

**TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY
AND
TEXAS *LEARNS*
TEXAS ADULT EDUCATION AND
FAMILY LITERACY COLLABORATION**

**STATE ASSESSMENT AND
GOAL SETTING/ATTAINMENT POLICY FOR
ADULT EDUCATION**

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PENDING US DOE OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL AND ADULT EDUCATION APPROVAL

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I. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

A. Need for the State Assessment Policy

Texas provides and requires assessment to measure achievement of literacy and language skills for adult students and ties achievement to quality and performance. Standardized assessments are required by the Workforce Investment Act and Texas House Bill (HB) 1640 (1996 Texas 76th)

Legislative Session). The state assessment policy addresses Title 34 Code of Federal Regulations 462 Subpart D. The following questions are addressed in the policy: Must a State have an assessment policy? (Part 462.40); How must tests be administered in order to accurately measure educational gain? (Part 462.41); How are tests used to place students at an NRS educational functioning level? (Part 462.42); How is educational gain measured? (Part 462.43); and Which educational functioning levels must States and local eligible providers use to measure and report educational gain in the NRS? (Part 462.44). The assessment instruments used in Texas were chosen for validity and reliability as an accurate way to measure student progress. The tests chosen for Texas are the *Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE)*, *General Assessment of Instructional Needs (GAIN)*, and the *Basic English Skills Test (BEST)*. The assessment policy standardizes the process of determining student progress and completion of levels. Student progress and completion of levels may be used as determined by the Commissioner of Education and/or the State Board of Education as a basis for performance-based funding.

Every funded project is responsible and held accountable for the integrity of the data entered into the state's management information system – Texas Educating Adults Management System (TEAMS). National Reporting System (NRS) <http://www.nrsweb.org/> educational functioning levels are determined by NRS approved standardized assessments (*TABE*, *GAIN*, and *BEST*). All students are placed into an appropriate Educational Functioning Level (EFL) as determined by the standardized assessments chosen by the state. A subsequent post-assessment shows students' progress. Results of the pre- and post- assessment data determine the state's performance targets, local program performance targets, professional development planning, and the need for program improvement. In addition, pre- and post- assessment data provides actual student performance which determines the state's performance targets negotiated annually with the federal Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE). Academic performance targets provide information to the state's electronic desk review, Adult Education Guidance Information System (AEGIS), on a quarterly basis and in a final annual compliance report. Each local program is responsible for its program's performance and must provide the state office with a program improvement plan if the local program does not show continuous improvement in student performance. Programs must meet at least 50% of their Educational Functioning Level performance targets annually. Original score sheets from tests and/or electronic score reports with results of students' pre and post test scores must be stored and/or backed up on appropriate media or printed out and filed in hard copy for local, state and federal auditing purposes. Finally, assessment data provides the basis for a variety of formative and summative self evaluations for local programs. Programs approved to offer distance education will follow the same procedures for assessing distance education students as regular students. All assessments are administered face-to-face following the publishers' guidelines for locator tests, timing, scoring, placement, post testing, and roll over scores. The Distance Education Policy is located in the appendix.

B. Purposes and Uses of Assessment

In addition to using required standardized assessments for NRS reporting and accountability, programs use assessments for instructional purposes. In addition to standardized assessments, programs are encouraged to supplement with instructional-based, portfolio-based, and/or teacher-made assessments. Professional development plans should include the results of assessment data.

C. Summary and Overview

Approved Assessments: The approved assessments in Texas are:

- *Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE)* (Reading, Language, and Math)
- *General Assessment of Instructional Needs (GAIN)* (English and Math)
- *Basic English Skills Test (BEST) - Literacy* (Reading and Writing Skills)
- *Basic English Skills Test Plus (BEST-Plus)* (Speaking and Listening Skills)
- *Test of Adult Basic Education Complete Language Assessment System-English (TABE CLAS-E)* (Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening)

1. Program Years (PY)

- Federal Program Year (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act [AEFLA] Funded) begins July 1 and ends June 30.
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) year begins September 1 and ends August 31.

2. Pre-Assessment

- a. **Establishing Placement with a Baseline Assessment** - Texas requires that students be assessed before the student may be enrolled in the adult education management information system called Texas Educating Adults Management System (TEAMS). The administration date of at least one sub-test of the standardized assessment instrument must be prior to the first contact hour. Tests administered in all sub-test areas within 30 days of each other are compared to determine the placement of the student. TEAMS locates the test closest to, and before the first contact hours in the new program year and then locates any tests within 30 days of that test. A program may administer additional sub-tests of the standardized assessment instrument within 14 days of the first contact hours if warranted. The closest test administered before the first contact hours is first considered. Tests administered up to 30 days before the first test closest to the first contact hours are compared next. Tests up to 14 days after the first contact hour (day) are included in the comparison if administered within 30 days of the group of tests administered before the first contact hour. Examples are listed in the glossary under Domain of Significance (DOS). **The lowest educational functioning level determined by the tests compared during the pre-assessment determines the educational functioning level (EFL) or Domain of Significance and placement in the TEAMS.**
- b. **Baseline for Returning Students** - Returning students' post-assessments from the previous year may be brought forward into the new program year and considered the pre-assessment for the new program year. Tests that are to be considered comparable must be administered within 30 days of each other. The 30-day rule applies to assessments rolled forward and for tests administered in the new program year. The process of bringing forward assessments from the previous year is automated in TEAMS and activated by the user.
- c. **Twelve (12) Hour Rule** - States must report to NRS/OVAE the required measures on *all students who receive 12 hours or more of service*. (NRS Implementation Guide, Division of Adult Education and Literacy, Office Of Vocational And Adult Education, U.S. Department Of Education, Contract No. ED-01-CO-0026, June 2007.)

- i. Students with at least 12 hours will be counted on the Federal Tables/Reports.
 - ii. Students with less than 12 hours will be counted on State Tables/Reports.
- d. **High ASE Students taking the Official GED Practice Test** - A student who has a baseline score on the *TABE* or *GAIN* that places him/her in High ASE may be administered the Official GED Practice Test (OPT) as an alternative to registering the student for class. No progress test is available if the student places in High ASE. The only educational outcome is passing the GED or a high school equivalency test. If the OPT indicates that the student is ready to take the GED, programs may refer the student to the official GED testing center to take the GED. Again, the student may be enrolled in a High ASE class, but the only educational related outcome will be passing the GED.
- e. **Counting Hours for OPT** - Programs not enrolling the student in a class may enter the hours accumulated when administering the *TABE*, *GAIN*, and/or OPT in TEAMS by creating a student profile and entering the testing hours under Orientation. Orientation hours should be recorded from a student sign-in sheet designated for “testing and orientation.” The hours for these students who are not enrolled in a class, but have a profile and orientation hours may be found in TEAMS Reports under “GED” and found in the report titled: “Participants Achieved GED by Age and Functioning Level.”

3. Post Assessment

- a. **Minimum Hours Between Pre and Post** - After completing the minimum hours of instruction established by the test publisher as posted on the table below, each student must be post-tested in his/her Domain of Significance (DOS) to determine educational functioning level gains. In addition, for each sub-test that has a pre-assessment, a post-assessment must be administered. A completion of the EFL or lowest educational functioning level determines whether or not a student completes the level and will be shown as a completer on the federal report. Post assessments in other sub-test areas are accounted for in the State Gains reports but are not reported on the federal report. Post-assessments must be administered at least once a fiscal year before June 30. If the hours for a course of instruction exceed the minimum recommended hours between pre- and post- testing, post-assessment may most appropriately take place at the end of the instructional session.
- b. **Minimum Hours Report** - Programs may monitor the number of students who are tested before the minimum hours are accumulated on a TEAMS Report found under “Participants” in the “Participants Tested with Less Than Minimum Hours of Instruction.” The target in Texas is for programs to test at least 80% of their students with the required number of hours between pre and post tests. Programs testing less than 80% of their students at the minimum are required to annually reduce the percentage of students posted tested without the minimum required hours. Program Improvement Plans are required if the reduced percentage is not met. (See **Exceptions** under C.4. for additional information.)
- c. The chart to follow outlines the minimum hours required between approved Pre and Post Tests.

TABLE I: Required Instructional Hours between Pre and Post-Tests (Effective July 1, 2011)

REQUIRED INSTRUCTIONAL HOURS	
Testing Instrument/Assessment	Required Instructional Hours between Pre- and Post- Test
TABE 9 and 10 ABE (NRS ABE Levels - ABE Beginning Literacy, ABE Beginning, ABE Intermediate Low & ABE Intermediate High) (Using Alternate Forms of Test)	40 hours minimum using alternate forms of the test
TABE 9 and 10 ASE (NRS ASE Levels – ASE Low and ASE High) (Using Alternate Forms of Test)	30 hours minimum using alternate forms of test
GAIN (NRS ABE and ASE Levels - ABE Beginning Literacy, ABE Beginning, ABE Intermediate Low, ABE Intermediate High, ASE Low, and ASE High)	60 hours minimum
BEST Plus (All levels ESL)	60 hours minimum
BEST Literacy (All levels ESL)	60 hours minimum using alternate forms of test
TABE CLAS-E (All levels ESL) (Using Alternate Form of Test)	50 hours minimum using alternate forms of test

If the same form of the *TABE 9* or *10* test is administered then 120 hours of instruction is required (Example: *TABE 9* Form D and *TABE 9* Form D). If the same form of *TABE CLAS-E* test is administered then 100 hours of instruction is required (Example: Reading Form A and Reading Form A).

- d. **Post-Test Annually** - Programs are required to post-test each student at least one time annually in each sub-test, but especially in the Domain of Significance, so that post test scores for all sub-tests may roll forward into the new program year, and an appropriate Domain of Significance may be determined in the new program year. If the student is not post-tested in all sub-test areas before the end of the fiscal year, the student must be administered all sub-tests in the new program year for comparison purposes. Post-tests must be administered within 30 days of each other, and the same rules apply as for the pre-assessment. (See Glossary –Domain of Significance for examples.) See each assessment instrument description for a list of sub-tests.

- e. **Latest Post-Test on Federal Report** - Per NRS guidelines, if more than one post-assessment is administered during the program year, the latest post-test entered into TEAMS (not necessarily the highest post-test) will be used to determine student completions.
 - f. **Number of Hours between Post-Assessments** - An appropriate amount of instruction must take place between a post-test assessment and a subsequent post-test assessment per the publisher's guidelines. An alternate form of the sub-test should be administered each time a test is administered or additional hours of instruction are required. (See Table I)
 - g. **Assessments for Instructional Purposes** - Programs are not required to enter assessments into TEAMS (the management information system) that are used for instructional practices and not used for placement or post-testing. If an approved assessment test is administered for instructional purposes, it may not be later used as a post-test unless the required number of instructional hours has elapsed. This is necessary to prevent a practice effect.
 - h. **Students Served with Other Funding Sources** - Adult students served with non-AEFLA funds or non-AEFLA matching funds such as students funded with TANF or Even Start are not reported on the annual AEFLA NRS federal report. Students served in adult education with non-AEFLA sources are documented in TEAMS; reports are available by funding sources, and reports may be provided to funders.
 - i. **Score Reports** - Original score sheets from tests and/or electronic score reports with results of students' pre and post test scores must be stored and/or backed up on appropriate media or printed out and filed in hard copy for local, state and federal auditing purposes.
4. **Test Administrator Training**
Texas requires that test administrators be properly trained before administering standardized assessments. Texas *LEARNS* provides certified trainers through the regional GREAT Centers to provide test administrator training. Local programs will maintain at least one test administrator for each test instrument and maintain test administrator training documentation on file available for review by a Grant Services Manager or other state staff.
5. **Exceptions – Exceptions should be rare and limited.**
Post-testing will occur after completion of publishers recommended minimum hours of instruction. There are no exceptions for testing Adult Basic Education or English Second Language students before the student completes the publishers' recommended minimum hours of instruction. Annually, the percentage of students tested before completing the required minimum hours of instruction will be determined by program. If the percentage of ABE and ESL students who are tested with the *TABE*, *GAIN*, *BEST*, and/or *BEST Plus* before they complete the publishers' recommended minimum hours of instruction is above the previous year's percentage of total tested in those levels with the above tests, the program will be required to begin a program improvement plan to decrease the number and percentage of students tested prematurely.

The state's goal is to keep the percentage of exceptions for all assessments to 20% or less. Each program will negotiate a target rate with their Grant Services Manager to determine the program's target percentage. At the end of the program year, programs with an increased percentage of students prematurely tested over the previous year's baseline target (or more than 20%) will be required to begin a program improvement plan. Please note that programs on program improvement plans during a fiscal year prior to a grant competition will not be eligible for priority points during the competition.

Documentation for exceptions must be available for review during technical assistance visits, monitoring visits, and program audits.

D. Resources for Information and Assistance

To get more information about pre- and post- assessment, data collection, TEAMS, required documentation, or any other assessment policy clarification, please contact Texas *LEARNS* toll free at 1-866-696-4233.

To find a certified test administration trainer, contact the GREAT Center in each region by calling the Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy and Learning (TCALL) at 1-800-441-READ (1-800-441-7323).

To view the calendar of assessment trainings in the regions or to find the GREAT Center websites, go to the follow link: <http://www-tcall.tamu.edu/calendars.htm>

To learn more about becoming a certified test administrator contact the GREAT Center in each region at the following link: <http://www-tcall.tamu.edu/texasLearns/tLGreat.htm>

II. GENERAL ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

A. Students to be Assessed

All students in the state adult education program will be assessed with the state-designated assessments listed below, and all tested students are included in the state's NRS data submission. Programs may not decide program-wide to test in one subject area. Each student determines his/her needs. The only exception to the rule of administering all sub-tests in the approved assessment instrument group is if an individual student specifically requests to study one area as determined in the student's goal-setting activities.

A pre-assessment establishes the baseline, or the educational functioning level, for the student. A post-assessment is the progress assessment that determines if a student completes the level or remains in the same level.

The educational functioning level must be established before the student begins instruction. Programs are required to provide a new student orientation where new students are provided a program overview, goal-setting activities, and assessment. Generally, student orientation is between 6 and 12 hours and may take place over several days. The pre-assessment may be

administered during orientation. If all sub-tests are not administered during the orientation period or before the first contact hour, programs may administer additional sub-tests up to 14 days after the first day of instruction. All tests considered for EFL placement must be administered within 30 days of each other. (See Domain of Significance (DOS) in Glossary for examples.) Returning students may have post-assessments from the previous year rolled forward as a pre-assessment or baseline for the new program year, or the program may administer a new pre-assessment to determine the EFL. It is highly recommended that students be re-assessed if their scores rolled forward from the previous program year are more than 120 days old. Original score sheets from tests and/or electronic score reports with results of students' pre and post test scores must be stored and/or backed up on appropriate media or printed out and filed in hard copy and be made available for local, state and federal audit purposes.

B. Required Training and Assessments Permitted

All programs must have at least one certified trained test administrator for the *Basic English Skills Test (BEST)*, have one person complete the training provided by CTB McGraw-Hill guidance or the GREAT Centers for the *Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE)* on staff or have arrangements with a certified trained *TABE* test administrator to provide this service for your program and have one person complete the online or face-to-face training provided by Wonderlic Inc. for the *General Assessment of Instructional Needs (GAIN)* or have arrangements with a certified trained *GAIN* test administrator to provide this service for your program. Training for *GAIN* is available by contacting the publisher toll free at 1-877-605-9496 or emailing corporate instructors at training@wonderlic.com. To find certified test administration trainer, contact the GREAT Center in each region by calling the Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy and Learning (TCALL) at 1-800-441-READ (1-800-441-7323). To view the calendar of assessment trainings in the regions or to find the GREAT Center websites, go to the follow link: <http://www-tcall.tamu.edu/calendars.htm>. **To learn more about becoming a certified test administrator contact the GREAT Center in your region.** The following link is for the GREAT Center web sites: <http://www-tcall.tamu.edu/texasLearns/tLGreat.htm>

Approved assessments in Texas are:

- *Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE)* (Reading, Language, and Math)
- *General Assessment of Instructional Needs (GAIN)* (English/Reading and Mathematics)
- *Basic English Skills Test (BEST) - Literacy* (Reading and Writing Skills)
- *Basic English Skills Test Plus (BEST-Plus)* (Speaking and Listening Skills)
- *Test of Adult Basic Education Complete Language Assessment System - English (TABE CLAS-E)* (Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing)

A brief description for each approved assessment is provided in this section. A more detailed description is provided in Section III.

1. Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE)

TABE is an NRS approved assessment for adult basic education students and is published by the CTB McGraw-Hill Companies. The purpose of the *TABE* is to assess adult basic skills in vocabulary, reading, language, language mechanics, mathematics, and spelling. *TABE* is a designated assessment instrument for students enrolling in:

- Adult Basic Education (ABE) grade levels 0-8
- Adult Secondary Education (ASE) grade levels 9-12

- (Pre-GED/GED preparation classes)
- a. **TABE Locator** - Programs must use the *TABE Locator Test* to determine the correct level of each sub-test in the *TABE Survey* or *Battery Test* that is administered to each individual student. The *TABE* instrument group is composed of various skill areas or domains/component levels. The levels are:
 - *Literacy (L)
 - Easy (E)
 - Medium (M)
 - Difficult (D)
 - Advanced (A)

*Literacy Level test is not an NRS approved test.

A *TABE Locator* is used in each sub-test subject area. *TABE* sub-test subject areas are:

- Reading
- Math
- Language

The locator may indicate a different level assessment for each sub-test subject.

The *TABE Word List* may be used for initial appraisal of assessment for students functioning at the Beginning ABE Literacy Level and for students who are unable to read or write to complete the Locator Test. *The TABE Literacy* test score is entered into TEAMS. Students tested with the *TABE Word List* are not reflected on the federal report unless another NRS approved assessment is administered.

- b. **Parallel Forms** – *TABE* has two parallel forms, Forms 9 and 10 which must be used alternately to ensure valid results when retesting the same student. A form different from that of the pre-test should be administered as a post-test. **As of March 31, 2008, Forms 7&8 of the *TABE* family were no longer available for purchase. Programs using *TABE* 7&8 were required to switch to *TABE* 9&10 on July 1, 2009. (http://www.ctb.com/products/product_summary.jsp?FOLDER%3C%3Efolder_id=1408474395247195&CONTENT%3C%3Ecnt_id=10134198673271391&bmuID=1246995478859)** Beginning July 1, 2009, TEAMS will no longer accept or recognize *TABE* 7 and 8 scores as pre-assessment and post-assessments (progress) scores except for historical data purposes.
- c. **Required Percentage to be Post Tested** - Each student must be pre-assessed with an approved standardized assessment before enrollment, at intake, or during orientation. Programs must post-test no less than **68% (the 2011-2012 State Performance Measure Target)** of enrolled students that have a baseline using a different test form than was used in the pre-assessment. Each student should be administered a post-assessments according to the guidelines in the *TABE Manual*.

- d. **Rolling Scores Forward from the Previous Year** - For continuing students, assessment scores from the previous Program Year (PY) may be rolled forward and be used as pre-assessment scores for the new program year.
- e. **Administering and Scoring the TABE** - *TABE* may be administered individually or in a group setting and may be administered in “paper and pencil” form or by computer. *TABE* is either locally hand scored, machine scored, or scored with *TestMate TABE®* software. Regardless of the type of administration, the raw scores must be converted to Scale Scores before entering score information into TEAMS. *TABE* provides a Norms Book for paper and pencil scoring to convert the raw score or number correct into a Scale Score. The Norms book is divided into sections for each form (*TABE 9* and *TABE 10*) and by subject areas (e.g., Reading, Language, Math, etc.). With the number correct, testers can locate the scale score.
- f. **Accommodations** - To assist educators in complying with the IDEA legislation, CTB produces the CTB/McGraw-Hill Assessment Accommodations Guide--a decision-making tool for the consistent documentation and implementation of testing accommodations for student with disabilities. The website for ordering the guide may be found at:
 - g. <http://www.ctb.com/ctb.com/control/childNodesViewAction?categoryId=193&adjBrd=Y>
 Students requesting accommodations should provide paperwork from a diagnostician indicating the requested accommodation.
 Students requesting accommodations without diagnostician signed paperwork may be provided reading glasses, magnifying glasses, earplugs, and additional or reduced lighting.

2. **The Basic English Skills Test (BEST) Literacy**

The *Basic English Skills Test (BEST)* is a measurement tool designed for adult English learners at the survival and pre-employment skills level. It consists of an oral interview section and a literacy skills section that are scored separately. The *BEST Literacy Skills Section* was updated as *BEST Literacy* in October, 2006. The *BEST Oral Interview Section* has been replaced by *BEST Plus* and was retired effective October 1, 2006.

BEST Literacy is the test designated in Texas to assess literacy skills for limited English proficient, English language learners, and English as a second language adult students and is published by the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL). *BEST Literacy* tests reading and writing skills in authentic situations specifically geared for adult English language learners in the United States. Reading tasks include reading dates on a calendar, labels on food and clothing, bulletin announcements, and newspaper want ads. Writing tasks include addressing an envelope, writing a rent check, filling out a personal background form, and writing personal notes.

- a. **Literacy Locator Tool and Identifying Students Unable to Test** - The *BEST Literacy* test does not provide or require a locator test although some adults entering an English language program may have limited knowledge of written English and will struggle with or be unable to complete a literacy assessment such as *BEST Literacy*. A literacy screening tool is an option and may be used to identify these individuals. A sample literacy screening tool is provided below. If using the locator form below or a similar

locator tool, students should be asked to fill in the information indicated on the form, i.e., screening the student for basic reading and writing literacy skills. If the student is unable to complete the form indicating a lack of basic literacy (reading and writing) skills, an oral English proficiency assessment such as *BEST Plus* may be a more appropriate assessment and the *BEST Literacy Test* is not administered.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Date of birth: _____

Signature: _____

Today's date: _____

[*BEST Literacy Test Manual, 2006*]

- b. **Parallel Forms - *BEST Literacy*** is available in three parallel forms (B, C and D) for pre- and post-testing. The *BEST Literacy Test Manual* is designed to provide test administrators and scorers with all the information needed to give and score the test, including a rubric with clear benchmarks for scoring the note-writing tasks. Use different forms for pre-testing and post-testing.
 - c. **Required Percentage to be Post-Tested** - Programs must post-test no less than **68%** (*the 2011-2012 State Performance Measure Target*) of enrolled students using a different test form than was used in the pre-test.
 - d. **Rolling Scores Forward from the Previous Year** - For continuing students, assessment scores from the previous Program Year (PY) may be rolled forward and be used as pre-test scores for the new program year. Administering a new pre-assessment may be necessary if scores are more than 120 days old or the student has dropped out for more than 120 days.
 - e. **Administering and Scoring the *BEST Literacy*** - *BEST Literacy* can be administered individually or to groups of examinees generally in one hour or less.
 - f. **Accommodations** - Students requesting accommodations should provide paperwork from a diagnostician indicating the requested accommodation. Students requesting accommodations without diagnostician signed paperwork may be provided reading glasses, magnifying glasses, earplugs, and additional or reduced lighting.
3. ***BEST Plus***
The *Basic English Skills Test* is a measurement tool designed for adult English learners at the survival and pre-employment skills level. It consists of an oral interview section and a literacy skills section that are scored separately. The *BEST Literacy Skills Section* was

updated as *BEST Literacy* in October, 2006. The *BEST Oral* Interview Section has been replaced by *BEST Plus* and was retired effective October 1, 2006.

The Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) publishes the *BEST Plus*. *BEST Plus* is the newest addition to the CAL product line of language tests. *BEST Plus* is an adaptation of the *Basic English Skills Test (BEST) Oral Interview (obsolete test)*. Like the *BEST Oral*, *BEST Plus* assesses interpersonal communication using everyday language. *BEST Plus* comes in two versions - a computer-adaptive assessment on CD or a semi-adaptive print-based version. Both versions are administered as a face-to-face oral interview.

- a. **BEST Plus Locator** – In the **print-based version of the BEST Plus**, a brief locator test determines the level of test items (level 1, 2, or 3) that will be most appropriate for the ability level of the examinee. These items are arranged in fixed-form level tests. In the **computer-adaptive version** of the *BEST Plus*, items are selected by the computer program, choosing the most appropriate question for the examinee’s demonstrated ability level; therefore, *BEST Plus* computer adaptive version does not have a locator test.
- b. **Parallel Forms** – *BEST Plus* print-based version has three parallel forms. The print-based version three forms are A, B, and C and are specifically for pre- and post-testing purposes. The computer-adaptive version allows the computer to select the next test item, choosing items most appropriate for the examinee according to the scores entered for previous responses.
- c. **Required Percentage to be Post Tested** - Programs must post-test no less than **68%** (*the 2011-2012 State Performance Measure Target*) of enrolled students using a different test form than was used in the pre-test.
- d. **Rolling Scores Forward from the Previous Year** - For continuing students, test scores from the previous Program Year (PY) may be rolled forward and be used as pre-test scores for the new program year. Administering a new pre-assessment may be necessary if scores are more than 120 days old or the student has dropped out for more than 120 days.
- e. **Administering and Scoring the BEST Plus** - *BEST Plus* is administered face-to-face for both the computer-adaptive version and the print-based version. In the **computer-adaptive** version, the test items are delivered to the test administrator via computer. Prompted by the computer screen, the test administrator asks the examinee a question, listens to the examinee's response, uses a rubric to score the response, and enters the score into the computer. The computer then selects the next test item, choosing questions most appropriate for the examinee's demonstrated ability level. In the **print-based** version, test items are arranged in fixed-form level tests. In the **print-based version**, a brief locator test determines the level of test items (level 1, 2, or 3) that will be most appropriate for the ability level of the examinee. These items are arranged in fixed-form level tests. The test administrator asks the examinee each item on the selected level test and scores the items using the same scoring rubric that is used with the computer-adaptive version. The print-based version also comes in three forms (A, B, and C) for pre- and post-testing purposes.

Informative score reports are generated for both the computer and print versions using the *BEST Plus Score Management Software*.

- f. **Accommodations** - Students who do not hear, speak, or see should not be administered the *BEST Plus Test per the publisher guidelines*. Students requesting accommodations should provide paperwork from a diagnostician indicating the requested accommodation. Students requesting accommodations without diagnostician signed paperwork may be provided reading glasses, magnifying glasses, and additional or reduced lighting.

4. **TABE CLAS-E**

TABE Complete Language Assessment System--English provides teachers with a reliable, easy-to-use system that accurately identifies the instructional needs of English as a second language student. *TABE Complete Language Assessment System--English* assesses English proficiency levels to accurately measure students' reading, listening, writing, and speaking skills. The optional speaking test gives teachers maximum flexibility in how they assess their students.

- a. ***TABE CLAS-E Locator*** - A short Locator Test ensures that adult learners start with the appropriate assessment level.
- b. **Parallel Forms** - Pre- and Post-Tests are available at four levels to ensure that students test within the correct range for their abilities.
- c. **Required Percentage to be Post Tested** - Each student must be pre-tested with an approved standardized assessment before enrollment, at intake, or during orientation. Programs must post-test no less than **68%** (***the 2011-2012 State Performance Measure Target***) of enrolled students that have a baseline using a different test form than was used in the pre-assessment. Each student should be administered post-assessments according to the guidelines in the *TABE CLAS-E Manual*.
- d. **Rolling Scores Forward from the Previous Year** - For continuing students, assessment scores from the previous Program Year (PY) may be rolled forward and be used as pre-assessment scores for the new program year. Administering a new pre-assessment may be necessary if scores are more than 120 days old or the student has dropped out for more than 120 days.
- e. **Administering and Scoring the *TABE CLAS-E - TABE Complete Language Assessment System--English*** delivers number correct and scale scores for each skill area: Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking--and for the total battery of assessments. Programs must convert the number correct to the scale score for each sub-test and enter a scale score for each sub-test into TEAMS. Additional scores include: National Reporting System (NRS) proficiency levels; objective mastery scores; and Student Performance Levels (SPLs). *TABE Complete Language Assessment System--English* also offers scoring with *TestMate TABE®*.

- f. **Accommodations** - To assist educators in complying with the IDEA legislation, CTB produces the CTB/McGraw-Hill Assessment Accommodations Guide--a decision-making tool for the consistent documentation and implementation of testing accommodations for student with disabilities. The website for ordering the guide may be found at:
- g. <http://www.ctb.com/ctb.com/control/childNodesViewAction?categoryId=193&adjBrd=Y>
Students requesting accommodations should provide paperwork from a diagnostician indicating the requested accommodation. Students requesting accommodations without diagnostician signed paperwork may be provided reading glasses, magnifying glasses, earplugs, and additional or reduced lighting.

5. **General Assessment of Instructional Needs (GAIN)**

General Assessment of Instructional Needs (GAIN) is an all in-one assessment developed by Wonderlic, Inc. *GAIN* is a testing and scoring platform for basic English and math proficiency assessment designed to streamline and optimize the student and teacher experience. *GAIN* assesses math and English skills. Each subject contains three books arranged by the National Reporting System Educational Functioning Levels (EFLs) and then by *GAIN* Review Topics (skills). *GAIN* is a designated assessment for students enrolling in

- Adult Basic Education (ABE) grade levels 0-8
- Adult Secondary Education (ASE) grade levels 9-12
- (Pre-GED/GED preparation classes)

- a. **Locator** - The *GAIN* has no locator test.
- b. **Parallel Forms** - Two English forms--Forms A & B--and two mathematic forms--Forms A & B--are available in paper/pencil and Web administration modes. The test publisher has indicated that a Form C may be available during the 2011-2012 Program Year. The test items in paper/pencil- and Web-enabled modes are identical and thus facilitate the use of one mode in pre-test situations and the other mode in post test situations if desired. Scores on *GAIN* forms are designed to be psychometrically equivalent, regardless of the particular test form that was used or the administration mode that was employed. Parallel forms reliability coefficients for English/reading measured .93; the reliability coefficient for math measured .91. Taken as a whole, research findings indicate that *GAIN* possesses strong reliability levels and low susceptibility to measurement error.
- c. **Required Percentage to be Post Tested** - Each student must be pre-assessed with an approved standardized assessment before enrollment, at intake, or during orientation. Programs must post-test no less than **68%** (*the 2011-2012 State Performance Measure Target*) of enrolled students that have a baseline using a different test form than was used in the pre-assessment. Each student should be administered a post-assessment according to the guidelines in the *GAIN* training or stated in the *GAIN Administrator's Guide for ABE/ASE Use, Section II: Proctor's Guide*.
- d. **Rolling Scores Forward from the Previous Year** - For continuing students, assessment scores from the previous Program Year (PY) may be rolled forward and be used as pre-assessment scores for the new program year.

- e. **Administering and Scoring the *GAIN*** - *GAIN* can be administered in either a group or individual setting. *GAIN* test administrators must be trained before administering the *GAIN*. Wonderlic provides certification and training free of charge on a twice-weekly schedule with options for customized training available. For training contact publisher toll free at 1-877-605-9496 or emailing corporate instructors at training@wonderlic.com. *GAIN* can be administered online by computer or in paper/pencil format. *GAIN* is machine scored by Wonderlic either online, fax-back, or by mailing in forms to Wonderlic for machine scoring.
- f. **Accommodations** - Reasonable accommodation has long been recognized for an essential component of the testing process. Further, it is legally mandated under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). While the ADA does not define reasonable accommodation, it provides a list of examples of what might constitute a reasonable accommodation. With respect to testing, the ADA requires that tests be given to people with impaired sensory or manual skills in a format and manner that minimizes the impact of any impaired skill on test results, unless the test is designed to measure that particular skill. Once it has been determined that the test taker has a disability that is covered by the ADA, the test administrator should initiate discussions with the test candidate and/or Wonderlic to help identify an appropriate reasonable accommodation. Wonderlic's psychologists are available to assist test administrators with the reasonable accommodation process.

C. Training for Administering Assessments

1. TABE

All staff administering the *TABE* must be trained before administering the test. Texas *LEARNS* provides test administrator training through the GREAT Centers. Local programs are responsible for maintaining records of staff trained to administer tests in their programs. Staff training records must be entered into TEAMS. Programs are required to have at least one trained *TABE* test administrator on staff or evidence of arrangements with a trained *TABE* administrator to administer the *TABE* for the local program. CTB-McGraw-Hill (*TABE* Publisher) has trained a cadre of GREAT Center trainers in Texas to properly administer the *TABE*. GREAT Centers provide *TABE* training to the local programs.

Local programs should develop a plan to determine how many testers are required to pre- and post-test the maximum number of students efficiently and effectively. There is a State Board of Education minimum requirement that all staff has completed at least a GED or high school diploma to be a tester, but it is highly and strongly recommended that a 4-year degreed staff administer the *TABE*.

TABE Training is 6 hours for inexperienced users, and *TABE* Refresher Training is 3 hours for experienced users. The local program is responsible for maintaining the security of all assessments and for keeping record of all persons trained to administer the *TABE*. Annual or periodic *TABE* Refresher Training is recommended to maintain the integrity of and promote the security of the *TABE* testing process.

Programs may call toll free, 800-441-READ, to find the closest *TABE* training option or go to the TCALL website for a calendar of training in each GREAT Center region. The Web address is: <http://www-tcall.tamu.edu/>

2. **BEST Literacy**

All staff who administers the *BEST Literacy* assessment must be trained in proper test administration practice according to the publisher. Center for Applied Linguistics (*BEST Literacy* publisher) provides a manual for training. *BEST Literacy* Training is generally one hour long. The local program is responsible for maintaining the security of all assessments and for keeping record of all persons trained to administer the *BEST Literacy*.

Local programs should develop a plan to determine how many testers are required to pre- and post-test the maximum number of students efficiently and effectively. There is a State Board of Education minimum requirement that all staff has completed at least a GED or high school diploma to be a tester, but it is highly and strongly recommended that a 4-year degreed staff administer the *BEST*.

Refresher *BEST* Training is recommended at least every two years.

The GREAT Centers may provide assessment training and contact information for trainers. Programs should call toll free, 800-441-READ, to find the closest training option or go to the TCALL website for a calendar of training in each GREAT Center region. The Web address is <http://www-tcall.tamu.edu/>. Assessment training can be provided to meet the schedule of the local program.

3. **BEST Plus**

All staff who administers the *BEST Plus* must be trained in proper test administration practice according to the publisher. Center for Applied Linguistics (*BEST Plus* publisher) trained a cadre of trainers from the GREAT Center to be certified *BEST Plus* test administrator trainers. Texas *LEARNS* funded this training through state leadership funds. These certified trainers provide *BEST Plus* training to local program staff. Local programs may not train additional *BEST Plus* test administrators without the expertise of a CAL *BEST Plus* certified trainer. The local program is responsible for arranging to have at least one certified *BEST Plus* test administrator on staff, maintain the security of all assessments, and keep record of all persons trained to administer the *BEST Plus*. Local programs may order *BEST Plus* computer-adaptive or print-version test administrations only through a certified *BEST Plus* test administrator on staff.

BEST Plus test administrators must participate in *BEST Plus Refresher Toolkit* training every two years.

Local programs should develop a plan to determine how many testers are required to pre and post test the maximum number of students efficiently and effectively. The minimum education requirements for *BEST Plus* test administrator is determined by CAL. There is a State Board of Education minimum requirement that all staff has completed at least a GED or

high school diploma to be a tester, but it is highly and strongly recommended that a 4-year degreed staff administer the *BEST Plus* regardless of CAL's requirements.

The GREAT Centers provide *BEST Plus* assessment training and contact information for certified trainers of trainers. Programs should call toll free, 800-441-READ, to find the closest training option or go to the TCALL website for a calendar of training in each GREAT Center region. The Web address is <http://www-tcall.tamu.edu/>. Assessment training can be provided to meet the schedule of the local program.

4. **TABE CLAS-E**

The *TABE CLAS-E* system's professional development materials include a DVD or VHS video tape for use with individual or group training sessions. Per the CTB-McGraw-Hill publisher of the *TABE CLAS-E*, training is designed to be delivered locally through DVD or VHS video. Included from the publisher is explanatory and descriptive information about how to use the system, examples of test items and score reports, and more. These materials show teachers how to interpret and apply test results to classroom instruction and student learning. Once students have been accurately assessed, teachers can tailor their instruction by leveraging the assessment system's Instructional Guidance materials. The materials are designed for classes of multi-proficient language learners and address critical content objectives.

Local programs should develop a plan to determine how many testers are required to pre and post test the maximum number of students efficiently and effectively. There is a State Board of Education minimum requirement that all staff has completed at least a GED or high school diploma to be a tester, but it is highly and strongly recommended that a 4-year degreed staff administer the *TABE CLAS-E*. All staff administering the *TABE CLAS-E* must be trained before administering the test. Local programs are responsible for organizing the training and documenting staff training. Training information must be entered into TEAMS.

Annual or periodic refresher training is recommended to maintain the integrity of and promote the security of the *TABE CLAS-E* testing process. Programs may work with the GREAT Centers to organize group training.

5. **GAIN**

Test Administrator Certification training/testing is provided online; this allows for training/testing to occur according to the needs/time frame determined by the GTA candidate. Wonderlic Online training occurs via webinar twice weekly. However, local GTA training and Wonderlic Online training will be provided at additional times and/or on-site if needed. The training lasts one hour. Training for the *GAIN* is available by contacting the publisher at 1-877-605-9496 or e-mailing corporate instructors at training@wonderlic.com

Local programs should develop a plan to determine how many testers are required to pre and post test the maximum number of students efficiently and effectively. The State Board of Education requires all testers to have at least a GED or high school diploma, but it is strongly recommended that a 4-year degreed staff administer the *GAIN*. All staff administering the *GAIN* must be trained before administering the test. Local programs are responsible for

organizing the training opportunities with Wonderlic and for documenting staff training. Training information must be entered into TEAMS.

Annual or periodic refresher training is recommended to maintain the integrity of and promote the security of the *GAIN* testing process. Programs may work with Wonderlic to organize group training.

D. Accommodating Students with Disabilities or Other Special Needs

1. Students with documented disabilities who require accommodations may request assessment instruments in alternative formats and alterations in test administration procedures. Documented disabilities means that the individual can present a formal document provided by a qualified professional (physician, educational counselor, psychologist, special education teacher, or a rehabilitation counselor) such as a doctor's report, a diagnostic assessment, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or other formal record of disability that includes:
 - a. A diagnosis of the disability, whether it is a medical, psychological, learning, developmental and/or attention deficit disorder.
 - b. An evaluation of the educational implications of the diagnosis and the impact of the disability on areas of functioning.
 - c. Recommendations for the specific strategies and accommodations in education required by the disability which are reasonable and necessary as provided by ADA/Section 504.
2. The accommodations provided in the assessment should be the same accommodations used during instruction.
3. Students who are mentally retarded and/or developmentally disabled, served by local programs, are subject to the standardized testing requirements as referenced in the State Assessment Policy for Adult Education.

III. GUIDELINES FOR EACH ASSESSMENT

A. Test of Adult Basic Education (*TABE*) (Sub-Tests are Reading, Language, and Math)

1. Who should be tested with the *TABE*?

TABE is an NRS approved assessment that Texas has chosen for adult basic education students. *TABE* is one of the designated assessment instruments for students enrolling in Adult Basic Education (ABE) or Adult Secondary Education (ASE). Students who speak English well enough to complete the *TABE* Locator test and score in each level to be administered a test in at least the Level E may be administered the *TABE*. Students unable to complete the locator test and score in at least the *TABE* E level should be administered the *TABE Word List*, or if the student has limited English proficiency, the student should be administered the *BEST Plus* and/or *BEST Literacy* or the *TABE CLAS-E*. For non-literate students who are native English speakers, the *TABE Word List* provides a score that can be entered into TEAMS but the student will not be added to the federal NRS report until a score on *TABE* Forms 9 or 10 is obtained.

2. **Are alternate forms of the test used for pre- and post- testing?**

Beginning on July 1, 2009 *TABE* has two parallel forms, Forms 9 and 10. An alternate form must be used when post assessing the same student to ensure valid results.

See Table I for a description of the *TABE* Grade Levels, Scale Scores, and Educational Functioning Levels (EFL). Example: If the *TABE* 9 is used as a pre-assessment, then *TABE* 10 is used as a progress assessment. If the pre- and post- assessments are the same level and use the same form e.g., *TABE* 9, level M to *TABE* 9, level M then **120 hours of instruction are required between the pre- and post- assessments.**

3. **Is a locator test administered before the actual *TABE* pre-assessment?**

Administer the *TABE* Locator Test to determine the correct level of each pre-assessment sub-test in the *TABE* Survey or Battery Test that is administered to each individual student. The locator is not used in conjunction with post-assessment.

4. **If the assessment has sub-tests in more than one area, describe the appropriate test for each population along with the procedures for determining which sub-test to use with each type of student.**

The *TABE* does not have more than one sub-test in an area. Populations who have limited English proficiency are not administered the *TABE* until they have advanced level scores on both the *BEST Literacy* and *BEST Plus*.

5. **What are the training requirements for administering the assessment?**

All staff administering the *TABE* must be trained before administering the test. Local programs are responsible for maintaining records of staff trained to administer tests in their programs. Staff training records must be entered into TEAMS.

CTB-McGraw-Hill (*TABE* Publisher) has trained a cadre of GREAT Center trainers in Texas to properly administer the *TABE*. GREAT Centers provide *TABE* training for the local programs. Local programs may provide locally developed *TABE* training per the requirements of CTB-McGraw-Hill and maintain documentation of the local process.

Local programs should develop a plan to determine how many testers are required to pre- and post- test the maximum number of students efficiently and effectively. There is a State Board of Education minimum requirement that all staff has completed at least a GED or high school diploma to be a tester, but it is highly recommended that a 4-year degreed teacher administer the *TABE*.

TABE Training is 6 hours for inexperienced users, and *TABE* Refresher Training is 3 hours for experienced users. The local program is responsible for maintaining the security of all assessments and for keeping record of all persons trained to administer the *TABE*. Annual or periodic *TABE* Refresher Training is recommended to maintain the integrity of and promote the security of the *TABE* testing process.

6. **When does post testing occur, by calendar date or instructional hour?**

Post- testing occurs per student after completion of at least the minimum hours of instruction recommended in the publishers' guidelines. Programs may choose a calendar date or dates for

post -testing, but programs must ensure that each student has obtained at least the minimum hours of instruction recommended in the publishers’ guidelines. More hours of instruction may occur before post-testing. Students receiving 20-30 hours of instruction per week may be tested after completing more hours than those recommended in the publisher’s guidelines.

7. **What are the instructions for using scale scores from the assessments to place students into NRS educational functioning levels and determining whether students have completed levels?**

Please refer to Table II for information about NRS Educational Functioning Levels and associated score ranges.

- a. Programs may administer the *TABE* in the Survey Form or the Complete Battery Form. The Survey Form takes about half the time of the Complete Battery.
- b. Before administering either the Survey Form or the Battery Form, programs must administer a *TABE Locator* test to determine which level of the *TABE* test to administer as a pre-test to establish a baseline. The number of items and estimated time to administer the *TABE Locator* is as follows in Table II:

TABLE II: *TABE Locator* Test- Item Count and Test Times

Locator Test	Number of Items	Estimated Testing Time (h:m)
Reading	12	:12
Mathematics Computation	8	:05
Applied Mathematics	8	:08
Language	12	:12

* Please note that these times are used as guidelines only.

The score on each portion of the *TABE Locator* test determines which level of the *TABE* to administer. A different level of the *TABE* may be required for each sub-test subject area.

For example: a student may be administered the *TABE* Reading Sub-Test at the Medium Level or M Level, *TABE* Math at the Difficult Level or D Level, and the *TABE* Language at the Easy Level or E Level. The level of test may vary for every student and is based on the *TABE Locator* scores. If a score in a subject area the *TABE Locator* is the maximum or minimum score for the level, programs may choose to give the next test level either above or below the recommended level.

- c. The *TABE* is made up of three **sub-test subject areas or domains**
 - Reading
 - Math
 - Language

- d. The *TABE* instrument group is made-up of various skill areas or domains/ component levels. The levels are
- Literacy (L)*
 - Easy (E)
 - Medium (M)
 - Difficult (D)
 - Advanced (A)

*Literacy Level is not recognized in NRS and is not used for a placement in an NRS level.

The *TABE* Levels allow programs to focus its assessment activities. The level is determined by the *TABE Locator Test*.

Note: The *TABE Word List* may be used for initial appraisal of assessment for students functioning at the Beginning ABE Literacy Level but may not be used to place a student in an NRS level.

- e. All sub-test areas should be administered to all students as a pre-assessment to establish a baseline unless there is an exception.
- f. Follow the guidelines in the *TABE Test Administrator's Manual*. Score each assessment or sub-test to obtain a raw score.
- g. Convert each raw score to a *scale score provided in the TABE Norms Book* or *TABE* software program (*TestMate*®).
- h. ABE, ASE/GED students assessed at baseline in all basic skill areas (all *TABE* sub-tests/domains) *must be* placed by the lowest level/domain. The lowest scale score determines the Domain of Significance (DOS).
- i. If a student has the same *scale score for two different sub-tests/domains*, *TEAMS* will look at the *maximum* score for each functioning level. The sub-test/domain with the highest score differential is the lowest, and thus *TEAMS* will select it as the DOS.
For example: If a student scores a 470 *TABE* Reading (Low Intermediate basic Education) and 470 *TABE* Math (Low Intermediate basic Education), you would subtract 470 from 517 to get 47 (Reading difference), and 470 from 505 to get 35 (Math difference); the greatest difference is 47 so *TABE* Reading would be selected as the DOS.
- j. If an ABE, ASE/GED student has a specific skill area/domain goal that differs from the lowest score, the student must be tracked in the specific skill area/domain. The specific goal area becomes the DOS. *TEAMS* is automated to select the lowest scale score. Programs must treat this as a special situation and contact Texas *LEARNS* to resolve this situation. Note: Programs are strongly encouraged to track in all areas in which instruction is provided.
- k. *TABE* may be administered individually or in a group setting and may be administered in “paper and pencil” forms or by computer. *TABE* is either locally hand scored, machine scored, or scored with *TestMate*® *TABE* software. Regardless of the type of

administration, the raw scores must be converted to Scale Scores before entering score information into TEAMS. Table III illustrates the NRS Level, the Grade Equivalent and the Scale Score. TEAMS is automated to place the student in the lowest NRS Functioning Level when the *TABE* Scale Score is entered for each sub-test subject area.

TABLE III – TABE 9 AND 10 NRS FUNCTIONING LEVELS, GRADE EQUIVALENTS, AND SCALE SCORE RANGES				
NRS Functioning Level	Grade Level Equivalent Range	Reading Scale Score Ranges	Total Math Scale Score Ranges	Language Scale Score Ranges
Beginning Adult Basic Education (ABE) Literacy	0-1.9	0-367	0-313	0-389
Beginning Basic Education	2-3.9	368-460	314-441	390-490
Low Intermediate Basic Education	4-5.9	461-517	442-505	491-523
High Intermediate Basic Education	6-8.9	518-566	506-565	524-559
Low Adult Secondary Education (ASE)	9-10.9	567-595	566-594	560-585
High Adult Secondary Education (ASE)	11-12.9	596-812	595-775	586-826

- l. After publishers’ minimum hours for required instruction, students should be administered a post-test using a different “form” from the pre-test. The same “level” of the *TABE* is administered for post-test as the pre-test. The post-test is scored the same way as the pre-test.
- m. Administer post-test individually or in a group.
- n. The post-test raw score is converted to a scale score, and the scale score is entered into TEAMS. TEAMS is automated to determine if the student has completed the lowest level or Domain of Significance (federal report) and if the student has made gains for the state report.
- o. If the student moves from a pre-test score range to the next higher score range on the post-test, the student completes a level. If the student does not have a post-test score in the next score range level, the student is reported as “remaining in the level.”

- p. Original score sheets from tests and/or electronic score reports with results of students' pre and post test scores must be stored and/or backed up on appropriate media or printed out and filed in hard copy and be made available for local, state and federal audit purposes.

B. *BEST Literacy*

1. Who should be tested with the *BEST Literacy Test*?

BEST Literacy should be administered to all limited English proficient students who take the *BEST Plus* assessments unless the student is unable to complete a screen tool.

2. Are alternate forms of the test used for pre- and post- testing?

BEST Literacy is available in three parallel forms (B, C and D) for pre- and post- testing. The *BEST Literacy Test Manual* is designed to provide test administrators and scorers with all the information needed to give and score the test, including a rubric with clear benchmarks for scoring the note-writing tasks. Use different forms for pre-testing and post-testing.

3. Is a locator test administered before the actual *BEST Literacy test*?

The *BEST Literacy* test does not require a locator test although some adults entering an English language program may have limited knowledge of written English and will struggle with or be unable to complete a literacy assessment such as *BEST Literacy*. A literacy screening tool may be used to identify these individuals. A sample literacy screening tool is provided below. If using the locator form below, students should be asked to fill in the information indicated on the form. If the student is unable to complete the form indicating a lack of basic literacy (reading and writing) skills, an oral English proficiency assessment, such as *BEST Plus*, may be a more appropriate assessment, and the *BEST Literacy Test* is not administered.

Name: _____
Address: _____
Date of birth: _____
Signature: _____
Today's date: _____

4. If the assessment has sub-tests in more than one area, describe the appropriate test for each population along with the procedures for determining which sub-test to use with each type of student.

The *BEST Literacy* test does not have more than one sub-test in an area. Populations who have advanced level scores on both the *BEST Literacy* and *BEST Plus* are no longer tested with the *BEST Literacy* and are administered a *TABE* test.

5. What are the training requirements for administering the *BEST Literacy* assessment?

All staff who administers the *BEST Literacy* assessment must be trained in proper test administration practice according to the publisher. Center for Applied Linguistics (*BEST*

Literacy publisher) provides a manual for training. *BEST Literacy* Training is generally three hours long. The local program is responsible for maintaining the security of all assessments and for keeping record of all persons trained to administer the *BEST Literacy*.

Local programs should develop a plan to determine how many testers are required to pre and post- test the maximum number of students efficiently and effectively. There is a State Board of Education minimum requirement that all staff has completed at least a GED or high school diploma to be a tester, but it is highly and strongly recommended that a 4-year degreed staff administer the *BEST*.

Refresher *BEST* Training is recommended at least every two years.

The GREAT Centers may provide assessment training and contact information for trainers. Programs should call toll free, 1-800-441-READ, to find the closest training option or go to the TCALL website for a calendar of training in each GREAT Center region. The Web address is: <http://www-tcall.tamu.edu/> Assessment training can be provided to meet the schedule of the local program.

6. **When does post-testing occur, by calendar date or instructional hour?**

Post-testing occurs per student after at least 60 hours of instruction. Programs may choose a calendar date or dates for post-testing, but programs must ensure that each student has obtained at least 60 hours of instruction. More hours of instruction may occur before post testing. Students in TANF may receive 20-30 hours of instruction per week and may be tested after more than 60 hours, and programs may choose to test TANF students monthly or every other month.

7. **What are the instructions for using scale scores from the assessments to place students into NRS educational functioning levels and determining whether students have completed levels?**

Please refer to Table III for information about NRS Educational Functioning Levels and associated score ranges.

- a. Follow the guidelines from a certified trainer and the *BEST Literacy Test Manual*.
- b. A screening tool may be used to determine if a participant is “ready” to take the *BEST Literacy* test. The *BEST Plus* oral test may not be used to predict “when a participant is ready” to take the *BEST Literacy*. Instead, the sample Literacy Screening Tool maybe used as a screening tool. Participants should correctly fill out the screening tool without assistance within a reasonable amount of time. If the participant correctly fills out the screening tool without assistance and within a reasonable amount of time, then administer the *BEST Literacy*.

Sample Literacy Screen Tool:

Name: _____
Address: _____
Date of birth: _____
Signature: _____
Today's date: _____

- c. Score each test or sub-test to obtain a raw score.
- d. Convert *each raw score* to a scale score provided in the *BEST Literacy Test Manual*.
- e. Use TABLE IV to determine the NRS Educational Functioning Level per the NRS approved score ranges.

TABLE IV – BEST LITERACY NRS FUNCTIONING LEVELS, SCALE SCORE RANGES, AND STUDENT PERFORMANCE LEVELS		
National Reporting System Educational Functioning Levels	Scale Score Ranges	Student Performance Levels (SPL)
Beginning ESL Literacy	0-20	0-1
Low Beginning ESL	21-52	2
High Beginning ESL	53-63	3
Low Intermediate ESL	64-67	4
High Intermediate ESL	68-75	6
Advanced ESL	76-78*	6

** If an examinee pretests into the NRS Advanced ESL level with a scale score of 76-78, use a different ESL assessment that measures higher reading and writing skills to more accurately measure an examinee's language ability. Any student that falls into this category should be re-tested with another assessment at the time of pre-testing.*

- f. Note: ESL or ELL students are assessed at baseline in both Oral and Literacy basic skill areas/domains and must be placed by the lowest level/domain. The lowest scale score determines the Domain of Significance (DOS).
- g. If a student has the same functioning level for the *BEST Plus* and the *BEST Literacy*, *BEST Plus Oral* is the Domain of Significance (DOS).
- h. If an ESL student has a specific skill area goal that differs from the area in which he/she scores the lowest, the student must be tracked by the specific skill area. Programs must

track in all areas in which instruction is provided unless documented for an individual student.

- i. Students must have completed at least the hours of instruction recommended in the publishers' guidelines before taking the post-test.
- j. If the student scores in the Scale Score Range in a higher level than the DOS, the student is recorded in TEAMS and on the NRS federal report as completing a level. In other words, compare the pre-test score range to the post-test score range. If the student moves to a higher score range, the student completes the level.
- k. Original score sheets from tests and/or electronic score reports with results of students' pre and post test scores must be stored and/or backed up on appropriate media or printed out and filed in hard copy and be made available for local, state and federal audit purposes.

C. *BEST Plus*

1. **Who should be tested with the BEST Plus Test?**

BEST Plus should be administered to all limited English proficient students to measure oral and listening proficiency.

2. **Are alternate forms of the test used for pre and post testing?**

BEST Plus print-based version has three parallel forms. The three print-based version forms are A, B, and C and are specifically for pre- and post-testing purposes. The computer-adaptive version allows the computer to select the next test item, choosing items most appropriate for the examinee according to the scores entered for previous responses. The examinee will not see the same test twice in the *BEST Plus*. The print version and the computer version can be used as parallel forms of the *BEST Plus*, i.e., one version can be used as a pre and the other version used as a post-test.

3. **Is a locator test administered before the actual BEST Plus?**

No.

4. **If the assessment has sub-tests in more than one area, describe the appropriate test for each population along with the procedures for determining which sub-test to use with each type of student.**

The *BEST Plus* test does not have more than one sub-test in an area. Populations who have advanced level scores on both the *BEST Literacy* and *BEST Plus* are no longer tested with the *BEST Literacy* and are administered a *TABE* test.

5. **What are the training requirements for administering the BEST Plus Test?**

All staff that administers the *BEST Plus* must be trained in proper test administration practice as set forth in (in accordance with) the publishers' guidelines. Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) *BEST Plus* publisher trained a cadre of trainers from the GREAT Center to be certified *BEST Plus* test administrator trainers. Texas LEARNS funded this training through state leadership funds. These certified trainers provide *BEST Plus* training to local program staff.

Local programs may not train additional BEST Plus test administrators without apart from the expertise of a CAL BEST Plus certified trainer. The local program is responsible for arranging to have at least one certified BEST Plus test administrator on staff, maintaining the security of all assessments, and keeping record of all persons trained to administer the BEST Plus. Local programs may order BEST Plus computer-adaptive or print-version test administrations only through a certified BEST Plus test administrator on staff.

BEST Plus test administrators must participate in *BEST Plus Refresher Toolkit* training every two years and can be done in a variety of ways.

Local programs should develop a plan to determine how many testers are required to pre and post test the maximum number of students efficiently and effectively. The minimum education requirement for *BEST Plus* test administrators is determined by CAL. There is a State Board of Education minimum requirement that all staff has completed at least a GED or high school diploma to be a tester, but it is highly and strongly recommended that a 4-year degreed teacher administer the *BEST Plus* regardless of CAL's requirements.

The GREAT Centers provide *BEST Plus* assessment training and contact information for certified test administrators. Programs should call toll free 1-800-441-READ to find the closest training option or go to the TCALL website for a calendar of training in each GREAT Center region. The Web address is <http://www-tcall.tamu.edu/>. Assessment training can be provided to meet the schedule of the local program.

6. **When does post-testing occur, by calendar date or instructional hour?**

Post-testing occurs per student after at least 60 hours of instruction. Programs may choose a calendar date or dates for post-testing, but programs must ensure that each student has obtained at least 60 hours of instruction. More hours of instruction may occur before post-testing. Students in TANF may receive 20-30 hours of instruction per week and may be tested after more than 60 hours, and programs may choose to test TANF students monthly or every other month.

7. **What are the instructions for using scale scores from the assessments to place students into NRS educational functioning levels and determining whether students have completed levels?**

Please refer to Table IV for information about NRS Educational Functioning Levels and associated score ranges in the BEST Plus.

- a. Follow the guidelines from a certified *BEST Plus* Trainer.
- b. Score each question according to the training instructions.
- c. Enter scale score into TEAMS.
- d. Use TABLE V to determine the NRS Educational Functioning Level per the NRS approved score ranges.

- e. Original score sheets from tests and/or electronic score reports with results of students' pre and post test scores must be stored and/or backed up on appropriate media or printed out and filed in hard copy and be made available for local, state and federal audit purposes.

TABLE V – BEST PLUS NRS FUNCTIONING LEVELS, SCALE SCORE RANGES AND STUDENT PERFORMANCE LEVELS		
NRS Functioning Level	BEST Plus Scale Score Ranges	Related Student Performance Levels
Beginning ESL Literacy	0-400	0-1
Low Beginning ESL	401-417	2
High Beginning ESL	418-438	3
Low Intermediate ESL	439-472	4
High Intermediate ESL	473-506	5
Advanced ESL	507-540	6

D. TABE Complete Language Assessment System--English (TABE CLAS-E)

1. Who should be tested with the TABE CLAS-E Test?

TABE CLAS-E may be administered to limited English proficient students to measure oral and listening proficiency.

2. Are alternate forms of the test used for pre and post testing?

TABE CLAS-E has pre- and post-tests available in four levels to ensure that students test within the correct range for their abilities.

3. Is a locator test administered before the actual TABE CLAS-E?

A short Locator Test ensures that adult learners start with the appropriate assessment level.

4. If the assessment has sub-tests in more than one area, describe the appropriate test for each population along with the procedures for determining which sub-test to use with each type of student.

TABE CLAS-E has sub-tests in listening, speaking, reading and writing. It is recommended to administer all 4 sub-tests to limited English proficient students. Exceptions may be made if a Literacy Screening Tool is administered and the student is unable to complete the information indicating no reading or writing skills. The local program may choose to administer the listening and speaking sub-tests only. A student will be placed in an educational functioning level with at least one of the four sub-test scores.

Sample Literacy Screen Tool:

Name: _____
Address: _____
Date of birth: _____
Signature: _____
Today's date: _____

5. What are the training requirements for administering the *TABE CLAS - E* Test?

The *TABE CLAS-E* system's professional development materials include a DVD or VHS video tape for use with individual or group training sessions. Per the CTB-McGraw-Hill publisher of the *TABE CLAS-E*, training is designed to be delivered locally through DVD or VHS video. Included from the publisher is explanatory and descriptive information about how to use the system, examples of test items and score reports, and more. These materials show teachers how to interpret and apply test results to classroom instruction and student learning. Once students have been accurately assessed, teachers can tailor their instruction by leveraging the assessment system's Instructional Guidance materials. The materials are designed for classes of multi-proficient language learners and address critical content objectives.

Local programs should develop a plan to determine how many testers are required to pre and post test the maximum number of students efficiently and effectively. The State Board of Education requires all testers to have at least a GED or high school diploma, but it is strongly recommended that a 4-year degreed staff administer the *TABE CLAS-E*. All staff administering the *TABE CLAS-E* must be trained before administering the test. Local programs are responsible for organizing the training and documenting staff training. Training information must be entered into TEAMS.

Annual or periodic refresher training is recommended to maintain the integrity of and promote the security of the *TABE CLAS-E* testing process. Programs may work with the GREAT Centers to organize group training.

6. When does post-testing occur, by calendar date or instructional hour?

Post-testing occurs per student after completion of at least the minimum hours of instruction recommended in the publishers' guidelines. Programs may choose a calendar date or dates for post testing, but programs must ensure that each student has obtained at least the minimum hours of instruction recommended in the publishers' guidelines. More hours of instruction may occur before post testing. Students in TANF may receive 20-30 hours of instruction per week and may be tested after completing more than the hours recommended in the publishers' guidelines, and programs may choose to test TANF students either monthly or every other month.

7. **What are the instructions for using scale scores from the assessments to place students into NRS educational functioning levels and determining whether students have completed levels?**

TABE Complete Language Assessment System--English provides teachers with a reliable, easy-to-use system that accurately identifies the instructional needs of English as a second language students. TABE Complete Language Assessment System--English assesses English proficiency levels to accurately measure students' reading, listening, writing, and speaking skills. The optional speaking test gives teachers maximum flexibility in how they assess their students.

- a. **Scope and Sequence** - The scope and sequence lists the test objectives by content area-- Reading, Listening, Writing, and Speaking—and the four proficiency levels in which they are assessed. CTB/McGraw-Hill subject matter experts created the test objectives and proficiency levels after a thorough examination of several sets of state and international standards.
- b. **Reading** - To assess students' reading proficiency, the Reading test employs realistic document-based passages such as schedules, forms, flyers, store receipts, advertisements, product instructions, and newsletters. Lower-level students also answer discrete, picture-based items. Assessed Reading objectives include quantitative literacy, read words--e.g., applying knowledge of morphemes and syntax, word meaning, and appropriate associated information--and reading comprehension.
- c. **Listening** - With the use of a CD or audiocassette, the Listening test presents items in a spoken format of varying lengths. Familiar adult contexts are used to assess students in meaningful work, community, and education situations. Students are tested in quantitative literacy, listening comprehension, and interpersonal skills.
- d. **Writing** - The Writing test uses selected-response items to gauge the student's knowledge of English language grammar and mechanics, and constructed-response items to measure their application of this knowledge in expository writing. Selected-response items test quantitative literacy, usage and conventions, and sentence formation and coherence. The constructed-response items are scored using holistic rubrics to assess the student's expository writing ability. Lower-level students describe pictures and fill out realistic forms. Higher-level students write descriptions, brief work or community-related letters, and a short essay.
- e. **Speaking** - The optional Speaking test is individually administered. The test uses picture-based stimuli to determine student proficiency in quantitative literacy, social interaction, providing information, and accomplishing goals. Realistic work and community contexts integrate critical speaking skills, such as phone competency, the expression of opinions and abilities, negotiating meanings, and providing descriptions and instruction. In order to provide the most valid scores possible, the Speaking test introduces an innovative, multiple-criteria scoring rubric that simultaneously measures grammar, meaning, and the appropriateness of spoken responses. Students receive credit for strong performance in one or more areas, rather than simply receiving a one-dimensional score.

- f. **Score Reports** - The Individual Student Report identifies both a student's strengths and skill areas that need improvement. The reports also present number-correct scores for each test in the assessment, NRS and Student Proficiency Levels, and Objectives Mastery information. The system's Group List Report presents scores by sub-test for each student in a specified group or class. The report, which can be used to evaluate both individual and group performance, also provides number-correct information. The Prescriptive Report links a student's performance by objective to specific study assignments, thereby providing additional practice on skills that need improvement. In order to provide the most valid scores possible, the Speaking test introduces an innovative, multiple-criteria scoring rubric that simultaneously measures grammar, meaning, and the appropriateness of spoken responses. Students receive credit for strong performance in one or more areas, rather than simply receiving a one-dimensional score. The Assessment Summary Report allows teachers to summarize a group's performance on each sub-test in the assessment. In addition to evaluating group skill proficiency levels, this report can also be used to help administrators estimate overall program effectiveness. Original score sheets from tests and/or electronic score reports with results of students' pre and post test scores must be stored and/or backed up on appropriate media or printed out and filed in hard copy and be made available for local, state and federal audit purposes.

E. Administering and Scoring the *TABE CLAS-E*

TABE Complete Language Assessment System--English delivers number-correct and scale scores for each skill area:—Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking--and for the total battery of assessments. Additional scores include: National Reporting System (NRS) proficiency levels; objective mastery scores; and Student Performance Levels (SPLs). Please refer to Table V for information about NRS Educational Functioning Levels and associated score ranges in the *TABE CLAS –E*. Follow the guidelines from a training DVD or VHS Video. Enter a scale score for each sub-test into TEAMS. The sub-tests are: Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking.

Table VI - <i>TABE CLAS-E</i> Forms A and B				
Scale Scores for NRS ESL Educational Functioning Levels				
Functioning Level	Reading Scale Scores	Writing Scale Scores	Listening Scale Scores	Speaking Scale Scores
Beginning ESL Literacy	250-392	200-396	230-389	231- 425
Low Beginning ESL	393-436	397-445	390-437	426-460
High Beginning ESL	437-476	446-488	438-468	461-501
Low Intermediate ESL	477-508	489-520	469-514	502-536
High Intermediate ESL	509-557	521-555	515-549	537-567
Advanced ESL	558-588	556-612	550-607	568-594

TABE Complete Language Assessment System--English also offers scoring with *TestMate TABE®*.

E. General Assessment of Instructional Needs (GAIN)

1. Who should be tested with the GAIN?

GAIN has been approved by OVAE for NRS Education Functioning Levels 1 through 6 for Adult Basic Education and Adult Secondary Education.

2. Are alternate forms of the test used for pre- and post- testing?

Yes. Two English/reading forms—Forms A & B--and two mathematic forms--Forms A & B-- are available in paper/pencil and Web administration modes. The test items in paper/pencil and Web-enabled modes are identical and thus facilitate the use of one mode in pre-test situations and the other mode in post test situations if desired. Scores on GAIN forms are designed to be psychometrically equivalent, regardless of the particular test form that was used or the administration mode that was employed. Parallel forms reliability coefficients for English/reading measured .93; the reliability coefficient for math measured .91. Taken as a whole, research findings indicate that GAIN possesses strong reliability levels and low susceptibility to measurement error.

3. Is a locator test administered before the actual GAIN?

GAIN has no locator test.

4. If the assessment has sub-tests in more than one area, describe the appropriate test for each population along with the procedures for determining which sub-test to use with each type of student.

GAIN does not utilize subtests correlated to grade level equivalencies; rather *GAIN* has two forms (Form A & Form B) for English/Reading and two forms (Form A & Form B) for Mathematics. Each form assesses skills ranging from basic literacy and numeracy to the more advanced skills that are typically taught as part of secondary education. A complete *GAIN* administration consists of two tests, each of which is timed for 45 minutes. The total time for the two tests is 90 minutes. The test of English/Reading contains 80 questions and the test of Mathematics contains 75 questions. *GAIN* English sub-scale scores will be provided for reading and grammar/usage/style. *GAIN* math sub-scale scores will be provided for arithmetic, rational numbers/operations/charts/graphs, and algebra/geometry/trigonometry.

5. What are the training requirements for administering the GAIN assessment?

Training for the *GAIN* is available by contacting the publisher at 1-877-605-9496 or e-mailing corporate instructors at training@wonderlic.com. To become a certified Wonderlic *GAIN* Test Administrator (GTA) one must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- (1) Sponsorship by at least one school that is a current Wonderlic *GAIN* client
- (2) A working email account
- (3) Achieving a passing score on the Wonderlic *GAIN* Test Administrator's Examination.

Once certified, an invitation to attend the interactive 1-hour *GAIN* Training webinar will be sent. *GAIN* Test Administrator Certification training/testing is provided online; this allows for training/testing to occur according to the needs/time frame determined by the GTA candidate. Wonderlic Online training occurs via webinar twice weekly. However, local GTA training and Wonderlic Online training will be provided at additional times and/or on-site if needed.

6. **When does post-testing occur, by calendar date or by instructional hour?**

Post-testing is recommended after 60 hours of instruction.

7. **What are the instructions for using scale scores from the assessment to place students into NRS educational functioning levels and determining whether students have completed levels?**

The individual *GAIN* report automatically places the student in the proper NRS level. The report also gives diagnostic information and learning prescriptions to promote advancement to the next EFL. The table below translates *GAIN* scale scores into educational functional levels and grade level equivalents. The composite score from the English assessment and composite score from all sections of the Mathematics assessment (scale score) must be recorded in TEAMS to have a valid assessment score. TEAMS will determine which test is the DOS. If a tie occurs, the English will be the DOS by default.

8. **Score Reports**

Original score sheets from tests and/or electronic score reports with results of students' pre and post test scores must be stored and/or backed up on appropriate media or printed out and filed in hard copy and be made available for local, state and federal audit purposes.

NRS Educational Functioning Level	English Composite Scale Score Range	Mathematics Composite Scale Score Range	Grade Level Equivalents
ABE Beginning Literacy	200-406	200-314	0.0-1.9
ABE Beginning	407-525	315-522	2.0-3.9
ABE Low Intermediate	526-661	523-669	4.0-5.9
ABE High Intermediate	662-746	670-775	6.0-8.9
ASE Low	747-870	776-854	9.0-10.9
ASE High	871-1000	855-1000	11.0-12.0+

IV. QUALITY CONTROL PROCEDURES

A. Purchasing Assessment Materials

- Programs may purchase *TABE* testing materials through the Texas CTB McGraw-Hill Sales Representative. The contact information is located in the Appendix.

- Programs may purchase *BEST Literacy* testing materials in a bulk discount through TCALL. For more information call 1-800-441-READ.
- Programs may purchase *BEST Plus* materials through a CAL certified *BEST Plus* Test Administrator only or call TCALL toll free at 1-800-441-READ for information. For more information about how to find a *BEST Plus* Test Administrator Trainer to train a local staff, call your Regional teacher training center - GREAT Center. The contact information is located on the TCALL website at <http://www-tcall.tamu.edu/texasLearns/tlgreat.htm> or call TCALL for contact information toll free at 1-800-441-READ.
- Programs may purchase *GAIN* testing materials through:
Wonderlic, Inc.
400 Lakeview Parkway, Suite 200
Vernon Hills, IL 60061
1-877-605-9496

B. Electronic Applications for Program Data Quality

- **Texas Educating Adults Management System (TEAMS)** is the Management Information System for adult education in Texas. Programs are required to hire or contract with a trained data entry staff person. GREAT Centers are required to have trainers available to train TEAMS data entry staff. TEAMS added a new feature in March 2011 to allow programs the ability to download class rosters into an EXCEL worksheet. The worksheet may be used to record hours for students from the original student sign-in sheets which contain student signatures and actual time and time out. The worksheets may be emailed electronically or saved on a flash drive or CD so that supervisors or other persons with access to TEAMS can upload the EXCEL worksheets into TEAMS electronically. This function has added integrity to the data by allowing more than one person to verify the original student sign in data entered. Direct data entry continues to be available. Programs are encouraged to do regular random selection of student sign in sheets to verify that data is accurate.
- **Data Entered at least Quarterly** – Programs are required to keep data entry current. Programs must enter data at least quarterly and complete a data sign off quarterly.
- **Data Sign Off (DSO)** – All program directors are required to complete a Data Sign-Off Report in TEAMS quarterly and in final compliance documentation after all data has been inputted and validated by the local program director.
- **Adult Education Guidance Information System (AEGIS)** is an electronic desk review tool that provides quarterly reports to the state office and local programs. Report Issues are sent out as informational in the 2nd and 3rd Quarters. The AEGIS report is sent out for local program required responses in the final compliance reports. Local programs may request that an AEGIS report be provided at anytime during the fiscal year by contacting the Grant Services Manager at Texas *LEARNS*. Call 1-866-696-4233. AEGIS automatically sends out letters of commendation after the final compliance reports are configured to qualifying programs.

- **Program Improvement Plans (PIP)** – Programs failing to meet the state target performance measures may be placed on program improvement plans if continuous improvement is not maintained. AEGIS automatically notifies programs and provides access to the Program Improvement Program template if a PIP is required.

C. Student Orientation

Student Orientation is a required activity for all students entering the program. Contact hours must be documented, entered, and counted in the management information system Texas Educating Adults Management System (TEAMS). Activities may include but are not limited to the following:

1. Goal-setting and/or identifying student goals related to core measures;
2. Informing students of procedures including use of Social Security numbers (if applicable) for data match to determine follow-up outcomes;
3. Data collection of demographics;
4. Administration and scoring of assessment to determine Domain of Significance (DOS) (e.g. Reading, Language, Math, Oral, or Literacy);
5. Enrollment/registration;
6. Familiarizing the student with adult education and student-related program operating procedures;
7. Learning Styles Inventory; and
8. Individual Learning Plan.

D. Placement by Lowest Functioning Level

Multiple skill areas or domains are assessed and the student will likely have different abilities or functioning levels in each different domain. Per NRS, students are placed according to the *lowest* functioning level. The lowest functioning level determines the Domain of Significance (DOS) for the student for the present program year. For example, during the pre-assessment, if a student assessed at the Beginning Level in Reading and the Low Intermediate Level in Mathematics the student would be placed in the Beginning Level and Reading would be the DOS; if the student takes the *BEST Plus* and *BEST Literacy*, and the lowest functioning level is in *BEST Plus*, the Domain of Significance is the *BEST Plus*. Each year the lowest educational functioning level determines the DOS. Refer to Tables II, III, and IV for score ranges. The lowest educational functioning level and the DOS will also be used to determine educational gain in subsequent or post-test assessments for federal reporting. TEAMS, the management information system automatically calculates the DOS once the scale scores are entered properly. Please note that for “state gain” performance measures all skill areas and domains are considered and calculated in the electronic desk review performed in the Adult Education Guidance Information System

(AEGIS). Programs have state gain performance measures in all skill areas or domains regardless of the DOS.

E. Placement by Specific Skill Area as an Exception

An adult learner may be assessed in the skill area or domain that reflects the student's needs as an exception to the rule of administering all three sections of the *TABE* or both the *BEST Plus* and the *BEST Literacy* tests. The NRS level descriptors may be instrumental in assisting students in determining their needs. During student orientation, the skill area or domain most relevant to student needs is determined and the learner is assessed accordingly. For example, if a student's goal is to improve mathematics skills only, the mathematic/numeracy descriptors would serve as the primary guide for placement, and the *TABE* Math would be administered.

NOTE: Programs may not decide program-wide to test in one subject area.

F. Student Goal Setting

Within the NRS framework, all students are presumed to have at least one goal: **development of literacy skills**. That is, all students are assumed to be in the program to improve their literacy skills, and thus have the default goal of either improving literacy skills or improving English language skills. This presumed goal is the reason that all students are counted in the educational gain measure. Students often have other goals, but only four are directly relevant to NRS accountability requirements: obtaining employment, retaining employment, obtaining a GED or high school credential, and entering postsecondary education. Note that the default goal of educational gain remains, regardless of whether the student designates any of the additional goals.

1. Goal Setting Policy

The Goal Setting Policy in Attachment P gives more detailed information about Policy points 1.1 through 1.8. Below the main points of the Goal Setting Policy are listed. Program directors who need to arrange training for staff on Goal Setting, should contact the GREAT Center for information about the face-to-face training (preferred training) and the two-hour online course.

➤ ***Policy 1.1***

All students with 12 hours or more of attendance are held accountable for educational gain goals.

➤ ***Policy 1.2***

Programs must adhere to goal-setting policies to ensure that learners select reasonable and attainable follow-up goals that satisfy NRS reporting requirements. All NRS follow-up goals must be attainable within the fiscal year. Follow-up goals should not be set until after pre-testing and a deliberate goal setting process are conducted.

➤ ***Policy 1.3***

Programs must provide a goal setting process that includes completion of a student learning plan (SLP) within the first few weeks of instruction for all learners reported in the Texas Educating Adults Management System (TEAMS).

- **Policy 1.4**
Programs should review the SLP ideally after every 30 - 40 hours of instruction or at least after 60 hours to coincide with progress testing, making revisions as appropriate. Any revisions that affect NRS or state reporting must be identified in TEAMS.
- **Policy 1.5**
Programs must report initial NRS follow-up goals in TEAMS within the first few weeks of the student goal being set.
- **Policy 1.6**
If a program and student determines that a follow-up goal needs to be changed, the reason for the goal change should be documented in the student's folder. The goal change should then be edited/recorded in TEAMS.
- **Policy 1.7**
All program staff members who participate in student goal setting processes must successfully complete training on the Texas goal setting policy and attend annually.
- **Policy 1.8**
Learners with professionally certified documentation who self-identify a given physical, mental, or emotional disability must be provided appropriate accommodations for completing goals.

2. **Goal-Setting Process**

Programs should have a goal-setting process whereby students meet with teachers or an intake counselor to help identify and set goals for instruction. The best time for this process to occur is when the learner first enters the program. The goal-setting process should help learners set both a realistic timeline for attaining each goal and a means for determining whether the goal is achieved. Since learners often change their goals after they begin instruction, it is often advisable to extend goal setting over additional orientation sessions during the first few weeks of class.

3. **Identify Attainable Short and Long-Term Goals**

Setting the timeline and evidence of achievement will help the learner realize whether the goal is short or long term and whether it is achievable. For example, when learners enter a program, many of them state very broad goals, such as attaining a GED or getting a job. Breaking the goal down into discrete steps—with short and long-term milestones along the way—establishes a series of goals that help learners and teachers design instruction and identify the appropriate goals for NRS purposes. All goals entered into TEAMS are short term goals attainable within the program year (July 1 – June 30). Long term goals are captured at the local level and entered into the student's portfolio.

When a student has one of the follow-up goals, the program is held accountable for helping the student attain the goal. The State must obtain information on whether the student achieved the goal after he or she leaves the program. For this reason, not only is it important that the student attain the goal during the year but also that the program's instruction, services, and referral to another agency for assistance be oriented toward helping the student achieve the goal.

For example, a student with a goal of GED attainment should be at a literacy level that makes passing the GED tests likely within the calendar year. Data matching to determine whether the student has passed the GED and obtained their short term goal takes place from the beginning of the fiscal year, i.e., July 1, through the end of the next calendar year, i.e. December 31, for a total of 18 months. (See Appendix H for the timelines for collecting, matching and reporting data.)

The student also should receive instruction that helps him or her acquire the additional skills needed for passing the tests. Similarly, if the student's goal is to obtain a job, the program should provide instruction, referral, and/or services to help the student acquire the skills needed to obtain employment. Participation in the many Texas Workforce Commission services or programs that the student may be eligible will assist the student meet his/her employment related goals.

While setting a realistic goal is important for accountability, students' long-term goals should not be ignored simply because they are not obtainable during the NRS reporting period. Local programs must assist learners with setting goals appropriately and not avoid setting goals because of difficulty in following up with learners.

4. **Secondary Measures**

The NRS secondary measures are optional measures of student outcomes and status that local programs are not required to use and should not be used as a basis for assessing performance under WIA. No performance standards are tied to these measures. The NRS includes these measures because many stakeholders during the consensus-building process believed these measures were important to the identity of the program and the goals and purposes of adult education.

The secondary measures are in the areas of employment, community, and family. The employment measure indicates whether the student's public assistance grant was reduced or eliminated due to employment. This measure applies only to students receiving public assistance upon entry.

In the area of community, there are three measures covering citizenship, voting, and community involvement. For students enrolled in EL Civics and citizenship programs, there is a measure of whether students have achieved citizenship skills. Voting for the first time or registering to vote and more involvement in community groups or activities are the remaining measures. The family measures include increased involvement in children's literacy activities and in children's education.

Secondary student status measures of low-income status, displaced homemaker, and single-parent status are included, because these groups are specific target populations under WIA. *NRS Implementation Guidelines, 2006*

G. Data Collection Policies and Procedures

1. Programs must provide staff with clear written description and understanding of its roles and responsibilities for data collection.

Collecting data involves every staff member in an adult education program. Intake staff may collect student demographic data and goals; teachers report attendance, may administer tests and report other outcomes; administrators must review and make decisions based on data tables; and administrative staff may be involved in checking forms and data entry. Program should have a clear written description of local data collection processes and the role of every individual in that process—and every program staff member should know his or her role. Job descriptions for all staff should incorporate the data collection responsibilities of the job and performance reviews should consider how well staff fulfilled these functions.

2. Clear definitions for each measure have been established.

Staff members must know their role in data collection. It is critical that they have an understanding of what they need to collect. Local procedures should include a written, precise definition for each data item that is compatible with the state definitions. To resolve ambiguities please refer to: *Improving NRS Data Quality, Chapter III., The Data Collection Process 23*

3. Programs use standard forms tied to the program database for collecting data.

Staff must record information on intake and other data forms and administrative staff then keys the information from these forms into TEAMS. Consequently, programs should use standard forms for data collection that include all the data elements and categories TEAMS uses.

H. Data Quality

1. Programs must have an error-checking and quality control system for identifying missing and inaccurate data.

In an activity as complex and stressful as data collection, mistakes and missing data are inevitable. Staff may fail to complete forms fully due to high workload or simple oversight. In addition, the required information may not be available when it is needed. Programs must have procedures for checking data for completeness and accuracy at several times during the process. Data checking should follow a regular, prescribed schedule with clear deadlines. Programs should assign one or more staff persons to perform these data checking functions explicitly and make the job of this person known to all other staff in the program. Data checkers should review all data forms as soon as possible for completeness and accuracy and should receive error reports from the database to check immediately after data entry. To do their job, data checkers must have access to all staff— teachers, intake staff, counselors and administrative staff—and the authority to obtain cooperation.

2. Programs must have ongoing training on data collection.

Local program directors are required annually to be up-to-date on National Reporting System policy, accountability policies, data collection processes, definitions of measures, and how to administer assessments. Texas LEARNS and the GREAT Centers provide NRS and data

collection training twice annually to local directors and twice annually to data managers/coordinators.

Data collection procedures will result in valid and reliable data if staff understand and follow them. Therefore, part of the program's data collection process must include training of all data collection staff on their roles and responsibilities, as well as the importance of data collection. Programs must offer training to all staff, and it should be offered several times during the year, if possible, to accommodate new staff and to allow existing staff to take follow-up training. It is also a good idea to have regular meetings or in-service trainings on data issues to give staff opportunities to discuss problems and issues that arise. (*Improving NRS Data Quality 24, Chapter III., The Data Collection Process*)

3. Program's use of the student-level, relational database system.
For program improvement, look at student outcomes and demographics by student according to such variables as: number of instructional hours received, length of enrollment, the teachers and classes enrolled and by student educational functioning level. This type of analysis is available in TEAMS which stores information by individual student and allows programs to link different pieces of data for each student for reports or other output.
4. Data entry procedures must be clear and timely.
Program procedures for data entry should specify at least one person whose job is to enter the information from forms into TEAMS. All staff members should know this person's role and he or she should have the authority to request clarification or resolution of errors. In addition, data entry should be scheduled at frequent, regular intervals—such as weekly or monthly. Without frequent data entry, not only will there be a large backlog of forms to enter, but programs may not become aware of errors and missing data until too late to correct them. Part of the data entry procedure should also include a prompt, organized way to identify and resolve errors. Data Sign-Off (DSO) Reports are due quarterly and 45 days after the closing of the program. Data Sign-Off (DSO) Reports are the program directors' certification that the data is accurate, valid, and reliable.
5. Staff must have timely or direct access to information from the database.
A frequent complaint of staff involved in data collection is that they fill out the forms, enter the data and then never see it again. If staff members cannot access data, they cannot learn how data is used or how they themselves can use it for program improvement and management. TEAMS has the capability for local program staff to access their data in useful ways. It is best if this access is direct if possible so that staff at the local level can query the database to print a report locally. Program directors may assign "read-only" access to staff and teachers by completing a TEA Secure Environment (TEASE) access application. The TEASE application may be accessed online at: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index4.aspx?id=2728> Read-only access to TEAMS can be at the class level and directors are encouraged to approve access for classroom teachers and supervisors.
6. Staff regularly reviews data.
The program's data collection procedures should include a regular review of data soon after entry into the database. Regular data reviews allow directors to spot errors, missing data and

other data that “don’t make sense.” Programs can use data reviews as a staff development opportunity to examine problems and issues to support program improvement. Data can help programs understand issues such as the impact of instructional arrangements, learner retention, and learner progress. Having staff learn to use data will foster program improvement and improve data quality; staff will see the importance of data collection to produce valuable information.

I. Data Matching

Collecting, matching, and reporting GED Obtainment, Entry into Postsecondary or Training, Employment Obtainment, and Employment Retention is performed according to the guidelines set up in the National Reporting System. The chart in *Appendix K* shows by program year and quarter when the data is collected, matched, and reported. This information is important to the goal setting process so programs know when a goal will be matched to a central data base.

V. APPENDICES

- Appendix A: Glossary of Terms and Acronyms
- Appendix B: Educational Functioning Level Descriptors per NRS
(Note: *TABE CLAS-E* has not been added to the chart)
- Appendix C: NRS Test Benchmarks Updated February 2009
- Appendix D: Sample Literacy Screening Tool
- Appendix E: TABLE III – *TABE* 9 and 10 NRS Functioning Levels, Grade Equivalents, and Scale Score Ranges
- Appendix F: TABLE IV – *BEST LITERACY* -NRS Functioning Levels, Scale Score Ranges, and Student Performance Levels
- Appendix G: TABLE V - *BEST Plus* NRS Functioning Levels, Scale Score Ranges and Student Performance Levels
- Appendix H: Table VI - *TABE CLAS-E* Forms A and B Scale Scores for NRS ESL Educational Functioning Levels
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- Appendix J: Resources for Information and Assistance
- Appendix K: Calendar for Collecting, Matching, and Reporting GED Obtainment, Entry into Postsecondary or Training, Employment Obtainment, and Employment Retention
- Appendix L: Federal and State Guidance on Collecting Student Data
- Appendix M: TABLE I Required Instructional Hours between Pre and Post Tests
- Appendix N: Distance Education Policy Revised April 1, 2011
- Appendix O: Test Security
- Appendix P: Goal Setting Policy

APPENDIX A

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ACRONYMS

1. **ABE** – Adult Basic Education
2. **ACES** –Adult and Continuing Education System is the Texas management information system designed according to NRS guidelines and is a historical data base in Texas. (effective July 1, 1998-June 30, 2005)
3. **Alternate Test Forms** – any two comparable forms of the same test, e.g., Form B and Form C of the *BEST Literacy* or the Form 9 and Form 10 of the *TABE*.
4. **ASE** – Adult Secondary Education
5. **Baseline** – The placement of a student each new program year into an Educational Functioning Level (EFL).
6. **BEST Plus** – Basic English Skills Test Plus – measures oral proficiency of English language learners
7. **BEST Literacy** – Basic English Skills Test Literacy version – measures literacy or reading/writing skills of learner.
8. **CAL** – Center for Applied Linguistics
9. **Contact Hour** – (**NRS definition**) Contact hour are the hours of instruction or instructional activity the learner receives from the program. Instructional activity includes any program-sponsored activity designed to promote student learning in the program curriculum such as classroom instruction, assessment, tutoring or participation in a learning lab.
(**State Board of Education Rule definition**) A contact hour is the cumulative sum of minutes during which an eligible adult student receives instructional, counseling, and/or assessment services by a staff member supported by federal and state adult education funds as documented by local attendance and reporting records.
10. **Core Outcome Measure** – Measures that are *required* and include outcome, descriptive measures, and participation measures that reflect the core indicator requirements of the Workforce Investment Act. States must report the required measures on *students who receive 12 hours or more of service*. The Department of Education will use these measures to judge program performance, including eligibility for incentive grants. *There are 5 core outcome measures*: (1) Educational Functioning Level Gains, (2) Entered Employment, (3) Retained

Employment, (4) Receipt of a Secondary School Diploma or GED, (5) Placement in Postsecondary Education or Training. Note: Numbers 2-4 above are required measures for students with the stated goals and exit the program.

11. **Domain Code** – The abbreviation for the subject area of an assessment (e.g., RD, the abbreviation for Reading)
12. **Domain** – A subject area tested by an assessment. Examples: *TABE* Reading, *TABE* Language, *TABE* Mathematics, *BEST Literacy* (reading/writing), *BEST Plus* (oral) *TABE CLAS-E* Reading, *TABE CLAS-E* Writing, *TABE CLAS-E* Listening, *TABE CLAS-E* Speaking, *GAIN* English and *GAIN* Mathematics.
13. **Domain of Significance (DOS)** – The domain (subject area) within which a participant has the most room for improvement (lowest placement) according to the assessments administered within the month or the year before the participant’s first instructional contact hours. The DOS is the domain or sub-test area in which the student is placed and reported on the federal report (i.e., NRS Tables) and the post-assessment in the DOS determines if the student completes the Educational Functioning Level. Tests administered in a particular instrument (e.g., *TABE* or *BEST Plus*) are compared to determine the DOS. The tests used for comparison must be administered within 30 days of each other, and one of the sub-tests in the instrument must be administered before the first contact hour. Within the 30/14 day rule, a test administered within 14 days after the first contact hour (day) will also be included in the comparison if the 14 days are within the 30 day rule. These are examples of possible scenarios and are used as explanation only and are not intended to direct programs to particular testing dates.

Examples:

(1) *TABE* 9 Math M is administered on August 3, *TABE* 9 Reading M is administered on August 14, and *TABE* Language M is administered on August 20. The first contact hour was recorded on August 17. According to the 30/14 day rule, all three sub-tests will be compared to determine the DOS. All sub-tests are within 30 days of the Reading Test which was the test closest to the first contact hour and before the first contact hour. The Math test was within the 30 days of the Reading sub-test. The Language sub-test was within 30 days of the Reading and Math sub-tests and within the 14 days after the first contact hour.

(2) *TABE* 9 Math M is administered on July 16, *TABE* 9 Reading M is administered on August 14, and *TABE* Language M is administered on August 20. The first contact hour was recorded on August 3. According to the 30/14 day rule, only two sub-tests (Reading and Math) will be compared to determine the DOS. The Math sub-test is within 30 days of the Reading Test which was the test closest to the first contact hour and before the first contact hour. The Math test was within the 30 days of the Reading sub-test. The Language sub-test was not within 30 days of the Reading and Math sub-tests.

(3) *TABE* 9 Math M is administered on July 1, *TABE* 9 Reading M is administered on August 14, and *TABE* Language M is administered on August 20. The first contact hour was recorded

on August 17. According to the 30/14 day rule, two sub-tests (Reading and Language) will be compared to determine the DOS. Math sub-test was not used for the comparison since it was administered outside the 30 days of the Reading sub-test which was before and closest to the 1st contact hour (day). The Language sub-test was used in the comparison since it was within 30 days of the Reading sub-test.

(4) *TABE* 9 Math M is administered on July 1, *TABE* 9 Reading M is administered on July 14, and *TABE* Language M is administered on August 20. The first contact hour was recorded on August 17. According to the 30/14 day rule, two sub-tests (Reading and Math) will be compared to determine the DOS. Math sub-test was used for the comparison since it was administered within the 30 days of the Reading sub-test which was before and closest to the 1st contact hour (day). The Language sub-test was not used in the comparison since it was not within 30 days of the Reading sub-test.

14. **Domain Level** – The level of a sub-test at which the participant was assessed.
15. **Domain Name** – The name of the subject area of assessment (e.g., reading, math, language, literacy, oral)
16. **Domain Score** – The scale score given to a participant in a specific domain (subject area) based on assessment instruments.
17. **ELL** – English Language Learner.
18. **Educational Functioning Level (EFL)** - Describes a set of skills and competencies that students entering at that level can do in the areas of reading, writing, numeracy, speaking, listening, and functional and workplace areas. Four levels for adult basic education (ABE), two for adult secondary education (ASE), and six levels of English as a Second Language (ESL). The National Reporting System EFL Descriptors are located in Appendix B.
19. **Educational Gain** – (Core Outcome Measure): Every student registered in the adult education program has a goal to complete the level in which he/she is placed. The measure of student literacy gains is a result of instruction. Learner completes or advances one or more educational functioning levels from starting level measured at entry into the program. The Appendices contains tables and descriptions that provide entry-level descriptors for the educational functioning levels.
20. **ESL** – English as a Second Language.
21. **Exceptions** – **Post testing exceptions should be rare and limited.** Post-testing will occur after completion of at least the minimum hours of instruction recommended in the publishers’ guidelines. The only exception approved by the Office of Vocational and Adult Education is for students in the **Adult Secondary Education (ASE)** levels post tested with the *TABE*. The

following must be in place when administering a post test before the approved instructional period of at least the minimum hours of instruction recommended in the publishers' guidelines.

1. Exception and associated documentation is pre-approved by a supervisor;
2. The student must be assessed and enrolled in Low ASE or High ASE;
3. The student's short term goal in TEAMS is either to Obtain Employment, Retain Employment, Obtain a GED, or Transition to Post Secondary Education; and
4. The student has 30 to 59 hours of instruction.

There are no exceptions for testing Adult Basic Education or English Second Language students before the student receives at least the minimum hours of instruction recommended in the publishers' guidelines. Annually, the program will determine the percentage of students tested before receiving the required minimum hours of instruction recommended in the publishers' guidelines. If the percentage of ABE and ESL students who are tested with the *TABE* and/or *BEST Plus* before they receive the minimum hours of instruction recommended in the publishers' guidelines is above the previous year's percentage of total tested in those levels with the *TABE* and *BEST Plus* tests administered, the program will be required to begin a program improvement plan to decrease the number and percentage of students tested prematurely.

The state's goal is to keep the percentage of exceptions for all assessments to 20% or less. Each program will negotiate a target rate annually with their Grant Services Manager to determine the program's target percentage. At the end of the program year, programs with an increased percentage of students prematurely tested over the previous year's baseline target (or more than 20%) will be required to begin a program improvement plan. (Please note that programs on program improvement plans during a fiscal year prior to a grant competition will not be eligible for priority points during the competition.)

Exceptions must have supporting documentation that describes the reason or reasons for the exception and back-up evidence or data proving the need for the exception. Data must prove a student is making learning gains (moving from EFL placement level to a higher level) in fewer than the minimum hours of instruction recommended in the publishers' guidelines or before the end of the instructional session. Example: Student enters the program with a DOS of Intermediate ABE Low and the student demonstrates completion of benchmark in the Content Standards for the Intermediate ABE Low level. The teacher has documentation of the learning gains through student completed worksheets. The teacher documentation allows the program to assess the student before the minimum hours of instruction recommended in the publishers' guidelines. The documentation must be kept on file for review upon request.

Documentation for exceptions must be available for review during technical assistance visits, monitoring visits, and program audits.

22. **Exiter** – As per federal guidelines, an exiter is an enrolled participant who has not participated in adult education for 90 days and with no indication of intent to return the following program year. Additionally, if the learner leaves during the last 90 days of the program and gives reason for not returning, the learner is included as an exiter in the exit cohort.

23. **Functional** – The functional level descriptors describe what an entering learner “can do” in the areas of reading, writing, numeracy, speaking, listening and/or *functional* or workplace skills.
24. **Functioning Levels** – The NRS approach towards measuring educational gain is to define a set of *educational functioning levels* in which students are initially placed, based on their ability to perform literacy-related tasks in specific content areas.
25. **GREAT Centers** – GREAT: Getting Results Educating Adults in Texas Centers are regional professional development and teacher training projects. Texas has 8 regions and 8 GREAT Centers, one center for each region.
26. **GSM** – Grant Services Manager – A GSM is a person in the State Office – Texas *LEARNS*-who is designated to provide technical assistance to adult education state and federally funded programs.
27. **Instructional session** – A semester of time determined and published by the program and approved in the eGrant application delineating the beginning and ending of a semester with predetermined objectives and outcomes being met. The semester must allow enough time for movement of students from one level to the next level as described in the National Reporting System (NRS) ESL, ABE, and ASE Functioning Level Descriptors.
28. **Long Term Goal** – Goal generally attainable outside the program or calendar year. Long term goals are not reported or matched for federal reports.
29. **National Reporting System (NRS)** – NRS is a project to develop an accountability system for the federally funded adult education program. This system includes a set of student measures to allow assessment of the impact of adult education instruction, methodologies for collecting the measures, reporting forms and procedures, and training and technical assistance activities to assist states in collecting the measures. The goal of the NRS is to produce a set of measures that describe adult education students and the outcomes they achieve due to their participation.
30. **Official GED Practice Test** – Reliable, authentic score prediction, from the exclusive distributor of the *Official GED Practice Tests*. This test was developed and normed side-by-side with the GED Test.
31. **Post-assessment** – Progress or subsequent test administered after at least the minimum hours of instruction recommended in the publishers’ guidelines.
32. **Pre-assessment** – Test administered to place a student into an educational functioning level generally before instruction takes place.

33. **Primary or Main Goal** – Goal which is listed as the foremost goal in the students profile.
34. **Rolling Forward Scores** – The practice of using previous program year’s post assessment scores for the new program year’s pre-assessment scores for particular or all students.
35. **Secondary Goal** – Optional measures of student outcomes and status that will not be used as a basis for assessing state or local performance under WIA. These measures are important to the identity of the program and the goals and purposes of adult education and include employment (reduction or elimination of student’s public assistance grant as a result of employment *only*), community (citizenship, voting, community involvement) family (increased involvement in children’s literacy activities and in children’s education).
36. **Semester** – The instructional session determined and published by the program and approved in the eGrant application delineating the beginning and ending of an instructional session with predetermined objectives and outcomes being met. The instructional session or semester must allow enough time for movement of students from one level to the next level as described in the National Reporting System (NRS) ESL, ABE, and ASE Functioning Level Descriptors.
37. **Short Term Goal** – Goal attainable during the program or calendar year. Obtaining a short term goal of a GED and Entering Postsecondary or other training is matched until the end of the calendar year (December 31) after the end of the Program Year. (Example: a person exiting the program in May 2007 with a short term goal to obtain a GED or enter post secondary education that obtains the GED in December 2007 will be matched [until December 31, 2007] and be recorded as reaching their short term goal. That match will count in the federal and state report.) (National Reporting System Guidelines, 2006).
38. **Skill Areas** – Educational Functional Levels.
39. **SPL- Student Performance Levels** – Basic English Skills Test levels and benchmarks as described in the *BEST* Administrator’s manual.
40. **Student Goal Form** – Locally designed form that captures short term, long term, main/primary and secondary.
41. **Student Portfolio** – Locally designed individual student record keeping at the local program level organized to allow analysis of student. Data collected and maintained in the portfolio should be accurate for data entry to insure data integrity for state-required reports. Goal Setting worksheets are maintained in the student portfolio.
42. **TABE** – *Test of Adult Basic Education*.
43. **TABE Battery** – Long form of *TABE*.
44. **TABE Survey** – Short form of the *TABE*.

45. **TEAMS** – Texas Educating Adults Management System (i.e., management information system for Texas adult education which became effective 2005-2006 program year.)
46. **Teacher/Program Professional Judgment Examples** – Teacher documentation of student progress. If a program is monitored or receives a technical assistance visit, the local program must produce documentation that supports the teacher or program’s decision to test before the completion of the minimum hours of instruction recommended by the publisher. Examples of this type of supporting documentation are (1) student portfolios (2) student journals (3) program data. There may be other examples that could justify this exception.

APPENDIX B

Exhibit 2.1

Functioning Level Table

Outcome Measures Definitions			
EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONING LEVEL DESCRIPTORS—ADULT BASIC EDUCATION LEVELS			
Literacy Level	Basic Reading and Writing	Numeracy Skills	Functional and Workplace
<p>Beginning ABE Literacy Test Benchmark: TABE (9–10) scale scores (grade level 0–1.9): Reading: 367 and below Total Math: 313 and below Language: 389 and below</p> <p>Wonderlic GAIN scale scores: English: 200-406 Math: 200-314</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>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>
<p>Beginning Basic Education Test Benchmark: TABE (9–10) scale scores (grade level 2–3.9): Reading: 368–460 Total Math: 314–441 Language: 390–490</p> <p>Wonderlic GAIN scale scores: English: 407-525 Math: 315-522</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>

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.

● TABE = Test of Adult Basic Education ● Wonderlic GAIN = Wonderlic General Assessment of Instructional Needs

Exhibit 2.1 (Continued) Functioning Level Table

Outcome Measures Definitions			
EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONING LEVEL DESCRIPTORS—ADULT BASIC EDUCATION LEVELS			
I. Literacy Level	Basic Reading and Writing	Numeracy Skills	Functional and Workplace Skills
<p>Low Intermediate Basic Education</p> <p>Test Benchmark: TABE (9–10) scale scores (grade level 4–5.9): Reading: 461–517 Total Math: 442–505 Language: 491–523</p> <p>Wonderlic GAIN scale scores: English: 526–661 Math: 523–669</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>High Intermediate Basic Education</p> <p>Test Benchmark: TABE (9–10) scale scores (grade level 6–8.9): Reading: 518–566 Total Math: 506–565 Language: 524–559</p> <p>WorkKeys scale scores: Reading for Information: 75–78 Applied Mathematics: 75–77</p> <p>Wonderlic GAIN scale scores: English: 662–746 Math: 670–775 All tests: 400–499</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>

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.

• TABE = Test of Adult Basic Education • Wonderlic GAIN = Wonderlic General Assessment of Instructional Needs

Exhibit 2.1 (Continued) Functioning Level Table

Outcome Measures Definitions			
EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONING LEVEL DESCRIPTORS—ADULT SECONDARY EDUCATION LEVELS			
II. Literacy Level	Basic Reading and Writing	Numeracy Skills	Functional and Workplace Skills
<p>Low Adult Secondary Education</p> <p>Test Benchmark: TABE (9–10): scale scores (grade level 9–10.9): Reading: 567–595 Total Math: 566–594 Language: 560–585</p> <p>WorkKeys scale scores: Reading for Information: 79–81 Applied Mathematics: 78–81</p> <p>Wonderlic GAIN scale scores: English: 747-870 Math: 776-854</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>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>
<p>High Adult Secondary Education</p> <p>Test Benchmark: TABE (9–10): scale scores (grade level 11–12): Reading: 596 and above Total Math: 595 and above Language: 586 and above</p> <p>WorkKeys scale scores: Reading for Information: 82–90 Applied Mathematics: 82–90</p> <p>Wonderlic GAIN scale scores: English: 871-1000 Math: 855-1000</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>

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.

- TABE = Test of Adult Basic Education
- Wonderlic GAIN = Wonderlic General Assessment of Instructional Needs

Exhibit 2.1 (Continued) Functioning Level Table

Outcome Measures Definitions			
EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONING LEVEL DESCRIPTORS—ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE LEVELS			
III. Literacy Level	Listening and Speaking	Basic Reading and Writing	Functional and Workplace Skills
<p>Beginning ESL Literacy</p> <p>Test Benchmark:</p> <p>BEST Plus: 400 and below (SPL 0–1) BEST Literacy: 0–20 (SPL 0–1)</p> <p>TABE CLAS-E scale scores:*</p> <p>Total Reading and Writing: 225-394 Total Listening and Speaking: 230-407</p>	<p>Individual cannot speak or understand English, or understands only isolated words or phrases.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>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 technology.</p>
<p>Low Beginning ESL</p> <p>Test benchmark:</p> <p>BEST Plus: 401–417 (SPL 2) BEST Literacy: 21-52 (SPL 2)</p> <p>TABE CLAS-E scale scores:*</p> <p>Total Reading and Writing: 395-441 Total Listening and Speaking: 408-449</p>	<p>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 control over grammar.</p>	<p>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, telephone number) and can complete simple forms that elicit this information.</p>	<p>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 knowledge and experience with computers.</p>

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.

● 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.

Exhibit 2.1 (Continued) Functioning Level Table

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
<p>High Beginning ESL</p> <p>Test benchmark:</p> <p>BEST Plus: 418–438 (SPL 3) BEST Literacy: 53–63 (SPL 3)</p> <p>TABE CLAS-E scale scores:*</p> <p>Total Reading and Writing: 442-482 Total Listening and Speaking: 450-485</p>	<p>Individual can understand common words, simple phrases, and sentences containing familiar vocabulary, spoken slowly with some repetition. Individual can respond to simple questions about personal everyday activities, and can express immediate needs, using simple learned phrases or short sentences. Shows limited control of grammar.</p>	<p>Individual can read most sight words, and many other common words. Can read familiar phrases and simple sentences but has a limited understanding of connected prose and may need frequent re-reading.</p> <p>Individual can write some simple sentences with limited vocabulary. Meaning may be unclear. Writing shows very little control of basic grammar, capitalization and punctuation and has many spelling errors.</p>	<p>Individual can function in some situations related to immediate needs and in familiar social situations. Can provide basic personal information on simple forms and recognizes simple common forms of print found in the home, workplace and community. Can handle routine entry level jobs requiring basic written or oral English communication and in which job tasks can be demonstrated. May have limited knowledge or experience using computers.</p>
<p>Low Intermediate ESL</p> <p>Test Benchmark:</p> <p>BEST Plus: 439–472 (SPL 4) BEST Literacy: 64– 67 (SPL 4)</p> <p>TABE CLAS-E scale scores:*</p> <p>Total Reading and Writing: 483-514 Total Listening and Speaking: 486-525</p>	<p>Individual can understand simple learned phrases and limited new phrases containing familiar vocabulary spoken slowly with frequent repetition; can ask and respond to questions using such phrases; can express basic survival needs and participate in some routine social conversations, although with some difficulty; and has some control of basic grammar.</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 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 interpret simple directions and schedules, signs, and maps; can fill out simple forms but needs support on some documents that are not simplified; and can handle routine entry level jobs that involve some written or oral English communication but in which job tasks can be demonstrated. Individual can use simple computer programs and can perform a sequence of routine tasks given directions using technology (e.g., fax machine, computer).</p>

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.

● 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.

Exhibit 2.1 (Continued) Functioning Level Table

Outcome Measures Definitions			
EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONING LEVEL DESCRIPTORS—ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE LEVELS			
IV. Literacy Level	Listening and Speaking	Basic Reading and Writing	Functional and Workplace Skills
<p>High Intermediate ESL</p> <p>Test Benchmark:</p> <p>BEST Plus: 473–506 (SPL 5) BEST Literacy: 68-75 (SPL 6)</p> <p>TABE CLAS-E scale scores:*</p> <p>Total Reading and Writing: 515-556 Total Listening and Speaking: 526-558</p>	<p>Individual can understand learned phrases and short new phrases containing familiar vocabulary spoken slowly and with some repetition; can communicate basic survival needs with some help; can participate in conversation in limited social situations and use new phrases with hesitation; and relies on description and concrete terms. There is inconsistent control of more complex grammar.</p>	<p>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 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.</p>	<p>Individual can meet basic survival and social needs, can follow some simple oral and written instruction, and has some ability to communicate on the telephone on familiar subjects; can write messages and notes related to basic needs; can complete basic medical forms and job applications; and can handle jobs that involve basic oral instructions and written communication in tasks that can be clarified orally. Individual can work with or learn basic computer software, such as word processing, and can follow simple instructions for using technology.</p>
<p>Advanced ESL</p> <p>Test Benchmark:</p> <p>BEST Plus: 507–540 (SPL 6) BEST Literacy: 76-78 (SPL 6)**</p> <p>TABE CLAS-E scale scores:*</p> <p>Total Reading and Writing: 557-600 Total Listening and Speaking: 559-600</p>	<p>Individual can understand and communicate in a variety of contexts related to daily life and work. Can understand and participate in conversation on a variety of everyday subjects, including some unfamiliar vocabulary, but may need repetition or rewording. Can clarify own or others' meaning by rewording. Can understand the main points of simple discussions and informational communication in familiar contexts. Shows some ability to go beyond learned patterns and construct new sentences. Shows control of basic grammar but has difficulty using more complex structures. Has some basic fluency of speech.</p>	<p>Individual can read moderately complex text related to life roles and descriptions and narratives from authentic materials on familiar subjects. Uses context and word analysis skills to understand vocabulary, and uses multiple strategies to understand unfamiliar texts. Can make inferences, predictions, and compare and contrast information in familiar texts. Individual can write multi-paragraph text (e.g., organizes and develops ideas with clear introduction, body, and conclusion), using some complex grammar and a variety of sentence structures. Makes some grammar and spelling errors. Uses a range of vocabulary.</p>	<p>Individual can function independently to meet most survival needs and to use English in routine social and work situations. Can communicate on the telephone on familiar subjects. Understands radio and television on familiar topics. Can interpret routine charts, tables and graphs and can complete forms and handle work demands that require non-technical oral and written instructions and routine interaction with the public. Individual can use common software, learn new basic applications, and select the correct basic technology in familiar situations.</p>

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.

● 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 only total scores

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



National Reporting System
for Adult Education
A Project of the U.S. Department of Education

NRS Test Benchmarks for Educational Functioning Levels

Educational Functioning Level	Test Benchmarks
Adult Basic Education	
Beginning ABE Literacy	<i>TABE (9–10) scale scores (grade level 0–1.9):</i> Reading: 367 and below Total Math: 313 and below Language: 389 and below
Beginning Basic Education	<i>TABE (9–10) scale scores (grade level 2–3.9):</i> Reading: 368–460 Total Math: 314–441 Language: 390–490
Low Intermediate Basic Education	<i>TABE (9–10) scale scores (grade level 4–5.9):</i> Reading: 461–517 Total Math: 442–505 Language: 491–523
High Intermediate Basic Education	<i>TABE (9–10) scale scores (grade level 6–8.9):</i> Reading: 518–566 Total Math: 506–565 Language: 524–559
Low Adult Secondary Education	<i>TABE (9–10): scale scores (grade level 9–10.9):</i> Reading: 567–595 Total Math: 566–594 Language: 560–585
High Adult Secondary Education	<i>TABE (9–10): scale scores (grade level 11–12):</i> Reading: 596 and above Total Math: 595 and above Language: 586 and above
English as a Second Language	
Beginning ESL Literacy	<i>BEST Plus: 400 and below (SPL 0–1)</i> <i>BEST Literacy: 0–20</i> <i>TABE CLASE-E scale scores:*</i> Total Reading and Writing: 225–394 Total Listening and Speaking: 230–407
Low Beginning ESL	<i>BEST Plus: 401–417 (SPL 2)</i> <i>BEST Literacy: 21–52</i> <i>TABE CLASE-E scale scores:*</i> Total Reading and Writing: 395–441 Total Listening and Speaking: 408–449
High Beginning ESL	<i>BEST Plus: 418–438 (SPL 3)</i> <i>BEST Literacy: 53–63</i> <i>TABE CLASE-E scale scores:*</i> Total Reading and Writing: 442–482 Total Listening and Speaking: 450–485

Low Intermediate ESL	<i>BEST Plus: 439–472 (SPL 4)</i> <i>BEST Literacy: 64– 67</i> <i>TABE CLASE-E scale scores:*</i> Total Reading and Writing: 483-514 Total Listening and Speaking: 486-525
High Intermediate ESL	<i>BEST Plus: 473–506 (SPL 5)</i> <i>BEST Literacy: 68-75</i> <i>TABE CLASE-E scale scores:*</i> Total Reading and Writing: 515-556 Total Listening and Speaking: 526-558
Advanced ESL	<i>BEST Plus: 507–540 (SPL 6)</i> <i>BEST Literacy: 76-78</i> <i>TABE CLASE-E scale scores:*</i> Total Reading and Writing: 557-600 Total Listening and Speaking: 559-600

* Refer to the *TABE CLAS-E* Technical Manual for individual score ranges for reading, writing, listening and speaking.

APPENDIX D

Sample Literacy Screen Tool:

Name:	_____
Address:	_____
Date of birth:	_____
Signature:	_____
Today's date:	_____

APPENDIX E

**TABLE III– *TABE 9 AND 10*
NRS FUNCTIONING LEVELS, GRADE EQUIVALENTS,
AND SCALE SCORE RANGES**

NRS Functioning Level	Grade Level Equivalent Range	Reading Scale Score Ranges	Total Math Scale Score Ranges	Language Scale Score Ranges
Beginning Adult Basic Education (ABE) Literacy	0-1.9	0-367	0-313	0-389
Beginning Basic Education	2-3.9	368-460	314-441	390-490
Low Intermediate Basic Education	4-5.9	461-517	442-505	491-523
High Intermediate Basic Education	6-8.9	518-566	506-565	524-559
Low Adult Secondary Education (ASE)	9-10.9	567-595	566-594	560-585
High Adult Secondary Education (ASE)	11-12.9	596-812	595-775	586-826

TABLE IV – BEST LITERACY NRS FUNCTIONING LEVELS, SCALE SCORE RANGES, AND STUDENT PERFORMANCE LEVELS		
National Reporting System Educational Functioning Levels	Scale Score Ranges	Student Performance Levels (SPL)
Beginning ESL Literacy	0-20	0-1
Low Beginning ESL	21-52	2
High Beginning ESL	53-63	3
Low Intermediate ESL	64-67	4
High Intermediate ESL	68-75	5
Advanced ESL	76-78*	6

** If an examinee pretests into the NRS Advanced ESL level with a scale score of 76-78, use a different ESL assessment that measures higher reading and writing skills to more accurately measure and examinee’s language ability. Any student that falls into this category should be re-tested with another assessment at the time of pre-testing*

APPENDIX G

TABLE V – <i>BEST PLUS</i> NRS FUNCTIONING LEVELS, SCALE SCORE RANGES AND STUDENT PERFORMANCE LEVELS		
NRS Functioning Level	<i>BEST Plus</i> Scale Score Ranges	Related Student Performance Levels
Beginning ESL Literacy	0-400	0-1
Low Beginning ESL	401-417	2
High Beginning ESL	418-438	3
Low Intermediate ESL	439-472	4
High Intermediate ESL	473-506	5
Advanced ESL	507-540	6
<i>Exit Criteria from NRS</i>	541 and higher	7

APPENDIX H

**Table VI - *TABE CLAS-E* Forms A and B
Scale Scores for NRS ESL Educational Functioning Levels**

Functioning Level	Reading Scale Scores	Writing Scale Scores	Listening Scale Scores	Speaking Scale Scores
Beginning ESL Literacy	250-392	200-396	230-389	231- 425
Low Beginning ESL	393-436	397-445	390-437	426-460
High Beginning ESL	437-476	446-488	438-468	461-501
Low Intermediate ESL	477-508	489-520	469-514	502-536
High Intermediate ESL	509-557	521-555	515-549	537-567
Advanced ESL	558-588	556-612	550-607	568-594

TABE Complete Language Assessment System--English also offers scoring with TestMate TABE®.

APPENDIX I

TABLE VII – GAIN English and Mathematics Scale Scores for NRS ABE and ASE Educational Functioning Levels

NRS Educational Functioning Level	English Composite Scale Score Range	Mathematics Composite Scale Score Range	Grade Level Equivalents
ABE Beginning Literacy	200-406	200-314	0.0-1.9
ABE Beginning	407-525	315-522	2.0-3.9
ABE Low Intermediate	526-661	523-669	4.0-5.9
ABE High Intermediate	662-746	670-775	6.0-8.9
ASE Low	747-870	776-854	9.0-10.9
ASE High	871-1000	855-1000	11.0-12.0+

APPENDIX J:

RESOURCES FOR INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

- Any questions about assessment policy should be directed to Texas *LEARNS*. The toll free number is 1-866-696-4233.
- Assessment training questions should be directed to the GREAT Center in the region. Website and phone contact information may be found at <http://www-tcall.tamu.edu/>
- Bulk assessment orders for the state of Texas are handled by TCALL. Contact information is: 1-800-441-READ or <http://www-tcall.tamu.edu/>
- Direct *TABE* ordering and support information can be found by contacting CTB-McGraw-Hill at <http://www.ctb.com> or through the following contact information:

Western Regional Office

20 Ryan Ranch Road, Monterey, CA 93940-5703 U.S.A
Tel: 888.282.5690 | Fax: 831.393.6993

CTB Support

For Help Specifying and Placing Orders:

Customer Services Representatives are available 6:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Pacific Time.

Tel: 800.538.9547 | Fax: 800.282.0266 | International: 831.393.0700 | TDD: 800.217.9190

For Help with Scoring Services:

Contact the CTB Scoring Services office.

Tel: 800.282.7267 (800.CTB.SCOR) | Fax: 800.428.2329 | International: 831.393.0700

For Help with CTB Software:

The CTB Technical Support staff is available 4:30 AM to 5:00 PM, Pacific Time.

Tel: 800.459.6522 | Fax: 800.459.4210 | International: 831.393.0700 | E-mail: tmsupport@ctb.com

- **Direct *BEST* Ordering:** <http://www.cal.org/> or use the following contact information:

Center for Applied Linguistics

4646 40th Street NW

Washington DC 20016-1859

Main number 202.362.0700

Fax number 202.362.3740

Email info@cal.org

Staff directory

Use our staff directory to find contact information for CAL staff.

Questions and comments

Please email info@cal.org

Web site problems

Please contact our Webmaster

APPENDIX K



National Reporting System
for Adult Education

A Project of the U.S. Department of Education

COLLECTING, MATCHING, AND REPORTING GED OBTAINMENT, ENTRY INTO POSTSECONDARY OR TRAINING, EMPLOYMENT OBTAINMENT AND EMPLOYMENT RETENTION

For PY 2006 – 2011

Exit Quarter/Year	Performance Measure	Collection of Data	Year of Report
July 1 2006 - June 30, 2007, (TEAMS 2007 SY) (4 quarters)	Obtained a GED	July 1 2006 - December 31, 2007	PY 2006*
July 1 2007 - June 30 2008, (TEAMS 2008 SY) (4 quarters)	Obtained a GED	July 1 2007 - December 31, 2008	PY 2007**
July 1 2008 - June 30 2009, (TEAMS 2009 SY) (4 quarters)	Obtained a GED	July 1 2008 - December 31, 2009	PY 2008+++
July 1 2009 - June 30 2010, (TEAMS 2010 SY) (4 quarters)	Obtained a GED	July 1 2009 - December 31, 2010	PY 2009++++
July 1 2010 - June 30 2011, (TEAMS 2011 SY) (4 quarters)	Obtained a GED	July 1 2010 - December 31, 2011	PY 2010xxx
July 1 2006 - June 30, 2007, (TEAMS 2007 SY) (4 quarters)	Entered Postsecondary Education or Training	July 1 2006 - December 31, 2007	PY 2006*
July 1 2007 - June 30 2008, (TEAMS 2008 SY) (4 quarters)	Entered Postsecondary Education or Training	July 1 2007 - December 31, 2008	PY 2007**
July 1 2008 - June 30 2009, (TEAMS 2009 SY) (4 quarters)	Entered Postsecondary Education or Training	July 1 2008 - December 31, 2009	PY 2008+++
July 1 2009 - June 30 2010, (TEAMS 2010 SY) (4 quarters)	Entered Postsecondary Education or Training	July 1 2009 - December 31, 2010	PY 2009++++
July 1 2010 - June 30 2011, (TEAMS 2011 SY) (4 quarters)	Entered Postsecondary Education or Training	July 1 2010 - December 31, 2011	PY 2010xxx

Exit Quarter/Year	Performance Measure	Collection of Data	Year of Report
April 1–June 30, 2005 (Fourth Quarter)	Retained Employment	January 1–March 31, 2006 (Third Quarter PY 2005)	PY 2006*
July 1–September 30, 2005 (First Quarter)	Retained Employment	April 1–June 30, 2006 (Fourth Quarter PY 2005)	PY 2006*
October 1–December 31, 2005 (Second Quarter)	Entered Employment	January 1–March 31, 2006 (Third Quarter PY 2005)	PY 2006*
	Retained Employment	July 1–September 30, 2006 (First Quarter PY 2006)	PY 2006*
January 1–March 31, 2006 (Third Quarter)	Entered Employment	April 1–June 30, 2006 (Fourth Quarter PY 2005)	PY 2006*
	Retained Employment	October 1–December 31, 2006 (Second Quarter PY 2006)	PY 2006*
April 1–June 30, 2006 (Fourth Quarter)	Entered Employment	July 1–September 30, 2006 (First Quarter PY 2006)	PY 2006*
	Retained Employment	January 1–March 31, 2007 (Third Quarter PY 2006)	PY 2007**
July 1–September 30, 2006 (First Quarter)	Entered Employment	October 1–December 31, 2006 (Second Quarter PY 2006)	PY 2006*
	Retained Employment	April 1–June 30, 2007 (Fourth Quarter PY 2006)	PY 2007**
October 1–December 31, 2006 (Second Quarter)	Entered Employment	January 1–March 31, 2007 (Third Quarter PY 2006)	PY 2007**
	Retained Employment	July 1–September 30, 2007 (First Quarter PY 2007)	PY 2007**
January 1–March 31, 2007 (Third Quarter)	Entered Employment	April 1–June 30, 2007 (Fourth Quarter PY 2006)	PY 2007**
	Retained Employment	October 1–December 31, 2007 (Second Quarter PY 2007)	PY 2007**
April 1–June 30, 2007 (Fourth Quarter)	Entered Employment	July 1–September 30, 2007 (First Quarter PY 2007)	PY 2007**
	Retained Employment	January 1–March 31, 2008 (Third Quarter PY 2007)	PY 2008+++
July 1–September 30, 2007 (First Quarter)	Entered Employment	October 1–December 31, 2007 (Second Quarter PY 2007)	PY 2007**
	Retained Employment	April 1–June 30, 2008 (Fourth Quarter PY 2007)	PY 2008+++
October 1–December 31, 2007 (Second Quarter)	Entered Employment	January 1–March 31, 2008 (Third Quarter PY 2007)	PY 2008+++
	Retained Employment	July 1–September 30, 2008 (First Quarter PY 2008)	PY 2008+++
January 1–March 31, 2008 (Third Quarter)	Entered Employment	April 1–June 30, 2008 (Fourth Quarter PY 2007)	PY 2008+++
	Retained Employment	October 1–December 31, 2008 (Second Quarter PY 2008)	PY 2008+++
April 1–June 30, 2008 (Fourth Quarter)	Entered Employment	July 1–September 30, 2008 (First Quarter PY 2008)	PY 2008+++
	Retained Employment	January 1–March 31, 2009 (Third Quarter PY 2008)	PY 2009++++

Exit Quarter/Year	Performance Measure	Collection of Data	Year of Report
July 1–September 30, 2008 (First Quarter)	Entered Employment	October 1–December 31, 2008 (Second Quarter PY 2008)	PY 2008+++
	Retained Employment	April 1–June 30, 2009 (Fourth Quarter PY 2008)	PY 2009++++
October 1–December 31, 2008 (Second Quarter)	Entered Employment	January 1–March 31, 2009 (Third Quarter PY 2008)	PY 2009++++
	Retained Employment	July 1–September 30, 2009 (First Quarter PY 2009)	PY 2009++++
January 1–March 31, 2009 (Third Quarter)	Entered Employment	April 1–June 30, 2009 (Fourth Quarter PY 2008)	PY 2009++++
	Retained Employment	October 1–December 31, 2009 (Second Quarter PY 2009)	PY 2009++++
April 1–June 30, 2009 (Fourth Quarter)	Entered Employment	July 1–September 30, 2009 (First Quarter PY 2009)	PY 2009++++
	Retained Employment	January 1–March 31, 2010 (Third Quarter PY 2009)	PY 2010xxx
July 1–September 30, 2009 (First Quarter)	Entered Employment	October 1–December 31, 2009 (Second Quarter PY 2009)	PY 2009++++
	Retained Employment	April 1–June 30, 2009 (Fourth Quarter PY 2008)	PY 2009++++
October 1–December 31, 2009 (Second Quarter)	Entered Employment	January 1–March 31, 2010 (Third Quarter PY 2009)	PY 2010xxx
	Retained Employment	July 1–September 30, 2009 (First Quarter PY 2009)	PY 2009++++
January 1–March 31, 2010 (Third Quarter)	Entered Employment	April 1–June 30, 2010 (Fourth Quarter PY 2009)	PY 2010xxx
	Retained Employment	October 1–December 31, 2010 (Second Quarter PY 2010)	PY 2010xxx
April 1–June 30, 2010 (Fourth Quarter)	Entered Employment	July 1–September 30, 2010 (First Quarter PY 2010)	PY 2010xxx
	Retained Employment	January 1–March 31, 2011 (Third Quarter PY 2010)	PY 2011XXX

* Report due December 31, 2007 **Report due December 31, 2008 +++Report due December 31, 2009

++++ Report due December 31, 2010 xxx Report due December, 2011 XXX Report due December, 2012

APPENDIX L

Federal and State Guidance on Collecting Student Data

1. FEDERAL

Measures and Methods for the National Reporting System (NRS) for Adult Education, March 2001
According to the NRS, an educational gain, a key outcome in the NRS, provides a measure of student literacy gains resulting from instruction. To determine this measure, local programs assess students upon intake to determine their educational functioning level (EFL).

2. STATE

Source: **Texas Education Code, Chapter 29, Educational Programs, Subchapter H, Adult and Community Education Programs, State Role in Adult and Community Education § 29.252. [Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, § 1, eff. May 30, 1995. Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 761, § 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1997.]**

(8) adopt or develop and administer a standardized assessment mechanism for assessing all adult education program participants who need literacy instruction, adult basic education, or secondary education leading to an adult high school diploma or the equivalent.

The assessment mechanism prescribed under Subsection (a)(8) must include an initial basic skills screening instrument and must provide comprehensive information concerning baseline student skills before and student progress after participation in an adult education program.

APPENDIX M

TABLE I: Required Instructional Hours Between Pre and Post Tests	
Testing Instrument/Assessment	Required Instructional Hours between Pre- and Post- Test
<i>TABE 9 and 10 ABE (NRS ABE Levels - ABE Beginning Literacy, ABE Beginning, ABE Intermediate Low & ABE Intermediate High)</i> (Using Alternate Forms of Test)	40 hours minimum using alternate forms of the test
<i>TABE 9 and 10 ASE (NRS ASE Levels – ASE Low and ASE High)</i> (Using Alternate Forms of Test)	30 hours minimum using alternate forms of test
<i>GAIN (NRS ABE and ASE Levels - ABE Beginning Literacy, ABE Beginning, ABE Intermediate Low, ABE Intermediate High, ASE Low, and ASE High)</i>	60 hours minimum
<i>BEST Plus (All levels ESL)</i>	60 hours minimum
<i>BEST Literacy(All levels ESL)</i>	60 hours minimum using alternate forms of test
<i>TABE CLAS-E (All levels ESL)</i> (Using Alternate Form of Test)	50 hours minimum using alternate forms of test

State Policy Document for Distance Education

1. **Definition.** Distance education is 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 in 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 the following to include but not limited to: communication via mail, telephone, e-mail, online technologies and software, or face to face instruction.
2. **Requirement for Direct Contact Hours.** Students in distance education must have at least 12 hours of direct contact with the program before they can be counted for federal reporting purposes. Direct contact hours involve interaction between the learner and program staff. This can be a combination of direct face-to-face contact as well as contact through telephone, video, teleconference or online communication, in which the identity of the learner can be verified. Live online discussions, telephone conference calls, monitored labs and live video broadcast to remote locations are examples of direct contact hours that are countable under this definition.
3. **Proxy Contact Hours.** In addition to direct contact hours, programs may also report proxy hours to track time students spend on distance learning activities. Proxy hours differ from direct contact hours in that the identity of the learner and/or the exact amount of time spent on a learning activity cannot always be verified directly.
4. **Distinction between a Distance Education Participant and a Participant with Proxy Hours.** For a student to be counted as a distance education participant in a program year, the preponderant amount of instruction must be delivered through distance education. A distance education participant is a student who has more proxy hours than direct hours. NRS Table IVC reports distance education participants.

A participant with proxy hours is a student who engages in distance education and has completed at least one proxy hour. A participant with proxy hours will not be counted as a distance education participant unless the total number of proxy hours exceeds the total number of direct hours.

5. **Distance Education Models:** In order to determine a learner's proxy hours a program must use an approved distance education curriculum and one of the following models:
 - *Clock Time Model:* Assigns proxy hours based on the time that a learner is connected to or engaged in an online or stand-alone software program that tracks time.
 - *Teacher Certification Model:* Assigns a fixed number of proxy hours for each activity in a distance curriculum based on teacher verification of the extent to which a learner engaged in or completed the assignment.
 - *Learner Mastery Model:* Assigns a fixed number of proxy hours based on learner mastery of each lesson in the distance curriculum as demonstrated by passing a test with a high percentage (usually 70% to 80%) of correct answers.

6. **Curriculum:** A list of approved curricula and the associated model used for calculating proxy hours will be posted on the Distance Learning Initiative page of the Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy and Learning (TCALL) website.

Each curriculum employed for distance education delivery must be approved by the state office before using and before proxy hours can be reported.

Each new curriculum for which proxy hours potentially are to be calculated must be reviewed and approved by the state office and a committee consisting of no fewer than three instructors who have used it in situations where student time and outcomes are closely monitored. Reviews for curricula using the teacher certification and mastery models must identify recommendations for assigning proxy hours, based on actual experience, for specific activities assigned or units mastered. These recommendations may be reported as a range of hours, taking into account learning differences for different populations. Recommendations for proxy hours will be reviewed each year for at least two years after the curriculum has been implemented to verify that the original recommendations are in line with field experience.

Please note:

- Proxy hours calculated through the *Clock Time Model* must utilize curricula that electronically track time the student spends interacting with instructional material and disconnects after a preset period of inactivity.
- Proxy hours calculated through the *Teacher Certification Model* and the *Learner Mastery Model* must adhere to reasonable estimates of time necessary to complete assignments or lessons, as pre-determined by teachers or staff with knowledge of the curriculum.

7. **Assessment:** All students engaged in distance education courses will be post-tested after the same amount of instructional time, as other students, according to the approved state assessment policy. Both direct contact hours and proxy contact hours are counted to calculate the amount of instructional time. Students must appear in person at a proctored program site for baseline tests and any subsequent posttests. Assessments must be conducted through face-to-face interaction with a trained test administrator in a secure setting using only state and NRS approved assessments.
8. **Registration and Assignment:** All of the required NRS data elements will be recorded in TEAMS for distance education participants and participants with proxy hours. For data to be reported on NRS Table IV or Table IVC, 12 or more direct hours and a baseline assessment are required.

When creating a distance education class in TEAMS, it will be necessary to identify the curriculum and the model used for calculating proxy hours. Once identified as a distance education class in TEAMS, students can be assigned and both direct hours and proxy hours can be recorded.

Proxy hours in the *Clock Time Model* are tracked electronically.

Proxy hours in the *Teacher Certification Model* are awarded for various activities completed by the participant and verified by the instructor. These proxy hours are pre-determined for each activity.

Proxy hours in the *Learner Mastery Model* are awarded when the students passes a test demonstrating mastery of the course content. These proxy hours are pre-determined.

If the *Teacher Certification* or *Learner Mastery* model is chosen, any direct contact hours of instruction from the same curriculum may not be counted since total proxy hours have already been assigned. However, any direct contact hours for registration, orientation, assessment, or instruction that are not part of the distance curriculum may still be counted.

9. **Reporting Hours:** Programs will report all instructional hours into the state data base (TEAMS). Classes that have been identified as distance education classes in TEAMS will permit programs to record proxy hours and direct hours separately.
10. **Professional Development.** Teachers and administrators planning to offer distance education for the first time will participate in professional development designed to ensure successful program implementation.
11. **Required and Other Training**
 - a. Distance Learning Academy, Modules 1 and 3 are required. Provided by the regional GREAT Centers
 - b. Other professional development activities for distance education teachers and program administrators based on needs assessments. Provided by GREAT Centers.

NOTE: List of approved curriculum, appropriate audience, criteria for awarding proxy hours, type of model, and assignment of hours for Distance Education in Texas may be found on the next pages.

Texas LEARNS Distance Education Materials List

Title	Audience	Model	Criteria for Awarding Proxy Hours	Validation by	Notes
Aztec	ABE/GED	Clocktime	System tracks time and logs out students after a preset period of inactivity.	Software developer	Offline materials, including workbooks, cannot be counted for proxy hours.
California Distance Learning Project - Adult Learning Activities	Intermediate ESL/ABE Reading	Certification	Teacher verifies completed work and assigns pre-determined amount of time per activity.	California Distance Learning Project	System emails score reports and proxy hour equivalents for each completed reading activity.
Crossroads Café	ESL Intermediate	Mastery	Pass Unit Test @ 70% or above.	North Carolina	10 hours assigned per unit; 260 total possible proxy hours.
English Discoveries	ESL High Beginning to Advanced	Clocktime	System tracks time and logs out students after a preset period of inactivity.	Software developer	Offline materials, including workbooks, cannot be counted for proxy hours.
English for All	ESL Intermediate	Mastery	Pass Unit Test @ 70% or above.	NC, based on research done in CA	6 hours assigned per unit; 120 total possible proxy hours
GED Connection	GED	Teacher Certification	Teacher verifies completed work and assigns pre-determined amount of time per activity.	Multi-state study, 2005	Must use a standard worksheet showing number of hours that can be assigned per activity.
GEDi (aka GED Illinois)	GED	Mastery	Pass Unit Test @ 70% or above.	Software developer	50 minutes per unit completed.
ITTS	ABE/GED	Clocktime	System tracks time and logs out students after a preset period of inactivity.	Software developer	Offline materials, including workbooks, cannot be counted for proxy hours.
Madison Heights/Lifelines	ABE	Teacher Certification	Teacher verifies completed work and assigns pre-determined amount of time per activity.	PA - State Office	Must use a standard worksheet showing number of hours that can be assigned per activity.
MHC -GED Online	GED	Clocktime	System tracks time and logs out students after a preset period of inactivity.	Software developer	Offline materials, including workbooks, cannot be counted for proxy hours.

Title	Audience	Model	Criteria for Awarding Proxy Hours	Validation by	Notes
PLATO	ABE/GED	Clocktime	System tracks time and logs out students after a preset period of inactivity.	Software developer	Offline materials, including workbooks, cannot be counted for proxy hours.
Pre-GED Connection	ABE	Teacher Certification	Teacher verifies completed work and assigns pre-determined amount of time per activity.	Texas, piloted at Victoria College, 2008.	Must use a standard worksheet showing number of hours that can be assigned per activity.
Rosetta Stone	ESL Beginning Low to Intermediate High	Clocktime	System tracks time and logs out students after a preset period of inactivity.	Software developer	Offline materials, including workbooks, cannot be counted for proxy hours.
Sed de Saber	Beginning ESL	Mastery	Pass Book Test @ 70% or above.	Texas Sed de Saber Pilot, 2009.	4 proxy hrs assigned per book; 24 total possible proxy hrs; not recommended as a stand-alone curriculum.
SkillsTutor	ABE/GED	Clocktime	System tracks time and logs out students after a preset period of inactivity.	Software developer	Offline materials, including workbooks, cannot be counted for proxy hours.
USA Learns - 1st English Course	Beginning ESL	Mastery	Pass Unit Test @ 70% or above.	CA Dept. of Education	3 proxy hours per unit, 20 units
Workplace Essential Skills	ABE/GED	Teacher Certification	Teacher verifies completed work and assigns pre-determined amount of time per activity.	Project IDEAL	Must use a standard worksheet showing number of hours that can be assigned per activity.



■ HOW TO ADMINISTER TABE ASSESSMENTS

What every adult educator needs to know about test security

Test security means not exposing examinees to test questions or content before actual testing. It also means keeping test books, answer keys, and test directions under lock and key between assessment sessions and keeping test results confidential.

Everyone on your staff who orders TABE tests, maintains an inventory of test materials, administers tests, or uses test results should receive thorough training in approved ways to handle standardized tests. Do not limit training to faculty—involve your support staff, too. Make sure all involved staff understand what test security is and why it is important.

Why test security matters

Loss of test security can have a negative impact on many different people associated with your testing program. For example:

Examinees who have prior knowledge of test questions can give a false picture of what they know. While students may show short-term gains by knowing the test questions beforehand, they will suffer in the long run. They may be placed in classes that are too difficult for them, causing them to feel discouraged, lose motivation, and even drop out of their education program.

Faculty or staff members who breach test security risk poor performance evaluations, demotions, and loss of employment.

Your entire organization may have to switch to another testing program if test security is not maintained. This can waste a great deal of time and money. Serious security breaches can result in legal challenges.

How to handle test materials

Once your team understands the importance of good test security, you can train them in the procedures listed below. In general, good test-handling practices require the following:

- You allow only those individuals who have appropriate training, professional credentials, and experience to handle and administer tests.



TABE Tip

CTB subscribes to the general principles of test use as set forth in the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (1999) by the American Educational Research Association. It is a good idea to familiarize yourself with these standards. Excerpts from the Standards are found in every CTB product and services catalog, and on our Web site at www.ctb.com. Make sure your staff also reads and understands these guidelines.



- Proper handling begins when you place your first order for test materials. Each order must be submitted by your organization on an official purchase order form, and the purchaser must fill out and sign a Purchaser's Qualification Statement.
- You are expected to have a clear understanding of the purpose of a test and its probable consequences; you must carefully choose the right test for the job at hand.
- While CTB provides information on the strengths and weaknesses of TABE and other instruments, the ultimate responsibility for appropriate test use and interpretation rests with you.
- Tests must be administered as directed in the TABE Test Directions.
- Examinees must not be left alone with test materials.
- When you release test data to students, teachers, clients, or others, you must also provide interpretation about what the test covers, what the scores mean, and how the scores will be used.
- You are responsible for protecting the security of test materials and test results.
- You must immediately notify CTB if you believe a security breach has occurred.
- You must never photocopy test books and answer sheets, and you should transmit tests and results electronically only when you can be reasonably confident the transmission is secure.
- When test books are too worn-out for further use, they should be thoroughly shredded before recycling. Never throw used test books into the trash.

Before your testing session, make sure your staff and students have the test materials they need. Check through your test materials several weeks before a testing session is scheduled. You should have these materials available:

- TABE materials for each test site
 - Guide to Administering TABE 9 & 10* (the book you have in your hands)
 - Technical Report (in electronic format only)
 - norms tables (electronic and print formats)
 - scoring supplies (such as scoring stencils)
 - scoring software (if you test electronically)

APPENDIX P

TEXAS ADULT EDUCATION GOAL SETTING POLICY

A. INTRODUCTION

Students who are motivated by specific goals and have the opportunity to experience progress toward those goals attend more regularly (NCSALL's Learner Persistence Study, 1999). In some cases, those goals are very specific; in others, they may be very general. Additionally, attainment of the goal may take a matter of weeks, several months, or more than a year. A thorough goal setting process can identify areas of focus for learners and instructional staff and establish benchmarks against which learner progress may be measured.

By establishing goals early in the educational process, the learner and the program have an increased opportunity to demonstrate performance. Learners and staff are able to demonstrate progress by interviewing, documenting goals with specific steps, and establishing benchmarks along a time line. This progress also serves as a motivator toward the ultimate step of completing the goal. By identifying specific, attainable steps, the learner, in particular, is able to identify what effort is required to complete the goal.

The goal setting policies in this document are designed to provide an explanation of the state and local program responsibilities for goal setting specific to the National Reporting System (NRS). These policies should guide the processes that programs apply when reporting learner goals in compliance with NRS requirements.

B. GOAL TYPES

EDUCATIONAL GAIN GOALS

Policy 1.1

All students with 12 hours or more of attendance are held accountable for educational gain goals.

Within the NRS framework, all students are presumed to have at least one goal: **development of literacy skills**. That is, all students are assumed to be in the program to improve their literacy skills, and thus have the default goal of either improving literacy skills or improving English language skills. This presumed goal is the reason that all students with 12 hours or more are counted in the educational gain measure. For the purposes of the NRS, achievement of educational gain is determined by completion of an educational functioning level as determined by state-approved standardized pre- and post-tests.

NRS FOLLOW-UP GOALS VERSUS PERSONAL GOALS

Policy 1.2

Programs must adhere to goal-setting policies to ensure that learners select reasonable and attainable follow-up goals that satisfy NRS reporting requirements. All NRS follow-up goals must be attainable within the fiscal year. Follow-up goals should not be set until after pre-testing and a deliberate goal setting process are conducted.

The majority of students are motivated to enroll in your program as a result of specific goals. For example, some may have career-oriented goals and desire to upgrade their skills to enroll in college, obtain a job, or maintain their current job. Others may have life goals such as improving their basic skills to deal more effectively with daily tasks (e.g., reading the newspaper, understanding medical information, etc.) or being a better role model to their children. Although students may be able to articulate their end goals (e.g., “I

want to get my GED.”), they may not know how prepared they are, what is involved in preparing to reach their goal, or when they will achieve it.

For the purposes of the NRS, only four goals are directly relevant to accountability requirements:

- Obtaining employment,
- Retaining employment,
- Obtaining a GED or high school credential, and
- Entering postsecondary education/job training.

The NRS does not require students to have any of these goals, but once set, programs are held accountable for determining whether students who chose these goals end up attaining them. These goals are referred to as “follow-up goals” because the program must follow-up with students to see if the students attained their goals. In Texas, the state uses data match to document achievement of the NRS follow-up goals.

In spite of this current practice, the survey method in combination with the data match will be piloted as a result of the recent Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) federal monitoring visit. The monitoring visit report contained the following recommendation: *The most recent NRS submission from TEA indicates that 14,236 adult education students are unemployed, yet only 11 percent of those unemployed students were reported as having a goal of gaining employment. TEA also indicates that 3524 adult education students are enrolled in ASE, yet only 19 percent of those students were reported as having a goal of entering postsecondary education or training. Additionally, TEA reported that 5131 students statewide attained their GED, yet “enter postsecondary education or training” was set as a goal for only one percent. These enrollment data suggest that local providers in Texas may be under-setting student goals related to employment and postsecondary education. During the visit, the federal team reinforced the importance of goal-setting by emphasizing adult education’s role in preparing people for jobs, further education, and training. The team recommends that the TEA explore whether supplementing the current data collection method of data matching with follow-up survey will capture sufficient additional learner outcomes to justify the effort.*

There is often a temptation to avoid setting the NRS follow-up goals because you may not want to be held accountable for them. However, it is essential that you collect these goals accurately: Not only can accurate information about NRS goals be used to serve students’ needs, but they also give an accurate and realistic picture of program performance—and of what adult education is all about. Although you are not held accountable if you do not set a goal for each student, your program cannot in turn receive recognition and credit or claim success for helping students achieve a goal that has not been set. For example, you may not be able to show that you help students get GEDs, find jobs, or go to community college. Therefore, you must find a careful balance between setting realistic goals that are reasonable for accountability and not setting unrealistic goals.

Beginning July 1, 2012, cohorts will be followed for attainment of follow-up goals. More information will be available from OVAE and NRS once the proposed changes are approved, and training will be provided by the Texas Education Agency and Texas LEARNS in the last quarter of the 2011-2012 program year (or before) in preparation for the 2012-2013 program year changes.

The main criterion that distinguishes NRS follow-up goals from other personal goals is the fact that the four follow-up goals should be identified **only for students who can reasonably achieve those goals within the calendar year**. NRS follow-up goals should not be set until after pre-testing and a deliberate goal setting process are conducted.

Your program is held accountable for achievement of identified follow-up goals. A certain percentage of students who exit the program and are given NRS follow-up goals must attain those goals within the

calendar year for GED obtainment and enrollment in post secondary or training and within specified quarters following exit from the program for obtaining and retaining a job. Therefore, it is important to exercise a diligent goal setting process before indicating a follow-up goal within TEAMS. The chart below provides some general guidelines in follow-up goal selection. Additional considerations are listed in the NRS Checklists.

NRS Follow-Up Goal	Descriptions
Obtain a GED or high school credential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate goal for most ASE Level 5 and 6 learners and some Level 4 learners • Outcome can be achieved while in program or after exiting (prior to December 31 of next fiscal year). • For additional considerations refer to GED Checklist.
Enter postsecondary/job training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be identified for ASE Level 6 and many ASE Level 5 learners who plan on enrolling in postsecondary education or job training within the program year • Outcome can be achieved while in program or after exiting (prior to December 31 of next fiscal year). • For additional considerations refer to Enter Postsecondary Checklist.
Obtain employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be identified for students who are unemployed and are actively seeking employment or are planning to seek employment after completing the program • Outcome is determined in the first quarter after exiting the program. • For additional considerations refer to Obtain a Job Checklist .
Retain employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be identified for students who are employed and plan to stay employed • Automatically identified for students who have the goal of obtaining employment and achieve that goal • Outcome is determined in the third quarter after exiting the program. • For additional considerations refer to Retain a Job Checklist.

SHORT-TERM VS. LONG-TERM GOALS

Some students may state very broad goals when they first enroll in the program. These may be goals that will take a considerable amount of time to achieve. Breaking the goal down into discrete steps – with short and long-term milestones along the way – establishes a series of goals that help learners and instructors design instruction and identify the appropriate goals for NRS purposes. Instruction, services, and referrals to other agencies for assistance should be oriented toward helping the student achieve the goal.

For example, a student with a goal of GED attainment should be at a literacy level that makes passing the GED® Tests likely within the calendar year. For students functioning at lower levels for which achievement of the GED is not realistic within the fiscal year, the instructor should help the student set short-term milestones that will show progress toward a longer-term goal of the GED. The GED would be maintained in the student’s folder as a long-term personal goal, but not identified as a NRS goal in TEAMS. While setting a realistic goal is important for accountability, students’ long-term goals should not be ignored simply because they are not obtainable during the NRS reporting period.

C. SETTING GOALS

Policy 1.3

Programs must provide a goal setting process that includes completion of a student learning plan (SLP) within the first few weeks of instruction for all learners reported in the Texas Educating Adults Management System (TEAMS).

The goal-setting process involves learners and staff at all levels of the program. Goal setting is an active and dynamic process. It requires an initial goal setting stage and periodic goal review, when completed steps are identified and revisions may be made. Several forms are available to record the student learning plan (SLP). A quality or “SMART” goal has the following five characteristics.

- **Specific** – The goal has a primary focus and direction for the learner.
- **Measurable** – The goal is established with quantitative components that identify when it has been achieved.
- **Attainable** – The learner is able to achieve the goal at a set point in time.
- **Reasonable** – The goal requires the learner to expand his/her abilities but does not cause the learner to become frustrated or discouraged.
- **Time-specific** – The goal sets a target date(s) for completion. Establishing a time line is recommended.

During Technical Assistance Visits (TAV’s) Texas LEARNS will randomly select a class(es) and interview the teacher(s) and students and document the SLP’s for the randomly selected class(es).

STUDENT LEARNING PLAN (SLP)

Policy 1.4

Programs should review the SLP ideally after every 30 - 40 hours of instruction or at least after 60 hours to coincide with progress testing, making revisions as appropriate. Any revisions that affect NRS or state reporting must be identified in TEAMS.

The SLP provides an opportunity for the learner and staff to periodically discuss, identify, and review the goals for attending. As part of the intake process, it represents a permanent record of the learner’s motivations for attending. The learner should have access to the plan and be responsible for indicating to staff when goals are completed or when revisions are necessary. The SLP also illustrates how the student’s goals will be linked to the program of study.

D. GOAL SETTING REPORTING

Policy 1.5

Programs must report initial NRS follow-up goals in TEAMS within the first few weeks of the student goal being set.

Learner goals must be identified in TEAMS within the first few weeks of the goal being set. Local programs and the state must be able to identify the needs of learners and be responsive to those needs.

Setting goals and reporting them in a timely manner provides an opportunity to track learners and respond to learner needs appropriately.

Policy 1.6

If a program and student determines that a follow-up goal needs to be changed, the reason for the goal change should be documented in the student's folder. The goal change should then be edited/recorded in TEAMS.

It is important to realize that goals often need to be revised. As time passes and circumstances change, a goal that was once realistic may no longer be achievable or relevant. Students also change their minds as they learn. On the other hand, if goals are revised too frequently or with little reason, they don't serve as a guidepost to measure progress or as a motivational tool.

E. TRAINING FOR GOAL SETTING

Policy 1.7

All program staff members who participate in student goal setting processes must successfully complete training on the Texas goal setting policy and attend annually.

OPTIONS

There are two training options available.

1. A three-hour face-to-face workshop that includes training on the goal setting policy in addition to hands-on processes and tools for goal setting activities and contextualizing instruction to those goals.
2. A two-hour online course that primarily covers the goal setting policy. The online course is self-paced, contains required participant assessments, and is non-facilitated. A certificate is issued electronically if 100% scores are attained on the assessments. Participants must print the certificate or save electronically since the on-line course does not save the certificates.

Adult education staff members are encouraged to participate in the three-hour workshop whenever possible. Contact the GREAT Center for information through your local program director.

If, however, new instructors are hired after the workshops have been conducted, the online course is a good option to ensure that all relevant staff members have completed training. The on-line course information is available

NEW STAFF

Staff new to adult education programs and student goal setting may not have experience reviewing, planning, and setting goals, particularly NRS goals. Consequently, new staff must successfully complete the goal-setting workshop or online course prior to any student goal setting.

CONTINUING STAFF

Electronic updates or reviews of the state's goal setting policy will be distributed annually to allow continuing staff involved in student goal setting processes to remain current in procedures and best practices.

F. ACCOMMODATING LEARNERS WITH DISABILITIES OR OTHER SPECIAL NEEDS

Policy 1.8

Learners with professionally certified documentation who self-identify a given physical, mental, or emotional disability must be provided appropriate accommodations for completing goals.

Adults with physical, mental, or emotional disabilities may not be able to demonstrate their knowledge and skills through traditional approaches. Adults with professionally certified documentation identifying

disabilities should receive accommodations based on their disabilities. Providing accommodations to adults with documented disabilities will result in a more accurate demonstration of their abilities to complete goals.

If a learner self-identifies a disability, it is the responsibility of the local program to provide reasonable accommodations. Local programs may not deny or prevent access to services based on a learner's disability. The local program may be required to absorb the costs related to the accommodation(s). By not providing appropriate accommodations for individuals with documented disabilities, programs could find themselves in violation of federal law.

DOCUMENTING ACCOMMODATIONS

As part of the learner's goal setting and educational plan, required accommodations should be identified when appropriate. This information assists the instructional staff and counselors with adapting lessons and materials for successful assignment and goal completion.

COLLABORATING WITH EXISTING SERVICES

The value of partnerships becomes especially important when providing services to learners with documented disabilities. To assist the disabled learner in completing goals, local programs should coordinate and develop partnerships with existing service providers to provide accommodations for goal completion. Service providers such as the Department of Social Services, Department of Rehabilitative Services, or the Department of the Blind and Visually Impaired are available to assist adults with disabilities who have employment-related goals. Service providers may also support the learner financially by assisting with costs associated with taking the GED Tests or applying for grant monies to attend post-secondary education and training.