

Arkansas

National Reporting System for **Adult Education Assessment Policy** **and Distance Education Guidelines**

Arkansas Department of Career Education

Adult Education Division

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***Approved by the U.S. Department of Education
Office of Vocational and Adult Education***

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Introduction

These guidelines are based on the federal manual "Implementation Guidelines: Measures and Methods for the National Reporting System for Adult Education" (May 2013) as well as Arkansas state adult education policies and procedures where noted. These guidelines are a summary of the key aspects of the federal manual which is available in its entirety online at: www.nrsweb.org.

Chapter 1: National Reporting System for Adult Education Core Measures

The National Reporting System (NRS) is the accountability system for the federally funded, State-administered adult education program. It addresses the accountability requirements of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Title II of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA—P.L.105–220). The NRS defines three types of core measures: **outcome measures**, **descriptive measures**, and **participation measures**. These core measures apply only to enrolled students (students receiving 12 or more contact hours). States report only enrolled students in the National Reporting System annual federal report. Arkansas also reports served students on the state level.

There are several optional secondary outcome measures in NRS. They are currently not required by NRS; however, they can be collected in AERIS and reported on the local and state level. Specific data are defined according to NRS requirements within this manual.

Reporting Student Data in AERIS

All adult education and literacy programs receiving adult education federal and state funds from the Arkansas Department of Career Education, Adult Education Division must report student data for both served and enrolled students using the state student management information system, **Adult Education Reporting Information System (AERIS)**. All adults who receive any services from adult education and literacy programs are considered **served** students. Adults who receive services, have a completed Intake Form, and have received at least one contact hour of instruction, should be entered into AERIS even if they have not taken a pre-test. Students who have 12 or more contact hours within a program year (July 1 to June 30) are considered **enrolled** students by the NRS. Students should be pre-tested before they have acquired 12 instruction contact hours.

All student data must be entered into AERIS by the 15th of each month for the previous month's data. All data must be approved by the 22nd of each month for the previous month's data. This includes post-test scores in which students do not show educational gains. Students with both a pre-test and post-test will be recorded in NRS Table 4B, which is now a required table. All test scores need to be dated on the exact date the test was given. Test documentation must be available in the students' files and is subject to monitoring during site visits and program reviews. In AERIS, only users with the role of a Local Education Agency (LEA) Administrator may approve data. Data entry personnel should not be responsible for approving data. The local program director should approve all data. Data audits will be conducted by the Adult Education Division during on-site reviews to verify the accuracy of data in AERIS and to verify that correct assessment procedures have been followed.

PLEASE NOTE: The final date for data entry into AERIS for fiscal year 2013-14 is Monday, September 1, 2014.

According to Assurance #13 of the Adult Education Division Assurances, which is signed at the time of the adult education grant award, all programs that receive adult education funds agree to submit student data according to schedules set by the Adult Education Division. If programs are missing data in AERIS, or have data with errors or deviations, they will be notified by a program advisor and will be required to correct the problem within one month.

According to Assurance #33, the Adult Education Division may reduce funding or terminate agreements in part or whole if it has been determined that a program has failed to comply with the assurances.

Exhibit 1.1 lists the *core* and *secondary* measures of the NRS. The core measures apply to all adult education students receiving 12 or more hours of service. There are three types of core measures:

- Outcome measures include educational gain, entered employment, retained employment, receipt of secondary school diploma or general education development (GED) certificate, and placement in postsecondary education or training.

Exhibit 1.1 Summary of NRS Measures and Definitions

Topic	Measures	Categories or Definitions
Core Outcome Measures		
Educational gains	❖ Educational gains	❖ Educational functioning levels in reading, writing, speaking, and listening and functional areas
Follow-up measures	❖ Entered employment	❖ Learners who obtain a job by the end of the first quarter after the exit quarter
	❖ Retained employment	❖ Learners who obtain a job and remain employed in the third quarter after program exit
	❖ Receipt of secondary school diploma or GED	❖ Learners who obtain a GED, secondary school diploma, or recognized equivalent after exit.
	❖ Placement in postsecondary education or training	❖ Learners enrolling after exit in a postsecondary educational or occupational skills program building on prior services or training received
Core Descriptive and Participation Measures		
Demographics	❖ Race/Ethnicity	❖ American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Black or African American (non-Hispanic), Hispanic or Latino, White (non-Hispanic)
	❖ Gender	❖ Male, female
	❖ Age	❖ Date of birth

Exhibit 1.1 (Continued)
Summary of NRS Measures and Definitions

Topic	Measures	Categories or Definitions
Core Descriptive and Participation Measures		
Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Labor force status ❖ Public assistance status ❖ Rural residency ❖ Disability status ❖ Highest degree or level of school completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Employed, not employed, not in labor force ❖ Receiving or not receiving assistance ❖ Rural, not rural ❖ Disabled, not disabled ❖ Highest grade level of school completed in US or abroad, college, secondary credential, postsecondary degree
Student participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Contact hours ❖ Program enrollment type 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Number of hours of instructional activity ❖ ABE, ASE, ESL, family literacy, workplace programs, homeless programs, correctional facilities, community corrections programs, other institutional programs
Teacher status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Total years of experience ❖ Teacher certification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Total number of years of experience teaching ❖ Certification in K-12, special education, adult education, TESOL
Secondary Outcome and Student Status Measures (Optional)		
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Reduction in receipt of public assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Students whose welfare benefits or equivalent public assistance grant is reduced or eliminated due to employment
Work-based project learner achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Met work-based project learner goal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Achieved skills for work-based project learner activity (activity of at least 12 hours and no more than 30 hours of instruction related to a teach specific workplace skills)

Exhibit 1.1 (Continued)
Summary of NRS Measures and Definitions

Topic	Measures	Categories or Definitions
Secondary Outcome and Student Status Measures (Optional)		
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Achieved citizenship skills ❖ Voting behavior ❖ General involvement in community activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Achieve the skills needed to pass the citizenship exam ❖ Learner registers to vote or votes for the first time ❖ Learner increases involvement in community activities
Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Involvement in children's education ❖ Involvement in children's literacy-related activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Learner increases help given for children's school work, contact with teachers to discuss education, and involvement in children's school ❖ Learner increases the amount read to children, visits libraries, or purchases books or magazines for children
Student status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Low-income status ❖ Displaced homemaker ❖ Single-parent status ❖ Dislocated worker ❖ Learning disabled adult ❖ Learner's goals for attending 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Low income, not low income ❖ Displaced homemaker, not displaced homemaker ❖ Single parent, not single parent ❖ Dislocated worker, not dislocated worker ❖ Learning disabled, not learning disabled ❖ Obtain a job, retain current job, improve current job, earn a secondary school diploma or GED, enter postsecondary education or training, improve basic literacy skills, improve English language skills, citizenship, work-based project learner goal, other personal goals

- **Descriptive measures** include student demographics, reasons for attending, and student status.
- **Participation measures** include contact hours received and enrollment in instructional programs for special populations or topics, such as family literacy or workplace literacy.

For PY 2013, performance standards required by WIA will be set only for the core measures for educational gain and awarding of incentive grants will be tied to these performance standards. PY 2013 Data for the core follow-up outcome measures will be used to set new baselines for future performance targets.

The NRS secondary measures include additional outcome measures related to employment, family, and community. Adult education stakeholders believe these are important to understanding and evaluating adult education programs. States are *not required to report on the secondary measures* and no performance standards are tied to them. The optional secondary measures are not used as a basis for incentive grant awards. There also are secondary student status measures that define target populations identified in WIA. These measures are provided for States that want to report on the services provided to these populations.

Chapter 2: Core Outcome Measure: Educational Gain

Definition: Learner completes or advances one or more NRS Educational Functioning Levels (EFL) from the starting level measured on entry into a program.

Applicable Population: All Enrolled Learners. This is the assumed goal of all adult education and literacy students. Therefore, this goal does not appear as a specific data field in AERIS. All student achievement of this goal will be recorded in NRS Table 4 and Table 4B.

Collection Procedure: Using one of the standardized testing instruments approved by the National Reporting System and the Adult Education Division, an individual learner's Educational Functioning Level (EFL) is determined within the NRS score ranges. The following pages of this manual contain the most recent NRS score ranges for each Educational Functioning Level for the approved testing instruments.

Federal Reporting: Total number of learners who complete a level during the program is reported, and a rate or percentage of level completion is computed. The number who continue in the program after completing a level, the number who fail to complete a level and leave the program, and the number who remain in the same level are recorded to obtain a fuller picture of student flow and retention.

ALL TEST SCORES must be entered into AERIS by the 15th of the following month and approved by the 22nd of the following month. This also includes post-test scores in which students do not show educational gains. Students with both a pre-test and post-test will be recorded in **NRS Table 4B**, which is now a required table. All test scores need to be dated on the exact date the test was given. Test documentation must be available in the students' files and is subject to monitoring during site visits and program reviews.

Programs are required to meet 80% of the Core Indicators of Performance to be considered Effective and Efficient according to the criteria established by the State Board of Workforce Education and Career Opportunities under authority granted by Arkansas Act 1280 of 2007, Section 30. These Criteria are found in the Arkansas Adult Education Program Policies:

http://ace.arkansas.gov/adultEducation/programs/Documents/Adult_Ed_Forms/ArkansasAdultEducationPoliciesProcedures.pdf

National Reporting System for Adult Education

Educational Functioning Level Score Ranges

Adult Basic Education (ABE) and Adult Secondary Education (ASE) Levels

<p>1.1 Beginning ABE Literacy</p> <p>Test Benchmark: TABE (9-10) scale scores: (grade level 0 -1.9)</p> <p>Reading: 367 and below Total Math: 313 and below Language: 389 and below</p>	<p>1.2 Beginning Basic Education</p> <p>Test Benchmark: TABE (9-10) scale scores: (grade level 2-3.9)</p> <p>Reading: 368-460 Total Math: 314-441 Language: 390-490</p>	<p>1.3 Low Intermediate Basic Education</p> <p>Test Benchmark: TABE (9-10) scale scores: (grade 4-5.9)</p> <p>Reading: 461-517 Total Math: 442-505 Language: 491-523</p>
<p>1.4 High Intermediate Basic Education</p> <p>Test Benchmark: TABE (9-10) scale scores: (grade level 6-8.9)</p> <p>Reading: 518-566 Total Math: 506-565 Language: 524-559</p>	<p>1.5 Low Adult Secondary Education</p> <p>Test Benchmark: TABE (9-10) scale scores: (grade level 9-10.9)</p> <p>Reading: 567-595 Total Math: 566-594 Language: 560-585</p>	<p>1.6 High Adult Secondary Education</p> <p>Test Benchmark: TABE (9-10) scale scores: (grade level 11-12.9)</p> <p>Reading: 596 and above Total Math: 595 and above Language: 586 and above</p> <p>Exit Criteria: Pass the GED Tests</p>

TABE = Test of Adult Basic Education
GED = General Education Development

National Reporting System for Adult Education

Educational Functioning Level Score Ranges

English as a Second Language (ESL) Levels

<p>1.7 Beginning ESL Literacy</p> <p>Test Benchmark: SPL Speaking 0-1 SPL Reading/Writing 0-1</p> <p>BEST Literacy: 0-20 CASAS (Life Skills): 180 and below BEST Plus: 400 and below</p>	<p>1.8 Low Beginning ESL</p> <p>Test Benchmark: SPL Speaking 2 SPL Reading/Writing 2</p> <p>BEST Literacy: 21-52 CASAS (Life Skills): 181-200 BEST Plus: 401-417</p>	<p>1.9 High Beginning ESL</p> <p>Test Benchmark: SPL Speaking 3 SPL Reading/Writing 3</p> <p>BEST Literacy: 53-63 CASAS (Life Skills): 201-210 BEST Plus: 418-438</p>
<p>1.10 Low Intermediate ESL</p> <p>Test Benchmark: SPL Speaking 4 SPL Reading/Writing 4</p> <p>BEST Literacy: 64-67 CASAS (Life Skills): 211-220 BEST Plus: 439-472</p>	<p>1.11 High Intermediate ESL</p> <p>Test Benchmark: SPL Speaking 5 SPL Reading/Writing 5-6</p> <p>BEST Literacy: 68-75 CASAS (Life Skills): 221-235 BEST Plus: 473-506</p>	<p>1.12 Advanced ESL</p> <p>Test Benchmark: SPL Speaking 6 SPL Reading/Writing 6</p> <p>BEST Literacy: 76+ CASAS (Life Skills): 236-245 BEST Plus: 507-540 Exit Criteria: BEST Literacy- none, CASAS 236+, or BEST Plus 507+</p>

BEST = Basic English Skills Test
CASAS = Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System
SPL = Student Performance Level

Standardized Testing Instruments

Subject: Standardized Testing Instruments

REFERENCE: Adult Education Program Policies

POLICY: Only the following state, National Reporting System for Adult Education (NRS), and Division of Adult Education and Literacy (DAEL) approved standardized tests will be utilized for pre-test, post-test, and continued student assessment for adult education students: Test of Adult Basic Education; Basic English Skills Test, and Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (Life Skills Assessment for ESL only). Other NRS/DAEL-approved standardized testing instruments, forms and version may be used with the written approval of the Deputy Director of Adult Education. Different forms of the same test must be used for the pre-test and the post-test. Local programs will pre-test and place all students into an educational functioning level (EFL) at intake or shortly after intake, within the first 12 hours of instruction.

Post-testing of adult learners is to measure performance and completion of an educational functioning level. Within the fiscal year, students should be post-tested according to the test publisher's guidelines approved by the United States Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) or when exiting the program. Students should be assessed within 180 calendar days (defined as weekdays, weekends, and holidays) after the previous assessment to reflect a more current measurement of performance.

INFORMATION/RATIONALE: The levels of performance will be expressed in an objective, quantifiable, and measurable form and will show the progress of the state toward continuously improving in performance. According to the National Reporting System of Adult Education Implementation Guidelines, states must require local programs to measure educational gain with standardized assessments that are appropriate for measuring education gain within the NRS framework and conform to accepted psychometric standards for validity and reliability.

EFFECTIVE DATE: JULY 1, 1991

REVISED DATE: SEPTEMBER 13, 1993

REVISED DATE: APRIL 18, 2003

REVISED DATE: DECEMBER 7, 2006

REVISED DATE: NOVEMBER 15, 2008

REVISED DATE: JUNE 4, 2011

Guidelines for Pre-Testing and Post-Testing

Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE)

All students (one hundred percent) who are registering for classes must be pre-tested. Pre-testing should be administered at intake or shortly after intake, but before the students receive 12 hours of instruction. For continuing students, AERIS will automatically roll over a student's last test score(s) from one program year to the next to determine the student's Entering Educational Functioning Level (EFL) for the new fiscal year. The roll-over student's last assessment(s) lowest EFL from the previous year will be the new starting EFL.

Programs must follow the test publishers' guidelines regarding test administration and must also follow the test publishers' guidelines in selecting the correct test level for each student's assessment. The Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) Locator Test (paper, audiocassette, or computer formats) must be used to determine the level of TABE to be administered: Easy, Medium, Difficult, or Advanced levels (E, M, D, or A). Programs may choose to use either the TABE Complete Battery or the Survey. Learners with very low reading skills who cannot complete the Locator Test should be administered the TABE Literacy Level (L). The pre-test and post-test should be the same level and battery but a different form.

The TABE is comprised of three content areas (Reading, Language, and Mathematics) and is appropriate for all levels of adult basic education and literacy students, from non-readers (Level L) up to learners who are preparing to take the General Educational Development (GED®) tests. The TABE 9&10 Survey takes about 2 hours, and the Complete Battery takes about 3.5 hours. Times for other TABE versions vary. Please refer to the publishers' guidelines TABE test times below:

Levels E, M, D, and A: Item Count and Test Times*

Locator Test	Complete Battery Number of Items	Estimated Testing Time	Survey Number of Items	Estimated Testing Time
Reading	50	0:50	25	0:25
Mathematics Computation	40	0:24	25	0:15
Applied Mathematics	50	0:50	25	0:25
Language	55	0:55	25	0:25
Language Mechanics	20	0:14		
Vocabulary	20	0:15		
Spelling	20	0:10		
Total	225	3:34	100	1:30

**Please note that these times are used as guidelines only. Allow 10 minutes for instruction, recording names on answer sheets, etc. Note that the Spelling test is optional and does not contribute to total Battery scores.*

If the learner is functioning in different levels (Beg. ABE Lit., Low ASE, etc.) in different subject areas (reading, language, mathematics) the **lowest** functioning level will be the basis for the NRS **Entering** of Educational Functioning Level placement. To determine educational gain, the learner should be assessed again, post-tested, after an instructional period with a **different form** of the same test. If the learner shows progress by moving up to the next higher EFL in any one of the content areas tested, the learner has made an educational gain. Sixty percent (60%) of all students who are pre-tested should be post-tested in order to meet the negotiated core indicator benchmarks.

For example: a student's TABE Locator reading score indicates the appropriate level of testing is Level M. The student is then given the TABE **Form 9, Level M** reading pre-test. After a period of instruction (based on test publishers guidelines), the student needs to be given the TABE **Form 10, Level M** as a post-test.

Do not post-test with the same form and do not post-test with a different level.

If the student shows gain, then the student may be tested in the future with a higher level TABE, for example Level D. Advancement(s) will be recorded in Table 4 and a *minimum* of one educational gain per year is recommended to meet the NRS core indicators of performance. If the student does not show progress, then the student needs to receive further instruction. After a second instructional period, the student may post-test a second time. The program needs to alternate the testing forms (TABE 9 and TABE 10) at each assessment.

Note: Every student should be encouraged to make as many educational functioning level (EFL) gains as possible. Do not stop after one EFL gain is achieved. Every administration of an assessment test must be recorded in AERIS.

Other assessments, such as the Wide Range Achievement Test, Slosson Oral Reading Test, and Jordan Oral Screening Test, among others, including teacher-generated assessments, may be given to help **inform instruction**; however they may not be used to place a student in an EFL or to determine educational gain or EFL advancement. If a student is not pre-tested and post-tested with an NRS-approved and state-approved testing instrument, educational gain cannot be determined for that student.

Note: If a student is given a test other than an NRS and State approved testing instrument to help inform instruction the time should be recorded as instruction.

Basic English Skills Test (BEST)

The Basic English Skills Test (BEST) is appropriate for English as Second Language (ESL) students. The BEST tests are available for the listening/speaking content areas (BEST Plus) and reading/writing content areas (BEST Literacy). In addition to the BEST assessments, the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS) is appropriate for English as Second Language (ESL) students. NOTE: when ESL students score above the Advance ESL NRS Level score range, then they should be given the TABE in order to be able to show educational progress. They should be separated from AERIS and re-entered using the TABE score as a non-ESL student.

Optional: Students do not need to be assessed in all of the content areas. The local program must decide the skill areas most relevant to each student's needs or the program's curriculum and assess students in these areas. Assessments should also be in the area(s) in which instruction will be focused.

Recommended Number of Instructional Hours Between Pre-test and Post-test

Post-testing shall occur after completion of an instructional period. The Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE)/Division of Adult Education and Literacy (DAEL) has approved the following recommendations from CTB McGraw Hill as the number of instructional hours required between the pre-test and post-test for the TABE 9/10, the TABE CLAS-E, and CASAS:

NRS Test	Recommended Number of Instructional Hours Between Pre-Test and Post-test
TABE 9 & 10 Alternate Form	50-60 hours of instruction is recommended when testing with an alternate form (ie. 9M to 10M) for students that test into NRS Levels 1-4 (ABE) with a minimum of 40 hours . For students testing into NRS Levels 5 and 6 (ASE Low and High) 30-59 hours of instruction is recommended.
TABE 9 & 10 Same Form Testing	120 hours of instruction is recommended when testing with the same form (ie 9M to 9M).
TABE CLAS-E Alternate Form Testing	60-95 hours of instruction is recommended when testing with an alternate form (ie. A2 to B2) with a minimum of 50 hours .
TABE CLAS-E Same Form Testing	100-140 hours of instruction is recommended when testing with the same form (ie A2 to A2).
CASAS Alternate Form Testing	70-100 hours of instruction is recommended when testing with an alternate form (ie R2.3 A to R2.3 B).

REFERENCE: Revised January 6, 2011 by the National Reporting System for Adult Education

Traditional vs. Non-Traditional Justification in AERIS

A student may choose to study and test in one, two, or three content area(s). The traditional justification of assessment in AERIS is when a student pre-tests in all three areas: math, reading, and language arts. If a student wants to study and pre-/post-test in only one or two content areas, then the justification of assessment is called Non-Traditional 1 and Non-Traditional 2, respectively.

If a student post-tests and scores in the next higher Educational Functioning Level (EFL), then the student will receive an educational gain in that area, which will be recorded for the student in Table 4. In order to change a student's test battery or change from Traditional to Non-Traditional justification, a student will need to post-test in all three content areas before the justification can be changed. If a Traditional Justification student or Non-Traditional student makes an educational functioning level gain in a content area, their entering EFL persists through the entire fiscal year regardless of whether s/he regresses, advances, completes or never tests again.

Special Populations

Students with Disabilities:

Students with documented disabilities will be granted reasonable accommodations upon request during testing and instruction. The audiocassette format of TABE (Survey, Levels E–A) and the Locator are valid substitutes for the paper format and are available through the Arkansas Adult Learning Resource Center (AALRC) (501-907-2490, or 800-832-6242).

According to CTB/McGraw-Hill, publishers of the TABE:

Questions about Accommodations

Q. When administering TABE, can we offer accommodations for students with special needs?

A testing accommodation is a change made to the test administration procedure to provide equal access for students with disabilities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. If an accommodation is employed, it is important that the selected accommodation minimize any advantage or disadvantage of completing the test. In particular, if the accommodation under consideration is not used in instruction, then it should not be used in the testing situation.

TABE-PC is appropriate for some students who have difficulty taking paper-and-pencil tests. Some TABE administrators have made other accommodations such as allowing extra time to complete the test or letting students mark answers in test booklets rather than on separate answer sheets. Additional accommodation suggestions are available in CTB/McGraw-Hill's Assessment Accommodations Checklist (#53682); order online or call Customer Services at (800) 538-9547.

Q. May I administer TABE as an untimed test?

If you use different time limits than were used in the standardization process, it compromises the interpretation of the norms. However, CTB recognizes that time extensions may be warranted to accommodate persons with certain disabilities, or when TABE is being used exclusively to diagnose the learning objectives an individual still needs to master.

Q. Are there special editions of TABE for people with visual disabilities?

Yes. Large-print, Braille, and audio editions of TABE Forms 9&10 are available from CTB/McGraw-Hill and may be ordered by calling Customer Services toll-free at (800) 538-9547 or through our Web site at www.ctb.com.

Q. How should we interpret scores when we administer TABE under non-standard conditions?

Whenever non-standard directions and time limits are utilized, norm-referenced comparisons should be treated with great caution, since the only norms available are those based on test administrations using standard directions and time limits. Nonetheless, CTB/McGraw-Hill believes that information about instructional strengths and student needs can be obtained from a non-standard test administration. This is best done by focusing on the curriculum-referenced or objective mastery information the test can provide. For more information, consult CTB's publication, *Guidelines for Using the Results of Standardized Tests Administered Under Non-Standard Conditions*. Obtain your free copy by calling Customer Services at (800) 538-9547.

According to the CASAS Assessment Policy Guidelines, May 2009:

Accommodations in testing alter the conditions for administering a test or change the nature of an assessment instrument, allowing test takers with disabilities to demonstrate their skills and abilities more accurately. Proper accommodations meet the needs of examinees without changing what a test is intended to measure.

Local test administrators may provide or allow some accommodations in test administration procedures or environment for documented disabilities without contacting CASAS.

Accommodations procedures are applicable to all CASAS tests and include:

- accommodations in test time
- giving supervised breaks
- or providing a sign language interpreter for test administration directions only
- testing in an alternate room
- using a colored overlay
- large print test booklets and answer sheets
- allowing extended time

Additionally, CASAS test forms that may be appropriate for learners with a disability include CASAS eTests, computer-adapted and computer-based tests, and large-print tests. CASAS large-print tests include Beginning Literacy Reading Assessment, ECS test booklets, Life and Work test booklets, and Secondary Level Assessment test booklets in math. Large-print answer sheets are also available. A Life and Work test form in Braille format measures basic literacy skills for learners who are blind or have a visual impairment.

It is not an appropriate accommodation in test administration procedures to read a CASAS reading test to a learner with low literacy skills or blindness.

The paper *Guidelines for Providing Accommodations Using CASAS Assessment for Learners with Disabilities* provides more detailed information on providing accommodations. This document is available at www.casas.org.

According to the Center for Applied Linguistics, publishers of BEST:

Testing Accommodations for BEST Plus and BEST Literacy

According to the test publisher, programs administering BEST Plus and BEST Literacy are responsible for providing accessible services and for making sure that requests for accommodations are considered and handled in a manner consistent with applicable laws and regulations. Program and test administrators may provide and allow accommodation in test administration procedures or in the testing environment for individuals with disabilities, provided that the accommodation does not compromise the purpose of the test. Testing environment accommodations for either test might include frequent breaks or individual administration of BEST Literacy.

In the case of BEST Literacy, the purpose of the test is to obtain a measure of reading and writing in English. Permissible accommodations related to BEST Literacy test administration include the use of eyeglasses or magnifying glasses, earplugs, color overlays, or rulers.

The purpose of BEST Plus is to obtain a measure of listening and speaking in English. Permissible accommodations related to BEST Plus include the use of hearing aids. BEST Plus is not designed to assess the communicative language skills of hearing- or speech-impaired students, nor should it be used with visually impaired students, as some of the questions depend on a photographic stimulus.

It is not an appropriate accommodation for a test administrator to read BEST Literacy test questions to an examinee with sight impairment as BEST Literacy is a test of reading. Similarly, it is not an appropriate accommodation for a BEST Plus test administrator to allow an examinee to read the on-screen prompts as BEST Plus is a listening, not a reading, test.

The following interventions do **not** require disability documentation and may be provided during testing: use of a large-print version, use of a straight edge, use of colored overlays, request to sit near a window (away from fluorescent lights), use of graph paper, or taking individual tests on different days.

All programs must begin the process of screening for learning disabilities during student intake. The process, administered by trained personnel, includes the use of a validated learning disabilities screening tool, follow-up interview to review results of the screening tool, and appropriate further steps for investigating diagnostic referrals as warranted by the screening process. For further information regarding learning disabilities, accommodations, and training in administering a learning disabilities screening tool, programs should contact Ms. Patti White, the state Disabilities Project Manager (479-232-5760, or 800-569-3539).

Sixteen and Seventeen-Year-Old Students:

Programs with students who are 16 and 17 years old must follow the guidelines outlined in Arkansas Act 1659 of 2001 and Act 604 of 2003. Refer to the *Arkansas Adult Education Program Policies* for further information on serving 16 and 17-year-old students (<http://ace.arkansas.gov/adultEducation/informationForms/Pages/programPolicies.aspx>).

English Language Learners:

Programs with English language learners should have their Intake Form and their class schedule of English as a Second Language (ESL) classes available in the most common foreign languages of the program's community. Programs should assess ESL students with the Basic English Skills Test (BEST) or CASAS (Life Skills) as soon as possible at intake or shortly after intake, but before the students receive 12 hours of instruction.

The Adult Education Division recommends that ESL students be given both an oral version and a literacy version of the tests, and then be placed according to the lowest EFL. The BEST Plus (an oral test) is a computer-adaptive test with multiple test versions built into the programming. A different form of the test is therefore given each time the student takes the computer-adaptive version. The BEST Plus also has three different print-based scoring versions. The BEST Literacy test was updated by the Center for Applied Linguistics in 2006 and is now available in three forms (B, C, and D).

Training and Other Assessments

Training on test administration is available from Arkansas Adult Learning Resource Center (AALRC) on a regular basis. Contact AALRC for the most current calendar of training events (501-907-2490, or 800-832-6242) www.aalrc.org. AALRC maintains records (sign-in sheets, certificates (if applicable), and the ESC Web online registration system) for all persons trained for each assessment conducted at AALRC. AALRC also maintains records of the trainers who conduct each workshop.

According to CTB/McGraw-Hill:

Adult educators who have a general knowledge of measurement principles and are willing to abide by the assessment standards of the American Psychological Association may administer TABE. These professional standards require TABE administrators to follow specific guidelines, such as keeping tests in a secure place and administering them only as directed. For additional information, see the Purchaser's Qualification Statement in the back of the CTB/McGraw-Hill Assessment Products and Services Catalog. TABE: www.ctb.org

Only trained personnel, who are *certified* by the Center for Applied Linguistics, may administer the BEST Plus assessment. Trainings on BEST Plus test administration will be given at the Arkansas Adult Learning Resource Center (AALRC) on a regular basis (501-907-2490, or 800-832-6242). Refresher courses on the BEST Plus will also be held at AALRC on a regular basis. It is recommended that BEST Plus examiners take a refresher course every one to two years.

The Center for Applied Linguistics does not require training to administer *BEST Literacy*. Program administrators, test administrators, and test scorers should thoroughly review the *BEST Literacy Test Manual - 2008 Edition* in order to become familiar with proper testing and scoring procedures. The *BEST Literacy Test Manual - 2008 Edition* provides comprehensive information about administering and scoring the three forms (B, C, and D) of the test as well as information for interpreting the results and technical information. BEST: www.cal.org/BEST

CASAS requires agencies to complete a training workshop before ordering and administering most tests. Training is available at the annual CASAS National Summer Institute in June, through regional training workshops, in a distance training format, at the CASAS San Diego office, and on-site at your agency. Training is necessary to maintain the integrity and quality of the assessment process. CASAS: www.casas.org

Teachers and other local staff will be involved in gathering, analyzing, compiling, and reporting data for NRS. Training on conducting assessment administration at AALRC will also include the following topics: NRS policy, accountability policies, the data collection process, and the definitions of measures. New staff members need to attend the appropriate training prior to administering assessments. Previously trained staff should attend refresher courses (every two to three years) to become familiar with any assessment updates.

Chapter 3: Follow-up Outcome Measures

Follow-up Measure #1: Entered Employment

Definition: Learner enters employment by the end of the first quarter after the program exit quarter. Employment is working in a paid, unsubsidized job or working 15 hours or more per week in an unpaid job on a farm or business operated by a family member or the student. The exit quarter is the quarter when instruction ends, the learner terminates or has not received instruction for 90 days, and is not scheduled to receive further instruction. A job obtained while the student is enrolled can be counted for entered employment and is reported if the student is still employed in the first quarter after exit from the program.

Applicable Population: Learners who are not employed at time of entry **and in the labor force** who exit during the program year.

Federal Reporting: States report the total number of **unemployed** learners **in the labor force** who enter employment and exit during the program year and the total number of learners in the labor force who are unemployed at entry who exit during the program year. Entered employment rate is computed by dividing these numbers.

Follow-up Measure #2: Retained Employment

Definition: Learner remains employed in the third quarter after exit quarter.

Applicable Population: **Learners who, at time of entry, were not employed and in the labor force, who are employed in the first quarter after exit quarter, and learners employed at entry.**

Federal Reporting: States report the total number of learners **in the applicable population (see above) who are employed in the third quarter after program exit** and the total applicable population (i.e., the number of learners in the labor force who were unemployed at entry, and who entered employment; **and** learners who are employed at entry). The retained employment rate is computed by dividing the number of learners who retain employment by the total applicable population.

Follow-up Measure #3: Receipt of a Secondary School Diploma

Definition: The learner obtains certification of attaining passing scores on GED tests, or the learner obtains a diploma or State-recognized equivalent, documenting satisfactory completion of secondary studies (high school or adult high school diploma).

Applicable Population: All enrolled learners **who take all GED tests, or are enrolled in adult high school* at the high ASE level, or are enrolled in the assessment phase of the EDP** who exit during the program year.

Federal Reporting: States report the total number of learners **in the applicable population (see above) and the number of learners who pass all GED tests or obtain** secondary school diplomas who exit. To compute a rate or percentage of attainment, the number of students receiving a secondary school diploma or pass the GED is

divided by the total number of learners *in the applicable population* who exit during the program year. If a State has a policy officially recognizing attainment of a foreign language GED as receipt of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, the State may also report attainment of a foreign language GED in the NRS for adult literacy. A passing score on the GED test is defined by the State and must be consistent with State policies relating to the issuance of a high school diploma or its equivalent.

Follow-up Measure #4: Entered Postsecondary Education or Training

Definition: Learner enrolls in a postsecondary educational, occupational skills training program, or an apprenticeship training program that does not duplicate other services or training received, regardless of whether the prior services or training were completed.

Applicable Population: All learners *who passed the GED tests or earned a secondary credential while enrolled in adult education, or have a secondary credential at entry, or are enrolled in a class specifically designed for transitioning to postsecondary education* who exit during the program year. A transition class is a class that has a specific purpose to prepare students for entry into postsecondary education, training or an apprenticeship program.

Federal Reporting: The total number of learners who enter postsecondary education or a training program and *the total number of students in the applicable population (see above)* who exit during the program year are reported. *Entry into postsecondary education or training can occur any time from the time of exit till the end of the following program year.* To compute a rate of placement, the number of students enrolling in postsecondary education or training, through the end of the program year following the year of program exit, is divided by the total number of learners in the applicable population who exited during the program year.

Collection and Follow-up Measures

The entered employment measure must be collected from students who leave the program by the end of the first quarter after they exit. A job obtained while the student is enrolled can be counted for the entered employment measure, but it is still measured and reported in the first quarter after the student exits. Retained employment must be collected in the third quarter following exit from the program, for students who entered employment according to the NRS definition and employed students who exit. There are no time periods tied to the other follow-up measures, thus they may be collected at any time until the end of the reporting period (December 31). States may include students who enter postsecondary education training up to the end of the *next* Program Year (June 30).

Exhibit 2.4

Student Population and Collection Time for Core Follow-up Measures

Core Outcome Measure	Student Population to Include	Time Period to Collect Measures
Entered employment	Learners unemployed at entry and in the labor force who exit	First quarter after exit quarter*
Retained employment	Learners unemployed at entry in the labor force who exit and are employed during first quarter after exit; and learners employed at entry who exit	Third quarter after exit quarter
Placement in postsecondary education or training	Learners who earned a secondary credential while enrolled, have a secondary credential at entry or who are enrolled in a class specifically designed for transition to postsecondary education who exit.	Any time after exit through the end of the program year (June 30) following the year of program exit.
Receipt of secondary diploma or GED	Learners who take all GED tests, are enrolled in adult high school at the high ASE level or are enrolled in the assessment phase of the EDP who exit.	Any time after exit to the end of the reporting period (December 31)

* For all measures, exit quarter is the quarter when the learner completes instruction or has not received instruction for 90 days and has no instruction scheduled. A job obtained while the student is enrolled can be counted but must be reported and measured during the first quarter after exiting the program if the student remains employed in that quarter.

Follow-up Surveys

Exhibit 2.5

Quarterly Periods for Collecting Entered and Retained Employment

Exit Quarter	Collect Entered Employment by the End of:	Collect Retained Employment by the End of:
First Quarter (July 1–September 30)	Second Quarter	Fourth Quarter
Second Quarter (October 1–December 31)	Third Quarter	First Quarter, Next Program Year
Third Quarter (January 1–March 31)	Fourth Quarter	Second Quarter, Next Program Year
Fourth Quarter (April 1–June 30)	First Quarter, Next Program Year	Third Quarter, Next Program Year

Chapter 4: Core Demographic, Status and Participation Measures

The NRS includes required descriptive measures, which are student *demographics* and student *status* in several areas. These measures allow for a description and understanding of who attends adult education programs and for what reasons. The measures also facilitate analyzing the performance of students attending adult education, such as unemployed students or students receiving public assistance. The demographic measures include ethnicity, age, gender and highest education level or credential attained. Also, there are two descriptive measures for teachers: years of experience and teacher certification. The status measures include employment status and whether the student has a disability or is on public assistance.

There are two *participation* measures—contact hours and program enrollment type—collected for both descriptive and analytic purposes. These measures record the amount of instruction that students receive and the number of students who attend in areas such as family literacy and workplace literacy. This section provides definitions of these measures and guidelines for collecting them.

Core descriptive measures are self-reported at intake. Programs must collect the following information on ALL learners and enter the data in AERIS.

Demographic Measures

Demographic Measure #1: Race/Ethnicity

Definition: Racial or ethnic category to which the learner self-identifies, appears to belong to, or is regarded in the community as belonging.

When collecting data, program staff are to first ask about a student's ethnicity (i.e., Hispanic/Latino or not) and then select one or more races with which the student identifies. Programs report data by counting students in only one of the following seven aggregate racial/ethnic categories.

- **American Indian or Alaska Native**—A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintains a tribal affiliation or community attachment.
- **Asian**—A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- **Black or African American**—A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa.
- **Hispanic/Latino of any race**—A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race. The term "Spanish origin" can be used in addition to "Hispanic/Latino or Latino."
- **Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander**—A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.
- **White**—A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

- **Two or more races**—A person having origins in two or more race categories and not Hispanic/Latino.

Students who identify themselves as Hispanic/Latino are reported only in that category.

Applicable Population: All learners.

Federal Reporting: Total number of learners by racial/ethnic group is reported.

Demographic Measure #2: Gender

Definition: Whether the learner is male or female.

Applicable Population: All learners.

Federal Reporting: Total number of learners by gender is reported.

Demographic Measure #3: Age

Definition: Years since learner's date of birth.

Applicable Population: All learners.

Federal Reporting: Total number of learners by age is reported using the following age categories: 16–18 years, 19–24 years, 25–44 years, 45–59 years, and 60 years and older.

Demographic measures #1, 2, and 3 are reported in NRS Tables 1 – 3.

Student Status Measures

Student Status Measure #1: Labor Force Status

Definition: Whether the learner is employed, not employed, or not in the labor force. **All students will fall into one of these three categories:**

Employed – Learners work as paid employee in an unsubsidized job, work in their own business or farm, or who work 15 hours or more per week as unpaid workers on a farm or in a business operated by a member of the family. Also included are learners who are not currently working but who have jobs or businesses from which they are temporarily absent.

Unemployed – Learners who are not working, but are seeking employment, have made specific efforts to find a job and are available for work.

Not in the Labor Force – Learners who are not employed and not seeking employment (for example, a housewife or retiree who does not want a job or an inmate who is not eligible for parole for several years).

Collection Procedure: At intake, individual learner reports employment status.

Applicable Population: All learners.

Federal Reporting: Total number of learners by category is reported.

Student Status Measure #2: Public Assistance Status

Definition: Learner is receiving financial assistance from federal, state or local government agencies, including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), food stamps, refugee cash assistance, old-age assistance, general assistance, and aid to the blind or totally disabled. Social Security benefits, unemployment insurance, and employment-funded disability are not included under this definition.

Collection Procedure: At intake, referring agency or individual learner reports public assistance receipt. The information on student status measure #2 is collected on a separate form. Student personal information should be in a locked file and remain confidential.

Applicable Population: All learners.

Federal Reporting: Total number of learners receiving assistance is reported.

Student Status Measure #3: Disability Status

Definition: Learner has a record of, or is regarded as having, any type of physical or mental impairment, including a learning disability, that substantially limits or restricts one or more major life activities, including walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, learning, or working.

Collection Procedure: At intake, referring agency or individual learner reports disability or program assesses disability. The information on student status measure #3 is collected on a separate form. Student personal information should be in a locked file and remain confidential.

Applicable Population: All learners.

Federal Reporting: Total number of disabled learners is reported.

Student Status Measure #4: Rural Residency Status

Definition: Learner who resides in a place with a population less than 2,500 and outside an urbanized area. An urbanized area includes a population of 50,000 or more in a city and adjacent areas of high density.

Collection Procedure: At intake, learner's residency in a rural area is determined by learner self-report or documentation.

Applicable Population: All learners.

Federal Reporting: Total number of learners living in rural areas is reported.

****Student Status Measures #1, 2, 3, and 4 are reported in NRS Table 6.**

Student Status Measure #5: Highest Degree or Level of School Completed

Definition: The highest number of years of formal schooling the learner has completed or the highest credential or degree the learner has achieved. Schooling in the U.S. or abroad is included.

Collection Procedure: At intake, individual learner reports education status.

Applicable Population: All learners.

Federal Reporting: Total number of learners completing the highest grade level or credential is reported for schooling either in the U.S. or abroad.

All enrolled learners will be counted under Educational Gains in NRS Table 4.

Teacher Status Measures

Teacher Status Measure #1: Total Years of Adult Education Teaching Experience

Definition: The total number of years a teacher has taught in adult education.

Applicable Population: All paid teachers.

Federal Reporting: Total number of teachers by years of experience teaching adult education is reported, separately for full- and part-time paid teachers.

Teacher Status Measure #2: Teacher Certification

Definition: The credential or equivalent education achieved by the teacher, as defined in the following categories:

- **Adult Education Certification**—a credential recognized by the State that focuses on teaching adult education students.
- **K-12 Certification**— a credential recognized by the State that focuses on teaching children.
- **Special Education Certification**— a credential recognized by the State that focuses on teaching children or adults with disabilities or special needs.
- **TESOL Certification**— a credential recognized by the State that focuses on teaching English to speakers of other languages.

Applicable Population: All paid teachers.

Federal Reporting: Total number of teachers by type of credential is reported, separately for full- and part-time paid teachers.

Student Participation Measures

Student Participation Measure #1: Contact Hours

Definition: Hours of instruction or instructional activity the learner receives from the program. Instructional activity includes any program-sponsored activity designed to promote student learning in the program curriculum such as classroom instruction, assessment, tutoring or participation in a learning lab.

Collection Procedure: Data entry staff will record the contact hours as they are provided by instructor or program staff will record the contact hours as they are provided. Note that time spent on assessment can be counted only if the assessment is designed to inform placement decisions, assess progress, or inform instruction. Time used to take the Official GED® tests (published by the American Council on Education) may not be counted as contact hours.

However, programs may count the time spent on taking the official GED practice tests (published by Steck-Vaughn) if the test results are used for diagnostic purposes to inform instruction.

Reporting Procedure: Hours of instruction must be dated daily. All attendance and testing data need to be entered by the 15th of the following month and approved by the 22nd of the following month. However, in order to maximize the data in AERIS such as to conduct analyses of outcomes for specific student groups for reporting and program management, all data should be entered daily or on a weekly basis. This data is reported in NRS Table 4.

Applicable Population: All learners.

Federal Reporting: Total number of hours is reported.

Measuring Contact Hours for Learners in Distance Education

Students in distance education (defined below under Student Participation Measure #2) must have at least 12 hours of contact with the program before they can be counted for federal reporting purposes. Contact hours for distance learners can be a combination of actual contact and contact through telephone, video, teleconference or online communication, where student and program staff can interact and through which learner identity is verifiable.

Student Participation Measure #2: Program Enrollment Type

Definition: Learner is enrolled in the following programs or institutions. The following are the NRS program enrollment types:

- **Adult Basic Education Program**—A program of instruction designed for adults who lack competence in reading, writing, speaking, problem solving, or computation at a level necessary to function in society, on a job, or in the family.

- **Adult Secondary Education Program**—A program of instruction designed for adults who have some literacy skills and can function in everyday life but who are not proficient or do not have a certificate of graduation or its equivalent from a secondary school.

- **EL Program**—A program of instruction designed to help adults with limited English proficiency achieve competence in the English language.

- **Correctional Education Program**—A program of ABE, ASE, or EL instruction for adult criminal offenders in correctional institutions.

- **Family Literacy Program**—A program with a literacy component for parents and children or other intergenerational literacy components.

- **Workplace Literacy Program**—A program designed to improve the productivity of the workforce through improvement of literacy skills needed in the workplace by:

- Providing adult literacy and other basic skill services and activities, including basic computer literacy skills.
- Providing adult secondary education services and activities that may lead to the completion of a high school diploma or its equivalent.
- Meeting the literacy needs of adults with limited English proficiency.

- **Program for the Homeless**—A program designed for homeless adults. Homeless adults lack a fixed, regular, nighttime residence or have a residence that is (1) a publicly supervised or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill), (2) an institution that provides temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized, or (3) a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings. The term homeless adult does not apply to any individual imprisoned or otherwise detained pursuant to an act of the Congress or a State law.

- **Correctional Facilities**—Any prison, jail reformatory, work farm, detention center, or any other Federal, State, or local institution designed for the confinement or rehabilitation of criminal offenders.

- **Community Corrections Programs**—A community-based rehabilitation facility or halfway house.

- **Other Institutional Programs**—Any other medical or special institution.

- **Distance Education**—Formal learning activity where students and instructors are separated by geography, time or both for the majority of the instructional period. Distance learning materials are delivered through a variety of media including, but not limited to, print, audio recording, videotape, broadcasts, computer software, web-based programs and other online technology. Teachers support distance learners through communication via mail, telephone, e-mail or online technologies and software.

Collection Procedure: At intake, local program counts learner as entering the appropriate NRS program or class type.

Reporting Procedure: Programs create classes in AERIS under the following “Class Types” and register students in the appropriate classes.

Applicable Population: All learners.

Federal Reporting: Total number of learners in each program or category is reported. The number of learners in each program type can be used to analyze the performance of these participants separately from the overall adult education population.

**This information is important for NRS
Tables 6, 8, 9, and 10.**

AERIS Class Type Choices:

Adult Basic Education
Adult Secondary Education
Career Pathways
Citizenship
Community Corrections
Computer Literacy (*non-NRS approved class*)
Correctional Facilities
Career Readiness Certificate (CRC)
Distance Learning (F2F)
Distance Learning (proxy)
English as a Second Language
EL/Civics
Family Literacy
KeyTrain

Microsoft IT Academy
No Specialized Program
One-Stops
Other Institutional Settings
Smarter Sentencing
Testing Hours
Transition
WAGE™
WorkKeys
Workplace Literacy
16-17 Year Olds
Other (State Level Only)

Chapter 5: Secondary Outcome Measures (Optional)

NRS does not require that states report the optional secondary outcome measures at this time. These measures include Work-based Project Learners, Employment Measures, Community Measures, Family Measures, and Student Status Measures. However, Arkansas adult education and literacy programs can collect this information and report it in AERIS (for example, under Secondary Reasons for attending adult education). ***This information is reported in NRS Tables 8 and 11.***

Student data on income level and other secondary student status measures are collected on a confidential sheet that will be separated from the student's Intake Form after the data is entered into AERIS. ***This information is reported in NRS Table 6.***

Work-Based Project Learner Outcome Measure: Completed Work-Based Project Learner Activity

Definition: Learner acquires the skills taught in a short-term learning course designed to teach specific work-based skills. A short-term course is an instructional program of at least 12 hours but no more than 30 hours duration.

Applicable Population: Learners enrolled in a short-term course and designated at entry as work-based project learners.

Federal Reporting: Total number of learners who complete a work-based project learner activity is recorded. A rate or percentage can be computed by dividing this total by the total relevant population (number of work-based project learners). Project learners are not counted for the educational gain measure and are not assigned an educational functioning level. No core outcome measures are reported for project learners.

Additional Guidance on Work-Based Project Learners Measure

Work-based project learners are enrolled in an instructional or training course that has at least 12 hours and no more than 30 hours of scheduled instruction. The course must be designed to teach work-based literacy skills. The skills the student learns, and the method for assessing these skills and standards for achievement, must be explicitly stated prior to beginning the course. To be recognized as completing the activity, the learner must demonstrate achievement of the skills at the level of the agreed-upon standard. As with other student assessments of the NRS, the assessment must either be a standardized test or performance-based assessment with standardized scoring rubrics. It is the State's responsibility to establish and monitor the assessment process and train staff on the use of the assessment procedures.

Work-based project learners should designate "achieve work-based project learner goals" as their goal for attending. Once a student is designated as a work-based project learner, the student is not assigned an educational functioning level and no additional outcomes are collected on that learner. The learner is reported on the NRS reporting tables (in the optional *secondary outcomes table*).

Work-based project learning should not be confused with workplace literacy programs, which also are designed to teach workplace skills. Workplace literacy programs have a longer duration, are open ended, and generally teach a broader range of literacy skills (see definition). Students enrolled in workplace literacy programs are counted under the required core outcome measures.

Chapter 6: Distance Education

Definition: Distance education is a formal learning activity in which the instructional activities of students and instructors are separated by geography, time or both.

Program Responsibilities: Distance learning instructors will provide instruction and document proxy hours using distance learning approved curriculum as outlined on the Adult Education Instructional Hours Rubric. Student rosters must be maintained by the distance education instructor containing the names of all enrollees. A record of all assignments made for a distance education student must be maintained by the instructor. Student logs must be kept by the instructor indicating the proxy hours awarded for distance learning for each completed lesson/assignment, and placed in student's folder.

Students may still receive face-to-face instruction while participating in distance learning. Intake, orientation, pre-test and post-tests will occur in a face-to-face setting.

Only distance education programs approved by the Department of Career Education, Adult Education Division and instructors trained in DL 101 shall be eligible to report distance education students and hours.

NRS Reporting: For federal reporting purposes, all learners receiving a minimum of 12 proxy hours of instruction with the program will be reported to the National Reporting System as distance learners.

Assessment and Reporting: All pre-test and post-test procedures must adhere to the current Arkansas National Reporting System for Adult Education Assessment Guidelines.

Student requirements:

- Grade level minimums: ABE High Intermediate (6.0-8.9) or ESL Low Intermediate as marked in student data management system by lowest TABE or BEST score
- Hours to maintain: 12 hours monthly
- Contact to maintain: bi-monthly contact

Curriculum: Only resources listed below on the Arkansas Adult Education Distance Education Instructional Hours Rubric shall be used for distance education purposes. Credit of proxy hours shall follow the rubric guidelines for instructional hours awarded.

- **Adult Education Distance Education Instructional Hours Rubric**

Curriculum	Criteria for Awarding Proxy Hours	Credit
Crossroads Café	Must pass unit test @ 70% or greater	10 hours per unit (total of 260 hrs)
English for All	Must pass unit test @ 70% or greater	6 hours per unit (total of 120 hrs.)
GED® Connection	Video	1/2 hour per video (total of 19.5 hrs)
	Workbook: teacher determines % of work completed	Workbook: ≥75% of activities completed= 4 hrs per module; 50-74% = 2 hrs per module
	Internet Activities	1 hr. per activity (total of 43)
	Internet Module	3 hrs. per module (total of 15 hrs.)
	Printed Practice Tests	1 hr. per test (total of 22)
McGraw Hill/Contemporary GED Interactive Online	System tracked (preset period of inactivity prompt log out)	Recorded time in system
Aztec	System tracked (preset period of inactivity prompt log out)	Recorded time in system
Skills Tutor	System tracked (preset period of inactivity prompt log out)	Recorded time in system
Key Train	System tracked (preset period of inactivity prompt log out)	Recorded time in system

Chapter 7: Frequently Asked Questions

AERIS

Q. Do we have to put TABE scores in AERIS if the student does not make a gain?

Yes. AERIS information should mirror the information in the student file. Tests also need to be dated in AERIS on the exact date they were administered.

Q. Can we enter attendance once per week?

Yes. Attendance may be entered on a weekly basis. Attendance must be entered by the 15th and approved by the 22nd of each month following the report month. If you are 'grouping' attendance, the maximum time period for an entry is one week.

Q. Does the local program director have to approve AERIS entries?

Yes. The administrator is responsible for data approval.

Q. In AERIS, under the "Student Management" heading, there is a new option – "Pre-registered students" – should programs be doing something with this?

This feature was added for those States that allow online registrations; a student registers online, the registration will go to this area and then have to be approved by the program Director. Arkansas does not offer online registration so this feature does not apply to our programs.

Q. How are actual testing hours recorded in AERIS for the administration of more than one level of TABE pretest in case the Locator does not indicate the appropriate TABE level; Time accommodations given on the test; Instruction in use of the calculator for students taking the Official GED Practice Test in math; and Extra time allowed for Locator test.

Enter the actual time in AERIS and keep documentation.

Q. What is the process of changing a student from ESL to ABE?

This can only be accomplished if the student has no test scores associated with their record. We do have in the pipeline the ability for state administrators to handle these issues (and many others) via a State Administration Panel.

Q. When a student has completed the highest level of ESL, do we separate the student and re-enroll as ABE?

The system does require the student who has reached the highest level of ESL to be separated and then re-enrolled as an ABE/ASE student.

Core Outcomes: Educational Gains

Q. Why didn't my student get credit for his/her manual outcomes?

It is usually one of four things. Be sure that: 1) the student completed 12 hours (was enrolled) 2) the goal is entered in AERIS for the student 3) the student is separated 4) the program sent a manual outcome form to the state office.

Q. Why didn't my student get credit for his GED?

It is usually one of five things: 1) Did the student get 12 hours (enrolled)? 2) Was the goal entered in AERIS for the student? 3) Is the student separated? 4) Did the program enter the goal as 'complete' for the student after the GED test was passed? 5) If the student doesn't have a Social Security Number, was his/her AERIS-generated ID number changed in AERIS to the GED Jurisdiction number received from the state GED office?

Q. Where do I record the goal of making an education gain in AERIS?

This is the assumed goal of all adult education and literacy students. Therefore, this goal does not appear as a specific data field in AERIS. All student achievement of this goal will be recorded in NRS Table 4 and Table 4B.

Q. If a student is to take the GED but does not have a SSN, does the program need to enter a manual outcome?

Obtaining a GED is ALWAYS a manual outcome BUT you do not have to send in the manual outcome form; however, you do have to enter the indicator in AERIS. Furthermore, if a GED student does not have a SSN, they are assigned a jurisdiction # by the GED Department when they register for the GED testing. The number assigned by GED should be forwarded to the State Office (AERIS Personnel) and entered in AERIS in place of the social security number.

Q. If a student appears on Table 4.1 in level II because that was his lowest score, but makes an advancement in another subject on level III, where does the advancement count on the table?

If the student appears in the row for Level 2, he will remain at Level 2 throughout the fiscal year. Students are slotted in rows on Table 4.1 based on their entering EFL.

Q. If a student has made an EFL advancement in any areas will the students show up on the testing alerts? And if the student shows up what do we do next?

Students currently do remain on testing alerts. Testing alerts do not impact the student record, they are for informational and management purposes.

Educational Functioning Levels

Q. How are Educational Functional Level's (EFL) established?

EFL is established as by the lowest score of the battery a student is working on. If it's one test, the one test establishes the EFL, if two, the lowest of the two and if three, the lowest of the three.

Q. How is entering a student's EFL established?

Entering EFL is the level at which the student begins the fiscal year. For new students this is generated by their pre-test results. For rollover students Entering EFL is established by the level at which the student ended the previous fiscal year, in other words, the EFL on June 30. For aggregate reporting and in the cases where students have multiple registrations in the same fiscal year, the registration with the earliest registration date establishes the Entering EFL. The Entering EFL persists through the entire fiscal year for that student regardless of whether he regresses, advances, completes or never tests again.

Q. Is Level Gain independent of EFL and Entering EFL?

Level Gain is independent of EFL and Entering EFL. It is created when a student improves one test in a battery. This improvement does not necessarily have to be in the area in which the student scored the lowest. For example a student could post pre-test scores at Level 3 in Math, Level 2 in Language and Level 3 in Reading. Entering EFL for that student would be Level 2. But if the student takes a Reading post-test and scores at Level 4 the student would show a Level Gain for Table 4 purposes despite the fact that their overall EFL remains at Level 2.

This is why our system has the red/yellow/green Table 4 status bar. The EFL may not change, but the student may register a gain on Table 4 and this bar allows the program to see this at a glance.

There is an exception to this rule. If that same student took a post-test in Language, regressed to Level 1 and then improved back with a subsequent post-test to Level 2, the student would not be credited with a Level Gain for Table 4 purposes. Rules require that any achievement be above the entering EFL.

Due to the possibility of multiple registrations, you can occasionally see what appear to be anomalies but are actually accurate representations. Suppose a student enters Program A in July as an ESL student. The same student enters Program B in September but is enrolled as an ABE/ASE student. For aggregate Table 4 purposes the student will appear in a row for ESL students. Even if that student departs Program A and later achieves a Level Gain at Program B, he remains listed as entering at ESL since it was the first record in. We often field questions from programs that serve only ESL students questioning why their Table 4 reflects students who appear in rows for ABE/ASE students and this is the reason.

Q. If a student leaves one program and enters another one during the fiscal year, which program gets credit if the student makes a gain?

It depends on which Table you run. From the aggregate standpoint, both programs get credit. If you run a Table 4 for Program A and a Table 4 for Program B, both tables will show a gain for the student even if he/she achieved that gain only in Program B. From a state standpoint, one student with multiple registrations will appear on a state aggregate report one time, but when individual reports are run for each program, that same student will be reflected on each. This is why we always caution that adding up the student counts from each individual Table 4 will not equal the aggregate total.

Standardized Testing Instruments

Q. Sometimes we find out that a student should have been “bumped up a level in TABE” Locator results are border-line; is this allowed?

Yes. According to the TABE Complete Battery Test Directions, the Locator cut points are guidelines. Test administrators are to use them in conjunction with any knowledge of examinees previous performance to help determine the placement in TABE level test. This would indicate that the administrator could either bump up or down a level. Instruction to do this is included in the TABE training and the AERIS training taken through AALRC.

Q. Can we give the D-Level TABE to 16 and 17 year olds entering our programs?

No. Sixteen and seventeen year-old students should come to us with a minimum of 8.5 on each section of the TABE A-Level complete battery test. Public schools providing a waiver to an adult education program must follow this procedure. Adult education programs always give the locator and test accordingly using the survey or complete battery.

Q. If administering TABE, do both the pre-test and posttest need to be the same battery?

Yes. The TABE pretest and post- test should always be the same level and battery though different forms.

Q. Can students entering a new program bring their last test scores from another program with them?

Yes. Students who come to your program from another program within 45 days can bring their last test score with them.

Q. Should a student be re-tested after 180 calendar days or 6 months?

Yes. Within 6 months from taking the test in your program a student should be re-tested regardless of the hours attended.

Q. How should an ESL student be entered in AERIS who scores high on a Basic English Skills Test (BEST)?

If the BEST test scores are the result of an initial assessment (pre-test) AND the scores are 76 or greater on the Literacy BEST, and 541 or greater on BEST Plus, then do not enter the scores into AERIS. Since these students are above Advanced ESL and cannot show educational gain with the BEST, they should be given the TABE. Resource: AERIS Training

Pre - Testing and Post – Testing

Q. Must we use the same battery (survey or complete) for the both the pre-test and post-test?

Yes. The pre-test and post-test should be on the same level with a different form.

Q. What if a score is too high on the BEST pre-test?

If a score is too high on the BEST pre-test then give the TABE and make the student an Adult Basic Education (ABE) student.

Traditional vs. Non-Traditional Justification in AERIS

Q. If all three tests of the TABE are taken as a non- traditional 1; or non-traditional 2; or traditional justification student, can we enter only the lowest EFL into AERIS?

No. If all three parts of the TABE are taken then all three scores will need to be entered into AERIS.

Q. Can we enter all our students as Non -Traditional 1 or Non-Traditional 2 students without giving them the TABE Locator?

No. All TABE Testing must follow the Publisher Guidelines. First the locator is given and the results are used to determine the appropriate level of survey or complete battery to administer.

Q. Does a Non-Traditional 1 student have to be separated from AERIS if he or she decides to test in another content area?

Yes. If a Non-Traditional 1 student completes a content area and would like to be tested in another content area, then they must be separated from AERIS using a separation form and placed back in the system using a new intake date.

Q. Can we make copies of the BEST Literacy test to use?

No. Copyright laws restrict the reproduction of testing materials, which include the tests and answer sheets for BEST and TABE tests.

Q. Does a traditional student have to make an EFL gain in all three areas or the lowest area to get credit for a gain?

If the learner shows progress by moving up to the next higher EFL in any one of the content areas tested, the learner has made an educational gain.

Accommodations

Q. When administering TABE, can we offer accommodations for students with special needs?

A testing accommodation is a change made to the test administration procedure to provide equal access for students with disabilities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. If an accommodation is employed, it is important that the selected accommodation minimize any advantage or disadvantage of completing the test. In particular, if the accommodation under consideration is not used in instruction, then it should not be used in the testing situation. TABE-PC is appropriate for some students who have difficulty taking paper-and-pencil tests. Some TABE administrators have made other accommodations such as allowing extra time to complete the test or letting students mark answers in test booklets rather than on separate answer sheets. Additional accommodation suggestions are available in CTB/McGraw-Hill's Assessment Accommodations Checklist (#53682); order online or call Customer Services at (800) 538-9547.

Q. May I administer TABE as an untimed test?

If you use different time limits than were used in the standardization process, it compromises the interpretation of the norms. However, CTB recognizes that time extensions may be warranted to accommodate persons with certain disabilities, or when TABE is being used exclusively to diagnose the learning objectives an individual still needs to master.

Q. Are there special editions of TABE for people with visual disabilities?

Yes. Large-print, Braille, and audio editions of TABE Forms 9&10 are available from CTB/McGraw-Hill and may be ordered by calling Customer Services toll-free at (800) 538-9547 or through our Web site at www.ctb.com.

Q. How should we interpret scores when we administer TABE under non-standard conditions?

Whenever non-standard directions and time limits are utilized, norm-referenced comparisons should be treated with great caution, since the only norms available are those based on test administrations using standard directions and time limits. Nonetheless, CTB/McGraw-Hill believes that information about instructional strengths and student needs can be obtained from a non-standard test administration. This is best done by focusing on the curriculum-referenced or objective mastery information the test can provide. For more information, consult CTB's publication, Guidelines for Using the Results of Standardized Tests Administered Under Non-Standard Conditions. Obtain your free copy by calling Customer Services at (800) 538-9547.