

Adult Education and Literacy Continuity of Learning Instruction and Assessment Guidance

Guidance Rescinded

This guidance was issued/updated April 22, 2020 and is rescinded as of June 16, 2021. It is no longer in effect. Please see [COVID-19 Guidance for Vermont Schools](#) for current guidance related to the COVID-19 pandemic emergency.

Purpose

To provide continuity of learning for all Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) learners during remote learning in Vermont, staff need to reach out to all active learners to determine a plan to meet their individual learning needs. Predictable virtual instruction should be established and scheduled for all students to ensure students receive the instruction they need and are ready to be assessed for skill gains once onsite testing can be scheduled.

General AEL Instruction and Assessment

AEL Centers and staff should contact all active students to set up a flexible, remote learning schedule according to the individual student needs.

Considerations

- Student's access to the internet
- Equipment/materials for remote learning access
- Student's ability to commit to education plan
- Schedule restrictions due to family responsibilities
- Students with learning accommodation needs

Requirements

- Enter all service hours provided to students at least every two weeks in the student records in DataWorks
- Identify student readiness for progress assessment based on FY20 Assessment policy guidelines
- Set up potential in-person testing schedule for late May and the first week in June (estimated timeline based on current information)

Performance Targets and Assessment Requirements

The invitation by the US Department of Education to states to apply for a waiver to administer standardized tests does not impact AEL assessment requirements. Although Program Memorandum OCTAE 20-3 describes that "[t]he Department will take the effect of the COVID-19 outbreak into consideration in reviewing PY 2019 data" Vermont's AEL system

will maintain the integrity of assessments and will continue to reimburse for grant-funded and High School Completion Program (HSCP) services when AEL providers can show student skill gains through progress assessments.

Students Who did Not Complete all Three Assessments Before Learning Center Closure

Please contact Sharon Parker at Sharon.Parker@vermont.gov immediately with student ID numbers of those in this situation. Once the scale of the issue is understood, guidance will be provided.

Expectations to Provide Services to HSCP Students with Below NRS 5 Skills

Students participating in the HSCP with Below NRS 5 skills with an anticipated graduation target date of June 30, 2020, need to be contacted to establish a plan and a reasonable expectation for skill level development as they complete education plans.

AEL staff responsibilities:

- Identify lists of students by region that are Below NRS 5 and have a graduation target date of June 30, 2020. AOE staff have generated lists by provider and center from the FY20 HSCP Below NRS 5 monitoring list that will be distributed upon request.
- Students that are ready for progress assessments must be identified at the center level.
 - Students must be notified of assessment requirements, once in-person testing can be done, for earning a high school diploma by June 30, 2020.
 - Instructional services must continue to be provided that will lead to skill gains to NRS 5 in all three skill areas.
- Students that have not received the required 40 hours of instruction according to the FY20 assessment policy:
 - Must be contacted and remote learning schedule established to provide basic skills instruction in necessary skill areas.
 - Once students have completed specific skill area instruction and met the required 40 hours of instruction according to the FY20 assessment policy, they must be notified of the assessment requirement (once in-person testing can be done) to earning a high school diploma by June 30, 2020.
- Students that cannot engage in their graduation plan at this time for any reason should be made aware that a graduation target date of June 30, 2020, is not a reasonable expectation.
- Students for whom requests to graduate by June 30, 2020, have been submitted:
 - Plan to re-submit RTGs, with revised graduation education plans and updated information to reflect the remote instruction and services provided by May 29, 2020. Include details on plans to progress assess each student, as described above.
 - If the student was denied graduation by June 30, 2020, you may re-submit for a later date that is at least 60 days prior to anticipated graduation date.

- For students who have been on IEPs in the past and are participating as unenrolled-in-school students:
 - Consult with local AEL staff with special education licensure or consult with the partnering school's special education staff to identify accommodations and modifications for instruction
 - Work with regional Vocational Rehabilitation staff to provide appropriate services, which may include assistive technology or other [programs and services](#)
- For students with documented or suspected disabilities and no history of special education services (IEPs), and unenrolled-in-school:
 - Consult with local AEL staff with special education licensure or with the partnering school's special education staff to identify strategies that will meet the student's educational needs
 - Work with regional Vocational Rehabilitation as described above and request assessments as needed (i.e., KBIT)
- Every effort must be made to increase skills and provide transition services to every student. Less than 100 hours of instruction for students scoring below NRS 5 is generally insufficient to result in measurable skill gains and demonstrated skills necessary to transition successfully.

Students Enrolling in AEL During Learning Center Closure

Providing baseline assessments will occur when:

- The Governor's stay at home order has been lifted and students can be assessed in person, or
- The Vermont Agency of Education (AOE) has released guidance on procedures for virtual test proctoring of identified assessments, and
- The local AEL provider assessment administrators have been trained to follow procedures for virtual test proctoring.

Online Assessments and Virtual/Remote Test Proctoring

Guidance from the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education

States may choose to implement virtual testing, but specific conditions must be met:

States may choose to develop procedures to implement virtual test proctoring. States that choose to use this flexibility must have procedures to ensure that (1) the student who is testing can be properly identified, (2) any approved test (i.e., any test determined suitable for use in the NRS) that is used is properly secured, and (3) the virtual proctor can properly administer the test.

The AOE is working on developing procedures and guidance to allow virtual test proctoring of NRS-approved assessments.

TABE 11/12

AEL providers must begin planning to discontinue administering the paper-based version of the TABE 11/12 and transition to administering only the online version for all new students entering the AEL system. Local procedures to provide virtual test proctoring for the secure electronic version will be developed by the AOE in consultation with Data Recognition Corporation. Any students previously baseline assessed with the online version may be progress assessed when virtual test proctoring procedures are established and local AEL proctors are trained. New students enrolling in AEL during FY20Q4 must be baseline assessed using the online version of the TABE 11/12, whether the assessment is administered at a learning center when allowed by the Governor's decree or through virtual test proctoring.

Data Recognition Corporation is holding three opportunities to attend a webinar during the week of April 20th for local programs. The webinar will cover the release of the Locator and information about remote proctoring.

BEST Plus 2.0

The Center for Applied Linguistics has provided information that although they will allow use of the BEST Plus 2.0 as virtual assessment, such use of the assessment has not been researched. Therefore, the AOE requires continued in-person use of the BEST Plus 2.0 when it is possible to convene in-person assessments. The AOE will continue to work with CAL and AEL providers to determine the best timeline to prepare for eventual virtual test proctoring and assessing using BEST Plus 2.0.

The BEST Plus 2.0 Refresher scheduled for May 15th will be held virtually. More information will be available as AOE staff finalize plans with the Center for Applied Linguistics.

[Best Plus 2.0 assessment FAQ](#)

Paper Instruments

TABE 11/12

All ABE and ASE students with baseline levels established using the TABE 11/12 paper version will need to be progress assessed with the paper version using the matched pair form for that instrument once in-person testing can resume.

TABE CLAS-E and CASAS Life and Work Reading

Only in-person administration of these assessments for ELL students are allowed currently although the AOE is monitoring the publishers' guidance and potential availability of these instruments to be administered online at a future date.