

# Wyoming Community College Commission

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## Policy Letter Adult Basic Education

To: Adult Basic Education Directors

From: Marcia Hess, Wyoming State ABE Program Manager  
Wyoming Community College Commission

Date: January 26, 2011

Subject: **State Assessment Policy Revised for FY 2010-2011 revised**  
Section 10 – WY ABE Policy Manual

Policy Number: ABE11-01

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Policy Letter ABE09-03 is repealed and replaced with this Policy Letter ABE11-01.

## Part I. Introduction and State Context

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### Need for Assessment

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA – Title II) and the National Reporting System (NRS) require states “local adult education programs must assess students using standardized pre- post assessments to report educational gain measures.” Adult learner educational gains are namely, gains in the development of basic English literacy, language skills, and/or numeracy skills. The NRS specifically requires that adult education programs (ABE) assess and place each student into NRS educational functioning levels at intake and at least one other time during the year to determine and document the academic progress of each student.

The Act establishes five (5) core indicators that will be used to assess state performance:

- Demonstrated improvements in literacy skill levels in reading, writing, and speaking the English language, numeracy, problem solving, English language acquisition, and other literacy skills;
- Entered employment;
- Retained employment;
- Obtained a GED® or secondary school diploma;
- Entered postsecondary education or training.

Pursuant to the Act, the U.S. Department of Education has promulgated rules that require the State to have a written assessment policy that its local eligible providers must follow in measuring educational gain and reporting data in the NRS. The state must submit its assessment policy to the Secretary of Education for review and approval each year at the time it submits its annual statistical report for the NRS.

It is critical for programs to administer assessments in a standardized and consistent way to help preserve data *validity* and *reliability*. *Validity* is how well an instrument measures what it is intended to measure. This relates to the NRS educational functioning levels for ASE, ABE and ESL. *Reliability* is how well an instrument performs similarly with use. It is very important that assessments are uniformly implemented and data be comparable across Wyoming and at the national level. With the implementation of the Wyoming ABE funding formula that ties increased educational functioning levels to local program funding it is more critical that comparability of testing be uniform across the state.

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## Purpose of Assessment

Accurate assessment of student educational gain is critical because it helps:

- Establish state appropriate performance standards for program accountability;
- Ensure the collection and reporting of quality data;
- Sustain continued funding for local programs;
- Accurately inform programs and students about their basic skill levels;
- Better equip students to set appropriate goals;
- Monitor program and student progress toward goals;
- Guide and motivate students to be actively involved in their learning;
- Determine the extent to which instructors are meeting student needs;
- Provide programs and instructors with information to improve instruction.

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## Policy Overview

This policy is intended to help ensure accuracy and consistency across programs in assessment administration and data collection/reporting. Additionally, the policy will identify and explain such important issues as:

- Approved assessments to measure student educational gain;
- Appropriate administration of pre- and post-tests;
- Appropriate reporting of student advancement.

## General Requirements

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### Wyoming Approved Assessments

The assessments approved for Wyoming ABE programs are as follows:

- TABE<sup>®</sup> 9 & 10
- TABE CLAS-E<sup>®</sup>
- BEST Plus<sup>®</sup>
- BEST Literacy<sup>®</sup>

- WorkKeys®

It is required that all eligible students being served with adult education funding are to be pretested after orientation and before goal setting activities. At the latest a student should be pretested before 12 hours of attendance especially in the case of English as a Second Language student with limited English proficiency.

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

Programs may not use other performance-based or homegrown assessments for reporting to the State for NRS purposes. However, programs are encouraged to use their own placement tests, diagnostic assessments in reading, and other informal assessments that provide additional, useful instructional information to teachers and students.

Programs may use the results of tests for the NRS, only if the test was administered in a manner that is consistent with the State's assessment policy and the test publisher's guidelines. The testing must be administered with a trained teacher or proctor present.

For additional clarification and technical assistance, contact the ABE director at the Wyoming Community College Commission at (307) 777-7885.

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## Part II. General Assessment Requirements

The use of standardized assessments is essential to ensure that all adult students are placed at the appropriate level of Instruction. All local ABE providers must measure the education gain of all students receiving 12 or more hours of instruction with an NRS-approved assessment.

Programs must follow these important guidelines when assessing students:

- Each test publisher describes the use of a locator or pre-assessment tool if it is require for determining initial level to begin testing.
- Use the test scores and educational level descriptors found in *Exhibit A, B, & E* as criteria for placing students at the appropriate NRS educational functioning levels.
- Determine educational gain by comparing the initial (pre-test) educational functioning level to the level attained on the post-test. If a student is not post-tested, then no advancement can be determined.
- Testing for NRS reporting must be conducted face-to-face in a secure, proctored setting with a trained test administrator.
- Assessments should be given under good logistical conditions (i.e., well-lit, quiet space, adherence to time limits).
- Instructors and advisors must have access to assessment results and counsel with students on academic progress.
- If a student has a high school diploma or GED® and is seeking adult education services, they must provide a legitimate reason for these services. Lack of sufficient mastery of basic educational skills to enable the individual to function effectively in society is considered a legitimate reason to seek adult education services.

## Test Administration Requirements

All programs must ensure the following procedures are in place and implemented.

### Pretesting

- All TABE students are to be administered the locator to identify the level for initial pre-testing.
- All students enrolled in an ABE or ASE level program must be assessed using TABE 9 & 10 (levels L, E, M, D or A) or WorkKeys and ESL students must be assessed using one of the approved assessments including BEST or TABE CLAS-E. These are the only assessments that can be used for student placement and to document the Educational Functioning Level (EFL).
- Programs should follow publisher guidelines for test administration.
- Pre-testing must occur at student orientation or prior to the completion of 12 hours of participation in an ABE or ESL program, ideally, at intake or soon thereafter and utilized when setting goals.
- **All students shall be officially enrolled in LACES upon completion of the registration/intake form, orientation and one hour of instruction.**
  - The hours spent in orientation, assessment, goal setting, working in the classroom, and working with the instructor or in online approved distant learning curriculum shall count toward the student's total attendance hours.
- Allowable attendance is any time a student is working in the center, in an approved online distance learning program, or spending time with an instructor, other than GED testing time.
- Within a program year, if a student "stops-out" of class and then returns after an absence of less than 180 days (six months), a new pretest should not be given.
- Pre- and post-testing must use different test forms of an approved assessment (for example, TABE Form 9, Level D for pre-test and TABE Form 10, Level D for post-test).
- The lowest test score in a subject area should be used to determine a student's entry level. One subject area of an assessment, such as reading or math, may be used. The assessment should be in areas in which instruction will be focused to facilitate student goal achievement.
  - When a student wants to work on a subject area that is not the lowest EFL, then the center/instructor/student will decide at the beginning of the year and that subject area will be chosen in LACES. For example, if a student receives a low score in reading and writing but wants to work on math, then math will be the subject tracked and assessed in LACES.
    - If a subject area is different from the lowest assessed area, it is recommended that a notation be made in the student's comment section of LACES and in the student's hard copy permanent file.
  - If more than one subject area falls within the same educational functioning level (EFL), LACES will default to reading and will track reading. However, LACES allows the subject area to be changed to math, if the subject placed the student in the same EFL as reading, and that is the student's preferred study area. Language may be used if math and reading are at the highest level and language is needed to qualify a student for ABE services.

### Post-testing

- The length of time between the pre- and post-tests must be long enough to allow the test to measure educational gains according to the test publisher's guidelines.
- See *Exhibit A* for publishers' recommended post-test intervals.

- Before post-testing, the State requires that instructors use professional judgment and students complete an appropriate curriculum based on their academic assessments and diagnostics to determine if the student is ready for post-testing.
- Programs should consider these factors that will influence learning proficiency gains when determining timing for post-testing; intensity of instruction, duration of classes, class size, teacher training and experience, and use of and completion of appropriate curricula and materials.
- Before post-testing, the State requires that students receive **the publisher recommended** hours of instruction.
  - **Recommendation for Low ASE and High ASE (NRS levels 5 & 6) students:**
    - **Only ABE** students placed in Low ASE and High ASE levels (tested with TABE) may be assessed after 30-59 hours of instruction when using alternate forms of the test. 120 hours of instruction is required if the same level and form of the assessment is used.
    - Testing before the time designated by the publisher should not occur.
    - The following must be in place when sending High ASE students for GED testing post test:
      - Staff confirm the student has a goal(s) in LACES to **Obtain Employment, Retain Employment, Obtain a GED and/or Transition to Post Secondary Education**; and
      - The student **must have a minimum of 30 hours of instruction**; and
      - For students using the GED as their post-test for completion, proof or readiness to test on the GED by scoring a minimum of 450 – 500 on the GED Official Practice Test(s) and:
        - Results placed in the student file;
        - documented in LACES; and
        - this will be monitored by the State of Wyoming’s ABE office.
  - **Recommendation for Low & High Beginning ABE and Low and High Intermediate ABE (NRS levels 1-4) students:**
    - **Only ABE** students placed in Low & High Beginning and Low and High Intermediate levels (tested with TABE) may be assessed after 50-60 hours of instruction when **using alternate forms of the test** with a minimum of 40 hours. The State requires having **no more than 20% of NRS levels 1-4** students be post tested before 50 hours of instruction.
    - 120 hours of instruction is required if the same level and form of the assessment is used.
    - Testing before the time designated by the publisher should not occur.
    - The following must be in place when sending Low & High Beginning and Low and High Intermediate level students for post testing:
      - Staff confirms the student has **a minimum of 50 hours of instruction between post-testing sessions, or**
      - has documented through informal assessment the students readiness to test and **requested a waiver** from the local director **and the percentage of waivers is tracked.**
  - **Recommendation for all ESL NRS Levels using TABE CLAS-E:**
    - For alternate form testing, CTB recommends 60-95 hours of instruction (i.e., A2 to B2) with a minimum of 50 hours.
    - For same form testing CTB recommends– 100-140 hours of instruction (i.e., A2 to A2).
  - **Recommendation for all ESL NRS Levels using BEST Plus:**
    - 60 hours minimum, or at end of instructional session that exceeds the 60 hours (i.e., 6 week, quarter or semester classes).
- All programs must strive to achieve or exceed the State’s post-test standard. For program year 2010-2011, the **post-test rate standard is 30%**. (This percentage will increase in subsequent years).
- Affected students may be post-tested and/or re-assessed as described in the individual publisher’s user manuals:
  - the end of the instructional session, i.e., end of 50-60 hours and/or managed enrollment class period, or

- a student must be re-assessed after he/she has had an instructional lapse in services for more than 180 consecutive days.
- Those classes with intensive instruction, such as corrections or ESL classes should post test no more than quarterly or at the end of a managed enrollment class providing the class has enough hours to meet the minimum hours instruction for post testing.
- The setting of additional EFL gains after the initial goal being set and met for the year is not necessary.
- For continuing students - If a student is attending class at the end of the program year and continues into the program at the beginning of the next program year, that student's contact hours from the previous year carries over and counts toward the post-testing hour requirement in the new program year. For example, a student enrolls in an adult education class in March and accumulates 37 hours of instruction by June 30. She/he continues with the class when it resumes in July. The student only has to make up the difference in required instruction hours for their level to be eligible to post-test. This requires that the student be rolled forward in the MIS from the immediate past year. The student must not be separated from the ABE program in the prior year (absent from class for 90 days, federal law requires that the student be dropped/separated from the class with no exceptions.) The student must also have had a pretest or post-test between January 1 and June 30 of the prior program year.
- Late re-entry or "stop-out" students that have been in attendance during the last quarter of the previous year (April – June). You may push forward assessments not older that 6 months and consider instructional hours obtained between January and June when calculating time for post-testing.

## General Data Entry

- Student scaled scores must be entered in the LACES database and the appropriate grade level.
- All interim and post-test results must be entered into LACES **by the 5<sup>th</sup> of the each month**. If more than one assessment is given in the same subject area, the latest assessment determines educational functioning level completion or advancement. Program's should use the lowest subject area test score to determine a student's progress unless the student and center have decided to use the student's preferred subject area, as discussed previously.
  - Regardless of what subject area is chosen, the student must be tracked and assessed within the same subject area.
  - **The state will check quarterly and verify data entry during monitoring visits.**
- Assessments are good for six months from the date administered when used for eligibility for entrance into the program or re-entry after an extended absence or separation from class.
- Students may be co-enrolled in ESL **and** ABE or ASE program. If co-enrolled, the student should be enrolled in LACES in the program in which they can demonstrate progress (e.g., if a student tops out on the BEST assessment at the end of a program year, then the TABE should be administered to determine the level for the next year; the posttest, then, should also be given in TABE. This person should be enrolled in ABE on LACES.)
- The LACES database allows the most recent assessment (the one a student is to be tracked in for the new year) to be pushed forward when a returning student enrolls in the new program year.
  - Official Practice Tests (OPTs) **should not** be pushed forward in LACES, as this is not an approved NRS assessment and will cause problems in LACES if attempting to push these forward.
  - Official Practice Tests (OPTs) can be tracked either in LACES Assessments or in the LACES Student General Comment section. Note the assessment date, subject area, form, and score in the General Comment section.
    - Please note if listing OPTs in the Student Comment section of LACES, this data cannot be exported later.
  - Official Practice Tests (OPTs) must be administered as you would any standardized test and not used as a diagnostic instrument. It is only to determine readiness for taking the GED.

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## Assessment Training

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

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

Local programs are responsible for using lead instructors, who attend statewide training, to train new staff. Statewide training will be coordinated by the State ABE office, at state conference or by request. Local programs must ensure that all staff members assigned to administer or score tests or to conduct intake are trained on test publisher guidelines, recommendations, and scoring procedures. Programs must pay particular attention to assessments that require certification for test administration i.e., BEST Plus. (See *Exhibit A*.)

In general, programs and assigned staff must follow these training guidelines for administering all assessments:

- Read the publisher manual, study examples provided and work through any practice exercises.
- Become familiar with the assessment, its tests, procedures, instructions, and scoring rules.
- Practice giving the tests several times to colleagues or non-student volunteers before actual test administration.
- If recommended by publisher guidelines, experienced local examiners should provide training to new test administrators and provide refresher trainings as recommended by publisher.
- Data entry personnel must be familiar with proper assessment guidelines, proper data entry protocol, and NRS guidelines see [www.nrsweb.org](http://www.nrsweb.org).
- For each training, programs must keep a copy of the syllabus, including topics covered, along with a record of all trainers and trainees. The state office will monitor these training documents.

Pre- and in-service training, refresher information, and guidance are offered upon request of the ABE State office and will generally be conducted in conjunction with other conferences and/or meetings around the state. When new instruments or forms are added to the assessment list, training is provided in their use. The State maintains copies of syllabi and records of all trainers and trainees for each of the trainings they provide.

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## Student Accommodations

Programs must consider individual student needs when providing accommodations. Programs are responsible for providing accessible services and for ensuring that these services meet reasonable criteria. In addition, reasonable accommodations are to be provided at no cost to the student.

### Administrative responsibilities for accommodations:

Local programs can best service students with disabilities by becoming aware, being informed, encouraging students to self-identify, keeping current student documentation on file, and helping protect student rights under the law.

Programs need to provide reasonable accommodations once a student **discloses** a disability and **requests** accommodations. The program will need current documentation, including an evaluation and official diagnosis by a qualified professional diagnostician. The documentation should describe the nature and extent of the disability and state specific recommendations for the accommodation(s) the student may need to participate effectively. Complete documentation will not only provide the basis for setting realistic expectations and student goals, but will also help facilitate the learning process, help students make appropriate requests for assistance, and increase the likelihood of success.

The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS), Office for Civil Rights (OCR), places *no* obligation on an institution to determine appropriate accommodations. Further, it is up to the student to advise the institution if accommodations are *not* effective.

To comply with Section 504 and ADA administrative requirements, programs should arrange to:

- Have access to a designated Section 504/ADA coordinator.
- Provide public and internal notice that the institution/organization does not discriminate based on disability.
- Have access to an established grievance policy/procedure. If the program is part of a larger institution/organization, staff members should become familiar with the grievance policy in place. In addition, enrolled students should receive information describing the grievance process.
- Provide reasonable access and accommodations for qualified students.

### **Identifying students in need of accommodation:**

All students are informed during orientation of their right to request accommodations. Adult students with disabilities are responsible for providing information on and documentation of their disability. Documentation may include such items as a physician's report, a diagnostic assessment from a qualified professional diagnostician, Individual Education Plan (IEP) records, a vocational rehabilitation report, and/or report from other service providers.

### **Testing students in need of accommodation:**

For testing and placing special populations and students with self-disclosed disabilities, programs must:

- Comply within the guidance set by ADA - Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008
- All documented disabilities will be accommodated in a testing situation following each publisher's recommended guidelines. The following test manuals should be consulted. See *Exhibit A* for publisher contacts.
  - TABE – Test of Adult Basic Education, CTB/McGraw-Hill
  - TABE CLAS-E - Test of Adult Basic Education - Complete Language Assessment System, CTB/McGraw-Hill
  - Best Plus – Basic English Skills Test, Center for Applied Linguistics
  - Best Literacy - Basic English Skills Test, Center for Applied Linguistics
  - WorkKeys – ACTs WorkKeys Assessment, ACT WorkKeys
- If a student will be requesting any of the accommodations available for GED testing, the same accommodations should be available during classroom study and for administration of the TABE or BEST Plus assessments and the Official GED Practice Tests. See Appendices for a list of "GED Accommodations Available." Contact your local GED Chief Examiner for information regarding GED accommodations requiring documentations and approval.

## Quality Control

All instructors are required to complete a student monthly attendance form for each class taught. This attendance form (paper or computerized), and any student data, including pre and post-test scores, are to be submitted to the local program director at the end of each month that classes are held. Data is to be entered by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month following attendance and testing.

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

- Every local program provider must have a minimum of two staff trained to administer the ABE and/or ESL assessments.
- Testing data must be entered into the program database within four (4) weeks of completion.
- Staff with assigned responsibility for assessment must be adequately trained and have a clear understanding of the instrument's administration (i.e., timing, scoring, determining appropriate NRS levels, etc.).
- If different staff members are assigned to assessment and data entry of results, the roles, responsibilities, tasks, interfaces with other agencies or programs, and verification and site review of records must be clearly communicated in writing. Assessment results must be kept in student files (electronic and/or paper) until the end of the seventh year as required by the State of Wyoming, or 3 years after the end of the grant whichever is longer, to ensure a full audit trail, if necessary.
  - Records may be archived off site in a secure location, provided the local program provides the State its program's security, record retrieval, record retention, and record destruction policy and procedure.
- The assessment results in permanent student files must match those in the program database.
- Each program is responsible to periodically assess personnel to assure consistency within the program and conformance with the assessment policy.

During program site visits, the State ABE office will review training documents, training of personnel, consistency of test administrators and data entry personnel, and understanding and conformance to the assessment policy by program personnel.

## Part III. Guidelines for Approved Assessments

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### Assessment Guidelines

This section discusses fundamental procedures for administering and reporting results on Wyoming ABE approved assessments. The guidelines may differ depending upon the selected instrument, as shown in the following table. Please refer to *Exhibits A and B* for further, detailed guidelines.

Instrument	Guidelines
TABE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Locator is required.</li> <li>▪ Pre- and post-testing must use different test forms of an approved assessment (for example, TABE Form 9, Level D for pre-test and TABE Form 10, Level D for post-test).</li> <li>▪ Use an alternate form and/or level if the student pre-tested at a level where they topped that level of the test. Consult publishers' guidelines for students pre-testing at a level where they topped that level of the test (<a href="http://www.ctb.com/">http://www.ctb.com/</a>).</li> <li>▪ Scores at entry and at the end are compared to measure student skill attainment.</li> <li>▪ The publisher discourages random and/or frequent testing.</li> <li>▪ Large print, Braille, and audio cassette versions of the assessment are available through the publisher.</li> </ul>
TABE CLAS-E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Locator is required.</li> <li>▪ Pre- and post-testing must use different test forms of an approved assessment (for example, TABE CLAS-E Form A for pre-test and TABE CLAS-E Form B for post-test).</li> <li>▪ Scores at entry and at the end are compared to measure student skill attainment.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The publisher discourages random and/or frequent testing.</li> <li>▪ Large print and audio cassette versions of the assessment are available through the publisher.</li> </ul>
BEST Plus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ BEST Plus tests oral proficiency only.</li> <li>▪ The computer-adaptive version can be given for pre- and post-testing.</li> <li>▪ With the semi-adaptive print version, use one form for pre-testing and a different form for post-testing.</li> <li>▪ Training to administer and score is required; contact Kelly Willmarth, LCCC and/or Laura Chew, WWCC for training opportunities (see <i>Exhibit A</i>).</li> <li>▪ At this time no standard instrument is available to assess for learning disabilities in the ESL population, best practices in teaching is the best alternative.</li> </ul>
BEST Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ BEST Literacy tests reading and writing proficiency only.</li> <li>▪ Use one form for pre-testing and a different form for post-testing.</li> <li>▪ Formal training is not required for administration; however, the test publisher recommends a thorough review of the BEST Literacy Test Manual to become familiar with proper testing and scoring procedures.</li> <li>▪ Reasonable accommodations may be made provided that they do not compromise the purpose of the test as a measure of reading and writing in English. CAL lists as permissible accommodations; the use of eyeglasses or magnifying glasses, earplugs, color overlays or unmarked straight edge rulers.</li> <li>▪ It is not an appropriate accommodation for someone to read the test questions to an examinee with sight impairment, as the BEST Literacy is a test of reading and writing.</li> </ul>
WorkKeys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Students should be enrolled in regular instruction offered by the program, i.e., a quarter/semester course or a program year course.</li> <li>▪ Font size adjustments for computer screen and print versions are available.</li> </ul>

## EXHIBIT A

## Wyoming Approved Assessment Instruments

Instrument/ Publisher Contact	Approved Forms	Approved Tests	Appropriate NRS Levels	Pre- and Post-Testing Intervals (Publisher Recommended)
<p><b>TABE</b> (Test of Adult Basic Education)</p> <p>Paula Brown <a href="mailto:Paula_e_brown@ctb.com">Paula_e_brown@ctb.com</a> 303.816.4538 CTB/McGraw-Hill Customer Service Department P.O. Box 881002 Indianapolis, IN 46208-1002 Phone orders: 800.538.9547 Fax orders: 800.282.0266 <a href="http://www.ctb.com">http://www.ctb.com</a></p> <p>Michael Johnson Product Manager, Adult Assessment Products <a href="mailto:Michaeld_johnson@ctb.com">Michaeld_johnson@ctb.com</a> 630-789-4586</p>	<p>Forms 9-10</p> <p>*Locator is required*</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reading</li> <li>▪ Language</li> <li>▪ Total Math</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All ABE/ASE NRS Levels</li> <li>▪ TABE may be used when testing out of Advanced ESL with BEST and if the program does not use TABE CLAS-E.</li> </ul>	<p>CTB/McGraw-Hill recommends 50-60 hours of instruction when testing with an alternate form (i.e. 9M to 10M) for students that test into NRS Levels 1-4 (ABE) with a minimum of 40 hours.</p> <p>For students testing into NRS Levels 5 and 6 (ASE Low and High) 30-59 hours of instruction is recommended.</p> <p>If the pre- and posttest are for with the same level and use the same form: 120 hours.</p> <p>CTB/McGraw-Hill suggests the pre- and post-test guidelines as best practices recommendations based upon practitioner feedback.</p> <p>CTB discourages random and frequent testing as it will not present valid gain scores and could create a practice effect, thus producing questionable or spurious scores. Instructional intervention between testing periods is strongly recommended.</p>
<p><b>TABE CLAS-E</b> (Test of Adult Basic Education – Complete Language Assessment System – English)</p> <p>Paula Brown <a href="mailto:Paula_e_brown@ctb.com">Paula_e_brown@ctb.com</a> 303.816.4538 CTB/McGraw-Hill Customer Service Department P.O. Box 881002 Indianapolis, IN 46208-1002 Phone orders: 800.538.9547 Fax orders: 800.282.0266 <a href="http://www.ctb.com">http://www.ctb.com</a></p> <p>Michael Johnson Product Manager, Adult Assessment Products <a href="mailto:Michaeld_johnson@ctb.com">Michaeld_johnson@ctb.com</a> 630-789-4586</p>	<p>Forms A and B</p> <p>*Locator is required*</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reading</li> <li>▪ Writing</li> <li>▪ ESL Listening</li> <li>▪ ESL Speaking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All ESL NRS Levels</li> </ul>	<p>For alternate form testing, CTB recommends 60-95 hours of instruction (i.e., A2 to B2) with a minimum of 50 hours.</p> <p>For same form testing CTB recommends– 100-140 hours of instruction (i.e., A2 to A2).</p> <p>CTB discourages random and frequent testing as it will not present valid gain scores and could create a practice effect, thus producing questionable or spurious scores. Instructional intervention between testing periods is strongly recommended.</p>

<p><b>BEST Plus</b> (Basic English Skills Test Plus) <i>Tests oral proficiency</i></p> <p>Frank Finamore <a href="mailto:frank@cal.org">frank@cal.org</a> BEST Plus Project Manager Center for Applied Linguistics 202.362.0700</p> <p>BEST Plus User Support <a href="http://www.cal.org">http://www.cal.org</a> <a href="mailto:best-plus@cal.org">best-plus@cal.org</a> 866.845.2378</p> <p>Certified WY Trainers contact: Kelly Willmarth 307.637.2403 <a href="mailto:kwillmar@ccc.wy.edu">kwillmar@ccc.wy.edu</a> Laura Chew 307.382.1829 <a href="mailto:lchew@wvcc.wy.edu">lchew@wvcc.wy.edu</a></p>	<p>Computer-adaptive or Print-Based (Forms A, B and C)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Computer (CD) and print-based versions <u>test oral proficiency only</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All ESL NRS Levels</li> </ul>	<p>60 hours minimum, 80-100 hours recommended or at end of a course of instruction. If the hours for a course of instruction exceeds the recommended number of hours, post-testing may most appropriately take place at the end of the instructional course or session.</p> <p>Because program-related factors such as intensity of instruction, class size, teacher training and experience, and use of appropriate curricula and materials will affect language learning proficiency gains, programs should consider these factors when determining timing for pre- and post-testing.</p>
<p><b>BEST Literacy</b> (Basic English Skills Test Literacy) <i>Tests reading and writing proficiency</i></p> <p>BEST Literacy User Support <a href="http://www.cal.org">http://www.cal.org</a> <a href="mailto:best-plus@cal.org">best-plus@cal.org</a> 866.845.2378</p>	<p>Forms B, C, and D</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reading and Writing <u>only</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All ESL NRS Levels</li> </ul>	<p>60 hours minimum; 80-100 hours recommended; or at end of instructional session that exceeds 60 hours</p>
<p><b>WorkKeys</b> (ACT's WorkKeys Assessment)</p> <p>ACT WorkKeys Customer Service 2727 Scott Boulevard P.O. Box 1008 Iowa City, Iowa 52243-1008 800.967.5539 <a href="http://www.act.org/workkeys/">http://www.act.org/workkeys/</a></p>	<p>WorkKeys Assessment Component</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reading for Information</li> <li>▪ Writing</li> <li>▪ Applied Math</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ High Intermediate Basic Education</li> <li>▪ Low Adult Secondary Education</li> <li>▪ High Adult Secondary Education</li> </ul>	<p>Each quarter, semester, or program year, as applicable</p>

See Publisher's notes for timing and use of locator tests.

## EXHIBIT B

## 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 Skills
<b>Beginning ABE Literacy (ABE)</b> TABE (9–10) scale scores: (grade level 0–1.9): Reading: 367 and below Total Math: 313 and below Language: 389 and below	Individual has no or minimal reading and writing skills. May have little or no comprehension of how print corresponds to spoken language and may have difficulty using a writing instrument. At the upper range of this level, individual can recognize, read, and write letters and numbers, but has a limited understanding of connected prose and may need frequent re-reading. Can write a limited number of basic sight words and familiar words and phrases; may also be able to write simple sentences or phrases, including very simple messages. Can write basic personal information. Narrative writing is disorganized and unclear, inconsistently uses simple punctuation (e.g., periods, commas, question marks), and contains frequent errors in spelling.	Individual has little or no recognition of numbers or simple counting skills or may have only minimal skills, such as the ability to add or subtract single digit numbers.	Individual has little or no ability to read basic signs or maps and can provide limited personal information on simple forms. The individual can handle routine entry-level jobs that require little or no basic written communication or computational skills and no knowledge of computers or other technology.
<b>Beginning Basic Education (ABE)</b> TABE (9–10) scale scores: (grade level 2–3.9): Reading: 368–460 Total Math: 314–441 Language: 390–490	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).	Individual can count, add, and subtract three digit numbers, can perform multiplication through 12, can identify simple fractions, and perform other simple arithmetic operations.	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.
<b>Low Intermediate Basic Education (ABE)</b> TABE (9–10) scale scores: (grade level 4–5.9): Reading: 461–517 Total Math: 442–505 Language: 491–523	Individual can read text on familiar subjects that have a simple and clear underlying structure (e.g., clear main idea, chronological order); can use context to determine meaning; can interpret actions required in specific written directions; can write simple paragraphs with a main idea and supporting details on familiar topics (e.g., daily activities, personal issues) by recombining learned vocabulary and structures; and can self and peer edit for spelling and punctuation errors.	Individual can perform with high accuracy all four basic math operations using whole numbers up to three digits and can identify and use all basic mathematical symbols.	Individual is able to handle basic reading, writing, and computational tasks related to life roles, such as completing medical forms, order forms, or job applications; and can read simple charts, graphs, labels, and payroll stubs and simple authentic material if familiar with the topic. The individual can use simple computer programs and perform a sequence of routine tasks given direction using technology (e.g., fax machine, computer operation). The individual can qualify for entry-level jobs that require following basic written instructions and diagrams with assistance, such as oral clarification; can write a short report or message to fellow workers; and can read simple dials and scales and take routine measurements.

**Notes:** 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.

SPL = student performance levels

TABE = Test of Adult Basic Education

TABE CLAS-E = Test of Adult Basic Education – Complete Language Assessment System – English

BEST Plus = Basic English Skills Test Plus

BEST Literacy = Basic English Skills Test Literacy

WorkKeys = ACT's WorkKeys Assessment

Functioning Level Table  
(Continued)

Outcome Measures Definitions			
Educational Functioning Level Descriptors—Adult Basic Education Levels			
Literacy Level	Basic Reading and Writing	Numeracy Skills	Functional and Workplace Skills
<p><b>High Intermediate Basic Education (ABE)</b>  <i>TABE (9–10) scale scores:</i>  <i>(grade level 6–8.9):</i>            Reading: 518–566            Total Math: 506–565            Language: 524–559</p> <p><i>WorkKeys scale scores:</i>            Reading for Information: 75–78            Writing: 75–77            Applied Mathematics: 75–77</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>
<p><b>Low Adult Secondary Education (ASE)</b>  <i>TABE (9–10) scale scores:</i>  <i>(grade level 9–10.9):</i>            Reading: 567–595            Total Math: 566–594            Language: 560–585</p> <p><i>WorkKeys scale scores:</i>            Reading for Information: 79–81            Writing: 78–85            Applied Mathematics: 78–81</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>

**Functioning Level Table  
(Continued)**

Outcome Measures Definitions			
Educational Functioning Level Descriptors—Adult Basic Education Levels			
Literacy Level	Basic Reading and Writing	Numeracy Skills	Functional and Workplace Skills
<p><b>High Adult Secondary Education (ASE)</b>            TABE (9–10) scale scores:  <i>(grade level 11–12):</i>            Reading: 596 and above            Total Math: 595 and above            Language: 586 and above</p> <p><i>WorkKeys scale scores:</i>            Reading for Information: 82–90            Writing: 86–90            Applied Mathematics: 82–90</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, can apply principles of geometry to measure angles, lines, and surfaces, and can 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>
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><b>Beginning ESL Literacy</b>            TABE CLAS-E scale scores: (SPL 0-1)            Reading: 250-392            Writing: 200-396            Total Reading/Writing: 225-394            Listening: 230-389            Speaking: 231-425            Total Listening/Speaking: 230-407</p> <p>BEST Plus: 400 and below (SPL 0–1)            BEST Literacy: 0–20 (SPL 0–1)</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><b>Low Beginning ESL</b>            TABE CLAS-E scale scores: (SPL 2)            Reading: 393-436            Writing: 397-445            Total Reading/Writing: 395-441            Listening: 390-437            Speaking: 426-460            Total Listening/Speaking: 408-449</p> <p>BEST Plus: 401–417 (SPL 2)            BEST Literacy: 21-52 (SPL 2)</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, 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>

**Functioning Level Table  
(Continued)**

Outcome Measures Definitions			
Educational Functioning Level Descriptors—Adult Basic Education Levels			
Literacy Level	Basic Reading and Writing	Numeracy Skills	Functional and Workplace Skills
<p><b>High Beginning ESL</b>                      TABE CLAS-E scale scores: (SPL 3)                      Reading: 437-476                      Writing: 446-488                      Total Reading/Writing: 442-482                      Listening: 438-468                      Speaking: 461-501                      Total Listening/Speaking: 450-485</p> <p>BEST Plus: 418–438 (SPL 3)                      BEST Literacy: 53-63 (SPL 3)</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><b>Low Intermediate ESL</b>                      TABE CLAS-E scale scores: (SPL 4)                      Reading: 477-508                      Writing: 489-520                      Total Reading/Writing: 483-514                      Listening: 469-514                      Speaking: 502-536                      Total Listening/Speaking: 486-525</p> <p>BEST Plus: 439–472 (SPL 4)                      BEST Literacy: 64–67 (SPL 4)</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>
<p><b>High Intermediate ESL</b>                      TABE CLAS-E scale scores: (SPL 5)                      Reading: 509-557                      Writing: 521-555                      Total Reading/Writing: 515-556                      Listening: 515-549                      Speaking: 537-567                      Total Listening/Speaking: 526-558</p> <p>BEST Plus: 473–506 (SPL 5)                      BEST Literacy: 68–75 (SPL 6)</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>

**Functioning Level Table  
(Continued)**

Outcome Measures Definitions			
Educational Functioning Level Descriptors—Adult Basic Education Levels			
Literacy Level	Basic Reading and Writing	Numeracy Skills	Functional and Workplace Skills
<p><b>Advanced ESL</b>                      TABE CLAS-E scale scores: (SPL 6)                      Reading: 558-588                      Writing: 556-612                      Total Reading/Writing: 557-600                      Listening: 550-607                      Speaking: 568-594                      Total Listening/Speaking: 559-600</p> <p>BEST Plus: 507–540 (SPL 6)                      BEST Literacy: 76-78 (SPL 6)</p> <p>Exit Criteria:                      *BEST Plus: 541 and above (SPL 7)                      BEST Literacy: 79 and above (SPL 7-8)</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, 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>

\*BEST Plus and BEST Literacy: If an examinee pre-tests into SPL 7 with a BEST Plus scale score of 541 or above or a BEST Literacy scale score of 76 in the NRS Advanced ESL level, 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.

**If a student comes into the program testing at 76 or higher on BEST Literacy, a different assessment should be given, such as the TABE reading and language tests, Level E. In addition the BEST Literacy assessment cannot be used to exit the ESL program.**

**Whenever possible, students who score 541 or higher on BEST Plus should be ready for an ELS “bridge class in order to bridge the gap between ESL and ABE. Low level ABE and high level ESL materials should be combined. This will allow these “bridge” students to improve their English skills while using ABE materials to develop reading, writing, math, and vocabulary skills.**

## **GED Testing Accommodations Available Upon Request**

**NOTE: A GED candidate can request certain accommodations that do not require prior approval from a state's GED Administrator and or GED Testing Services. Candidates should request any of these accommodations prior to arrival for testing. A diagnosed disability is not required to use these accommodations. The accommodations for NRS assessments will follow the GED testing guidelines and include the following items that do not require prior approval but do need to be requested in advance:**

**Colored transparent overlays:** These devices, which resemble tinted overhead transparencies, are widely used by persons with visual impairments and those with learning disabilities who have difficulty decoding written words and symbols.

**Clear transparent overlays and highlighter:** The combination of clear (untinted) overlays and a highlighter can be used with the candidate who needs to use a highlighter while reading. The highlighting takes place on the clear overlay and protects the test booklet from becoming marked. All used overlays must be collected at the end of each testing session.

**Temporary adhesive notes with spatial directions:** Candidates can affix temporary "sticky" notes (e.g. Post-it Notes) on the answer sheet to accommodate a disability affecting spatial orientation. For example, the candidate might flag the sheet for top, bottom, right, and left. For security reasons, the GED Testing Center must supply these adhesive notes to the examinee.

**Ear Plugs:** The candidate may use earplugs as an aid in concentration.

**Large Print form of the test:** The candidate may use the large print edition (18 point font) of the tests under normal test time limits upon request to the GED Examiner.

**Magnifying devices:** The candidate may use his or her preferred type of magnifying device during test taking. Note: Measuring devices such as rulers and scales may not be used because they may serve as an unauthorized aid in certain portions of the tests.

**Priority Seating:** A candidate may request to be seated near the front of the room in order to better hear instructions, or in some other location (in the same room) to avoid distractions.

**Straightedge:** Candidates may use a plain, unmarked straightedge made from any safe materials as an aid in spatial orientation and reading. If the straightedge is an additional piece of scratch paper issued by the Examiner, it must be collected at the end of the testing session and destroyed with any other scratch paper.

**Fluorescent Lighting:** GED candidates may request permission to 1) wear hats or caps to limit the effects of fluorescent lighting or 2) sit near a window or away from fluorescent lighting.

**Other Adaptive Devices:** such as pencil holders, writing braces, or graph paper may be used so long as it does not provide an unfair advantage to the test-taker. Assistive technology like the Kurzweil scan/reader, JAWS screen reading program for the Blind, ZoomTest Screen Magnification, Ergonomic Keyboards and track balls, NaturallySpeaking Voice Recognition software, Big Keys numeric pad and headsets to block noise may be available.

Note: It is the Chief Examiner's prerogative to examine any materials to ensure that they do not contain any unauthorized testing aids.

## Definitions:

**Assessment for Accountability** – To ensure comparability of the meaning of the educational functioning levels across all programs in the State, all programs must use standardized assessment procedures that conform to the State’s assessment policy when determining students’ educational functioning levels. The assessment procedure must include a standardized test or standardized performance-based assessment with a standardized scoring rubric that has been approved by the Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) within ED for measuring educational gain within the NRS framework. OVAE conducts the approval process annually using panels of independent experts in assessment, who evaluate assessments according to the process outlined in 34 CFR Part 462 (see Federal Register, Vol. 73, No. 9, January 14, 2008). Note: the assessment must provide a way to translate scores on the assessment to the NRS educational functioning levels and the method used to establish this translation. Students in distance education should be post-tested after the same amount of instructional time as other students, according to the state’s approved NRS assessment policy.

**Assessment for Instruction** - Self-made or publisher made tests are an informal assessment used to guide instruction, assist in identifying gaps requiring further instruction, and to help in establishing individual learning plans. It is recommended that local programs encourage the use of informal assessment to inform overall performance in specific subject areas. Many computer-based curriculums have built –in assessments for placement which align with the NRS levels. These should be considered informal assessments and do not replace standardized testing for pre and post-testing.

**Educational Gain** – Educational gain measures the primary purpose of the adult education program: to improve the basic literacy skills of participants. This goal is the reason that all students are counted in the educational gain measure. The NRS approach to measuring educational gain is to define a set of educational functioning levels at which students are initially placed based on their abilities to perform literacy-related tasks in specific content areas. After a set time period or number of instructional hours set by the State, students are again assessed to determine their skill levels. If their skills have improved sufficiently to be placed one or more levels higher, an “advance” is recorded for that student.

**Standardized Tests** – a standardized test, is uniformly developed, administered, and scored, must be both valid and reliable. These terms are defined by NRS as follows: *Content validity* of an assessment is the extent to which the items/tasks of the instrument cover the domain of interest. For the NRS, the domain of interest is comprised of the skills used to describe the educational functioning levels for ABE and ESL.

*Reliability* refers to the degree of consistency in performance on an assessment; that is, the extent to which an examinee would be expected to perform similarly across multiple administrations of the instrument or under different conditions. An important condition that can differ across administrations of a particular instrument to be used for the NRS is the form of the instrument administered.

While standardized tests TABE 9 & 10 and BEST Plus, are required for all students entering Adult Education classes and identifies the students EFL placement and movement, it is recommended that local programs use additional informal tests (chapter tests, pre and post tests in instructional materials, self-made tests, instructional-based assessments, etc.) to further assist in identifying a student’s strengths, areas requiring study and overall performance.

Assessment can be used in the following ways:

- Placement decisions – measure the extent of the student’s academic skills upon entry into the Adult Education program to ensure appropriate class placement.
- Instructional planning – to develop individual learning plans and/or course curriculum but is not used to frequently identify small gains – informal assessments are used for this.
- Assessment of student progress – by use of a post-test, determines the gain in academic skills of an individual.
- Program evaluation – to determine effectiveness of a course or program when both a pre and posttest is administered.
- Accountability for the NRS – to report student progress within an accountability system, such as the NRS, for Adult Education.

**Stopped-Out:** When an enrolled student in ABE has not attended for 90 days or more and then returns to re-enter the program.

## ESL Placement Criteria

Educational Functioning Level	BEST Plus (Oral)	Literacy BEST
Beginning ESL Literacy	BEST Plus: below 400 SPL 0-1	Literacy BEST: 0-20 SPL 0-2
Low Beginning ESL	BEST Plus: 401-417 SPL 2-3	Literacy BEST: 21-52 SPL 2-3
High Beginning ESL	BEST Plus: 418-438 SPL 3	Literacy BEST: 53-63 SPL 4
Low Intermediate ESL	BEST Plus: 439-472 SPL 4	Literacy BEST: 64-67 SPL 4
High Intermediate ESL	BEST Plus: 473-506 SPL 5	Literacy BEST: 68-75 SPL 5-6
Advanced ESL	BEST Plus: above 507-540 SPL 6 Exit Criteria: BEST Plus: 541 SPL 7 or above	Literacy BEST: 76-78 SPL 7-8

<b>NRS Literacy Level</b>	<b>Grade Equivalent</b>	<b>TABE 9/10 Scale Score</b>
Beginning Literacy Adult Basic Education (ABE)	0-1.9	Reading: 367 and below Total Math: 313 and below Language: 389 and below
Beginning Basic ABE	2-3.9	Reading: 368-460 Total Math: 314-441 Language: 390-490
Low Intermediate ABE	4-5.9	Reading: 461-517 Total Math: 442-505 Language: 491-523
High Intermediate ABE	6-8.9	Reading: 518-566 Total Math: 506-565 Language: 524-559
Low Adult Secondary Education (ASE)	9-10.9	Reading: 567-595 Total Math: 566-594 Language: 560-585
High Adult Secondary Education (ASE)	11-12.9	Reading: 596 and above Total Math: 595 and above Language: 586 and above

ABE Placement Criteria  
Administration Times

<b>Word List, Practice Exercise and Locator Test Activity</b>		<b>Complete Battery Testing Time (per examinee)</b>
<b>Word List</b>		15 minutes
<b>Practice Exercise</b>		20 minutes
<b>Locator Test</b>		35 minutes
<b>Level L</b>	Reading	50 minutes
	Math	60 minutes
<b>Levels E, M, D and A</b>	Reading	50 minutes
	Mathematics Computation	24 minutes
	Applied Mathematics	50 minutes
	Language	55 minutes
	Vocabulary	14 minutes
	Language Mechanics	14 minutes
	Spelling	10 minutes

## Providing accommodations using TABE assessment

<b>DISABILITY</b>	<b>TEST ADMINISTRATION PROCEDURES</b>	<b>TABE TEST FORMS AVAILABLE</b>
Specific learning disability and/or ADHD such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, receptive aphasia, hyperactivity, written language disorder, attention deficit disorder	Extended time Alternate schedule Frequent breaks Scribe/writer/alternate room Computer with spelling and grammar check disabled Simple calculator for Level A/B only	Large-print tests
Deaf or hearing impaired  Blind or visually impaired  Mobility impairment	Sign language interpreter for test directions only Head phones for those taking a listening test Magnifier Extended time Alternate site/equipment Scribe/writer/communication board	Braille  Large-print TABE tests  Computer-based TABE tests
Psychiatric disability such as schizophrenia, major depression	Extended time Supervised breaks	
Developmental disability such as autism, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, mental retardation	Recommendation from physician is suggested Private room	