
MEMORANDUM

TO: Adult Education and Literacy Program Staff

FROM: Robin Castle, State Director of Adult Education & Literacy; Linda Moreno, Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment Coordinator

SUBJECT: National Reporting System Assessment Transition Guidance

DATE: September 25, 2024

Purpose

This memo was created to assist Adult Education & Literacy (AEL) providers with the transition from the legacy English Language Proficiency (ELP) assessment to the new ELP assessments, and the TABE 11/12 to the TABE 13/14. The transition period to the new assessments will begin on January 1, 2025. This memo will include background information with rationale for the change, a transition timeline, and links to important documents that can be used to answer common questions.

Background

The Office of Career Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE) approves federally required assessments for a specified period of time. When assessments expire, it means that the assessment needs to go to OCTAE for review. If acceptable, OCTAE will then issue a period of time for which the field can continue to use the assessment(s) until the assessment “sunsets”. When an assessment “sunsets”, the assessment is NO LONGER VALID and cannot be used. Once an assessment sunsets you will notice a new assessment will replace the former test. These tests will either change names (most often) or change forms. In FY26 (July 1, 2025), the current tests for English Language Proficiency, for English Language Learners (ELLs), and the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) 11/12 assessments will sunset and new assessments will go into effect.

Although the [TABE 13/14](#) is a refresh with small modifications to the assessment blueprint, the ELP assessments were updated to better align with the National Reporting System (NRS) English Language Proficiency (ELP) Achievement Level Descriptors. In Vermont, we will go from CASAS Life and Work Reading to CASAS Reading STEPS, from BEST Plus 2.0 to BEST Plus 3.0. **In Vermont, the TABE CLAS-E no longer is used to set Educational Functioning Level (EFL) effective July 1, 2024.**



Because there are students whose EFL was set with one of the legacy assessments mentioned above, any progress assessing must be completed using the same version of the legacy assessment that set EFL, by June 30, 2025.

Test Administrator Training & Certification

All test administrators will need to do the instrument specific trainings in order to recertify and administer the TABE 13/14, BEST Plus 3.0, and the CASAS Reading STEPS. Please note that although current assessment certificates for legacy assessments may remain valid throughout the FY25, all test administrators who will be responsible for administering the newly approved NRS assessments on or after January 1, 2025, will need to update their certifications to include the new assessments.

BEST Plus 2.0 certified Test Administrators will have their certifications extended until June 30, 2025, for BEST Plus 2.0 only. However, everyone who administers the BEST 3.0 will need to recertify in order to purchase the new BEST Plus 3.0 assessments.

The recertification grace period, for which there will be no training cost, will only be available for six months once the training series launches on October 14, 2024. Please note specific timelines for becoming certified to administer the new assessments in the paragraphs to follow.

Moving forward, the Vermont Agency of Education will no longer be contracting with the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) for trainings. Providers should plan on having one staff member, who is certified in BEST Plus 3.0, become trainer certified.

Certification

Because all new AEL students will need to be baselined using the new NRS assessments, all assessment trainers and those who administer assessments, will need to recertify by December 31, 2024. This includes those who hold a current certification. You will find the links to the certification courses below. Please follow publisher guidance on which trainings to complete.

[CASAS Reading STEPS](#)

TABE 13/14 (TBD)

BEST Plus 3.0 (including those with a current 2.0 certification) (Available 10/14/24)

Transition Timeline

Because assessments that sunset are no longer valid for reporting purposes, a transition timeline needs to be in place in order to ensure a smooth transition from one assessment to another. Although both ESL assessments measure English language proficiency, the new assessments have a different scale, items, and blueprint. Progress assessment must be done using the same assessment until its sunset. For example, students who baselined using the Best Plus 2.0, will need to progress assess using the Best Plus 2.0 if they have enough hours by June 30, 2025. New students arriving after January 1, 2025, will need to baseline assess using the Best Plus 3.0 and progress

assess using the Best Plus 3.0. **After July 1, 2025**, any students who have been progress assessed using the Best Plus 2.0 will need to **re-baseline** using the Best Plus 3.0. This process will be the same for the CASAS Life and Work Reading's transition to the new CASAS Reading STEPS, and the TABE transition to the TABE 13/14.

Please see the timeline below for transitioning to new assessments.

FY25

July 1, 2024

- TABE CLAS-E will no longer be used to set EFL. However, it may still be used for instructional purposes. Testing certification will need to be maintained and kept current for that assessment if used instructionally and entering the scores into the AEL database.

September 2024

- Providers should inventory current assessments on hand and order new assessments for use after January 1, 2025.

July - December 2024

- All teachers who administer, or who might administer, the BEST Plus 3.0 must receive training from the Center for Applied Linguistics and certify.
- All teachers who administer, or who might administer, the CASAS Reading STEPS, must certify using the CASAS online certification course.
- Certificates generated must be uploaded into LACES.
 - Staff Tab > Credentials > Add > Credential/Certification Type > dropdown select
- All teachers who administer, or might administer, the TABE 13/14 will need to take the online training and certify prior to January 1, 2025.

January - June 2025:

- New English Language Learner (ELL) students must baseline to set EFL, and progress assess using the BEST Plus 3.0 or CASAS Reading STEPS.
- All current ELL students can continue to progress assess using the BEST Plus 2.0 and CASAS Life and Work Reading.
- New ABE/ASE students must base-line and progress assess using the TABE 13/14.
- All current ABE/ASE student may continue to progress assess using the TABE 11/12.
- Test Trainers/Administrators need to monitor remaining administrations of legacy assessments and order only what is needed to complete progress assessing until June 30, 2025.

May – June 2025:

- Assessments given using instruments that sunset June 30, 2025, will expire on July 1, 2025.

- Students with 40 or more hours of instruction since their last assessment using an instrument that will be sunsetting on June 30, 2025, must be progress assessed using the same instrument to capture possible Measurable Skill Gains (MSGs).
- Options for re-baselining students with fewer than 40 hours of instruction since their last assessment using an instrument that will be sunsetting on June 30, 2025:
 1. Re-baseline using a new assessment before July 1, 2025, to prevent expiration of EFL or,
 2. Re-baseline using the new assessment as soon as possible when the new fiscal year begins (FY26).

July 1, 2025

- Re-baseline all continuing students who do not have an active EFL due to the sunsetting of the older assessments.
- Continue to use only the new assessments to baseline any new students.
- All expired legacy assessments may not be used for practice and must be destroyed (e.g., shredded.)

Scenarios

Scenario 1:

A student is enrolled in April 2024 and assessed in the BEST Plus 2.0. Services and instruction ensue until the student has had 40 hours of instruction. The student is progress assessed in July 2024 using the Best Plus 2.0 and shows a gain resulting in an MSG. This student continues to receive instruction, and in January is due to progress assess.

The BEST Plus 3.0 must be used because they have already been progress assessed in the BEST Plus 2.0 once **and showed a gain**. The student has earned an MSG in FY25, so please transition this student to the new assessment at this time.

Scenario 2

A student is enrolled in December 2024 and assessed using the CASAS Life and Work Reading. Because the student was enrolled prior to January 1, 2025, the student can be baseline assessed under the CASAS legacy assessment (Life and Work Reading). However, the student does not appear in person again until May. The student had taken advantage of the proxy hours and started to receive in-person instruction again in May now reaching 40 hours of instruction.

At this point, the assessment in December is still valid, and you can progress assess using the CASAS Life and Work Reading to try and earn an MSG prior to June 30, 2025. Then after July 1, 2025, the student should take the CASAS Reading STEPS to establish a new baseline EFL.

Scenario 3

In January of 2025, a student reached NRS 6 on the BEST Plus 2.0 earning an MSG, and also has an NRS 5 on the CASAS Life and Work Reading. In March the student reaches 40 hours of instruction and has expressed interest in earning their high school diploma.

It makes sense to transition the student using the TABE 13/14 though the student will remain in the ESL population for federal reporting purposes for the remainder of the fiscal year. The student has indicated a desire to pursue a high school diploma, and scores on the English Language Proficiency assessments (both speaking/listening and reading) are high. However, if a student still wants to work on their speaking and listening, the AEL provider could still reassess with the BEST Plus 3.0 (new ELP standards) and continue to monitor their progress in language acquisition. In July, you will bring forward the TABE 13/14 assessment to set EFL for the new fiscal year and then the student will be in the ABE population for federal reporting purposes.

Scenario 4

A student, who has had no instructional hours for 18 months, has returned to our program to resume instruction. This student's assessment (TABE 11/12) has not expired, it is June of 2025, the student has less than 40 hours, and the student will not have enough hours to progress assess with TABE 11/12.

In this case, even though the student's EFL has not expired, the TABE 11/12 will no longer be valid in July 2025. The student could re-baseline using the new assessment before July 1, 2025 to avoid expiration of the EFL, or re-baseline as soon as possible when the new fiscal year begins July 1, 2025.