

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT

VIRGINIA WORKFORCE LETTER (VWL) #14-14

TO: LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARDS
FROM: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
SUBJECT: Approved Tests for LITERACY-NUMERACY Gains
DATE: December 1, 2014

REFERENCES:

WIA Section 136;
WIA Regulations at 20 CFR Parts 661 and 666;
Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 17-05; Subject: Common Measures Policy for the Employment and Training Administration's (ETA) Performance and Accountability System and Related Performance Issues; Dated: February 17, 2006;
Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 17-05; Subject: Common Measures Policy for the Employment and Training Administration's (ETA) Performance and Accountability System and Related Performance Issues, Change 2; Dated: May 20, 2009;
Training and Employment Notice No. 18-11; Subject: Improving Literacy-Numeracy Gains of Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Youth Program Participants; Dated: March 2, 2012;
Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 4-13; Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Performance Reporting System; Dated: August 28, 2013;
National Reporting System for Adult Education – NRS Test Benchmarks for Educational Functioning Levels – Updated July 2014;
Virginia Workforce Letter No. 05-12; Subject: WIA Program Participation and Performance Measures;
Virginia Workforce Letter No. 11-08; Subject: Local Monitoring Requirements for Workforce Investment Areas;
Virginia Workforce Letter No. 13-07; Subject: Case Notes in VAWC;
Virginia Workforce Letter No. 13-08; Standardized Participant File Format
Virginia Workforce Letter No. 14-01; Subject: WIA Service Code Definitions and Limitations;
Virginia Workforce Letter No. 14-08; Subject: Common Measures
Virginia Workforce Letter No. 14-09; Subject: Timely Data Entry;
Virginia Workforce Letter No. 14-11; Subject: Program Exit;

Purpose:

To provide Local Workforce Areas with the updated National Reporting System Test Benchmarks for Educational Functioning Levels (EFL). This is an integral part of the Literacy-Numeracy Gains measurement process.

Required Actions:

Review the attachment for tests that can be used in the Literacy-Numeracy performance measures. The tests included in the list provided by National Reporting System for Adult Education are to be used in the Literacy-Numeracy measurement process only. (See Attachment A)

Terminology:

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. In addition, states and grantees have the option establishing their own definition, which must include the above language. In cases where states or grantees establish such a definition, that definition will be used for basic skills determination. Note: Grade level scores below 9.0 (e.g., 8.9) should be considered as at or below the 8th grade level.

Out-of-School Youth – An eligible youth who is a school dropout, or who has received a secondary school diploma or its equivalent but is basic skills deficient, unemployed or underemployed (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 who are attending post-secondary school and are not basic skills deficient.

Literacy and Numeracy Gains:

Methodology:

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

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

Operational Parameters:

- In-school youth are excluded from this measure. (Note: determination of in-school and out-of-school status is only made at 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 pre-tests are not available, administration of the pre-test must occur within 60 days following the date of first youth program service.
- This measure is based on “date of first youth service” rather than date of participation as defined as the earliest date of service from any program if a participant receives services from multiple programs. It is possible for the participation date of a youth to be prior to the date of first WIA youth service if such youth was served earlier by a different program. Therefore, date of first WIA youth service is used to ensure that this measure is based on a “youth participation date” rather than the initial participation date.

- Individuals not determined 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: 29 CFR 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 grade 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 program (i.e., one year from the date of first youth program service).
- To be included in the numerator, a participant must demonstrate on a post-test that he/she has 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 service. (Note: the one-year time period is from the date of the first youth program service, not date of pre-test).
- All out-of-school youth must be assessed in basic reading/writing and math.

ATTACHMENT A

NRS Test Benchmarks for Educational Functioning Levels (Updated July 2014)

NRS – National Reporting System for Adult Education



National Reporting System
for Adult Education

A Project of the U.S. Department of Education

NRS Test Benchmarks for Educational Functioning Levels

Updated July 2014

Adult Basic Education

Please refer to the attached Federal Register notice for a list of NRS approved tests and test forms.

Educational Functioning Level	Test Benchmarks
Beginning ABE Literacy	TABE¹ (9–10) scale scores (grade level 0–1.9): Reading: 367 and below Total Math: 313 and below Language: 389 and below CASAS² scale scores: Reading: 200 and below Math: 200 and below Writing: 200 and below Wonderlic GAIN³ scale scores: English: 200-406 Math: 200-314
Beginning Basic Education	TABE (9–10) scale scores (grade level 2–3.9): Reading: 368–460 Total Math: 314–441 Language: 390–490 CASAS scale scores: Reading: 201–210 Math: 201–210 Writing: 201–225 Wonderlic GAIN scale scores: English: 407-525 Math: 315-522 MAPT⁴ scale scores: All tests: 200-299

¹ TABE = Tests of Adult Basic Education

² CASAS = Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System

³ GAIN = General Assessment of Instructional Needs

⁴ MAPT = Massachusetts Adult Proficiency Test

NRS Test Benchmarks for Educational Functioning Levels
Updated July 2014

Educational Functioning Level	Test Benchmarks
<p style="text-align: center;">Low Intermediate Basic Education</p>	<p>TABE (9–10) scale scores (grade level 4–5.9): Reading: 461–517 Total Math: 442–505 Language: 491–523</p> <p>CASAS scale scores: Reading: 211–220 Math: 211–220 Writing: 226–242</p> <p>Wonderlic GAIN scale scores: English: 526–661 Math: 523–669</p> <p>MAPT scale scores: All tests: 300–399</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">High Intermediate Basic Education</p>	<p>TABE (9–10) scale scores (grade level 6–8.9): Reading: 518–566 Total Math: 506–565 Language: 524–559</p> <p>CASAS scale scores: Reading: 221–235 Math: 221–235 Writing: 243–260</p> <p>Wonderlic GAIN scale scores: English: 662–746 Math: 670–775</p> <p>MAPT scale scores: All tests: 400–499</p>

NOTE: WorkKeys has been removed from the NRS list under this functioning level

NRS Test Benchmarks for Educational Functioning Levels
Updated July 2014

Educational Functioning Level	Test Benchmarks
Low Adult Secondary Education	<p>TABE (9–10): scale scores (grade level 9–10.9): Reading: 567–595 Total Math: 566–594 Language: 560–585</p> <p>CASAS scale scores: Reading: 236–245 Math: 236–245 Writing: 261–270</p> <p>Wonderlic GAIN scale scores: English: 747-870 Math: 776-854</p> <p>MAPT scale scores: All tests: 500-599</p> <p>NOTE: WorkKeys has been removed from the NRS list under this functioning level</p>
High Adult Secondary Education	<p>TABE (9–10): scale scores (grade level 11–12): Reading: 596 and above Total Math: 595 and above Language: 586 and above</p> <p>CASAS scale scores: Reading: 246 and above Math: 246 and above Writing: 271 and above</p> <p>Wonderlic GAIN scale scores: English: 871-1000 Math: 855-1000</p> <p>MAPT scale scores: All tests: 600-700</p> <p>NOTE: WorkKeys has been removed from the NRS list under this functioning level</p>

NRS Test Benchmarks for Educational Functioning Levels

Updated July 2014

English as a Second Language

Please refer to the attached Federal Register notice for a list of NRS approved tests and test forms.

Educational Functioning Level	Test Benchmarks
<p>Beginning ESL Literacy</p>	<p>CASAS scale scores: Reading: 180 and below Listening has been removed &W Listening: 162-180 NEW</p> <p>BEST⁵ Plus: 400 and below (SPL 0-1) BEST Literacy: 0-20 (SPL 0-1)</p> <p>TABE CLAS-E⁶ scale scores⁷: Total Reading and Writing: 225-394 Total Listening and Speaking: 230-407</p>
<p>Low Beginning ESL</p>	<p>CASAS scale scores: Reading: 181-190 Listening has been removed &W Listening: 181-189 NEW Writing: 136-145</p> <p>BEST Plus: 401-417 (SPL 2) BEST Literacy: 21-52 (SPL 2)</p> <p>TABE CLAS-E scale scores: Total Reading and Writing: 395-441 Total Listening and Speaking: 408-449</p>
<p>High Beginning ESL</p>	<p>CASAS scale scores: Reading: 191-200 Listening has been removed &W Listening: 190-190 NEW Writing: 146-200</p> <p>BEST Plus: 418-438 (SPL 3) BEST Literacy: 53-63 (SPL 3)</p> <p>TABE CLAS-E scale scores: Total Reading and Writing: 442-482 Total Listening and Speaking: 450-485</p>

⁵ BEST = Basic English Skills Test