

17-Texas Content Standard Roll Out

Slide 1:

Good morning my name is Anson Green. I'm the State Director for Adult Education Literacy at the Texas Workforce Commission and I want to welcome you to the first in a series of webinars on our Texas Adult Education Literacy content standards. This series is part of our larger series defining student success under WIOA.

Slide 2: A little outline of what we're going to go over today; we're going to begin with some fundamental informational standards in general, from general understanding of standards all the way into educational standards and then talk a little bit about why. Why have standards? What do they do? How do they help us in education? And then I want to spend some time on how we developed our new standards here in Texas and revised them from the historical standards that have been used for over a decade. Then talk about the organization of the standards themselves, what do they look like, how are they situated and then share with you our rollout strategy for this year with an exciting series of professional development and coaching sessions to help local programs go through the heavy lifting of implementing the standards and revising curriculum.

Slide 3: So little background just what standards are in general.

Slide 4: They are agreements that contain technical specifications that are used as guidelines to ensure a process, material, a product, or service addresses the purpose for which the user expects them to address.

Slide 5: So examples are very common to us in industry and really focus around providing a framework or a building block for the development of a process or the implementation of a service or those kind of things to ensure that there is compatibility, that things work together, and that customer safety and public health are protected. So we have health and safety standards that we're very familiar with to ensure that our food is protected, or that when we go into the health care system for health care support, there are some level of uniformity in how that service is delivered, how that medication is prescribed, etc. In our everyday life, the metric and standard measurement systems are frequently referred to as kind of a very fundamental standard across products. In industry, there's a wide variety of other standards, you'll see them known as ISO standards (International Organization for Standardization) and they really help develop standards that are used all across the world.

Slide 6: In education, we see standards everywhere and they been very much in the forefront of our lives the last twenty or thirty years in education. In Texas, we're familiar with the TEKS in the K-12 system but even something as fundamental as grade level is a standardization. When someone says third grade all across United States, there's a general level of understanding of what that individual can do at the third grade level. Although, as we know, in education there's great variability across the state for sure in sometimes functioning levels. But sometimes if you ask someone from another country, how many years of school that been to and they say "Oh up to a level three," sometimes there is a lot different understanding of what a level three is from other countries than it is in the United States. That's because other countries have a different general level of standardization for their education system. We have certifications in workforce training that we're familiar with. So something that's common as CNA, even embraces that certification and title of certified nursing aide and that means that that individual that's working in long term care has the fundamentals of what it takes to be an effective caregiver, in a long term care situation. They've gone through a certification here in Texas, by the state of Texas that provides that certification. So it's a level of standardization employers that hire CNAs, if that individual has the Texas certification, they know yes- indeed, this individual has a certain level of skill sets that would be required for the job.

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Slide 7: It's important to understand that standards are not curriculum but they do provide kind of a roadmap for a systematic use of curriculum to schools, communities, and educators could use their own curriculum. The standards don't prescribe a certain curriculum, and then that curriculum has to be reviewed to what extent it aligns to the standards. So these standards provide kind of clear roadmap for educators to design specific student performance indicators and drive instructional practice and influence curriculum and how curriculum is developed, used and modified to meet the standards.

Slide 8: Essentially they confirm the skills, abilities and knowledge that are needed and can be aligned with assessments to help determine whether students are attaining those essential skills

Slide 9: Standards are set at exit level so they represent mastery at any particular content domain, reading, math, English as a second language, and then it is set at the exit level. So when you look at a standard and read it, that means at this level the individual should be able to do these types of benchmarks. They approximate the administration of mastery of these contents and skills and they offer educators and students a transparent view of what it's expected at exit. So I'm really eager to see standards not just as something that the education professional is using, but something that really becomes transparent to the student. So when you develop a syllabus for a class, students want to know: *where am I going, how far do I need to get in this level that exit mastery level.* It will be very transparent to the student this class will offer skills to get you to these levels. So I really hope we can build to a level of that type of transparency for the individual because students want to know where they're going and they want to know how far they need to develop skills to get there. And so across, I think the promises that really across all stakeholders are gauges preparedness for college entry, for job training, and really for entry and middle skilled employment.

Slide 10: So for background and history on the requirements, we started this journey couple years ago with the passage of the WIOA (Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act) and have been digging in ever since.

Slide 11: So some history, first, we first established in Texas our content standards back in 2008. Some of you that were in adult education at that time, might been involved in that process. I was and I found it a very invigorating and exciting process in something where were you instrumental in getting me more and more engaged in the profession of adult education and literacy. That same really the next year I was also fortunate to work as Texas adopted the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards (known as the TCCRS.) And those are really some of the first college and career readiness standards in the United States. Some work had been done in the interim to our new standards were rolling out today with a gap analysis that was done to determine to what extent the adult education standards and the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards align and that was done in 2011. Always catching up with Texas, the Federal College and Career Readiness Standards were adopted 2013 but we don't use those here in Texas, of course, we use our Texas College and Career Readiness Standards. In 2014, WIOA was passed, and then, in 2016, we're releasing these revised standards starting really right now. This webinar is our first foray into a public roll-out of the standards. In 2017, this is going to be a requirement in year 4 contracts for adult education and literacy. The current contract actually requested in the proposal process how states or programs are using standards but we didn't have a hard requirement to use the standards, mainly because they were from 2008 (the old standards) and we knew we were going to change them so we didn't want to continue to require programs to use the old standards. But that requirement is coming up for us now up in 2017, but I'll talk more about that in a minute.

Slide 12: So here's a requirement language if you're interested, this is a sneak peek into the year

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4 contract but we will have an instructional delivery requirement that instructional services are aligned to standards.

Slide 13: Of course all of this has a federal requirement and that's really what generated, or really helped us, to invigorate us to revise the standards. We had a requirement back July 1st, actually to revise our standards and align them to be K-12 standards. That's what that federal requirement you see here, the reference to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965; that's really the act that governs K-12 system. A large parts of it, it's now called the "Every Student Succeeds Act." So federal requirement is to take the adult ed standards and align them to K-12 ostensibly to ensure that individuals getting high school equivalency through adult education are meeting K-12 graduation standards. So you'll see that we went way beyond that in terms of developing our standards and aligning them to certain other standards and I'll describe that in a bit, but that's the federal requirement.

Slide 14: So what does it mean to you as a practitioner, to you as program coordinator, to you as a curriculum development specialist, or director? So I want to talk a little bit about enhancing student service delivery.

Slide 15: So the promise of standards, really is for all of us to have an opportunity to think about how we can affect change to promote greater student success. That standards confirm kind of a range of knowledge and skills that learners should have while they're in our adult education and literacy classes. It helps us to measure knowledge and skills and to communicate that development of knowledge and skills with learners themselves. Then it really helps us in a curriculum development exercise to ensure that the textbooks we use, the curriculum that teachers develop and work to find other resources to augment their learning activities or curriculum that's developed by programs is aligned to a certain criteria that is going to help students achieve the expected goals, and get them to their real world outcomes of high school equivalency, entry into work, entry into college, and with the development of English skills.

Slide 16: It helps us have really shared understanding across our partner agencies, amongst ourselves and with learners to work more efficiently in planning, and reviewing, and implementing our work, the delivery of educational services.

Slide 17: The new standards are pretty ambitious when you look at them and this is really a reflection of what is required in education, in college entry, training, and in a work requirement. So the standards are going to really raise the bar across our mathematics curriculum, our English language arts and literacy, and our English as a second language where we really I think branch into some new domains also. I think it also means that we've got to really think about our professional development in a very concentrated way and really challenge ourselves with the types of staff that we're hiring for our programs. And really think about does our incumbent work force have the skills needed to teach some of this, if not we change our job descriptions and outreach to individuals that do have the knowledge and skills to teach at these higher levels and more rigorous content. So I think it's that's kind of the big shake up I think that is going to really make us pay attention to how our instructional delivery is going to have to really dramatically transform to really at the end of the day deliver students their success they come to us looking for. It going to really have a look at a wide variety of areas not just curriculum, but also instruction, instructional requirements, and then, of course, professional development to help individuals understand and implement the standards and curriculum.

Slide 18 15:18 : So mathematics we see a greater lift towards a more advanced algebra, and geometry. As well as, data analysis and statistics and this is really aiming towards college readiness

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and what work requirements have. As well as, of course, what we've seen really for a few years now the increased rigor and our high school equivalency exams available to those here at Texas.

Slide 19: English Language Arts has a much more robust analytic in reasoning the skill requirement. As well as, combining oral and written communication language within ELA.

Slide 20: And then English as a second language. I think that's going to have some of the most change and it gives me pause because I know in Texas that it's our largest population; over sixty percent of our students in our program are in English as a second language. So that's a lot of students, that's a lot of curriculum and it's a lot of instructors. So here we do see some of the more dramatic changes not only in their requirements of the curriculum in speaking and listening but really branching into two domains that we have not traditionally done very much heavy lifting in and that reading and writing for English language learners. And so this is really going to be I think a big curriculum development area for us to consider, as well as something that we're going to have to be very, very conscious of as far as our professional development. So a big population of students and a big impact I think in terms of our instructional workforce, our curriculum development needs, and our service delivery. So this is something I'm taking very seriously, I've been talking to our leadership about that here in terms of what we need to provide support to the field but if you're a director out there I think this is an area to pay attention to because there's going to be a lot of work needed to be done in making sure we have the right people, teaching the right content, and that we get our curriculum aligned.

Slide 21: This increased rigor is something really we see coming at it from all directions. Our new national reporting system performance level descriptors require this greater rigor and those will be implemented soon as there is a standardized assessment test available to measure against the standard. So I want to take this moment to kind of talk about where we are. We're kind of at a place where many of you will say, "OK well higher standards more rigor, I get that, but how do we measure it?" You will see it this is going to be really a multi-year process because when new standards get developed, they raise the bar, textbooks, curriculum have to get to that bar and then and the bars not only higher but sometimes it's just more articulated and nuanced across the skills. And then, of course, we need a new assessment test and that process takes a long time. So at the federal level there is a call right now for test development happening; I know certain test developers have tests, I think, some of them coming out this summer. So we'll start to see a rollout of new tests that will become adopted by the feds and used in our programs to help measure the new skills that we see embedded in the standards. So the new NRS performance level descriptors that are included in the standards document as an appendix to that we can review them. They are available for us to review; we use them in the standard but there is not currently a test to measure them. The department of feds and say, here are the standards you can see there but we are not going to require using that tool till test developers actually develop test to align to them. So it's exciting, I think it's going to be very exciting for us to go through this but we're kind of in the middle of it. Sometimes that's less comfortable for some people because they want to kind of have it done, they want to have everything but these things are complicated. We want to get them right and I want you to know as we roll out our standards here in Texas, I'm all about continuous improvement and making mid-course adjustments. So better communication back up to TWC and to me will help make sure that we're hitting this at the right place to really get to that core mission of student success. But as I mentioned this increased rigor, this elevated rigor is something we've already seen in our high school equivalency tests that have been released in the last few years and, of course, we know college and employment skill requirements are going up further and further. The dialogues and the discussion about employment has been in our forefront for many years now but, you know, the idea that the skills that somebody had forty years ago are no longer something you can have a middle class job built on. In college, of course, we see this dynamic where there's just an increasing number of

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individuals in developmental education because the standards in college are high and educational systems have to get there and many, many students are coming in not prepared. So in adult education, we've got to really raise our bar at exit at those high levels to meet these requirements. Nobody in adult education listening to this webinar would want to have students exiting, getting high school equivalency and then ending up in developmental education but unfortunately that is common right now because we just haven't got the rigor built in our system. So to me it's a clarion call, it the clear mandate that we've got to really increase our rigor could develop for students and develop on their goals and aspirations for success.

Slide 22: So it's a great opportunity for us. It raises our expectation and it raises the expectations for students to really help us tell students, you know, when you get in with class this is where we need to get, we're here to support you but it really gives students that clear vision of what it's going to take to help them reach their goal and I think this is important. It's so important for us to be transparent with students, for us to be honest with them. They come us... they know they're under skilled... they're coming in but we have to do our due diligence to be clear with them and understanding what the process looks like, how we fit into that process so that they can go to college and that they can get that job that will help lift them out of poverty, or that they can pass that certification or get a high school equivalency. It helps get stakeholders involved not just here in adult education but with our colleges, with our workforce development partners, our VR partners, vocational rehabilitation, to have a common vocabulary of goals of where we're going. It helps us improve the curriculum and instruction, and assessment, of course, which is kind of the fundamental where the rubber meets the road for our instructors out there. And then our professional development has got to be developed further to help our programs reach these new levels of rigor. For directors it really helps you hold teachers accountable for what a high quality education in adult education and literacy looks like. It helps us build multi-faceted assessment models, not just testing but comprehensive assessment that help articulate our goals in our programs, so that when program directors do in service they can say this is where we were in exiting students at these levels, so let's get here to a new level next year or this year. And then it really helps us in our community raise awareness about how we fit into the larger education complex or system, and shows that goal that adult education is a strong learner and a very serious partner with our colleges, with our universities and with our K-12 systems because standards really help raise that level of seriousness and commitment, I think, to a strong educational foundation.

Slide 23: So let's talk about sources what we've built our standards on, the process, who are the people that did it and then our next steps.

Slide 24: The process was one that I was very excited to work on with a very invigorating team. It was led by Texas State University who was a contractor for the standards development and then we had a strong working group of practitioners, many of you probably listening to this webinar now

Slide 25: Let me just kind of share who those individuals were. We drew from education at all ranks from K-12, adult education and literacy and community college with some university researchers in there but then also from workforce, from adult education and from our development education areas in particular because, remember, we're trying to reach into what work requires, what college requires, and then we had just a great group of practitioners, some of our directors out there such strong partners and then a lot of new partners that we brought in that just really created wonderful meetings and discussions. So our mathematics work group here you see a lot of names that are probably familiar with and some that are not you could see we really were fortunate to get these individual time dedicated to really working on the heavy lifting of developing the standards.

Slide 26: In English Language Arts and Literacy, we have another great group of individuals that

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worked on this from our community college system, in particular. Also, some folks from industry and folks who have a deep background but I think one of the areas that was very interesting was this migration of how technology and distance learning and e-learning influences learning in general and that was reflected with some individuals in these work groups.

Slide 27: Then English as a Second Language remember this area that I think we really are building out quite a bit, we see again another group of individuals that were very very involved in this work and have great deep background an ESL area. So great team and I want to thank them for their efforts and I think the product that resulted of this is really outstanding.

Slide 28: So the sources that I mentioned earlier the federal requirement was really to align to the TEKS or the standards using K-12 but we went far beyond that because we wanted to really make sure we were hitting, not just what high school exit requires, but also what work requires and what college requires. So you see here we not only look at our STAAR end of course exams, our TEKS, but also our high school equivalency tests, the TSIA (Texas Success Initiative Assessment), of course, the NRS guideline descriptors, the CCRS (College and Career Readiness Standards) at the federal level, as well as our Texas ones. And then we look at other kind of widely recognized education standards, such as the TESOL standards and the CASAS standards which are widely recognized in adult education and literacy as both strong standards that cut across states, cut across federal requirement and really represent what practice requires in adult education.

Slide 29: So here's a little bit about the process. As we mentioned there's the standards kind of provide foundation for curriculum that really describes what is taught at each of the levels and then the instruction is how the content is taught. Curriculum and instruction, we see, are going to be areas where there's going to need to be quite a bit of an enhancement and I think especially in areas such as English as a second language and I would say also in high level math where I think we really have a deficit in terms of a deep bench of curriculum and of instructors out there and that's where we want to get. We have a big push to increase our ninth to twelfth grade-level students in the state, that's a small population for us; we don't have a lot of students and thus we don't have a lot of those instructors and a lot of curriculum. So I think it's an area of growth for us here in Texas and I'm going to try and find many different ways to facilitate that as possible. And then, of course, assessment is how we measure this and this is something I mentioned earlier: standardized assessments will follow soon but that assessment at the formative stages and the exit levels are things that also local developed assessments will be very necessary, teacher developed assessments to help students understand how far they're meeting those requirements and meeting the new levels while they're in instruction.

Slide 30: So let's talk a little bit about how the standards are organized. When you look at them what will they look at look like and I want to let everyone know I'm sending a hard copy of the standards out to the directors this week and then we will be making those available online. As well as, at our events coming up in the next few months which I'll talk more about at the end of the webinar.

Slide 31: So first up the standard cover three domain: mathematics, English language arts and literacy and then English as a Second Language.

Slide 32: And then this is kind of an example, generic example, of how they are laid out and I'll show you kind of what this really looks like with one domain. So here you have a content standard and then there will be a subarea standard that's designated by different types of font and then the content standards itself with the benchmarks.

Slide 33: But what does it really look like, well here we see English Language Arts and Literacy as

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the content area, the subarea is reading and then the standard is vocabulary development. Understanding vocabulary in content and use them accurately in reading, speaking and writing. And then benchmarks, at exit, of what students need to be able to in subarea 1.2. So that kind of what they all look like and it's very detailed and this is where that work group was spending so much time, identifying the language, parsing the words, arm wrestling with how they want to describe them and I think they've done a great job in that area.

Slide 34: So let's talk about the rollout what it's going to look like over the next few months and I want to say we kind of established a plan for the next year but it's also a plan that is going to be continuously improved based on input and how things are effectively being put together.

Slide 35: So right now, 2017-18 I want to say there will be a concentrated effort of professional development happening that will include coaching at the local area. So this is not something where we're going to be a couple of big events and let you go at it alone; there's going to be quite a bit of concentrated effort and local support because I am anticipating this to be a heavy lift with us in adult education and literacy. I want to make sure that we provide the commensurate support as we roll things out. There will be monitoring by us, in terms of just review of how is it going so that we can make sure that we administer the right levels of support to get our programs aligned in such a way. In then, in May and June, we're going to have really the rollout of the coaches for each program area identified. There will be commitment letters that will be described in our big rollout event here coming up on April 19th in Austin which you've been invited to and I think we actually are full now. We have directors and related staff signed up for this event coming up in April and that's really our big rollout this coaching model and the standards themselves. And then at our summer institute in June we're going to have a progress report of how's it going, what do we need and that will be our first major check in. By December of 2017, will be our first really requirement of implementation. So from now in March till December programs will have that period to really start to develop curriculum, to align curriculum, to adjust, and enhance curriculum to the standards. And then in 2018, there's actually a phase two coming. We have a project that's being implemented soon, that are going to take the standards as they are developed and align them to what work requires at the entry and middle or intermediate level in certain sectors. So the health care science sector, advance manufacturing, construction and extraction, and transportation distribution and logistics. So the academic side of the standards isn't going to change but there will be kind of indicators of what an individual needs to do for entry level work in math for health care, or for construction, or for transportation. So that's going to really help us communicate to students and help us understand what work requires and what, of course, the certification and training of that work also requires. I'm really excited about that; they'll be a phase two of this and so it'll be really a multi-year roll out for us because then they'll be training and work has to be done around that in terms of preparing the field. So that's the plan as it stands, and I expect it to change. I think we want to tackle something like this, we really want to be listening well to make sure that we get it right. Because at the end of day, if students aren't learning, and the standard aren't being implemented fully and instructors aren't well supported, we've really accomplished very little. I'm going to keep a close eye on this and want to hear from you as we roll things out.

Slide 36: So that's the conclusion of the webinar, I'm real happy that you viewed it. I hope you use it in kind of meetings with your teams to kind of talk about this and how you want to implement it. Everyone's going to have a different plan but we're going to have an overarching frame work to support you in that plan. So with that I'll going to close the webinar, and I want to thank you for your time.