

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

**WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT**

**VIRGINIA WORKFORCE LETTER (VWL) #12-07**

**TO:** LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARDS  
**FROM:** WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES  
**SUBJECT:** TESTING OF ALL OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH FOR BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENCIES  
**DATE:** December 3, 2012

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**Purpose:**

This document provides local workforce investment areas with guidance on the requirement to assess all out-of-school youth in reading/writing and math in order to determine skill levels and then to report those results in the Virginia Workforce Connection (VaWC).

**References:**

Training and Employment Guidance Letter 17-05; Subject: Common Measures Policy for the Employment and Training Administration's (ETA) Performance Accountability System and related Performance Issues; Dated: February 17, 2006

Training and Employment Guidance Letter 17-05, Change 2; Subject: Common Measures Policy for the Employment and Training Administration's (ETA) Performance Accountability System and related Performance Issues; Dated: May 20, 2009

Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 17-09; Subject: Quarterly Submission of the Workforce Investment Act Standardized Record Data (WIASRD); Dated: March 10, 2010

Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 18-11; Subject: Improving Literacy and Numeracy Gains of Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Youth Program Participants; Dated: March 2, 2012

Under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Common Measures:

Literacy and Numeracy Gains –

*Of those out-of-school youth who are basic skills deficient:*

The number of participants who increase one or more educational functioning levels divided by the number of participants who have completed a year in the program (i.e., one year from the date of program participation) **plus** the number of participants who exit before completing a year in the program.

### Operational Parameters

- In-school youth are excluded from this measure. (Note: determination of in-school or out-of-school status is only made at the point of program participation).
- It is allowable to use pre-tests that are administered up to six months prior to the date of first WIA youth service, if such pre-test scores are available. If prior pre-tests are not available, administration of the pre-test must occur within 60 days following the date of first youth program service. Note: If a pre-test is not administered within 60 days, it is still required.
- This measure is based on “date of first youth program service” rather than date of participation because of date of participation is defined as the earliest date of service from any program if a participant receives services from multiple programs.
- Individuals who are determined not to be basic skills deficient based on pre-test results are excluded from this measure (i.e., programs will not be held accountable for these individuals under this measure).
- When administering assessment tools, individuals with disabilities (as defined in 29 CFR Part 37.4) should be accommodated according to: (1) section 188 of WIA: 29CFR Part 37, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Title H of the Americans with Disabilities Act. (2) guidelines associated with the assessment tool used to determine functioning levels, or (3) state law or policies.
- The measure includes individuals who are given an initial assessment but, either: (1) do not post-test before exiting the program, or (2) exit before completing a year in the youth program (i.e., one year from the date of first youth service).
- To be included in the ***numerator***, a participant must demonstrate on a post-test that he/she advanced one or more educational functioning levels beyond the level in which he/she was initially placed at pre-test within one year from the date of first youth program service, (Note: the one-year time period is from the date of first youth service, not date of pre-test).
- ***All out-of-school youth must be assessed in basic reading writing and math.*** If a pre-test is not administered within 60 days, it is still required.

### Action Required:

All out-of-school youth must be assessed in basic reading, writing and math skills. If the assessment results (scale scores) in a determination of Basic Skills Deficient (8<sup>th</sup> grade or below), then the youth must be documented as BSD in the application in Virginia Workforce Connection (VWC). If the youth is enrolled in the program then the assessment results (scale scores) must be recorded in the “Create Literacy & Numeracy Record” in the VWC. Consequently, the youth will be included in the Literacy-Numeracy Gains performance measures and the participant must receive basic skills academic training. Failure to assess (pre-test) reading, writing and math skill levels for out-of-school youth is considered non-compliance.

### ***Data Review:***

Workforce Development Services Research and Evaluation staff will review the output of the Data Reporting and Validation System software (the performance backup – specifically the Denominator for the Youth Literacy-Numeracy Gains). The review will consist of:

1. Is the youth basic skills deficient?
2. If yes, was a Literacy & Numeracy Record created?
3. If No Literacy & Numeracy Record was created, then the record fails the Out-of-School Basic Skills Deficient testing requirement.

Any Out-of-School record failing the Basic Skills Deficient testing requirement will be turned over to the WDS Monitors for inclusion in their onsite review.

### **Applicable Definitions:**

***Basic Skills Deficient*** – The individual computes or solves problems, reads, writes, or speaks English at or below the eighth grade level or is unable to compute or solve problems, read, write or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual’s family, or in society,

***Educational Gain*** – At post-test, participant completes or advances one or more educational functioning levels from the starting level measured on entry into the program (pre-test).

***Out-of-school Youth:*** An eligible youth who is a school dropout, or who has a secondary diploma or its equivalent but, is basic skills deficient, unemployed or under employed (WIA section 101(33)). For reporting purposes, this term includes all youth except: (i) those who are attending any school and have not received a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, or (ii) those attending post-secondary school and are not basic skills deficient.

***Post-Test*** – A test administered to a participant at regular intervals during the program.

***Pre-Test*** - A test used to assess a participant’s basic skills literacy skills, which is administered to a participant up to six months prior to the date of participation, if such pre-test scores are available, or within 60 days following the date of participation.