



INDIANA  
**WORKFORCE**  
DEVELOPMENT  
AND ITS **WorkOne** CENTERS

**TO:** Indiana's Workforce Investment System/Adult Education Consortia Partners

**FROM:** Steven J. Braun, Commissioner 

**DATE:** December 9, 2014

**SUBJECT:** DWD Policy 2014-09  
Indiana Adult Education Assessment Policy

**Purpose**

To provide guidance on the standard assessment procedure to measure participant educational functioning level and gains.

**Rescission**

DWD Policy 2013-06, Indiana's Assessment Policy

**Content**

Adult Education (AE) programs must measure and report student *educational gains* as required by the National Reporting System (NRS), the federal accountability system for the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Title II of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA).

An *educational gain* measures the primary purpose of the federally funded, state-administered AE program: to improve the basic literacy skills of participants. The NRS approach to measuring educational gains is to define a set of educational functioning levels (EFL) at which students are initially placed based on their abilities to perform literacy-related tasks in specific content areas. After a set number of attendance hours in Adult Education (AE), students are again assessed to determine their skill levels. If a student's skill levels have improved sufficiently to be placed one or more levels higher, the student has achieved an educational gain.

This policy describes the standard assessment procedure for measuring educational gains, test administrator training requirements, and acceptable testing accommodations.

**Standard Assessment Procedure for Measuring Educational Gains**

1. *Eligible AE students should complete the entire test suite (reading, language, math computation, and applied math) as a pretest by the time of official enrollment, defined by NRS as 12 hours of attendance, using Department of Workforce Development (DWD) approved assessments. The entire test suite must be completed within eight (8) calendar*

days. Students who have not attended AE classes for more than ninety (90) consecutive calendar days must be administered a new pretest.

### Tests for Adult Basic Education (TABE 9 and TABE 10)

DWD requires that all AE programs administer CTB/McGraw-Hill's TABE 9 and TABE 10 Complete Battery or Survey to measure AE student skills in three subjects: **total math (math computation and applied math), reading, and language**. NRS allows for an AE student to only test in one subject and/or focus on one subject for instruction. However, these student-selected options should only be used rarely and the rationale for doing so must be documented.

Effective July 1, 2012, AE programs may administer either the TABE Survey or Complete Battery to measure AE skills in the three subjects listed above.

**Title I Eligible Youth Requirement:** Effective July 1, 2012, programs serving WIA Title I eligible youth must administer the TABE Survey to students on or after this date.

Both the TABE Survey and Complete Battery consist of five test levels (Literacy, Easy, Medium, Difficult, and Advanced), two test forms (9 and 10), and a Locator Test. The Survey and Battery can be taken online or in paper-and-pencil format<sup>1</sup>. Before administering either the Survey or Battery, providers should administer the Locator test to determine which level of the Survey or Battery to administer to a student. Taking a TABE test level above or below the level indicated by the Locator exam may result in invalid scores.

Table 1 lists the valid content grade level ranges for each test level. **The range for each test is approximately valid plus or minus two grade levels.** For example, a student taking the Level M test would receive valid results if his or her score corresponded to an approximate grade level between 2.0 and 7.9. Scores falling outside of the valid ranges (invalid scores) are not reliable for determining a student's instructional plan. In the case of invalid scores, retesting with a more appropriate level is **required** within thirty (30) calendar days from the original test date. Students retested only need to be retested in the subject(s) for which they received an invalid score. Teachers may also retest at his/her discretion if circumstances during the original testing session warrant a retest.

**Table 1-TABE 9 & 10 Test Levels**

Test Level	Content Grade Level Range	Grade Level Range for Valid Scores
Level L (Literacy)	0-1.9	0-3.9
Level E (Easy)	2.0-3.9	0-5.9
Level M (Medium)	4.0-5.9	2.0-7.9
Level D (Difficult)	6.0-8.9	4.0-10.9
Level A (Advanced)	9.0-12.9	7.0-12.9

<sup>1</sup> The literacy level test is not available online.

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

CTB/McGraw-Hill’s TABE CLAS-E measures the language proficiency of adult English as a Second Language (ESL) students in the areas of reading, listening, writing, and speaking. Programs must assess ESL students in *at least one* or more of the following subjects: reading, writing, or listening. Programs may choose to assess students in speaking; however, gains made in this subject will not count as gains for NRS or the performance incentive schedule.

TABE CLAS-E consists of four test levels (1, 2, 3 and 4), two test forms (A and B), and a Locator Test. Similar to TABE 9 and TABE 10, providers should administer the Locator test to determine which level of TABE CLAS-E to administer to a student. See Table 2 for CLAS-E levels and associated ESL proficiency. If the Locator indicates the student should be administered the Advanced ESL assessment, the instructor should transition the student to AE and administer him/her the TABE 9 and TABE 10.

**Table 2-TABE CLAS-E Assessment Levels**

Test Level	ESL Proficiency
1	Beginning ESL 1
2	Beginning ESL 2
3	Intermediate ESL
4	Advanced ESL

2. Enter the student’s raw subject scores in InTERS. InTERS will then convert the scores to scaled scores and place the student in a NRS-defined EFL.

Providers must enter the student’s raw assessment scores in InTERS within 48 hours of completing the assessment. InTERS will convert raw scores to scale scores and place the student in an EFL based on the student’s lowest subject score. All subsequent educational gains are measured from this EFL and in the corresponding subject area in which the student scored the lowest; this subject area is often referred to as the focus subject. NRS allows for an AE student to only test in one subject and/or focus on one subject for instruction. However, these student-selected options should only be used rarely and the rationale for doing so must be documented. For example, consider an AE student who tests at the beginning level in reading and the low intermediate level in numeracy. Since the student received the lowest score in reading, InTERS would place the student in the EFL corresponding to the reading score and would record future educational gains the student makes in reading from this placement EFL.

InTERS data matches TABE test scores from CTB/McGraw-Hill on a daily basis by using the unique identifiers of student name, date of birth and Social Security Number.

InTERS will automatically and immediately identify incomplete testing suites, invalid test scores, and other erroneous data input into the system. The state’s new risk-based monitoring process, Adult Education Program Monitoring and Improvement Policy (DWD Policy 2014-04) will review errors within InTERS to determine if more intensive monitoring is necessary.

Table 3 lists the *approximate* alignment between TABE scale scores and NRS EFLs. This alignment is not identical across all TABE tests levels (TABE L-A) or forms (9 and 10).

**Table 3-Approximate TABE 9 and TABE 10 Complete Battery and Survey Scale Score Conversions to NRS Levels**

NRS ABE/ASE Level	Grade Level Equivalent	Reading	Total Math	Language
1. ABE Beginning Literacy	0-1.9	<368	<314	<390
2. ABE Beginning Basic	2.0-3.9	368-460	314-441	390-490
3. ABE Intermediate Low	4.0-5.9	461-517	442-505	491-523
4. ABE Intermediate High	6.0-8.9	518-566	506-565	524-559
5. ASE Low	9.0-10.9	567-595	566-594	560-585
6. ASE High	11-12.9	>595	>594	>585

Similarly, Table 4 lists the *approximate* alignment between TABE CLAS-E scale scores and NRS EFLs. This alignment is not identical across all TABE CLAS-E tests levels (1-4) or forms (A and B). The table also lists which TABE CLAS-E test levels can be used to measure attainment of each NRS EFL. For example, the Level 1 test can only measure attainment of a NRS EFLs 1-3. To measure attainment of NRS EFLs 4 or higher, the student must take a higher TABE CLAS-E test level.

**Table 4-Approximate TABE CLAS-E Reading Scale Score Conversions to NRS Levels**

NRS ESL Level	Test Levels	Reading	Writing	Total Reading & Writing	Listening
1. ESL Beginning Literacy	1, 2, 3, 4	250-392	200-396	225-394	230-389
2. ESL Beginning Low	1, 2, 3, 4	393-436	397-445	395-441	390-437
3. ESL Beginning High	1, 2, 3, 4	437-476	446-488	442-482	438-468
4. ESL Intermediate Low	2, 3, or 4	477-508	489-520	483-514	469-514
5. ESL Intermediate High	3 or 4	509-557	521-555	515-556	515-549
6. ESL Advanced*	4 only	558-588	556-612	557-600	550-607

\*If a student is at this level, transition him/her to ABE and administer TABE 9 and TABE 10.

3. *Post-test the student to determine educational gain after required number of attendance hours.*

CTB/McGraw-Hill recommends a set number of attendance hours in AE between the administration of the TABE 9 and TABE 10 and TABE CLAS-E pre- and post-tests. These hours, summarized in Table 5, vary based on NRS level and the form of the administered test (same or alternate). Providers must ensure students complete the entire post-testing suite (reading, language, math computation and applied math) with valid scores in eight (8) calendar days. In the event of an invalid score, providers have thirty (30) calendar days from the original test date to retest the student and record the score. Providers may administer either the TABE Survey or the TABE Complete Battery for post-testing, but the post-test must use the same version as the pre-test. If a student is administered a Complete Battery

for the pre-test, then the student must also be administered a Complete Battery for the post-test.

**Table 5- Recommended Attendance Hours between Pre- and Post-test**

Test	NRS Levels	Same Test Form or Alternate Test Form for Post-test	Recommended Attendance Hours
TABE 9 and TABE 10	ABE EFLs (Levels 1-4)	Alternate Example: Pretest with 9M, Post-test with 10M	50 - 60 (Minimum 40 hours)
TABE 9 and TABE 10	ASE EFL (Level 5/6)	Alternate	30 - 59
TABE 9 and TABE 10	ABE & ASE EFLs (Levels 1-5 )	Same Example: Pretest with 9M, Post-test with 9M	120
TABE CLAS-E	All ESL Levels	Alternate Example: Pretest with A, Post-test with B	60 - 95 (Minimum of 50 hours)
TABE CLAS-E	All ESL Levels	Same Example: Pretest with A, Post-test with A	100 - 140

Hours toward a post-test begin counting the next attendance day after the student completes the pre-test, and end the day the student completes the post-test. These include all AE attendance hours, which may comprise orientation, instruction, and the time a student spends on the post-test. Post-tests may be administered sooner than the recommended hours of attendance only if a student receives intense instruction or plans to exit the program. Documentation of early test administration must be maintained in InTERS.

The instructor may consider administering the next level of the TABE or TABE CLAS-E test if the student shows the potential to score higher than the valid score range if given the same level test that was given as a pretest. For example, if the student was administered the TABE 9M pretest, the instructor could administer the student the TABE 9D test if the student shows significant skill progress. As discussed above, test scores that fall outside of the valid content grade ranges for TABE 9 and TABE 10 in Table 1 will not be counted. Re-testing with a more appropriate level is **required**.

For students without a high school equivalency certificate or high school diploma to count for the NRS, the measure of the High Adult Secondary Education (ASE) gain **must be** attainment of a high school equivalency certificate or high school diploma. For students who possess a secondary credential, the measure of the High ASE gain **must be** attaining a grade level equivalent of 12.9 on the TABE.

The only exception to administering a TABE post-test is if a student is at High ASE (11.0-12.9). To count for the NRS, the measure of a gain at the High ASE can be either:

- Successfully passing the high school equivalency assessment tests;
- Or, earning a high school diploma.

The student's post-test scores shall be entered into InTERS as described above. If a student advances one or more EFLs based on the assessment, InTERS records all educational gain(s) for the student.

#### Training for Administering Assessments

Local providers and staff administering/scoring assessments are responsible for participating in DWD TABE/TABE CLAS-E assessment training. Additionally, local providers are responsible for following DWD guidance, providing ongoing training for new staff, and refreshing skills of previously trained staff. New staff should view all training materials available on the DWD website as well as any locally provided training prior to administering any assessments. All staff will be required to attend annual refresher training. The refresher training will be provided at the annual conference put on by DWD, as well as on an as needed basis at provider locations.

Training will include NRS policy, accountability policies, data collection process, definitions of measures, how to conduct the assessments, and discussion on best practices. Staff members who attend these trainings should record the training hours in InTERS per the Professional Qualifications and Development Policy (DWD Policy 2011-10).

#### Assessment Accommodations

Fulfilling learner requests for reasonable accommodations, at no cost to students, is the responsibility of the provider. Adult students with disabilities are responsible for providing information and documentation for their disability. Provider staff are required to review documentation, consider needed accommodations, offering counseling to student, and establish accommodations, where appropriate. Accommodations include extended time, no time limits, pausing, and other reasonable accommodations suggested by a medical professional.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 Section 504, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1997, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 have provisions related to reasonable testing accommodations for learners with disabilities. Additionally, providers may contact CTB/McGraw-Hill for the accommodation guidelines for TABE 9&10 and TABE CLAS-E.

#### **Effective Date**

Immediately

#### **Ending Date**

Upon Rescission

#### **Ownership**

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#### **Action**

Indiana's adult education system will follow the guidance contained in this policy.