw Score: The number of items that are answered correctly.

Reliability: The extent to which a test is dependable, stable, and consistent when administered to the same individuals on different occasions. Technically, this is a statistical term that defines the extent to which errors of measurement are absent from a measurement instrument.

Reporting Period: The reporting period that conforms to state and local guidelines. In some programs this will be a semester, or a class cycle. For some open entry/open exit programs that continue throughout the year, the reporting period will be the entire fiscal year.

Rubric: A set of guidelines for giving scores. A typical rubric states all the dimensions being assessed, contains a scale, and helps the rater place the given work properly on the scale. These are specific sets of criteria that clearly define for both learner and teacher what a range of acceptable and unacceptable performance looks like.

Scale Scores: Scale scores developed through item response theory (IRT) report an individual's proficiency as a score along a fixed metric scale, with each score representing fixed gradations of difficulty in a person's proficiency at competencies or skills. Competencies are placed on the scale with the easiest competencies on one end and the most difficult on the other.

Student Performance Level (SPL): There are 10 levels, and each contains a set of skills and competencies that ELA learners at that level can accomplish in the areas of General Language Ability, Listening Comprehension, and Oral Communication. These descriptors for ELA learners were originally developed by the Mainstream English Language Training (MELT) project in the mid-1980s. An SPL chart is available in the *BEST Plus 2.0 Test Administrator Guide*.

Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE): A normed evaluation system designed to assess a number of specific skills.

Test of Adult Basic Education Complete Language Assessment System – English (TABE CLAS-E): Accommodates all English proficiency levels to accurately measure students' reading, listening, writing, and speaking skills.

Validity: The extent to which a test measures what it was intended to measure. Validity indicates the degree of accuracy of either predictions or inferences based upon a test score. For example, a ten-item single-digit addition test might be administered to a learner who answers nine items correctly. If the test is

valid, it can be safely generalized that the learner will likely do as well on similar items not included on the test.