



Assessment Policy for AEFLA Programs

Colorado Adult Education and Family Literacy

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1. State Context

The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA)--Title II of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998--requires the State to establish and monitor accountability within its local adult education programs. The state accountability system must be in accordance with National Reporting System for Adult Education (NRS) guidelines.

The National Reporting System (NRS) is the accountability system for the federally funded adult education program. The NRS includes student measures to describe adult education students, program participation and assessment of the impact of adult education instruction, methodologies for collecting the measures, and a national system for collecting information on adult education student outcomes. The NRS requirements were effective beginning in July 2000.

One of the ways in which the NRS measures the impact of instruction and ensures accountability is through the mandated use of **valid and reliable standardized assessments**.

Test reliability indicates the degree to which a test yields consistent results. Statistical techniques determine reliability and help ensure that there would not be a radically different score if the student were to attempt the test a second time with no additional learning.

Test validity indicates the degree to which a test actually measures what it proposes to measure.

The NRS defines **educational functioning levels** for ABE and ESL and provides test benchmarks for the levels. The educational functioning levels are meaningful only if determined through assessments that are administered in a standardized and consistent way by all programs. When test procedures are not followed correctly or consistently the validity is lost and comparability across and within programs is compromised.

States are required to develop and implement assessment policies that ensure not only the use of standardized assessments but standardized procedures and practices for the administration of assessments. Local adult education programs must assess students using standardized assessments to report **educational gain** measures to the State, which in turn reports to the U.S. Dept. of Education.

Measuring Educational Gain

Educational gain is one of the WIA-mandated core outcome measures. **State performance is evaluated by the U.S. Department of Education.** Educational gain reflects the **primary purpose of the federally-funded state-administered adult education grant program: to improve the basic literacy skills of participants.** Educational gains are measured by level completions based on standardized pre- and post test results and provide evidence of student literacy gains resulting from instruction. Each state's performance on the core outcome measures is reported annually to Congress. To help ensure the comparability of measures across States and the integrity of the data submitted to the U.S. Department of Education and Congress, regulations on measuring educational gain were issued by the Secretary of Education. These regulations (34 CFR Part 462 Measuring Educational Gain in the National Reporting System for Adult Education) codify the requirements states and local providers must meet when measuring educational gain. The requirements are incorporated within this document (Assessment Policy for AEFLA Programs).

Adherence to state assessment policies and procedures will ensure that Colorado's Adult Education and Family Literacy program complies with federal requirements by using:

- standardized assessments to determine educational functioning level and educational progress
- consistent testing and security protocols to ensure comparability and quality data
- accurate outcome data for state and federal reporting

Colorado's compliance with the federal requirements for accountability is a **collaborative effort** between, and the **joint responsibility** of, the state Adult Education and Family Literacy (AEFL) office and local providers.

The State AEFL office will provide:

- Policy and guidance to local AEFLA grant recipients
- Guidance in the implementation of the assessment policy
- Training and technical assistance in the administration of assessments
- Monitoring of programs' implementation and administration of the assessment policy

- Maintenance of annual records of 1) the persons at each AEFLA-funded program trained in each assessment and 2) the trainers who conducted each component of assessment training

AEFLA grant recipients will provide:

- Adherence to state policy and guidance
- Local assessment policy based on state policy and guidance
- Proper administration of the assessment process based on test publishers’ manuals and assessment training
- Monitoring of local staff assessment practice

Purpose and Use of Assessments

The standardized assessments that have been approved by the state AEFL office must be used by all local AEFLA-funded programs for measuring and reporting educational gains. However, programs are not limited to the approved assessments for other purposes. The use of informal assessments is encouraged to inform instruction and monitor progress. For example, programs may use teacher-made or performance assessments to gauge incremental progress and to provide students with ongoing feedback.

Summary and Overview

State and local compliance with federal guidelines for accountability is essential to the continuing support and success of the Adult Education and Family Literacy program in Colorado. Implementation of a comprehensive assessment policy enables informed and effective instruction, and ensures reliable and comparable performance reporting. The basic elements of Colorado’s assessment policy for AEFLA-funded programs are:

1) Approved Assessments

ABE-ASE	ESL
CASAS	CASAS
TABE	BEST Plus

2) Assessment Process

AEFLA Programs must comply with a set of assessment guidelines that cover the following rules:

- Follow appropriate test administration practices
- Place students into EFLs for instructional and reporting purposes
- Use only approved standardized assessments for pre- and post testing
- Apply the same standardized testing policy to students with the primary or secondary goal of earning a GED

3) Time Frames for Testing

Programs must follow publishers' recommended pre- and post testing guidelines.

Guidelines vary by test; see specific test information in Appendix 6.

Exceptions to the recommended time frames for administering post tests should be limited and rare. Each exception must be approved and signed by the program director.

Completed/signed exception forms must be retained in students' assessment files, and must be made available to AEFL staff for compliance review and monitoring purposes. Under no circumstances should a student with fewer than 40 instructional hours be post-tested.

4) Educational Functioning Levels

ABE/ASE		
CASAS Scale Score	Initial EFL	TABE Scale Score
Reading 0-200 Math 0-200 Writing 136-200	Beginning ABE Literacy 0-1.9	Reading 0-367 Math 0-313 Language 0-389
Reading 201-210 Math 201-210 Writing 201-225	Beginning Basic Education 2-3.9	Reading 368-460 Math 314-441 Language 390-490
Reading 211-220 Math 211-220 Writing 226-242	Low Intermediate 4-5.9	Reading 461-517 Math 442-505 Language 491-523
Reading 221-235 Math 221-235 Writing 243-260	High Intermediate 6-8.9	Reading 518-566 Math 506-565 Language 524-559

Reading 236-245 Math 236-245 Writing 261-270	Low Adult Secondary 9-10.9	Reading 567-595 Math 566-594 Language 560-585
Reading 246- Math 246- Writing 271-	High Adult Secondary 11-12.9	Reading 596- Math 595- Language 586-

ESL		
CASAS Scale Score	Initial EFL	BEST Plus Scale Score
Reading 0-180 Listening 0-180	Beginning ESL Literacy 0-1	0-400
Reading 181-190 Listening 181-190 Writing 136-145	Low Beginning ESL 2	401-417
Reading 191-200 Listening 191-200 Writing 146-200	High Beginning ESL 3	418-438
Reading 201-210 Listening 201-210 Writing 201-225	Low Intermediate ESL 4	439-472
Reading 211-220 Listening 211-220 Writing 226-242	High Intermediate ESL 5	473-506
Reading 221-235 Listening 221-235 Writing 243-260	Advanced ESL 6	507-540

5) **Reporting**

Programs must follow the instructions for data collection and reporting provided in the **User Guide for CAESAR**. See Appendix 5.

6) **Pre- and Post Test Target**

Colorado sets a target for percentage of students who are both pre- and post tested annually. See Appendix 4.

Information and Assistance

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2. General Assessment Requirements

AEFLA-funded programs must establish intake and goal setting processes that focus on student success by establishing realistic attainable goals, and facilitate the program's ability to provide appropriate guidance and instruction to the student.

Student intake and goal setting processes must be aligned with the State's Adult Education and Family Literacy policies and performance targets. Students' goals should be attainable within the program year; longer term goals that are not reasonable for the time frame should be discussed with students in terms of a step-by-step process of shorter term goals that lead to a larger outcome.

All students are measured against the goal of educational improvement (improve basic literacy or English language skills). Educational gain for each student is validated by

comparing the student's initial (pre-test) EFL to the student's post test EFL. EFLs are based on the results of standardized tests administered using a consistent standardized assessment process.

NRS goals must be set with reasonable time frames based on the student's current educational functioning level. Students' circumstances must be a factor in goal setting as well. For example, unemployed students may have short term educational goals and longer term employment-related goals. The intake process must include a discussion of students' needs, strengths and abilities, and short- and long-term goals.

Follow-up of Student Goals

Programs must establish and implement a student follow-up process to determine whether NRS goals have been achieved. Programs must establish protocols for follow-up services and assign staff to this function.

Follow-up Options for NRS Goals

Enter Postsecondary Education or Training

- Students must be surveyed, using the state-provided survey form, even when a social security number has been provided UNLESS
- The AEFLA-funded program has established a data matching process with the local community college(s) or training program(s) in which students served by the program would enroll.

Obtain a Job / Retain Employment / Improve Employment

- Students with employment goals who did not provide a social security number and/or did not sign the SSN waiver form must be surveyed, using the state-provided survey form.
- Students with employment goals who provide a social security number and sign the SSN waiver are followed up through state data matching. A survey of these students is not necessary.
- A Student Employment Goal report is issued to AEFLA-funded programs at least annually, in order to track the numbers of unemployed students who are eligible for data matching, and what percentage of eligible students have employment goals.

Earn a GED Diploma

- The State conducts data matching for this goal, regardless of whether the student has provided a social security number.
- Programs may track this goal locally if they wish, but the state's data matching results will be used by CDE/AEFL to measure and report goal attainment.

Earn an Adult High School Diploma

- This goal is limited to students who are enrolled in an adult high school program.
- The adult high school is responsible for tracking and reporting this goal through the school's student records. A survey is not necessary.

Approved Assessments

Assessments approved for use by the NRS and CDE/AEFL have been determined to meet these criteria:

- Are appropriate for measuring literacy and language development of adult students
- Provide standardized administration and scoring procedures
- Provide alternate equivalent forms for post testing
- Evidence links them to NRS educational functioning levels

The following assessments have been approved for use in Colorado AEFLA- funded programs:

CASAS Life Skills series (Math)

CASAS Life and Work series (Listening, Reading)

CASAS Employability Competency System series (Reading, Math)

CASAS Functional Writing Assessment (Writing)

CASAS Workforce Learning Systems (Reading, Math)

TABE 9/10 (Reading, Language, and Math)

BEST Plus (Speaking and Listening)

New assessment instruments or forms

Under any of the following circumstances:

- New assessment instrument(s) approved by CDE/AEFL for use in Colorado AEFLA-funded programs
- New form(s) become available for existing approved assessments
- Assessment instrument(s) or form(s) are retired from the approved list

CDE/AEFL will:

- Update the Assessment Policy accordingly
- Update the Assessment Guidelines Web page accordingly
- Announce change via Program Directors' listserv
- Update content of regional assessment training accordingly

AEFLA-funded programs must follow appropriate test administration practices.

All programs must:

- Provide trained staff to administer the standardized tests used by the program.
- Attend assessment training sponsored by CDE/AEFL. Sufficient resources (budget, staff time, travel) must be allocated so that appropriate staff can be adequately trained as required.
- Maintain records of staff training and certification in each of the assessments they use
- Follow test publishers guidelines for test security.
- Follow test publishers guidelines for providing testing accommodations.
- Record assessment results for each learner in learner's file and in CAESAR.

AEFLA-funded programs must place students into Educational Functioning Levels for instructional and reporting purposes.

- Initial EFL must be determined by pre-testing on an approved standardized assessment.
- Pre-test selection must be based on appropriate administration of locator or appraisal. (CASAS provides an appraisal to determine which pre-test to use; TABE provides a

locator test to determine which pre-test to use. BEST Plus is computer-aided and adjusts to students' level during the assessment process.)

- Pre-test must be administered to all students within the first 12 hours of attendance.
- If the learner is functioning at different EFLs in different skills areas, the lowest EFL is generally used as the basis for initial placement into an EFL. Learners may be placed according to their higher EFLs if doing so is in accordance with the skill area in which they will be focusing.
- Students who pre-test above the range for Advanced ESL should be re-tested on an ABE assessment and placed in ABE/ASE if appropriate; or they may be beyond the skill range for adult basic skills learners and could be referred to programs or services designed to serve persons at higher levels of proficiency. There is no ESL reporting level for learners at ESL level 7 or higher.
- Students who pre-test at the 11-12.9 (High ASE) level must have a GED or high school completion goal.

Approved standardized assessments must be used for pre- and post testing.

- A different (parallel) form of the same test used for pre-testing must be used for post testing.
- The previous year's post test score may be used as the current year's pre-test score, provided fewer than six months have elapsed since the post test was administered.
- The Official GED Practice Test is not an approved assessment; it cannot be used to place students into EFLs, nor be used to show educational gain.
- The GED Test cannot be used to measure educational gain at any EFL.

Students must not be post tested sooner than indicated by the minimum time frame recommended by the test publisher.

- Specific test guidelines must be followed in determining appropriate time frames for post testing. See Appendix 6.
- Exceptions to the recommended time frames for administering post tests should be limited and rare. Each exception must be approved and signed by the program director.

Assessment Training

Appropriate staff must be assigned to attend the annual assessment training provided by CDE/AEFL and the Colorado Adult Education Assessment Training Network. This includes: staff who either administer or score each of the assessments used to measure educational gain, staff responsible for the oversight and administration of the program's assessment policy, and teachers and other staff involved in gathering, analyzing, compiling and reporting data for year-end statistical reports.

The annual training is generally 1 and a half to 2 days in duration, with separate sessions to cover CASAS, TABE, and BEST Plus training. **Programs must keep records of staff training and certification in each of the assessments they use.**

All assessment training includes:

National Reporting System for Adult Education (NRS) background and purpose

Definitions of NRS measures

Data collection policy and practice at the local level

The role of assessment in data quality and accountability

CASAS

Training in CASAS assessment is required to ensure accurate use of tests, appropriate interpretation of learner results, and to maintain the integrity and quality of the assessment process. CASAS requires that minimally one person from each program using the CASAS system successfully complete CASAS Implementation training. Once trained, this individual can train others within his or her respective agency but may not train outside that agency. CASAS tests are scored locally with the exception of CASAS Functional Writing Assessment, which is scored by a national scoring service under contract with CDE/AEFL.

BEST Plus

In order to maintain the integrity of BEST Plus, it is important to score the assessment accurately and reliably. Thus, all potential test administrators are required to attend a 6-hour training workshop conducted by a certified BEST Plus trainer before they may begin testing. This workshop prepares test administrators to use and score BEST Plus.

BEST Plus Administrator Training is provided annually by CDE/AEFL. Those who successfully complete the training are registered as testers with the Center for Applied Linguistics. Testers must renew their registration a minimum of every two years by attending the BEST Plus Scoring Refresher Training offered annually by CDE/AEFL. Testers who are unable to attend the Scoring Refresher Training due to extreme circumstances may, with the permission of their program director and notification to CDE/AEFL, complete the Scoring Refresher Training through independent study. The materials needed to complete the refresher training are available to check out from the State Professional Development Resource Centers.

TABE

All staff that administer the TABE must receive training. TABE training is offered annually by CDE/AEFL, and should be renewed every two years.

Assessment Trainers

See Appendix 7

Assessment Training Schedule

See Appendix 7

Accommodating Students with Disabilities

State policy

CDE/AEFL requires local programs to provide accommodations in testing for eligible disabled students. Accommodations may modify the conditions of administering a test or change the physical presentation of the assessment instrument in order to compensate for the disability. These accommodations are made to allow the test taker with a disability to demonstrate his or her skills and abilities more accurately than if no modifications were made. In all cases, accommodations must meet the needs of the examinee without changing what the test is intended to measure.

Local policy

It is required that all AEFLA programs have in place a Special Learning Needs policy. The policy must conform to the guidelines provided in the AEFLA Program Policy on Special Learning Needs. Additionally, each program must appoint one staff member to serve as Learning Needs Coordinator (LNC) to coordinate special needs/LD training, policy, reporting, and accountability. LNCs are responsible for: sharing current information about learning disabilities issues with program staff, ensuring that students are informed about availability of accommodations as part of their enrollment process or orientation, and attending CDE sponsored and/or recommended training.

Local programs are responsible for providing fully accessible services and for ensuring that these services meet reasonable criteria. Adult learners with disabilities are responsible for requesting accommodations and for submitting documentation of their disability at the time of registration, program entry, or after professional diagnosis during the enrollment period.

Documentation of Need

Documentation of the need for specific testing accommodations must be maintained in learners' files as confidential information. The documentation must show that the disability interferes with the student's ability to demonstrate performance on the test. The information can come from a doctor's report, a diagnostic assessment from a certified professional, documentation from a vocational rehabilitation agency or student's secondary school.

Specific Test Accommodations

For assessment purposes, local programs will use only those accommodations approved by the publisher.

CASAS

The information below is from [Guidelines for Providing Accommodations Using CASAS Assessment for Learners with Disabilities.](#)

The full document is available at <http://tinyurl.com/3cmczn>

Local test administrators may provide or allow some accommodations in test administration procedures or environment for documented disabilities without contacting CASAS. Test administrators often use these same strategies as test taking strategies for other learners who do not have documented disabilities. Students may request to take only one test per day or to test in an alternate quiet room. Learners may also use a variety of strategies when they take a test, such as a plain straight-edge ruler, magnifying strips or glass, colored overlays, ear plugs, and other devices as deemed appropriate.

Sample accommodations in test administration procedures or environment are shown below. Examples of these accommodations are extended time, supervised breaks, or sign language interpreter for test administration directions only. The accommodations listed are suggestions only. Accommodations are based on needs of individual learners and not on a disability category. Any testing accommodation must be consistent with documentation in the annual plan, such as an IEP. These strategies do not alter the validity of the test results. The local test administrator does not need to contact CASAS when providing these accommodations.

Disability	Test Administration Procedures
Specific Learning Disability and/or ADHD such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, receptive aphasia, hyperactivity, written language disorder, attention deficit disorder	Extended time Alternate schedule Frequent breaks Scribe/writer/alternate room Computer — spelling and grammar check disabled Simple calculator for Level A/B only
Deaf or Hearing Impaired	Sign language interpreter for test directions only Head phones for those taking a listening test
Blind or Visually Impaired	Magnifier

Mobility impairment	Extended time Alternate site/equipment Scribe/writer/communication board
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TABE

The information below is from **Guidelines for Inclusive Test Administration**.

Accommodations suggestions for TABE are available in:

The **CTB Assessment Accommodations Guide** (order from [CTB/McGraw-Hill](#)) and CTB/McGraw-Hill's **Guidelines for Inclusive Test Administration** (free download; also available as Appendix A in **Guide to Administering TABE 9 & 10**, TABE Professional Development Series, 2004.)

Category 1

The accommodations listed in Category 1 are not expected to influence learner performance in a way that alters the interpretation of either criterion- or norm-referenced test scores. Individual learner scores obtained using Category 1 accommodations should be interpreted in the same way as the scores of other learners who take the test under default conditions.

TABE Category 1: Presentation

Visual magnifying equipment; large-print edition of the test; audio amplification equipment; use markers to maintain place; directions read aloud; tape recording of directions; directions presented through sign language; directions have been marked with highlighting

TABE Category 1: Response

Mark responses in test booklet; mark responses on large-print answer document; for selected-response items, indicate responses to a scribe; record responses on audio tape (except for constructed-response writing tests); for selected-response items, use sign language to indicate response; use a computer, typewriter, Braille writer, or other machine (e.g., communication board) to respond; use template to maintain place for responding; indicate response with other communication devices (e.g., speech synthesizer); use a spelling checker except with a test for which spelling will be scored

TABE Category 1: Setting

Test alone or in a study carrel; test with a small group or different class; Test at home or in a care facility (e.g., hospital), with supervision; adaptive furniture; special lighting and/or acoustics

TABE Category 1: Timing and Scheduling

Take more breaks (that do not result in extra time or opportunity to study information in a test already begun); flexible scheduling, e.g., time of day, days between sessions (that does not result in extra time or opportunity to study information in a test already begun)

Category 2

Category 2 accommodations may have an effect on student performance that should be considered when interpreting individual criterion- and norm-referenced test scores. In the absence of research demonstrating otherwise, scores and any consequences or decisions associated with them should be interpreted in light of the accommodation(s) used.

TABE Category 2: Presentation

Have stimulus material, questions, and/or answer choices read aloud, except for reading; use a tape recorder for stimulus material, questions, and/or answer choices, except for reading; have stimulus material, questions, and/or answer choices presented through sign language, except for a reading test; communication devices (e.g., text talk converter), except for a reading test; use a calculator or arithmetic tables, except for a mathematics computation test

TABE Category 2: Response

Use graph paper to align work; for constructed-response items, indicate responses to a scribe, except for a writing test

TABE Category 2: Timing and Scheduling

Use extra time for any timed test; take more breaks that result in extra time for any timed test; extend the timed section of a test over more than one day, even if extra time does not result; have flexible scheduling that results in extra time

BEST Plus

There are no accommodations for BEST Plus.

Test Security

CDE/AEFL requires that all AEFLA-funded programs sign an annual test security agreement. This agreement includes the following stipulations:

- The local adult education program director assumes responsibility for safeguarding all assessment materials, including test administration manuals, and answer sheets (which contain marks or responses).

- All test materials must be stored in a locked, preferably fireproof, file cabinet accessible to the program director or the director's designee(s).
- Staff who administer assessments must return all materials immediately after use to the program director or the director's designees.
- All answer sheets and writing samples are treated as confidential until destroyed.
- No duplication of any test form or any portion of any test form is permitted for any reason.
- Inventory information concerning test materials will be supplied to CDE/AEFL when requested.
- Defaced materials may not be destroyed unless authorized by CDE/AEFL.
- Programs may not use displays, questions, or answers that appear on any test to create materials designed to teach or prepare learners to answer test items.

Quality Control Procedures

Entry of Assessment Data: CDE/AEFL requires that assessment and attendance data be entered into CAESAR in a timely manner to facilitate quarterly data checks.

Pre-testing should occur within the first twelve hours of attendance, and pre-test information should be recorded in CAESAR within two weeks of its administration. This allows for an up-to-date check of the program's enrollment at each Educational Functioning Level.

CAESAR has the following quality control procedures in place to ensure that appropriate assessment procedures have been followed:

- Data integrity checks are conducted quarterly
- Edit reports to prevent inappropriate assessments, erroneous scale score gains, mismatched pre-post test pairs, and out-of-range scores

Appendix 1: CASAS Guidelines

Training

Training in CASAS assessment is required to ensure accurate use of tests, appropriate interpretation of learner results, and to maintain the integrity and quality of the assessment process. Certified trainers provide annual training in CASAS assessments for Colorado adult education programs. CDE/AEFL requires that minimally one person from each program using the CASAS system successfully complete CASAS Implementation Training (IT). Once trained, this individual can train others within his or her respective program, but may not train outside that program. CASAS tests are scored locally with the exception of CASAS Functional Writing Assessment, which is scored by a national scoring service under contract with CDE/AEFL.

Completion of the CASAS training counts toward the required competency “administer at least 2 standardized assessments” for the CDE Literacy Instruction Authorization coursework and/or portfolio.

Renewal of Training

CDE/AEFL requires at minimum that at least one trained CASAS test administrator from programs using CASAS attends CASAS Beyond Implementation (recertification) Training (BIT) or the CASAS Implementation Training (IT) every two years.

New Staff

New staff who will have test administration responsibilities may not administer CASAS assessments until after completion of CASAS Implementation training, or produce evidence of prior completion of training.

See Appendix 7 for specific training information.

Test Administration Manuals

AEFLA-funded programs are required to follow the test administration guidelines in each test administration manual (TAM) published by CASAS for each test series used. All local adult education programs must maintain copies of TAMs onsite for all assessments used. Test administration manuals provide quality control guidelines to ensure proper test use,

administration, scoring, and interpretation of results. These manuals typically contain information about the following:

- The CASAS Assessment System
- Overview of CASAS Progress Testing
- Description of Tests
- Determining Pre- and Post-Test Level
- Test Security
- Instructions for Administering Tests
- Scoring
- Interpretation of Results
- Curriculum Planning, Instruction, and Assessment
- Resources
- Testing Accommodations
- Skill Level Descriptors
- Suggested Next Test Charts
- Answer Keys and Score Conversion Charts (for converting raw scores to scale scores)
- Learner Profile Sheets
- Learner Performance by Competency
- Class Profile by Competency

Appropriate Assessments for Learner Populations

Series	Appropriate for	Skills assessed
Employability Competency System ETS	ESL, ABE, ASE	Reading, Math
Life and Work	ESL, ABE, ASE	Reading, Listening
Life Skills	ESL, ABE, ASE	Math
Workforce Learning Systems WLS	ESL, ABE, ASE	Reading, Math, Listening
Functional Writing Assessment	ESL, ABE	Writing

CASAS Test Forms by Skill Areas, Levels, and Series

At each level multiple forms are listed; these are alternate forms for pre- and post-testing. In some instances an “X” follows a test form number (e.g., 32X). These tests are extended range tests and may be used as an additional post-test within that specified level (for example, 32 and 32X are alternative forms for 31, all at level A). This table also lists the appropriate appraisal test(s) to accompany different CASAS test series.

Appraisals

The majority of CASAS assessments have appraisal tests that should be administered prior to pre-testing. Appraisal tests indicate the appropriate level for instruction, as well as which pre-test form programs should administer.

Time Frames for Testing

See Appendix 6.

Guidelines for Raw Score Conversion to Scale Scores and Using Scale Scores to Place Learners into NRS Levels

Each CASAS Test Administration Manual provides charts and guidelines for converting raw scores to scale scores. AEFLA-funded programs are required to use these as reference points. The CASAS scale has been subdivided into ranges that correspond to the NRS levels. NRS guidelines prescribe that learners whose pre-tests place them in different instructional categories (for example, reading and math) be placed in the area with the lower score, if the learner is to receive instruction in the skill related to the lower instructional level. Placement at the lower instructional level should be the basis of determining which pre-test to administer.

Purchasing Procedures

AEFLA-funded programs are required to order CASAS assessments authorized for use in Colorado directly from CASAS. CDE/AEFL's Assessment Training Network provides CASAS with a list of approved assessments to ensure that local adult education programs order appropriate materials.

Appendix 2: TABE Guidelines

Training

Training in TABE assessment is required to ensure accurate use of tests, appropriate interpretation of learner results, and to maintain the integrity and quality of the assessment process. Certified trainers provide annual training in TABE assessment for Colorado adult education programs. CDE/AEFL requires that minimally one person from each program using TABE successfully complete TABE Implementation Training. Once trained, this individual can train others within his or her respective program, but may not train outside that program.

Completion of the TABE training counts toward the required competency “administer at least 2 standardized assessments” for the CDE Literacy Instruction Authorization coursework and/or portfolio.

Renewal of Training

CDE/AEFL requires at minimum that at least one trained TABE test administrator from programs using TABE attends TABE training every two years.

New Staff

New staff who will have test administration responsibilities may not administer TABE assessments until after completion of TABE training, or produce evidence of prior completion of training.

See Appendix 7 for specific training information.

Test Administration Manuals

AEFLA-funded programs are required to follow the test administration guidelines in **TABE Test Directions** and the **Guide to Administering TABE 9 & 10**.

Appropriate Assessments for Learner Populations

TABE 9 & 10 are approved for use for AEFLA-funded programs. TABE may be used with ABE and ASE learners only.

Alternate Forms for Pre- and Post Testing

CTB/McGraw-Hill recommends the following combinations for pre- and post testing:

Pre-Test	Post Test
TABE 9	TABE 10
TABE 10	TABE 9

In these recommended pre- and post test combinations, the program would be testing with different forms of TABE that are on the same scale in order to measure gains. The student is not taking the same set of test questions in these scenarios. If a student were to be pre-tested and post tested with the same form, CTB’s best practices recommendation would be to wait six months before re-testing in order to eliminate a score that might be invalid due to the practice effect, or the effect of seeing the same questions in a short time frame.

TABE scales are calibrated across levels so scores from various levels of TABE may be compared to show progress. After sufficient instruction has taken place, it should be determined if a student has advanced to a new level before he or she is re-tested. Advancement may be indicated by a very high score on the original pre-test, progress on informal assessments, or a higher score upon re-administration of the locator. If the teacher judges that the student has advanced from Level E to Level M, a Level M post-test should be administered. Because all levels of TABE are calibrated on the same scale, results may be compared across levels.

TABE 9/10 has a survey version and a complete battery version. CDE/AEFL does not recommend the TABE Survey as a pre-test, as it provides insufficient prescriptive information.

Locator

The TABE Locator Test must be used in order to select the appropriate level for instruction and to determine which pre-test to administer.

Time Frames for Testing

See Appendix 6.

Guidelines for Raw Score Conversion to Scale Scores and Using Scale Scores to Place Learners into NRS Levels

TABE 9/10-Scale Score	NRS Educational Functioning Level
Reading 0-367 Math 0-313 Language 0-389	Beginning ABE Literacy 0-1.9

Reading 368-460 Math 314-441 Language 390-490	Beginning Basic Education 2-3.9
Reading 461-517 Math 442-505 Language 491-523	Low Intermediate 4-5.9
Reading 518-566 Math 506-565 Language 524-559	High Intermediate 6-8.9
Reading 567-595 Math 566-594 Language 560-585	Low Adult Secondary 9-10.9
Reading 596- Math 595- Language 586-	High Adult Secondary 11-12.9

Purchasing Procedures

AEFLA-funded programs are required to order TABE assessments authorized for use in Colorado directly from [CTB/McGraw-Hill](#).

Appendix 3: BEST Plus Guidelines

BEST Plus is a face-to-face oral interview of a learner's English listening and speaking proficiency.

Training

Training in BEST Plus assessment is required to ensure accurate use of tests, appropriate interpretation of learner results, and to maintain the integrity and quality of the assessment process. Certified trainers provide annual training in BEST Plus for Colorado adult education programs. All potential test administrators are required to successfully complete the BEST Plus Administrator Training before they may begin testing. Individuals trained in BEST Plus may **not** train others at their local programs.

Completion of the BEST Plus training counts toward the required competency "administer at least 2 standardized assessments" for the CDE Literacy Instruction Authorization coursework and/or portfolio.

Renewal of Training

CDE/AEFL requires that BEST Plus testers renew their certification a minimum of every two years by attending the BEST Plus Scoring Refresher Training offered by CDE/AEFL. Testers who are unable to attend the Scoring Refresher Training due to extreme circumstances may, with the permission of their program director and notification to CDE/AEFL, complete the Scoring Refresher Training through independent study. These testers must complete one of the BEST Plus Refresher Scoring Activities and send the answer sheet to CDE/AEFL for scoring. Materials needed to complete the refresher training are available to check out from the State Professional Development Resource Centers.

New Staff

New staff who will have test administration responsibilities may not administer the BEST Plus assessment until after completion of BEST Plus training, or produce evidence of prior completion of training.

See Appendix 7 for specific training information.

Test Administration Manuals

AEFLA-funded programs are required to follow the test administration guidelines specified in the **BEST Plus Test Administrator Guide**.

Appropriate Assessments for Learner Populations

BEST Plus is appropriate for ESL learners who are focused on improving their listening and speaking skills.

Alternate Forms for Pre- and Post Testing

When administered by computer, the test adapts to the examinees based on the answers they give. The semi-adaptive, print-based version has three parallel forms-A, B, and C.

Time Frames for Testing

See Appendix 6.

Guidelines for Raw Score Conversion to Scale Scores and Using Scale Scores to Place Learners into NRS Levels

BEST Plus Scale Score	NRS Educational Functioning Level
0-400	Beginning ESL Literacy 0-1
401-417	Low Beginning ESL 2
418-438	High Beginning ESL 3
439-472	Low Intermediate ESL 4
473-506	High Intermediate ESL 5
507-540	Advanced ESL 6
541-	ESL 7+ If pre test score: place in ABE/ASE If post test score: exit criteria (level completion) for ESL 6

Purchasing Procedures

Only those who have been trained to administer BEST Plus may purchase BEST Plus products. Orders placed by non-trained individuals will not be processed. Trained BEST Plus administrators may order test materials from the [Center for Applied Linguistics](#).

Appendix 4: FY11 and FY12

Performance and Pre/Post Targets for AEFLA Programs

One of the purposes of post testing is to provide evidence of level completion for annual reporting to the U.S. Department of Education. Based on past performance and continuous improvement requirements, the Dept. of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) negotiates with the State to establish performance targets for student educational gains at each Educational Functioning Level, as well as targets for attainment of student goals related to the core outcome measures of employment, high school completion, and postsecondary education. The charts below show Colorado's performance targets for FY11 (July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011) and FY12 (July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012).

The pre/post test target is set annually by the State, based on past performance and movement toward maximizing the number of students who are both pre- and post tested.

Goal	Target FY2011	Target FY2012
Improve Basic Literacy Skills		
ABE 0-1.9	61	58
ABE 2-3.9	61	59
ABE 4-5.9	55	53
ABE 6-8.9	54	48
ASE 9-10.9	49	40
Improve English Skills		
ESL 0-1	53	57
ESL 2	64	69
ESL 3	57	60
ESL 4	50	50
ESL 5	50	47
ESL 6	28	26
Obtain Employment	40	48
Retain/Improve Employment	35	50
Enter Postsecondary Education	42	50
High School Completion or GED	50	46
Pre- and Post Tested	70	70

Appendix 5: Recommended Pre- and Post Testing Time Frames

From **Recommended Timeframes for Pre- and Post Testing: Adult Education Assessments**, revised May 10, 2006, in: **State Assessment Policy Guidance** issued by the U.S. Dept. of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, specifying the requirements for state assessment policies for measuring educational gain within the National Reporting System (NRS) and including minimum and recommended hours of instruction that should occur before students are post tested.

Post Assessment Exceptions

Programs must document each of the exceptions it makes to the recommended time frames for administering post tests. Completed/signed exception forms must be retained in students' assessment files, and must be made available to AEFL staff for compliance review and monitoring purposes. Under no circumstances should a student with fewer than 40 instructional hours be post-tested. Exceptions should be limited and rare. No more than 15% of a program's students should be excepted from the recommended post testing time frames during one program year. Excessive exceptions will be considered non-compliance and will result in the program being placed on improvement. See Exception Form in Appendix 8.

BEST Plus

60 hours minimum; 80-100 hours recommended.

If the hours for a course of instruction exceed the recommended number of hours, post-testing may most appropriately take place at the end of the instructional session.

Because program-related factors such as intensity of instruction, class size, teacher training and experience, and use of appropriate curricula and materials will often affect language proficiency gains, programs should consider these factors when determining timing for pre- and post-testing.

CASAS

40 hours minimum; 70-100 hours recommended.

Allow exceptions for courses with different schedules and intensity, e.g., allow more time for courses that meet infrequently or not intensively and for very intensive courses wait longer than the recommended number of hours to post-test.

Programs offering high intensity courses (e.g., class meets more than 15 hours per week) may choose to test at the end of a semester, term, quarter, or other substantial block of instruction, even though the instructional intervention is more than 100 hours of instruction. Programs offering low intensity courses with less than 70 hours in a semester, quarter, term, or other block of instruction, may choose to post-test at the end of the instructional period.

Programs may assess students with fewer than the **recommended** number of instructional hours, but each individual exception must be approved by the program director and documentation of approval must be kept on file as evidence of compliance with assessment policy.

TABE, Forms 9 and 10

60 hours (same level, different form)

120 hours (same level, same form)

CTB/McGraw-Hill suggests the pre- and post-test guidelines as Best Practices recommendations based upon feedback and APA guidelines. The purpose for assessing with TABE will also have an impact on the implementation of these recommendations. CTB discourages random and frequent testing as it will not present valid gain scores and could create a practice effect, thus producing questionable or spurious scores. Instructional intervention between testing periods is strongly recommended to maximize gain. Proper use of the Locator Test as a determinant of appropriate content level testing is also strongly recommended and is an integral part of the testing process.

If a test is to be administered as a retest because the initial test session was invalid, there is not a prescribed length of time that needs to occur. However, CTB strongly encourages some instructional time in order to avoid a practice effect.

Appendix 6: FY12

Assessment Trainers and Regional Assessment Training Schedule

BEST Plus

Certified BEST Plus Trainers

Jane Miller, Colorado Dept. of Education, AEFL

Pamela Herrlein, CCD Workplace Learning Project, Denver

Barbara Sample, Spring Institute for Intercultural Learning, Denver

Contact: Jane Miller, 303.866.6611; Miller_J@cde.state.co.us

CASAS

Colorado's state level CASAS trainers provide state wide CASAS Implementation Training (IT) in the following areas:

CASAS Life and Work, Life Skills, WLS, and ECS training and technical assistance

Nita Bratt, Learning Source for Adults and Families, Denver

Connie Davis, Northern Colorado Professional Development Resource Center, Longmont

Kathy Santopietro Weddel, Northern Colorado Professional Development Resource Center, Longmont

Contact: Northern Colorado Professional Development Resource Center, 303.702.7912;
ncpdc@stvrain.k12.co.us

CASAS Functional Writing Assessment training and technical assistance

Ardith Loustalet, Northern Colorado Professional Development Resource Center, Longmont

Contact: Ardith Loustalet; ardith.fwa@gmail.com

TABE

Colorado's state level TABE Trainer

Elizabeth Shupe, 303.866.6611; shupe_e@cde.state.co.us

FY12 Regional Assessment Training Schedule

Aug. 11-12, 2011	Aug. 15-16, 2011	Aug. 18-19, 2011	Aug. 26-27, 2011	Sept. 9-10, 2011
Colorado Springs	Montrose	Glenwood Springs	Lakewood	Longmont

For details, go to the Adult Education and Family Literacy Calendar at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeadult/adultcalindex.htm> or the Regional Assessment Training web page at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeadult/AssessmentRAT.htm>.

FY13 Regional Assessment Training Schedule

TBA

**Appendix 7: FY12
Post Testing Exception Form**

Program: _____

Student's name: _____

Enrollment date: _____

NRS pre-test: assessment form and level: _____

Scaled score: _____ Number of instructional hours (40+ hours required): _____

Class/Instructor: _____

Initial EFL Based on NRS Pre-Test

Goal: Improve Basic Literacy Skills		Goal: Improve English Literacy	
<input type="checkbox"/>	ABE Beginning Literacy 0-1.9	<input type="checkbox"/>	ESL Beginning Literacy 0-1
<input type="checkbox"/>	ABE Beginning Basic Education 2-3.9	<input type="checkbox"/>	ESL Low Beginning Literacy 2
<input type="checkbox"/>	ABE Low Intermediate Basic Education 4-5.9	<input type="checkbox"/>	ESL High Beginning Literacy 3
<input type="checkbox"/>	ABE High Intermediate Basic Education 6-8.9	<input type="checkbox"/>	ESL Low Intermediate 4
<input type="checkbox"/>	ASE Low Adult Secondary Education 9-10.9	<input type="checkbox"/>	ESL High Intermediate 5
<input type="checkbox"/>	ASE High Adult Secondary Education 11-12.9	<input type="checkbox"/>	ESL Advanced 6

Student's goal(s) Mark all that apply. Leave blank if none apply. All students have one of the literacy goals above.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Obtain employment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Earn GED diploma
<input type="checkbox"/>	Improve employment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Earn HS diploma
<input type="checkbox"/>	Enter postsecondary education or training	<input type="checkbox"/>	Improve/increase involvement with children's literacy

Reason for exception

_____ Student has (1) at least 40 instructional hours AND has (2) indicated intention to exit program before recommended number of hours is accrued.

_____ Student has (1) at least 40 instructional hours, AND (2) evidence indicates readiness to pass GED tests and program exit may occur before recommended number of hours is accrued OR student's initial EFL is Low ASE.

Program Director's Signature

Date