

# OKLAHOMA ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY ASSESSMENT POLICY

## I. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

### A. Need for the State Assessment Policy

Standardized assessment is required by the Workforce Investment Act for accountability in documenting student educational gains that are aligned with the National Reporting System (NRS) educational functioning levels (EFL). The State Assessment Policy provides guidelines and responsibilities pertaining to standardized assessment practices for Oklahoma Adult Education Programs and is based on guidance from the U. S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technology, and Adult Education (OCTAE), and specific to NRS and state requirements.

Oklahoma's approved assessments are standardized, valid, reliable, and approved for use by OCTAE. **Standardized** is defined as *having directions, time limits, materials, and scoring procedures that are designed to remain constant each time the test is given.* **Valid** is defined as *the degree to which the assessment actually measures what it is intended to measure.* **Reliable** is defined as *the consistency with which an assessment produces results.* **Pre-assessment** is defined as *the initial assessment administered to a student when they first enroll in the program for the current fiscal year.* **Post-assessment** is defined as *an assessment administered to a student to measure learning gains since the pre-assessment or their last assessment in the current fiscal year.*

The NRS (<http://www.nrsweb.org/>) educational functioning level of a student is determined by NRS approved standardized assessment scale scores. All students are placed into an appropriate EFL as determined by the student's scale score of the standardized assessments chosen by the state. State performance targets for the NRS educational functioning levels are negotiated between the state and OCTAE each fiscal year. Local Programs are responsible for meeting these state EFL targets. The state's aggregated pre- and post-assessment data collected from local programs determines whether or not the state meets its performance targets for a fiscal year.

The State Assessment Policy standardizes the process of determining student progress and completion of levels and allows for comparability across programs within the state. Programs must follow the assessment policy guidelines in order to provide fair and equitable access to services for adult learners, collect consistent data regarding learner placement and advancement, and maintain accurate data for program planning, improvement, and accountability. High quality data is required for accurate reporting and impacts continued program funding and growth. Every funded program is responsible and held accountable for the integrity of the data entered into the state's management information system – Literacy, Adult, Community Education System (LACES). Uniform implementation of assessment is critical; therefore, all programs will adhere to the state's assessment requirements and guidelines.

## **B. Purpose and Uses of Assessment**

In addition to using required standardized assessments for NRS reporting and accountability, programs use assessments for instructional purposes. Accountability and reporting purposes of assessment include but are not limited to:

1. Uniform measurement of learner gains that are aligned with the NRS educational functioning levels.
2. Consistent comparison of the success of programs in meeting state performance targets.
3. Consistent comparison of program data for performance-based funding.

Instructional purposes of assessment include but are not limited to:

1. Determining the instructional needs of individual learners.
2. Determining the effectiveness of instruction through learner gains.
3. Providing information regarding local program and/or statewide professional development needs.

The state strongly encourages programs and adult education teachers to integrate alternate and/or informal assessment tools and strategies into instruction in order to:

1. Encourage adult learners to self-assess their own learning.
2. Provide ongoing guidance to the teacher and learner regarding instructional needs and the use of knowledge and skills in a variety of contexts.
3. Avoid overuse of standardized assessments which can cause a “practice effect” to take place and result in invalid assessment data.
4. Alternate or informal assessments are a useful supplement for directing instruction but do not substitute for the standardized assessments required for NRS reporting and educational gain measurement.

## **C. Summary and Overview**

Local Adult Education Programs will assess all enrolled students using the appropriate state-approved standardized assessment. Assessment data is required to report student educational gains for NRS reporting and for determining whether or not local programs meet the state’s negotiated performance targets for all NRS educational functioning levels. Assessment data also provides critical information needed to inform and support effective instruction.

**Oklahoma’s Approved Assessments are:**

1. **Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE)** – Adult Basic Education (ABE) Reading, Language, Mathematics Skills
2. **TABE Complete Language Assessment System – English (CLAS-E)** – English Language Learners (ELL) Reading, Listening, Writing, and Speaking Skills
3. **Basic English Skills Test (BEST) Literacy 2008** – ELL Reading and Writing Skills
4. **BEST Plus** – ELL Speaking and Listening Skills

To ensure valid results, individuals administering these assessments will follow all assessment administration and scoring guidelines established by the publishers.

**Pre-Assessment** – Oklahoma requires that students be assessed before the student is enrolled in a class and entered into LACES for the current program year. The pre-assessment will be administered within the first 12 hours of orientation and/or instruction. Adult literacy providers should assess learners in the areas that are the focus of instruction, using an appropriate standardized test. Adult literacy providers should administer post-tests, using an alternate form, at the end of a semester, term, quarter, or other substantial block of instruction to document learning gains. Programs may push one assessment forward from the preceding FY to be used as the new FY pre-assessment for a returning student if the pushed-forward assessment was administered 90 days or less prior to the student’s current FY enrollment date.

The state’s LACES system will automatically assign the student an NRS Entry Level in the subject area with the lowest EFL scale score. The assigned subject area will be tracked for learning gains when the student is post-assessed. If the assigned subject area is manually changed for any reason, then the program must provide written documentation in the student’s file as to why the subject area tracking change was made.

**Post-Assessment** – After being pre-assessed and receiving instructional hours, each student must be post-assessed using the following NRS-approved publisher guidelines:

<b>TABE – Entry Levels 1-4:</b>	Minimum 40 hours of instruction (50-60 suggested)
<b>TABE – Entry Levels 5-6:</b>	Minimum 30 hours of instruction (30-59 suggested)
<b>TABE – CLAS-E:</b>	Minimum 50 hours of instruction (60-95 suggested)
<b>BEST Plus:</b>	Minimum 60 hours of instruction (80-100 suggested)
<b>BEST Literacy:</b>	Minimum 60 hours of instruction (80-100 suggested)

**Learning Gain** - Once a student achieves a learning gain for the current fiscal year, programs can but are not required to enter additional post-assessments in LACES. Learning gains in one subject area per student per fiscal year is all that is allowed for NRS reporting purposes. Additional post-assessments are encouraged as needed for instructional planning and guidance.

The state has set a minimum goal of 60% for the number of adult learners receiving both a pre- and post-assessment during the fiscal year.

## 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>Beginning ABE Literacy</b></p> <p><b>Test Benchmark:</b>  <i>TABE (9–10) scale scores (grade level 0–1.9):</i>                      Reading: 367 and below                      Total Math: 313 and below                      Language: 389 and below</p>	<p>Individual has no or minimal reading and writing skills. May have little or no comprehension of how print corresponds to spoken language and may have difficulty using a writing instrument. At the upper range of this level, individual can recognize, read, and write letters and numbers but has a limited understanding of connected prose and may need frequent re-reading. Can write a limited number of basic sight words and familiar words and phrases; may also be able to write simple sentences or phrases, including very simple messages. Can write basic personal information. Narrative writing is disorganized and unclear, inconsistently uses simple punctuation (e.g., periods, commas, question marks), and contains frequent errors in spelling.</p>	<p>Individual has little or no recognition of numbers or simple counting skills or may have only minimal skills, such as the ability to add or subtract single digit numbers.</p>	<p>Individual has little or no ability to read basic signs or maps and can provide limited personal information on simple forms. The individual can handle routine entry level jobs that require little or no basic written communication or computational skills and no knowledge of computers or other technology.</p>
<p><b>Beginning Basic Education</b></p> <p><b>Test Benchmark:</b>  <i>TABE (9–10) scale scores (grade level 2–3.9):</i>                      Reading: 368–460                      Total Math: 314–441                      Language: 390–490</p>	<p>Individual can read simple material on familiar subjects and comprehend simple and compound sentences in single or linked paragraphs containing a familiar vocabulary; can write simple notes and messages on familiar situations but lacks clarity and focus. Sentence structure lacks variety, but individual shows some control of basic grammar (e.g., present and past tense) and consistent use of punctuation (e.g., periods, capitalization).</p>	<p>Individual can count, add, and subtract three digit numbers, can perform multiplication through 12, can identify simple fractions, and perform other simple arithmetic operations.</p>	<p>Individual is able to read simple directions, signs, and maps, fill out simple forms requiring basic personal information, write phone messages, and make simple changes. There is minimal knowledge of and experience with using computers and related technology. The individual can handle basic entry level jobs that require minimal literacy skills; can recognize very short, explicit, pictorial texts (e.g., understands logos related to worker safety before using a piece of machinery); and can read want ads and complete simple job applications.</p>

**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. TABE = Test of Adult Basic Education.

**Outcome Measures Definitions**

**EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONING LEVEL DESCRIPTORS—ADULT BASIC EDUCATION LEVELS**

Literacy Level	Basic Reading and Writing	Numeracy Skills	Functional and Workplace Skills
<p><b>Low Intermediate Basic Education</b></p> <p><b>Test Benchmark:</b>  <i>TABE (9–10) scale scores (grade level 4–5.9):</i>                      Reading: 461–517                      Total Math: 442–505                      Language: 491–523</p>	<p>Individual can read text on familiar subjects that have a simple and clear underlying structure (e.g., clear main idea, chronological order); can use context to determine meaning; can interpret actions required in specific written directions; can write simple paragraphs with a main idea and supporting details on familiar topics (e.g., daily activities, personal issues) by recombining learned vocabulary and structures; and can self and peer edit for spelling and punctuation errors.</p>	<p>Individual can perform with high accuracy all four basic math operations using whole numbers up to three digits and can identify and use all basic mathematical symbols.</p>	<p>Individual is able to handle basic reading, writing, and computational tasks related to life roles, such as completing medical forms, order forms, or job applications; and can read simple charts, graphs, labels, and payroll stubs and simple authentic material if familiar with the topic. The individual can use simple computer programs and perform a sequence of routine tasks given direction using technology (e.g., fax machine, computer operation). The individual can qualify for entry level jobs that require following basic written instructions and diagrams with assistance, such as oral clarification; can write a short report or message to fellow workers; and can read simple dials and scales and take routine measurements.</p>
<p><b>High Intermediate Basic Education</b></p> <p><b>Test Benchmark:</b>  <i>TABE (9–10) scale scores (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>

## Outcome Measures Definitions

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

Literacy Level	Basic Reading and Writing	Numeracy Skills	Functional and Workplace Skills
<p><b>Low Adult Secondary Education</b></p> <p><b>Test Benchmark:</b>  <i>TABE (9–10): scale scores (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>

<p><b>High Adult Secondary Education</b></p> <p><b>Test Benchmark:</b>  <i>TABE (9–10): scale scores (grade level 11–12):</i>  Reading: 596 and above  Total Math: 595 and above  Language: 586 and above  <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 and can apply principles of geometry to measure angles, lines, and surfaces and can also apply trigonometric functions.</p>	<p>Individual is able to read technical information and complex manuals; can comprehend some college level books and apprenticeship manuals; can function in most job situations involving higher order thinking; can read text and explain a procedure about a complex and unfamiliar work procedure, such as operating a complex piece of machinery; can evaluate new work situations and processes; and can work productively and collaboratively in groups and serve as facilitator and reporter of group work. The individual is able to use common software and learn new software applications; can define the purpose of new technology and software and select appropriate technology; can adapt use of software or technology to new situations; and can instruct others, in written or oral form, on software and technology use.</p>
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<p><b>Beginning ESL Literacy</b>  <b>Test Benchmark:</b>BEST Plus: 400 and below (SPL 0-1)</p> <p>BEST Literacy: 0–20 (SPL 0–1)</p> <p>TABE CLAS-E:  Total Reading &amp; Writing: 225-394  Total Listening &amp; Speaking: 230-407</p>	<p>Individual cannot speak or understand English, or understands only isolated words or phrases.</p>	<p>Individual has no or minimal reading or writing skills in any language. May have little or no comprehension of how print corresponds to spoken language and may have difficulty using a writing instrument.</p>	<p>Individual functions minimally or not at all in English and can communicate only through gestures or a few isolated words, such as name and other personal information; may recognize only common signs or symbols (e.g., stop sign, product logos); can handle only very routine entry-level jobs that do not require oral or written communication in English. There is no knowledge or use of computers or technology.</p>
<p><b>Low Beginning ESL</b>  <b>Test Benchmark:</b>  BEST Plus: 401–417 (SPL 2) BEST Literacy: 21 – 52 (SPL 2) TABE CLAS-E:  Total Reading &amp; Writing: 395-441  Total Listening &amp; Speaking: 408-449  BEST = Basic English Skills Test  SPL = Student Performance Level</p>	<p>Individual can understand basic greetings, simple phrases and commands. Can understand simple questions related to personal information, spoken slowly and with repetition. Understands a limited number of words related to immediate needs and can respond with simple learned phrases to some common questions related to routine survival situations. Speaks slowly and with difficulty. Demonstrates little or no control over grammar.</p>	<p>Individual can read numbers and letters and some common sight words. May be able to sound out simple words. Can read and write some familiar words and phrases, but has a limited understanding of connected prose in English. Can write basic personal information (e.g., name, address, telephone number) and can complete simple forms that elicit this information.</p>	<p>Individual functions with difficulty in social situations and in situations related to immediate needs. Can provide limited personal information on simple forms, and can read very simple common forms of print found in the home and environment, such as product names. Can handle routine entry level jobs that require very simple written or oral English communication and in which job tasks can be demonstrated. May have limited knowledge and experience with computers.</p>



## 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>High Beginning ESL</b>  <b>Test Benchmark:</b>                      BEST Plus: 418–438 (SPL 3)                      BEST Literacy: 53 – 63 (SPL 3)</p> <p>TABE CLAS-E:                      Total Reading &amp; Writing: 442-482                      Total Listening &amp; Speaking: 450-485</p>	<p>Individual can understand common words, simple phrases, and sentences containing familiar vocabulary, spoken slowly with some repetition. Individual can respond to simple questions about personal everyday activities, and can express immediate needs, using simple learned phrases or short sentences. Shows limited control of grammar.</p>	<p>Individual can read most sight words, and many other common words. Can read familiar phrases and simple sentences but has a limited understanding of connected prose and may need frequent re-reading.</p> <p>Individual can write some simple sentences with limited vocabulary. Meaning may be unclear. Writing shows very little control of basic grammar, capitalization and punctuation and has many spelling errors.</p>	<p>Individual can function in some situations related to immediate needs and in familiar social situations. Can provide basic personal information on simple forms and recognizes simple common forms of print found in the home, workplace and community. Can handle routine entry level jobs requiring basic written or oral English communication and in which job tasks can be demonstrated. May have limited knowledge or experience using computers.</p>

<p><b>Low Intermediate ESL</b>  <b>Test Benchmark:</b>                      BEST Plus: 439-472 (SPL 4)                      BEST Literacy: 64-67 (SPL 4)                      TABE CLAS-E:                      Total Reading &amp; Writing: 483-514                      Total Listening &amp; Speaking: 486-525</p> <p>BEST = Basic English Skills Test                      SPL = Student Performance Level</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>
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**High Intermediate ESL**

**Test Benchmark:**

BEST Plus: 473–506 (SPL 5)  
BEST Literacy: 68 – 75  
(SPL 5-6)

**TABE CLAS-E:**

Total Reading & Writing: 515-556  
Total Listening & Speaking: 526-558

BEST = Basic English Skills Test  
SPL = Student Performance Level

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.

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.

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.

**Test Administrator Training** – Training in the assessment system is required to ensure accurate use of tests, appropriate interpretation of learner results, and to maintain the integrity and quality of the assessment process. For training purposes, instructors may examine assessment materials for review purposes only. It is essential that this occur in a controlled, supervised environment with test security safeguards in place. Trainers should take special care to ensure the collection of all test booklets at the completion of training. Oklahoma requires that test administrators be properly trained as recommended by the test publisher before administering standardized assessments. Training documentation will be kept on file for review by state staff.

**Program Director Responsibilities** – Adult Learning Center (ALC) Directors will be held responsible for the following:

- Proper assessment procedures are followed.
- Persons administering the assessments have been properly trained and are able to meet the student demand for pre- and post-assessment.
- Accurate scale scores are reported in a timely manner to ensure local data entry is kept current on a monthly basis.
- Assessment materials are current, stored in a locked location, and inventoried a minimum of quarterly.

## **II. GENERAL ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS**

### **A. Adult Basic Education (ABE) Learners**

#### **1. Learners to be Assessed**

Adult Education programs will assess all adult learners, including distance learning students. No adult learners will be exempt from assessment.

#### **2. Assessments Permitted**

Approved assessments include the following: TABE Forms 9 and 10 Complete Battery, TABE 9 and 10 Survey, TABE-PC, and TABE Online. These assessments are approved by OVAE for use in NRS reporting.

#### **3. Pre- and Post-assessment Guidelines**

##### **A. TABE**

- The TABE is appropriate for assessing all ABE levels.
- The TABE Locator will always be administered first and used to determine the appropriate TABE Level (E, M, D, or A) to administer in each subject area. Adult learners unable to complete the TABE Locator Test will be administered the TABE Literacy Level (L) Test. Level L is not approved to measure learning gain.
- Different Forms of the same Level of the TABE will be used for the pre- and post-assessments. Example: If a student is pre-assessed using TABE Form 9, Level M, they would then be post-assessed using TABE Form 10, Level M.
- A pre-assessment will be completed within the first 12 hours of orientation and/or instruction. A post-assessment will be completed as follows:
  1. No post-assessment should be done with less than 30 hours instruction.
  2. ABE students with NRS Entry Levels of 1-4 may be post-assessed with a minimum of 40 hours. (50-60 hours recommended by publisher)
  3. ABE students with NRS Entry Levels of 5-6 may be post-assessed with a minimum of 30 hours. (30-59 hours recommended by publisher)
- Based on the test publisher CTB McGraw Hill's recommendations, and to avoid a possible "practice effect," the same TABE Form (9 or 10) should not be administered to a learner more often than every six months or 120 instructional hours.
- If a learner is absent from the program for 90 days or more, they should be marked as "left" in LACES. If the student returns after 90 days, a new assessment should be administered from which to capture educational gain for that fiscal year.

- A student’s lowest TABE scale score will be used for placement in an EFL and to document learning gains in accordance with NRS guidelines. If this is not the case, written documentation should be placed in the student file explaining why the lowest scale score subject area is not being tracked for learning gain. Subject area scores to be used for measuring learner gain include reading, total math, or language. (See TABE scoring chart below.)

**TABE 9 and 10 Scale Score Ranges for NRS Educational Functioning Levels**

<b>EFL</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Total Math</b>	<b>Language</b>
ABE Beginning Literacy	367 and below	313 and below	389 and below
ABE Beginning	368 – 460	314 – 441	390 – 490
ABE Low Intermediate	461 – 517	442 – 505	491 – 523
ABE High Intermediate	518 – 566	506 – 565	524 – 559
ABE Low Adult Secondary	567 – 595	566 – 594	560 – 585
ABE High Adult Secondary	596 and above	595 and above	586 and above

- TABE pre-assessment scores will be recorded on the learner’s enrollment form, entered into the ODCTE-approved Management Information System, Literacy Adult Community Education System (LACES), and used to document progress toward meeting program and state goals for the percentage of adults completing each of the NRS educational functioning levels.
- TABE post-assessment scores will be recorded on the monthly attendance forms, entered into LACES, and used to document learner progress according to NRS guidelines.
- Assessment scores will be entered into LACES during the month they are administered. All LACES data is to be kept current on a monthly basis.
- A student’s lowest TABE scale score may be rolled over from one fiscal year into the next fiscal year one time only, and only if there is a 90-day or less window of time between the student’s last assessment date and the new fiscal year class enrollment date. The assessment that is rolled over will serve as the student’s pre-assessment for the new fiscal year. Assessment scores should not be rolled over until the SDE has finalized the end-of-the-year NRS reports for the fiscal year. Programs will be notified when the roll-over process can take place each new fiscal year.
- The state standard for the number of students receiving both a pre- and post-assessment is 60%. Programs will use local LACES attendance data to track student instructional hours and ensure that post-assessment is completed according to assessment guidelines of 60 to 100 hours of instruction.
- The state assessment standard is part of the state performance-based funding formula.

- Programs should be aware of and implement research-based practices and strategies that encourage student persistence. Persistence is defined as a student attending the program long enough to capture learning gains and achieve goals.

#### **4. Overall Assessment Practices**

- The program director will ensure that all program staff involved in gathering, analyzing, compiling, and reporting data for the NRS will attend, at minimum, an annual in-service meeting addressing the following topics: (1) NRS policy, guidelines, updates, and definitions of measures; (2) state accountability policies, local program data collection processes; and (3) implementation of assessment for valid reporting purposes. While the above information can serve as a refresher for returning staff each year, it should also be included as part of the required in-service for new staff throughout the year.
- Program directors will attend state directors' meetings to stay abreast of state and NRS reporting updates. Programs are encouraged to take advantage of NRS online training as part of their annual Professional Development Action Plan.
- Training in administering the TABE is required prior to administration of the test. Persons can receive this training by either: (1) attending an ODCTE sponsored TABE training; or (2) attending a local training conducted by the program director and/or a trained TABE test administrator. Training materials supportive of TABE administration are available from the test publisher. Program directors should integrate TABE training materials into their local professional development plan for both new test administrators and an annual TABE refresher training for experienced test administrators.
- Local Programs will maintain a list of trained TABE administrators and have on file certificates of training for each test administrator.
- The program director will ensure that an adequate number of staff is trained so that data collection, analysis, and reporting are valid, and completed in a timely manner.
- Assessments must not interrupt instruction.
- The publisher's guidelines for assessment always take precedence if there is a question regarding testing format.
- Programs are expected to monitor assessment for compliance with standard assessment processes.
- Test security is imperative; therefore, all testing materials will be inventoried no less than quarterly. Programs should maintain a written test inventory log. Test materials will be stored in locked files accessible only to program directors and/or test administrators.

- The following procedures have been programmed in LACES to ensure correct assessment procedures are followed: (1) TABE forms (9 & 10) cannot be entered consecutively in a student's LACES file; (2) A post-assessment level cannot be lower than a pre-assessment level; (3) Post-assessment scores cannot be entered when a student has less hours of individual instruction since their last assessment than is required based on their entry level. State staff will conduct quarterly desktop reviews of local program data to ensure the assessment policy is being followed and that valid data is being reported. If the state determines a program's data to be invalid due to a lack of policy implementation or data entry procedures, they will be notified and asked to provide a plan of corrective action. State staff will follow up on the plan to ensure corrections have been made. Programs may not be eligible for performance-based funding if their data is deemed invalid.

## **5. Accommodations and/or Adaptations in Assessment**

- Adult learners who self-disclose a disability documented by a qualified professional and are eligible for accommodations under provisions of Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) may be granted appropriate testing accommodations. Programs should refer to the *TABE Users Handbook* for guidelines in modifying testing procedures. Large print, Braille, and Audio versions of the TABE are available from the publisher.
- Adaptations allowed for learners without a documented disability might include: colored transparent overlays, clear transparent overlays and highlighters, temporary adhesives with spatial directions, earplugs, large print tests (if available), magnifying devices, priority seating, hats, caps, or visors to minimize fluorescent lighting, or an unmarked straightedge. If in question, a program should contact the SDE for technical assistance in determining the appropriateness of an adaptation.

## **6. Guidelines for using HSE passing scores as a post-assessment**

The NRS does not require negotiation of a learner-gain percentage goal for students entering at the High Adult Secondary Education (High ASE) level. It is expected that students functioning at this level who do not have a high school diploma will set the goal of obtaining an HSE Diploma. A student's achievement of the set goal of obtaining an HSE Diploma is validated through the ODCTE data match process. However, programs may choose to use HSE passing scores to document learner gains for students entering at the High ASE level. In LACES, HSE passing scores work differently than a TABE post-assessment score when measuring learner gains.

**Read the following guidelines carefully. There are no exceptions!**

- The learner must have a current fiscal year TABE pre-assessment score placing them at an **Entry Level** of **High ASE**. All entry levels below High ASE are not eligible to use HSE passing scores as a post-assessment to measure learning gain.
- The learner must have passed all HSE subject areas.
- The program must have a copy of the learner's passing HSE scores on file to validate LACES data entry.

**Example: Student #1 (Eligible to use HSE passing scores as a post-assessment to measure learning gain)**

- The student is administered the TABE as a pre-assessment and scores 596 in Reading, 600 in Math, and 587 in Language. At minimum, the lowest scale score is entered into LACES in the learner's assessment file.
- The TABE lowest scale score of 587 in Language places the student at an Entry Level of High ASE. Language is the subject area from which learning gain will be measured.
- While attending the program this fiscal year the student passes the HSE Tests and receives the Oklahoma High School Diploma.
- Upon receipt of written documentation of the student's HSE passing scores, all the subject scores are entered in LACES in the learner's assessment file.
- LACES data now indicates the learner's Educational Level as Completed High ASE.
- Documentation of the HSE scores is placed in the learner's file.

**Example: Student #2 (Not Eligible)**

- The student is administered the TABE as a pre-assessment and scores 596 in Reading, 600 in Math, and 575 in Language. At minimum, the lowest scale score is entered into LACES in the learner's assessment file.
- The TABE lowest scale score of 575 in Language places the student at an Entry Level of Low Adult Secondary Education (Low ASE). Language is the subject area from which learning gain will be measured.
- While attending the program this fiscal year the student passes the HSE Tests and receives the Oklahoma High School Diploma.
- The student is not eligible to use the passing HSE scores as a post-assessment to document learning gain because their Entry Level, based on their TABE Language score, placed them below High ASE.
- The student must be progress-assessed with the TABE in order to document an educational functioning level gain.



## **B. English as a Second Language (ESL) Learners**

### **Learners to be assessed**

Local Adult Education programs will assess all adult learners, including distance learning students. No adult learners will be exempt from assessment.

### **Assessments permitted**

Approved assessments for English language learners include the BEST Plus, BEST Literacy 2008, and TABE Complete Language Assessment System – English (CLAS-E). These assessments are approved by OCTAE for use in NRS reporting.

### **Pre- and post-assessment guidelines:**

#### **A. BEST Plus and BEST Literacy 2008**

In-depth student assessment data leads to more effective planning of instruction. For NRS reporting purposes the following ESL guidelines will be followed.

- The BEST Plus is used to assess non-native speakers' oral language skills in English.
- The BEST Literacy 2008 is used to assess non-native speakers' reading and writing skills in English.
- A pre-assessment will be completed within the first 12 hours of orientation and/or instruction. A post-assessment will be completed after a minimum of 60 individual instructional hours. The publisher recommends 80-100 hours.
- If a learner is absent from the program for 90 days or more, they should be marked as "left" in LACES. If the student returns after 90 days, a new assessment should be administered from which to capture educational gain for that fiscal year.
- An entry level BEST Plus score of 540 and below can be entered into LACES and used to measure learner gain.
- An entry level BEST Plus score of 541 or higher (an entry level of Completed Advanced ESL) should not be entered into LACES to measure learning gain. The learner may be reassessed using the BEST Literacy 2008 or TABE CLASE. If the learner's BEST Literacy 2008 score places them at an EFL of High Intermediate ESL or lower, then this score may be entered into LACES and used to measure learner gain.
- An EFL gain from Advanced ESL to Completed Advanced ESL cannot be measured using the BEST Literacy 2008. Therefore, ESL students with an entry level of Advanced ESL based on a BEST Literacy 2008 score should be reassessed with another state-approved assessment such as the TABE CLAS-E or the regular TABE.
- When using the BEST Literacy 2008, different forms will be used for pre- and post-assessment. Three forms (B, C, D) of the BEST Literacy 2008 are available from the test publisher.

- As of July 1, 2008, the BEST Literacy Score ranges for NRS educational functioning levels changed. BEST Literacy Test scores prior to July 1, 2008, are no longer valid for capturing learner gains. (See the scoring chart below.)

**BEST Plus and BEST Literacy Scale Score Ranges for NRS Educational Functioning Levels**

<b>EFL</b>	<b>BEST Plus</b>	<b>BEST Literacy 2008 Effective July 1, 2008</b>
ESL Beginning Literacy	400 and below	0 – 20
ESL Low Beginning	401 – 417	21 – 52
ESL High Beginning	418 – 438	53 – 63
ESL Low Intermediate	439 – 472	64 – 67
ESL High Intermediate	473 – 506	68 – 75
ESL Advanced	507 – 540	76 – 78*

\*According to the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), publisher of the BEST Literacy Test, if an examinee pretests with a BEST Literacy scale score of 76-78, they should be retested with another instrument in order to be able to show gain. In Oklahoma these ESL learners are candidates for TABE assessment as a next step.

- BEST Plus or BEST Literacy 2008 pre-assessment scores will be recorded on the learner’s enrollment form, entered into the ODCTE-approved Management Information System, LACES, and used to document progress toward meeting program and state goals for percentage of adults completing each of the NRS educational functioning levels.
- BEST Plus or BEST Literacy 2008 post-assessment scores will be recorded on the monthly attendance forms, entered into LACES, and used to document learner progress according to NRS guidelines.
- An assessment score may be rolled over from one fiscal year into the next fiscal year one time only, and only if there is a 90-day or less window of time between the last assessment date and the new fiscal year class enrollment date.
- BEST Literacy 2008 scores may not be rolled over from one fiscal year into the next fiscal year until the beginning of fiscal year 2009-2010 due to score range changes implemented in fiscal year 2008-2009.
- The state standard for the number of students receiving both a pre- and post-assessment is 60%. Programs will use local LACES data to track instructional hours of students to ensure a post-assessment is being completed in a timely manner.
- The state assessment standard is part of the state performance-based funding formula.
- Programs should be aware of and implement research-based practices and strategies that encourage student persistence. Persistence is defined as a student attending the program long enough to capture learning gains and achieve goals.

**B. TABE Complete Language Assessment System – English (CLAS-E)**

1. The TABE CLAS-E is used to assess non-native speakers’ reading, writing, listening and/or speaking skills in English. All or one of the skill areas may be assessed.
2. The TABE CLAS-E Locator will be administered in an appropriate manner according to publisher guidelines. The appropriate TABE CLAS-E Level (1, 2, 3, or 4) will be administered in each subject area as determined by the Locator.
3. Different Forms (A or B) of the same Level of the TABE CLAS-E will be used for the pre- and post-assessments.
4. A pre-assessment will be completed within the first 12 hours of orientation and/or instruction. A post-assessment will be completed after a minimum of 50 individual instructional hours. The publisher recommends 60-95 hours.
5. If a learner is absent from the program for 90 days or more, they should be marked as “left” in LACES. If the student returns after 90 days, a new assessment should be administered from which to capture educational gain for that fiscal year.
6. A student’s lowest TABE CLAS-E scale score will be used for placement in an EFL and to document learning gains in accordance with NRS guidelines. If this is not the case, written documentation is required as to why. Subject area scores to be used for measuring learner gain include reading, writing, listening, speaking, total reading/writing, or total listening/speaking. (See TABE CLASE scoring chart below.)

**TABE CLAS-E Scale Score Ranges for NRS Educational Functioning Levels**

<b>EFL</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Total Reading &amp; Writing</b>	<b>Listening</b>	<b>Speaking</b>	<b>Total Listening &amp; Speaking</b>	<b>SPL</b>
ESL Beginning Literacy	250-392	200-396	225-394	230-389	231-425	230-407	0-1
ESL Low Beginning	393-436	397-445	395-441	390-437	426-460	408-449	2
ESL High Beginning	437-476	446-488	442-482	438-468	461-501	450-485	3
ESL Low Intermediate	477-508	489-520	483-514	469-514	502-536	486-525	4
ESL High Intermediate	509-557	521-555	515-556	515-549	537-567	526-558	5
ESL Advanced	558-588	556-612	557-600	550-607	568-594	559-600	6

### **Overall Assessment Practices**

1. The program director will ensure that all program staff involved in gathering, analyzing, compiling, and reporting data for the NRS will attend, at minimum, an annual in-service meeting addressing the following topics: (1) NRS policy, guidelines, updates, and definitions of measures; (2) state accountability policies, local program data collection processes; and (3) implementation of assessment for valid reporting purposes. While the above information can serve as a refresher for returning staff each year, it should also be included as part of the required in-service for new staff throughout the year.
2. Program directors will attend state directors' meetings to stay abreast of state and NRS reporting updates. Programs are encouraged to take advantage of NRS online training as part of their annual Professional Development Action Plan.
3. Local programs will maintain a list of trained assessment administrators and have on file certificates of training for each test administrator.
4. The program director will ensure that an adequate number of staff is trained so that data collection, analysis, and reporting are valid and completed in a timely manner.
5. Assessments must not interrupt instruction.
6. Programs are expected to monitor assessment for compliance with standard assessment processes. The test publisher's guidelines for assessment always take precedence if there is a question regarding testing format.
7. Test security is imperative; therefore, all testing materials will be inventoried no less than quarterly. Programs should maintain a written test inventory log. Test materials will be stored in locked files, accessible only to program directors and/or test administrators.
8. The following procedures have been programmed in LACES to ensure correct assessment procedures are followed: (1) BEST Literacy 2008 or TABE CLAS-E forms cannot be entered consecutively in a student's LACES file; (2) Post-assessment scores cannot be entered when a student has less than the approved hours of individual instruction since their last assessment; (3) TABE CLAS-E levels cannot be lower for a post-assessment than was administered for a pre-assessment.
9. State staff will conduct quarterly desktop reviews of local program data to ensure the assessment policy is being followed and valid data is being reported. If the state determines a program's data to be invalid due to a lack of policy implementation or data entry procedures, they will be notified and asked to provide a plan of corrective action. State staff will follow up on the plan to ensure corrections have been made. Programs may not be eligible for performance-based funding if their data is deemed invalid.

### **Accommodations and/or adaptations in assessment**

1. Adult learners who self-disclose a disability documented by a qualified professional and are eligible for accommodations under provisions of Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) may be granted appropriate testing accommodations.
2. Adaptations allowed for learners without a documented disability might include: colored transparent overlays, clear transparent overlays and highlighters, temporary

adhesives with spatial directions, earplugs, large print tests (if available), magnifying devices, priority seating, hats, caps, or visors to minimize fluorescent lighting, or an unmarked straightedge. If in question, a program should contact ODCTE for technical assistance in determining the appropriateness of an adaptation.

### III. RESOURCES AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Technical assistance, requests, and assessment requirement questions may be directed to:

Oklahoma Department of Career Technology and Education Lifelong Learning Division  
 1500 West Seventh Avenue  
 Stillwater, OK 74074-4398  
 Phone: 405-377-2000

For purchase of assessment materials, local programs should contact the test publishers associated with each state-approved assessment listed below:

<b>TABE and TABE CLAS-E</b>	<b>BEST Plus and BEST Literacy Test</b>
<p>Nina Trigger (Sales Representative)            nina_trigger@ctb.com            361-232-7461</p> <p>Mike Johnson, Product Manager            michael_d_johnson@ctb.com            630-789-4586</p> <p>Or visit: <a href="http://www.ctb.com">www.ctb.com</a>            888-282-5690</p>	<p>Center for Applied Linguistics            4646 40<sup>th</sup> Street NW            Washington D.C. 20016-1859            Phone: 1-866-845-2378            Web site: <a href="http://www.cal.org">http://www.cal.org</a>            E-mail: <a href="mailto:best-plus@cal.org">best-plus@cal.org</a>            E-mail: <a href="mailto:bestliteracy@cal.org">bestliteracy@cal.org</a></p>

### IV. DISTANCE LEARNERS

All distance learners will be pre- and post-assessed according to the same guidelines as traditional learners.

# **OKLAHOMA ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY DISTANCE LEARNING POLICY**

## **Overview of Distance Learning in Oklahoma**

Distance learning is typically viewed as a way to help students overcome barriers to attending a traditional adult education classroom. These barriers include conflicting work schedules, family responsibilities, and transportation problems. Distance learning has the potential to attract new students deterred by these barriers. In addition, it has the potential to help existing students stay connected to their studies. These issues are not unique to rural Oklahoma; therefore, we must provide distance learning opportunities to all adults in Oklahoma in need of adult education services.

Today's young adults are "digital natives." As more "digital natives" and tech-savvy adults seek adult education services, Oklahoma adult education programs must view distance learning as a necessity. Distance education has the potential to offer instruction that better meets the learning styles and learning pace of some students and may provide a richer, more expedient educational experience than instruction delivered within the traditional classroom.

Distance learning will be a voluntary delivery option for adult education programs. Programs must be willing to incur any increased costs associated with distance learning and maintain traditional classroom instruction. Distance learning teachers and the program director are encouraged to participate in Project IDEAL's Distance Learning 101 course prior to implementing distance learning.

Adult education programs must manage distance learning in accordance with the state's Distance Learning Policy and Assessment Policy. Programs that wish to offer distance learning must contact the Executive Director of Lifelong Learning. Support and technical assistance will be available by contacting the state office at (405) 377-2000

## **General Distance Learning Requirements**

### ***Definition of Distance Education***

Distance education is a formal learning activity where students and instructors are separated by geography, time, or both, for the majority of the instructional period. Distance learning materials are delivered through a variety of media including, but not limited to print, videotapes, DVDs, audio recordings, broadcasts, computer software, and Web-based programs and other online technology. Teachers support distance learners through communication via mail, telephone, e-mail, online technologies and software, or face-to-face instruction.

### ***Definition of Distance Learners***

Distance learners are students who receive distance education services as defined above. It is not uncommon for adult learners to receive both distance education and traditional classroom education during the course of the program year. A student's hours in both distance learning and traditional classroom programs will be reported in Oklahoma's management information system, Literacy and Adult Community Education System (LACES). A student will be reported as a distance learner for federal reporting purposes if he/she received 51% or more of his/her instruction at a distance (proxy hours). This determination will be made at the end of the program year.

### ***Measuring Contact Hours for Learners in Distance Education***

The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, requires students in distance education to have at least 12 hours of direct contact with the adult education program before they can be counted as a fundable student in the National Reporting System (NRS). Direct contact hours involve interaction between the learner and program staff in real time where the identity of the learner can be verified. Direct contact hours may include face-to-face orientation, pre-assessment, post-assessment, goal setting, and instruction. In addition, direct contact hours may include contact through telephone, video, teleconference, or online communication. Live online discussions, telephone conference calls, and live video broadcast to remote locations are examples of direct contact hours that are countable under this definition.

### ***Proxy Contact Hours***

In addition to direct contact hours, adult education programs must report proxy contact hours to track the time students spend on distance learning activities. Proxy contact hours must be associated with one of the three approved distance learning models of instruction.

1. The ***Clock Time Model*** assigns contact hours based on time that a learner is engaged in a software program that tracks time.
2. The ***Teacher Judgment Model*** assigns a fixed number of hours based on teacher determination of the extent to which a learner engaged in, or completed, the assignment.
3. The ***Learner Mastery Model*** assigns a fixed number of hours based on the learner passing a test on the content of the lesson.

The model used in Oklahoma will vary depending on the curricula used. Currently, all state-approved DL curricula are web-based and use the ***Clock Time Model*** to assign proxy hours. The online programs track the time the student works in the program from logging in to logging out. Distance learning teachers will also maintain a record of student clock hours.

Proxy and direct contact hours will be recorded separately in LACES. This will determine whether the student will be reported as a distance student (51% or more hours of instruction via distance) or as a traditional classroom learner. Students who have received some distance instruction (50% or less of their total instructional hours) may not be reported as a distance learning student, but may be counted as a traditional student as long as the student has twelve contact hours.

### ***Assessing Distance Learners***

Oklahoma's Adult Education and Literacy Assessment Policy will apply to all adult education students – distance and non-distance. Assessments will be conducted in a secure, in-person, proctored setting.

### ***NRS Reporting of Students in Distance Learning***

Distance learner data will be reported on NRS Table 4C and Table 5A. Proxy contact hours and actual contact hours for distance learning students will be reported on NRS Table 4C. Core follow-up outcome measures for distance learning students will be reported on NRS Table 5A. Data entry personnel for distance learning programs must enter data for distance learning students on a monthly basis.

### **Funding for Distance Learning**

Additional funding will not be available to programs approved to offer a distance learning program. Programs must be willing to incur any increased costs associated with distance learning. Hopefully any increase in costs will be offset by an increase in students served.

### **Contact Information**

If you have any questions about Oklahoma's Adult Education and Literacy Distance Learning Policy or any of the requirements for reporting data about distance learners, contact the Lifelong Learning Division at (405) 377-2000