

**New Mexico Higher Education Department  
Adult Education Division  
Adult Education Assessment Policy**

WIOA  
Adult Education and Family Literacy Programs

Adult Education Division  
New Mexico Higher Education Department  
2044 Galisteo Road, Suite 4  
Santa Fe, NM 87505

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**New Mexico Higher Education Department  
Adult Education Division  
Adult Education Assessment Policy**

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## SECTION I: Introduction and Context

The WIOA Title II and the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) have promulgated rules that require the State to have a written assessment policy to fulfill the accountability requirements for Adult Education (AE), English Language Acquisition (ELA), Adult Secondary Education (ASE), including high school completion and High School Equivalency (HSE) preparation programs, Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) programs, and family literacy programs. This policy describes the assessment instruments adult education programs must use when measuring learner gains in literacy, numeracy and language skills.

This policy provides guidance related to when adult education programs are to administer pre-tests and post-tests, and the assessment training, administration and reporting requirements of the National Reporting System for Adult Education (NRS).

A complete and current list of approved NRS assessments can be found at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2018/09/21/2018-20590/tests-determined-to-be-suitable-for-use-in-the-national-reporting-system-for-adult-education>

### A. Need for Assessment Policy

The NRS requires adult education programs to use standardized assessment instruments to determine eligibility for adult education programs, placement of learners at appropriate levels of instruction, evaluation of learner strengths and weaknesses, and to account for learners who demonstrate mastery at specific levels of instruction.

Valid and reliable assessments are necessary to measure the achievement of literacy and language skills that are linked to NRS functioning levels. It is important that the assessment policy be uniformly implemented so that comparability across programs can be evaluated. To assure accuracy and consistency, adult education programs must use standardized assessments with proven validity and reliability that have been approved by the NRS.

#### Validity

*The Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (1999)* explains that validity can be demonstrated in various ways, with construct validity referring to proper use and construction of test items, and with criterion and content validity as supporting methods of validity evidence. Criterion-related validity assesses the ability or effectiveness of an instrument in predicting something (e.g., skills in reading, math and writing). Please refer to the publisher's documentation regarding validity of a particular instrument.

#### Reliability

Test accuracy (reliability) comprises consistency and stability. This can be evaluated by item response theory and differential item functioning tests which measure test score reliability across different demographics (e.g., gender and ethnicity). If the test is reliable, it will give consistent results over time and across different demographics (e.g.,

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if administered to students from rural or urban areas). Please refer to the publisher's documentation regarding reliability of a particular instrument.

## **B. Purposes and Uses for Assessments**

In addition to using required standardized assessments for NRS reporting and accountability, programs use assessments for instructional purposes. Assessment data should be used to inform program evaluation and instructional design to better meet the needs of students and the instructors. Programs are encouraged to supplement standardized assessments with instruction-based, portfolio-based, career-based, and teacher-made assessments. Quality assessment data plays a major role in many areas to

- ❖ Inform students about skill levels and place them in the most appropriate instructional program;
- ❖ Help students determine short and long term goals;
- ❖ Use information as a diagnostic guide to instruction;
- ❖ Pre- and post-test to record progress and certify EFL completion;
- ❖ Plan and develop professional development activities; and
- ❖ Manage program improvement and planning and assess comparability across local programs.

States must report to OCTAE the required measures on all students who receive 12 or more hours of instruction funded through WIOA Title II AEFLA.

## **C. Summary and Overview of Standardized Assessments**

The assessments approved by NRS for New Mexico Adult Education programs are

- ❖ BEST Literacy
- ❖ BEST Plus
- ❖ CASAS
- ❖ TABE
- ❖ TABE CLAS-E

Please refer to the table in *Appendix A* for pertinent information on these tests (i.e., publisher contacts, approved forms and tests for the NRS levels and publisher recommended post-test timing). Please refer to the tables in *Appendix B* for standardized scoring requirements. The tables specify the score ranges tied to educational functioning levels for placement and for reporting educational gains.

Adult education programs are encouraged to use a variety of on-going formative assessments to monitor learning. Informal assessment tools, teaching techniques, teacher-made tests, teacher observation, unit tests, portfolios, checklists and interim assessments may be used to inform instruction, however, these other assessments cannot be used to document educational gain for state or federal accountability reporting purposes.

Adult education programs may use test results for reporting purposes only if the tests were administered in a manner that is consistent with New Mexico's assessment policy and the test publisher's guidelines.

#### **D. Resources for Information and Assistance**

Adult Education Division  
New Mexico Higher Education Department  
2044 Galisteo Street, Suite 4  
Santa Fe, NM 87505  
Telephone: 505.476.8437

<http://www.hed.state.nm.us/programs/overview-and-contact-information.aspx>

Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE)  
U. S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-7100  
Telephone: 202.245.7700

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/AdultEd/index.html>

## SECTION II: General Assessment Requirements

### A. Students to be Assessed

All students in adult education programs will be assessed with NMHED AE approved instruments and all students that will be included in New Mexico's NRS data submission must be tested.

Programs must follow these important guidelines when assessing students:

- ❖ Use the test scores and educational level descriptors found in *Appendix B* as criteria for placing students at the appropriate NRS educational functioning levels.
- ❖ Not all skill areas in the level descriptors may be needed to place students. The skills areas used should be the most relevant to student needs and the program curriculum.
- ❖ Determine educational gain by comparing the initial (pre-test) educational functioning level to the level attained on the post-test. If a student is not post-tested, then no advancement can be determined.
- ❖ Testing for NRS reporting must be conducted face-to-face in a secure, proctored setting with a trained test administrator and according to publisher guidelines.
- ❖ Assessments should be given under good logistical conditions (i.e., well-lit, quiet space, adherence to time limits).
- ❖ Instructors and advisors must have access to assessment results.

### B. State Approved Assessments

BEST Literacy  
BEST Plus 2.0  
CASAS Life Skills and Work – Listening  
CASAS Life and Work – Reading (ESL)  
CASAS Life and Work – Reading (ADULT EDUCATION/ASE)  
CASAS Reading GOALS Series  
CASAS Math GOALS Series  
TABE– Reading  
TABE– Total Mathematics  
TABE– Language  
TABE CLAS-E

## Test Administration Requirements

### General

All programs must ensure that the following procedures are in place and carried out:

- ❖ 100% of student scaled scores must be entered into the LACES database. (Please refer to test administration manuals for guidelines related to converting raw scores to scale scores).
- ❖ Programs are expected to comply with percentage goals set yearly for pre- and post-testing of enrolled students.
- ❖ NMHED AE performs semi-annual data audits and will monitor pre- and post-testing rates on all students. NMHED AE's target for pre- and post-testing rates is 50%.
- ❖ NMHED AE will monitor exceptions to the publishers' guidelines approved by the local program director.
- ❖ Students must be retested if their program participation has lapsed for **six months** or longer.
- ❖ NMHED AE's LACES database allows assessments to be rolled over when a returning student enrolls in the new program year. The rollover may only occur if the assessment is less than six months old.

### Pre-testing

- ❖ All students enrolled in an AE program must be assessed using one of the approved assessment instruments.
- ❖ Programs must follow publisher guidelines for test administration.
- ❖ Pre-testing must occur prior to the completion of 12 hours of enrollment in an adult education program. Ideally, this should be done at intake or soon thereafter.
- ❖ Pre- and post-testing must use different forms of an approved assessment (for example, TABE form 11 for pre-test and TABE form 12 for post-test).
- ❖ When multiple skill areas are assessed and the student has differing abilities in these skill areas, NRS and NMHED AE policy requires that the student be placed at the **lowest** skill area.

### Post-testing

- ❖ The minimum recommended length of instruction time between the pre- and post-tests has been established by test publishers in order to maintain the integrity of the test results.
- ❖ Post-tests may not be given on a schedule. Students are to be post-tested when the teacher determines the student has progressed enough to make a measurable skill gain on the post-test.

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- ❖ It is expected that students will not be post-tested prior to receiving the publisher recommended minimum instructional hours in the subject to be post-tested. If a student is determined to be ready to post-test before the publisher recommended minimum instructional hours, approval from the local program director is required and a note documenting the special circumstances must be entered into LACES.
- ❖ On the rare occasion that a student is likely to leave before achieving the minimum publisher-recommended hours of instruction, and is not expected to return to the program within 90 days, the student can be post-tested with approval from the local program director. A note documenting the special circumstances must be entered into LACES.

### **C. Training for Administration of Assessments**

Pre-service and in-service training must be provided by local programs for all staff who conduct student intake, those who administer or score each of the tests used to measure educational gain, and all staff involved in gathering, analyzing, compiling and reporting data for the NRS. The training includes the following topics:

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

If permitted by the test publisher, local programs are responsible for training assessment staff. Local programs ensure that all staff members assigned to administer or score tests or who conduct intake are trained on test publisher guidelines, recommendations, and scoring procedures. Programs must pay particular attention to assessments that require certification for test administration (See *Appendix A*).

BEST Literacy:

Center of Applied Linguistics (CAL) requires one person at a program to complete training before a program can purchase materials. CAL certifies trainer. All persons who administer, score, and/or interpret the test must be trained.

BEST Plus 2.0:

CAL requires one person at a program to complete training before the program can purchase materials. Trainee participates in a one-day training and completes 20 practice administrations. CAL certifies trainer. All persons who administer, score, and/or interpret the test must be trained.

CASAS:

CASAS requires one person at a program to complete CASAS 101 before the program can purchase materials. Trained staff may train others at their program only. CASAS certifies trainer. All persons who administer, score, and/or interpret the test must be trained.

#### TABE 11/12 and TABE CLAS-E:

Data Recognition Corporation recommends that test administrators be trained before purchasing materials or administering the test. NMHED AE requires all test administrators to be certified in TABE test administration. Data Recognition Corporation certifies test administrators that complete TABE training. All persons who administer, score, and/or interpret the test must be trained.

#### **D. Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

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

These regulations require programs to assure program accessibility, use of auxiliary aids and services, and provide reasonable accommodations as appropriate at no cost to the student. All adult education programs must have procedures in place that refer students to an appropriate staff member, agency, or organization for issues related to identifying students with disabilities or other special needs, testing accommodations, procedures, and appropriate documentation required.

#### **Reasonable Accommodations**

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

Adult students with disabilities are responsible for providing documentation of a disability to support a request for a reasonable accommodation. Documentation may include such items as: a physician's report, a diagnostic assessment from a certified professional, educational records (to support a record of a disability), a vocational rehabilitation report, or report from other qualified service providers. The documentation should describe the nature and extent of the disability and suggest the kind of accommodations the student may need to participate effectively. Please see Table 1 for common accommodations approved by test publishers. The accommodations listed in Table 1 are suggestions only. Accommodations must be based on the needs of individual learners and not on a disability category.

With the student's informed consent, reasonable accommodations may be discussed and determined by the program's disability coordinator who will then inform the adult education program staff about any reasonable accommodations that have been authorized. It is not appropriate to assume that an applicant needs an accommodation, nor is it appropriate to suggest accommodations to an applicant prior to a formal request or notification of the need for an accommodation.

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**Table 1. Common Accommodations Approved by Test Publishers**

Instrument	<b>Common Accommodations Approved by Test Publishers</b> <b>Note: Reasonable accommodations are not effectively addressed by a general policy; rather accommodations are best addressed only on a case-by-case basis. (List is not exhaustive).</b>
BEST Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Eye glasses</li> <li>▪ Magnifying glasses</li> <li>▪ Earplugs</li> <li>▪ Color overlays or rulers</li> <li>▪ Frequent breaks</li> <li>▪ Individual administration</li> </ul> <p>An organization's disability coordinator may contact the Adult ESL Assessment Team for further assistance at 1-866-845-2378, or <a href="mailto:best-plus@cal.org">best-plus@cal.org</a></p>
BEST Plus 2.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hearing aids</li> <li>▪ Magnifying glass</li> </ul> <p>An organization's disability coordinator may contact the Adult ESL Assessment Team for further assistance at 1-866-845-2378, or <a href="mailto:best-plus@cal.org">best-plus@cal.org</a></p>
CASAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Extended time (1.5)</li> <li>▪ Alternate schedule</li> <li>▪ Frequent breaks</li> <li>▪ Scribe/writer/alternate room</li> <li>▪ Computer – spelling and grammar check disabled</li> <li>▪ Simple calculator for Level A/B only</li> <li>▪ Sign language interpreter for test directions only</li> <li>▪ Head phones for those taking a listening test</li> <li>▪ Magnifier/template</li> <li>▪ Text-to-speech software</li> <li>▪ Video magnifiers</li> <li>▪ Scribe/reader</li> <li>▪ One-on-one administration</li> </ul> <p>An organization's disability coordinator may contact Ginny Posey for further assistance at 1-800-255-1036, ext. 192</p>

TABE (and CLAS-E)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Visual magnifying equipment</li> <li>▪ Large print edition of test</li> <li>▪ Audio amplification equipment</li> <li>▪ Markers to maintain place</li> <li>▪ Mark responses in test book</li> <li>▪ Mark responses on large print answer document</li> <li>▪ Record responses on audiotape</li> <li>▪ Use of sign language for selected response items</li> <li>▪ Use of computer, typewriter, Braille writer or other communication board</li> <li>▪ Use of a speech synthesizer</li> <li>▪ Individual testing or in a small group</li> <li>▪ Use of adaptive furniture</li> <li>▪ Use of special lighting or acoustics</li> <li>▪ Frequent breaks, flexible scheduling</li> <li>▪ Have directions read aloud</li> <li>▪ Use of directions that have been marked with highlighting</li> <li>▪ Use of graph paper</li> <li>▪ Use of a spell checker</li> </ul>
TABE Online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Untimed test accommodations</li> <li>▪ Pause-test accommodations to allow breaks</li> <li>▪ Font/background color and font size accommodations for students with visual disabilities</li> <li>▪ Use of highlighter</li> <li>▪ Use of screen-reader</li> <li>▪ Online calculator</li> </ul> <p>Programs may refer to the <i>Accommodations Classifying Table</i> (2004) or the <i>Guidelines for Inclusive Test Administration</i> published by Data Recognition Corporation for more specific information. Please contact Mike Johnson for further assistance at 630-995-6712, or <a href="mailto:mjohnson@datarecognitioncorp.com">mjohnson@datarecognitioncorp.com</a></p>

### SECTION III: Guidelines for Each Assessment

#### A. Description of Students

All students who will be counted for NRS reporting purposes must be assessed with NRS approved standardized assessments.

#### B. Identifying Each Assessment

This section discusses fundamental procedures for administering and reporting results on NM AE approved assessments. These guidelines represent minimum standards. The guidelines differ

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depending upon the selected instrument, as shown in the following table. Please refer to *Appendices A and B* for further information, including relationship between scale scores and educational functioning levels.

Instrument	Guidelines
BEST Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ BEST Literacy tests reading and writing proficiency only.</li> <li>▪ Use one form for pre-testing and a different form for post-testing.</li> <li>▪ Formal training is not required for administration; however, the test publisher recommends a thorough review of the BEST Literacy Test Manual to become familiar with proper testing and scoring procedures.</li> </ul>
BEST Plus 2.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ BEST Plus tests oral proficiency only.</li> <li>▪ The computer-adaptive version can be given for pre- and post-testing.</li> <li>▪ With the semi-adaptive print version, use one form for pre-testing and a different form for post-testing.</li> <li>▪ Training to administer and score is required; contact the Center for Applied Linguistics for training opportunities (see <i>Attachment A</i>).</li> </ul>
CASAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Program staff administering CASAS assessment, must be CASAS certified. To obtain CASAS certification, staff has to attend the <i>CASAS Implementation Workshop</i> and successfully complete the certification exam. It is recommended that CASAS certification be renewed every three years.</li> <li>▪ Each student should be given the Appraisal/Locator. The Appraisal should be given <b>one</b> time <i>only</i>. The Appraisal results identify the student pre-test level and appropriate placement.</li> <li>▪ The publisher's chart should be used to determine the most appropriate post-test (Certification test) to measure student competency attainment.</li> </ul>
TABE and TABE Online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Perform the Locator Interview and administer Locator Test (Part 1 and 2 for TABE and a single Locator Test for TABE Online)</li> <li>▪ Use the Complete Battery as both the pre-test and post-test, or use the Survey as both the pre- and post-test.</li> <li>▪ Scores at entry and at the end are compared to measure student skill attainment.</li> <li>▪ The publisher discourages random and/or frequent testing.</li> </ul>
TABE CLAS-E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Perform the Locator Interview and administer Locator Test (Part 1 and 2)</li> <li>▪ Administer appropriate Level of CLAS-E for a pre-test.</li> <li>▪ Score CLAS-E Level to find out ESL Proficiency Level and place student in appropriate ESL class</li> <li>▪ Administer the alternate form of CLAS-E as the post-test. Publisher recommends 60-95 hours of instruction before post-test with different form.</li> </ul>

### C. Quality Control Procedures

To help ensure the quality of assessment data, all programs must follow these operating procedures:

- ❖ Testing data must be entered into the program database within 2 weeks of completion.
- ❖ Staff with assigned responsibility for assessment must be adequately trained and have a clear understanding of the instrument's administration (i.e., timing, scoring, determining appropriate NRS levels, etc.).
- ❖ All training certifications must be provided to the NMHED AE office.
- ❖ Assessment results must be kept in student files. Paper files must be kept in a locked and secure location.
- ❖ The assessment results in student files must match those in the LACES database.

NMHED AE conducts semi-annual data quality audits of all programs and performs thorough program performance evaluations during scheduled program site visits.

### References

- American Education Research Association (AERA), American Psychological Association (APA), and National Council on Measurement in Education (1999). *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*.
- Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) (2006). *BEST Literacy, Test Manual*, Washington, DC: Author.
- Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) (2005). *BEST Plus Technical Report*, Washington, DC: Author.
- Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) (2005). *Development of a Computer-Assisted Assessment of Oral Proficiency for Adult English Language Learners*, Washington, DC: Author.
- Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) (2006). *CASAS Assessment Policy Guideline*. San Diego, CA: Author.
- Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) (2006). *CASAS Technical manual*. San Diego, CA: Author.
- Data Recognition Corporation (2017). *TABE Technical Report: Form 11 and 12 (all levels)*. Monterey, CA: Author.
- National Reporting System for Adult education Implementation Guidelines, USDOE (2011).
- U. S. Department of Education (2018). *Tests Determined To Be Suitable for Use in the National Reporting System for Adult Education*. Available at:  
<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2018/02/05/2018-02237/tests-determined-to-be-suitable-for-use-in-the-national-reporting-system-for-adult-education>

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**APPENDIX A**

**NM Approved Assessment Instruments**

<b>Instrument/ Publisher Contact</b>	<b>Approved Forms</b>	<b>Approved Tests</b>	<b>Appropriate NRS Levels</b>	<b>Pre- and Post-Testing Intervals (Publisher Recommended)</b>
<b>BEST Literacy</b> [Basic English Skills Test Literacy] <u>Tests reading and writing proficiency</u>  Daniel Lieberman Dlieberson@cal.org, 202-355-1531	Forms B, C, and D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading and Writing <u>only</u> (paper)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All ESL NRS Levels</li> </ul>	60 Hours minimum, or at end of instructional session; 80-100 hours in lowest pre-test subject area recommended before post-testing.
<b>BEST Plus</b> [Basic English Skills Test Plus] <u>Tests oral proficiency</u>  Daniel Lieberman Dlieberson@cal.org, 202-355-1531 BEST Plus User Support best-plus@cal.org 866-845-2378	Forms A, B and C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Oral proficiency only</u> (paper and computer-adaptive delivery format)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All ESL NRS Levels</li> </ul>	60 Hours minimum in lowest pre-test content area, or at end of instructional session; If the hours for a course of instruction exceed the recommended number of hours, post-testing may most appropriately take place at the end of the instructional session (Daniel Lieberman, <i>BEST Plus</i> Project Manager Center for Applied Linguistics <a href="mailto:dlieberson@cal.org">dlieberson@cal.org</a> , 202-355-1531
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>	

<b>CASAS for ESL</b>  [Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System]  Linda Taylor, Director of Assessment Development, CASAS ltaylor@casas.org 800-255-1036, ext. 186	(Reading) Forms 27, 28, 81, 82, 81X, 82X, 83, 84, 85, 86, 185, 186, 187, 188, 513, 514, 951, 952, 951X, 952X  *Appraisal/Locator Recommended*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading (Life and Work, Reading for Citizenship, Reading for Language Arts – Secondary Level) (paper and computer-based delivery format)</li> <li>Life and Work Listening</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All ESL NRS Levels</li> <li>All ESL NRS Levels</li> </ul>	70-100 Hours in lowest pre-test subject area recommended before post-testing. (40 Hours minimum)
<b>CASAS for ABE</b>  [Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System]  Linda Taylor, Director of Assessment Development, CASAS ltaylor@casas.org 800-255-1036, ext. 186	(Reading GOALS Series) Forms 901R, 902R, 903R, 904R, 905R, 906R, 907R, 908R  (Math GOALS Series) Forms 913, 914, 917, 918  *Appraisal /Locator Recommended*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading (Reading GOALS)</li> <li>Math (Math GOALS Series) (paper and computer-based delivery format)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All ADULT EDUCATION/ASE NRS Levels</li> <li>All ADULT EDUCATION/ASE NRS Levels</li> </ul>	70-100 Hours in lowest pre-test subject area recommended before post-testing. (40 Hours minimum)



<b>TABECLAS-E</b> [TABEComplete Language Assessment System-English]  Mike Johnson <a href="mailto:MJohnson@DataRecognitionCorp.com">MJohnson@DataRecognitionCorp.com</a> <a href="tel:630-995-6712">630-995-6712</a>	<b>For alternate form testing, CTB recommends <u>60–95</u> hours of instruction (i.e., A2 to B2) with a minimum of 40 hours.</b>  <b>For same form testing CTB recommends <u>100–140</u> hours of instruction (i.e., A2 to A2).</b>  CTB discourages random and frequent testing as it will not present valid gain scores and could create a practice effect, thus producing questionable or spurious scores. Instructional intervention between testing periods is strongly recommended to maximize gain. Proper use of the Locator Test as a determinant of appropriate content level testing is also strongly recommended and is an integral part of the testing process.	Forms A&B For Levels 1,2,3 &4 for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reading</li> <li>▪ Listening</li> <li>▪ Writing</li> <li>▪ Speaking (paper)</li> </ul>	▪ All ESL NRS Levels	A Locator Test is strongly recommended.
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**Commented [SLH1]:** The forms aren't listed; it also doesn't list that it is for paper use only

NRS Functioning Level Table

APPENDIX B

Outcome Measures Definitions			
EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONING LEVEL DESCRIPTORS—ADULT BASIC EDUCATION LEVELS			
LITERACY LEVEL	Basic Reading and Writing	Numeracy Skills	Functional and Workplace Skills
<b>ABE Level 1- Beginning Literacy</b>  <b>Test Benchmark:</b> TABE (11-12) scale scores (grade level 0–1.9): Reading: 441 and below Total Math: 448 and below Language: 457 and below  CASAS scale scores: Reading: 203 and below Math: 193 and below	Individual has no or minimal reading and writing skills. May have little or no comprehension of how print corresponds to spoken language and may have difficulty using a writing instrument. At the upper range of this level, individual can recognize, read, and write letters and numbers but has a limited understanding of connected prose and may need frequent re-reading. Can write a limited number of basic sight words and familiar words and phrases; may also be able to write simple sentences or phrases, including very simple messages. Can write basic personal information. Narrative writing is disorganized and unclear, inconsistently uses simple punctuation (e.g., periods, commas, question marks), and contains frequent errors in spelling.	Individual has little or no recognition of numbers or simple counting skills or may have only minimal skills, such as the ability to add or subtract single digit numbers.	Individual has little or no ability to read basic signs or maps and can provide limited personal information on simple forms. The individual can handle routine entry level jobs that require little or no basic written communication or computational skills and no knowledge of computers or other technology.

<p><b>ABE Level 2- Beginning Basic Education</b></p> <p><b>Test Benchmark:</b> TABE (11–12) scale scores (grade level 2–3.9): Reading: 442–500 Total Math: 449–536 Language: 458–510</p> <p>CASAS scale scores: Reading: 204–216 Math: 194–203</p>	<p>Individual can read simple material on familiar subjects and comprehend simple and compound sentences in single or linked paragraphs containing a familiar vocabulary; can write simple notes and messages on familiar situations but lacks clarity and focus. Sentence structure lacks variety, but individual shows some control of basic grammar (e.g., present and past tense) and consistent use of punctuation (e.g., periods, capitalization).</p>	<p>Individual can count, add, and subtract three digit numbers, can perform multiplication through 12, can identify simple fractions, and perform other simple arithmetic operations.</p>	<p>Individual is able to read simple directions, signs, and maps, fill out simple forms requiring basic personal information, write phone messages, and make simple changes. There is minimal knowledge of and experience with using computers and related technology. The individual can handle basic entry level jobs that require minimal literacy skills; can recognize very short, explicit, pictorial texts (e.g., understands logos related to worker safety before using a piece of machinery); and can read want ads and complete simple job applications.</p>
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Note: The descriptors are *entry-level* descriptors and are illustrative of what a typical student functioning at that level should be able to do. They are not a full description of skills for the level.

CASAS = Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System • TABE = Test of Adult Basic Education

### Outcome Measures Definitions

EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONING LEVEL DESCRIPTORS—ADULT BASIC EDUCATION LEVELS			
LITERACY LEVEL	Basic Reading and Writing	Numeracy Skills	Functional and Workplace Skills
<b>ABE Level 3- Low Intermediate Basic Education</b>  <b>Test Benchmark:</b> TABE (11-12) scale scores (grade level 4–5.9): Reading: 501–535 Total Math: 496–536 Language: 511–546  CASAS scale scores: Reading: 217–227 Math: 204–214	Individual can read text on familiar subjects that have a simple and clear underlying structure (e.g., clear main idea, chronological order); can use context to determine meaning; can interpret actions required in specific written directions; can write simple paragraphs with a main idea and supporting details on familiar topics (e.g., daily activities, personal issues) by recombining learned vocabulary and structures; and can self and peer edit for spelling and punctuation errors.	Individual can perform with high accuracy all four basic math operations using whole numbers up to three digits and can identify and use all basic mathematical symbols.	Individual is able to handle basic reading, writing, and computational tasks related to life roles, such as completing medical forms, order forms, or job applications; and can read simple charts, graphs, labels, and payroll stubs and simple authentic material if familiar with the topic. The individual can use simple computer programs and perform a sequence of routine tasks given direction using technology (e.g., fax machine, computer operation). The individual can qualify for entry level jobs that require following basic written instructions and diagrams with assistance, such as oral clarification; can write a short report or message to fellow workers; and can read simple dials and scales and take routine measurements.

### Outcome Measures Definitions

EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONING LEVEL DESCRIPTORS—ADULT BASIC EDUCATION LEVELS			
LITERACY LEVEL	Basic Reading and Writing	Numeracy Skills	Functional and Workplace Skills
<b>ABE Level 4- High Intermediate Basic Education</b> <b>Test Benchmark:</b> TABE (11–12) scale scores (grade level 6–8.9): Reading: 536–575 Total Math: 537–595 Language: 547–583  CASAS scale scores: Reading: 228–238 Math: 215–225	Individual is able to read simple descriptions and narratives on familiar subjects or from which new vocabulary can be determined by context and can make some minimal inferences about familiar texts and compare and contrast information from such texts but not consistently. The individual can write simple narrative descriptions and short essays on familiar topics and has consistent use of basic punctuation but makes grammatical errors with complex structures.	Individual can perform all four basic math operations with whole numbers and fractions; can determine correct math operations for solving narrative math problems and can convert fractions to decimals and decimals to fractions; and can perform basic operations on fractions.	Individual is able to handle basic life skills tasks such as graphs, charts, and labels and can follow multistep diagrams; can read authentic materials on familiar topics, such as simple employee handbooks and payroll stubs; can complete forms such as a job application and reconcile a bank statement. Can handle jobs that involve following simple written instructions and diagrams; can read procedural texts, where the information is supported by diagrams, to remedy a problem, such as locating a problem with a machine or carrying out repairs using a repair manual. The individual can learn or work with most basic computer software, such as using a word processor to produce own texts, and can follow simple instructions for using technology.

Note: The descriptors are *entry-level* descriptors and are illustrative of what a typical student functioning at that level should be able to do. They are not a full description of skills for the level.

CASAS = Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System • TABE = Test of Adult Basic Education

### Outcome Measures Definitions

#### EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONING LEVEL DESCRIPTORS—ADULT SECONDARY EDUCATION LEVELS

LITERACY LEVEL	Basic Reading and Writing	Numeracy Skills	Functional and Workplace Skills
<b>ABE Level 5- Low Adult Secondary Education</b>  <b>Test Benchmark:</b> TABE (11–12): scale scores (grade level 9–10.9): Reading: 576–616 Total Math: 596–656 Language: 584–630  CASAS scale scores: Reading: 239–248 Math: 226–235	Individual can comprehend expository writing and identify spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors; can comprehend a variety of materials such as periodicals and nontechnical journals on common topics; can comprehend library reference materials and compose multi-paragraph essays; can listen to oral instructions and write an accurate synthesis of them; and can identify the main idea in reading selections and use a variety of context issues to determine meaning. Writing is organized and cohesive with few mechanical errors; can write using a complex sentence structure; and can write personal notes and letters that accurately reflect thoughts.	Individual can perform all basic math functions with whole numbers, decimals, and fractions; can interpret and solve simple algebraic equations, tables, and graphs and can develop own tables and graphs; and can use math in business transactions.	Individual is able or can learn to follow simple multistep directions and read common legal forms and manuals; can integrate information from texts, charts, and graphs; can create and use tables and graphs; can complete forms and applications and complete resumes; can perform jobs that require interpreting information from various sources and writing or explaining tasks to other workers; is proficient using computers and can use most common computer applications; can understand the impact of using different technologies; and can interpret the appropriate use of new software and technology.

<p><b>ABE Level 6- High Adult Secondary Education</b></p> <p><b>Test Benchmark:</b>  TABE (11–12): scale scores  (grade level 11–12):  Reading: 617 and above  Total Math: 657 and above  Language: 631 and above</p> <p>CASAS scale scores:  ‘ Reading: 248 and above  Math: 236 and above</p>	<p>Individual can comprehend, explain, and analyze information from a variety of literacy works, including primary source materials and professional journals, and can use context cues and higher order processes to interpret meaning of written material. Writing is cohesive with clearly expressed ideas supported by relevant detail, and individual can use varied and complex sentence structures with few mechanical errors.</p>	<p>Individual can make mathematical estimates of time and space and can apply principles of geometry to measure angles, lines, and surfaces and can also apply trigonometric functions.</p>	<p>Individual is able to read technical information and complex manuals; can comprehend some college level books and apprenticeship manuals; can function in most job situations involving higher order thinking; can read text and explain a procedure about a complex and unfamiliar work procedure, such as operating a complex piece of machinery; can evaluate new work situations and processes; and can work productively and collaboratively in groups and serve as facilitator and reporter of group work. The individual is able to use common software and learn new software applications; can define the purpose of new technology and software and select appropriate technology; can adapt use of software or technology to new situations; and can instruct others, in written or oral form, on software and technology use.</p>
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Note: The descriptors are *entry-level* descriptors and are illustrative of what a typical student functioning at that level should be able to do. They are not a full description of skills for the level.

CASAS = Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System • TABE = Test of Adult Basic Education

### Outcome Measures Definitions

EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONING LEVEL DESCRIPTORS—ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE LEVELS			
LITERACY LEVEL	Listening and Speaking	Basic Reading and Writing	Functional and Workplace Skills
<b>ESL Level 1- Beginning ESL Literacy</b>  <b>Test Benchmark:</b> CASAS scale scores: Reading: 180 and below L&W Listening: 162-180 and below  BEST Plus: 400 and	Individual cannot speak or understand English, or understands only isolated words or phrases.	Individual has no or minimal reading or writing skills in any language. May have little or no comprehension of how print corresponds to spoken language and may have difficulty using a writing instrument.	Individual functions minimally or not at all in English and can communicate only through gestures or a few isolated words, such as name and other personal information; may recognize only common signs or symbols (e.g., stop sign, product logos); can handle only very routine entry-level jobs that do not require oral or written communication in English. There is no knowledge or use of computers or
<b>ESL Level 2- Low Beginning ESL</b>  <b>Test benchmark:</b> CASAS scale scores Reading: 181–190 L&W Listening: 181–189  BEST Plus: 401–417 (SPL 2)	Individual can understand basic greetings, simple phrases and commands. Can understand simple questions related to personal information, spoken slowly and with repetition. Understands a limited number of words related to immediate needs and can respond with simple learned phrases to some common questions related to routine survival situations. Speaks slowly and with difficulty. Demonstrates little or no	Individual can read numbers and letters and some common sight words. May be able to sound out simple words. Can read and write some familiar words and phrases, but has a limited understanding of connected prose in English. Can write basic personal information (e.g., name, address,	Individual functions with difficulty in social situations and in situations related to immediate needs. Can provide limited personal information on simple forms, and can read very simple common forms of print found in the home and environment, such as product names. Can handle routine entry level jobs that require very simple written or oral English communication and in which job tasks can be demonstrated. May have limited

Note: The descriptors are *entry-level* descriptors and are illustrative of what a typical student functioning at that level should be able to do. They are not a full description of skills for the level.

CASAS = Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System • BEST= Basic English Skills Test • TABE CLAS-E = Test of Adult Basic Education Complete Language Assessment System—English

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



# **NMHED Adult Education (AE) Division DISTANCE EDUCATION POLICY & PROCEDURES**

**Effective July 1, 2019**

## **SECTION I: INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT**

### **Background**

In June 2007, The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE), received approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to collect demographic, enrollment and outcome data on distance education learners and report this information in the National Reporting System (NRS). As a result, New Mexico Adult Education (NM AE) convened a task force and implemented local program pilots to determine how to best provide distance education to the NM adult education population. This policy discusses the primary actions needed to design and implement distance education programs that will provide quality services to students at the local program level.

New Mexico is a predominantly rural state with huge distances between its more populated areas. With less-than-ideal economic conditions, and the high cost of transportation, distance education has become a prime alternative to the traditional classroom setting. Distance education can be an effective way to serve learners unable to attend regularly scheduled classes. It may also be an attractive option for students who live some distance away from a local program. Distance education courses can help students obtain the skills necessary to transition into work and/or higher education. They can also help students develop the self-efficacy, discipline, resourcefulness and technology skills to pursue a career or advance in a current job.

### **Procedures Overview and Purpose**

The purpose of this procedure is to give local programs information on how NM AE will implement distance education processes and procedures for local programs. This will help local programs to determine whether distance education is an appropriate initiative for their population, and set realistic timeframes in planning distance education programs.

## **SECTION II: GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

National Reporting System (NRS) Implementation Guidelines define Distance Education as:

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, e-mail or online technologies, and software. (p 50)

It is common for adult learners to take traditional classroom-based, blended and/or distance learning courses during the same program year. For purposes of defining who is a distance learner, programs will track students as distance learners if at least 50% of the instructional hours scheduled for a given class are to be derived from proxy hours. For the purposes of this policy, blended learning students will follow the same policies as distance learners.

### **SECTION III: Assessment, Contact Hours and Approved Software**

#### **Assessing Distance Learners**

Distance learners must be assessed in accordance to the NMHED/Adult Education Division State Assessment Policy. All assessments must be completed face-to-face, in a secure proctored setting with a certified test administrator. Proxy hours should be considered when determining when it is appropriate to post-test students.

In addition, programs must have a procedure to determine the student's ability to function effectively as a distance learner. This may be a survey of computer skills, motivation, and independent learning skills, or a plan to support the student through blended learning to build those skills.

#### **Instructional Hours for Distance Learning**

Classes providing distance or blended learning must be indicated as such in the title of the course in the state database (LACES). NRS Implementation Guidelines require:

Students in distance education ... must have at least 12 hours of contact with the program before they can be counted for federal reporting purposes. Contact hours for distance learners can be a combination of actual contact and contact through telephone, video, teleconference or online communication, where student and program staff can interact and through which learner identity is verifiable. (p 48)

Contact hours are entered into the state database (LACES) as Instruction.

In addition, programs should report proxy (distance learning) hours according to NRS Implementation Guidelines and as defined below. (p 48-49)

**Clock Time Model (preferred)** – assigns contact hours based on a software program that tracks time. PLATO, Common Core Achieve and KeyTrain are examples of online programs that provide reports of clock time.

NOTE: Procedures for reporting clock time must ensure that time using the software during contact hours are not also reported as proxy hours.

**Teacher Verification Model** – assigns a fixed number of hours based on teacher determination of the extent to which a learner engaged in, or completed the assignment. This model is useful for print or video programs as well as other software that does not include clock time such as USA Learns and Khan Academy.

**Learner Mastery Model** – Assigns a fixed number of hours based on the learner mastering a test on the content of the lesson. This model is useful for print or video programs as well as other software that does not include clock time such as USA Learns and Khan Academy.

For Teacher Verification and Learner Mastery Models, a chart will be provided and updated annually to ensure consistency throughout the state.

Proxy hours are entered into the state database (LACES) as Instruction – Distance Learning.

**NOTE:** Homework for a face-to-face class may NOT be included as proxy hours. Proxy hours must include the student engaging with and learning new material at a distance.

### **Approved Curricula**

State licenses are purchased annually for online curriculum that has been reviewed and deemed appropriate. Training and support will be provided for this curriculum. The curriculum the NMHED/AE office will provide statewide is Edmentum (PLATO). Individual programs may choose other quality online products as meet the needs of their programs. Programs choosing different online learning systems will need to bear the costs of those systems, including training and support. Training for other curriculum and delivery methods may be provided by DELT at the discretion of the project and HED.