Nebraska

Adult Education Assessment Policies and Guidelines

Revisions approved by OVAE/USDOE & effective July 2011

Vicki Bauer, State Director
Nebraska Adult Education
402/471-4807
Fax: 402/471-8127
vicki.l.bauer@nebraska.gov

Nebraska's Assessment Policy and Guidelines

Revisions Effective July 2011

- State Context -

With the passage of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), Title II, required states to develop a student data system to track student demographics, assessment testing, goals, and performance. The Nebraska Adult Information Management System (AIMS) is used for this purpose. AIMS is the state's accountability system for Adult Education; its contents make up the tables that are submitted annually to the Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) at the US Department of Education via the National Reporting System (NRS) tables. Through consultation with OVAE, Nebraska's performance is the basis for setting the performance measure standards each year as the Adult Education programs strive for continuous program improvement. Attainment of the performance standards can qualify the state to receive WIA Incentive Funds.

Local adult education programs are required to assess, with use of standardized testing, all students entering the Nebraska Adult Education program. It is the uniform method by which students are pre and post-tested to determine educational gain for reporting in the National Reporting System (NRS). That educational gain is the method used to measure progress /success of the primary purpose of Adult Education: to improve basic literacy skills of the students served.

The use of standardized assessments is essential to ensure that all adult students are placed at the appropriate level of instruction; that both student weaknesses and strengths are identified; and that progress is monitored and recorded. Uniform implementation of these policies allows for comparison across local programs. The ability to compare student data across local programs will prove to be especially useful as the state moves toward implementation of performance-based funding in July 2010.

BEST Plus must be administered to all students entering the ESL and/or EL/Civics instructional programs; use of BEST Literacy is optional. The TABE, Forms 9 & 10, must be administered to all students in the ABE and ASE levels. These are the only assessments that can be used for student placement and to document Educational Functioning Level (EFL) gain.

This document will address the use of the approved assessment tools in Nebraska Adult Education programs, and also the importance of such tools. All test administrators are required to adhere to the policies and guidance stated here, as well as the specific administration instructions provided by McGraw-Hill (TABE 9 & 10) and the Center for Applied Linguistics (BEST Plus and BEST Literacy).

Questions concerning these policies can be forwarded to either of the following: Vicki Bauer at vicki.l.bauer@nebraska.gov or 402-471-4807 and/or Jeanette Evans at jeanette.evans@nebraska.gov or 402-471-4806.

- Standardized Tests -

A standardized test, which is uniformly developed, administered, and scored, must also be both valid and reliable. These terms are defined by NRS as follows:

Reliability: The consistency with which a test measures what it is designed and intended to measure; describes the extent to which a test is dependable, stable, and consistent when administered to the same individuals on different occasions.

Validity: The extent to which a test measures the skills it sets out to measure and the extent to which inferences and actions made on the basis of test scores are appropriate and accurate.

While standardized tests, TABE 9 & 10 and BEST Plus, are required for all students entering Adult Education classes and identifies the students' EFL placement and movement, it is recommended that local programs use additional informal tests (chapter tests, pre-and post tests in instructional materials, self-made tests, instruction-based assessments, etc.) to further assist in identifying a student's strengths, areas requiring study and overall performance.

Assessment can be used in the following ways:

> **Placement decision** – measure the extent of the student's academic skills upon entry into the program to ensure appropriate class placement.
>
> **Instructional planning** – to develop individual learning plans and/or course curriculum.
>
> **Assessment of student progress** – by use of a post-test, determines the gain in academic skills of an individual.
>
> **Program evaluation** – to determine effectiveness of a course or program when both a pre and post-test is administered.
>
> **Accountability** – to report student progress within an accountability system, such as the NRS, for Adult Education.

- General Testing Requirements for TABE and BEST Plus -

All students entering a Nebraska Adult Education program must be given either the TABE, (Form 9 or10) or the BEST Plus assessment, depending upon which program the student enters. It is recommended that the assessment be given prior to the first day of class, preferably at program orientation or an intake testing session. However, if this is not possible, the assessment must be administered either by the end of the first week of class or by 12 hours of instruction, whichever comes first.

The initial assessment or pre-test is to be administered for:

1. placement into the appropriate educational functioning level (EFL)
2. placement in the appropriate class within the local program
3. determining appropriate student goals and AIMS goals
4. determining appropriate instructional materials for the student

Within a program year, if a student "drops or stops out" of class and then returns after an absence of less than 180 days (six months), a new pre-test should not be given.

Within a program year, if a student "drops or stops out" of class, and then returns after 180 or more days (six months) of absence, the pre-test should be re-administered to assure correct placement in the program.

A post-test must be given at least one time each program year (July 1 – June 30) in order to show level and EFL gain. See pages 9 and 12 for the specific number of hours required for post-testing for both the TABE and BEST Plus. *The only exception* is: An individual has made significant skill gains and these skill gains are documented by the instructor(s), who feel(s) that an EFL gain is likely. Evidence of those skill gains must be presented, in writing, to the program director for approval or denial prior to early post-testing. A form is available for this purpose. This exception should be used discriminately and only after careful consideration. **This is applicable only for ASE Low or ASE High.**

If a student is attending class at the end of the program year and continues in the program at the beginning of the next program year, that student's contact hours from the previous year carries over and counts toward the post-testing requirement in the new program year. For example, a student enrolls in an AE class in March and accumulates 51 hours of instruction by June 30. She continues with the class when it resumes in July. Therefore, she only has to attend 9 hours in July to be eligible to post-test.

If a student enrolls in class on or after January 1 of a program year and continues attending class, with no break or separation in attendance, his/her accumulated hours, if they are less than the required number of hours for post-testing, can be carried over to the next program year and can count toward the post-testing requirement.

Those classes with intensive instruction, such as corrections, should post-test no more than once quarterly, or if the student will be leaving the institution and 60 hours of instruction has taken place.

Random and frequent testing will not present a valid gain and could create a practice effect, thus producing questionable results.

If a student has post-tested and has shown an EFL gain, continued post-testing is not required, but may be done at the discretion of the instructor.

Both pre and post-tests must take place only in the classroom/learning center, and can be administered only by qualified personnel. No dictionaries, translators, or other resource materials can be used by the student during testing. The tests are not to be used as a study tool.

For purposes of pre and post-testing and NRS reporting, each student remains in the program area (ABE or ESL) initially entered for the entire year. Consequently, all contact hours are recorded in that initial program area.

- Accommodations -

Refer to the TABE and BEST Plus test directions for specifics for those persons who have a documented disability and the accommodations allowed for the specific assessment.

Those persons with a documented disability are allowed to use approved accommodations during pre and post-testing, as specified in the test manual and are to be used during instruction as well.

The state office has Levels M and D of the large print, audiocassette, and Braille test versions of TABE. They are available for checkout to programs, as needed.

If a student will be requesting any of the accommodations available for GED testing, the same accommodations should be available during classroom study and for administration of the TABE or BEST Plus assessments and the Official GED Practice Tests. See Appendices for a list of "GED Accommodations Available Request." Contact your local GED Chief Examiner for information regarding GED accommodations requiring documentation and approval.

- Data Collection and Verification -

All instructors are required to complete a student monthly attendance form for each class taught, This attendance form (paper or computerized), and any student data, including pre and post-test scores, are to be submitted to the local program director at the end of each month that classes are held.

Local programs are required to enter all student data by the end of the month following attendance. The Monthly Report is to be printed from AIMS, approved by the local program director, and then forwarded to the state office for review.

AIMS has an error checking function to identify out of range values (testing scores) and inappropriate age and entry & exit dates. At least quarterly, the state office checks the data for errors, missing data, erroneous data, etc. Local programs are notified and technical assistance is provided.

- Training of Test Administrators -

The state office will, as needed, sponsor regional trainings throughout the state for those needing to be trained to administer TABE 9 & 10 and/or BEST Plus. Along with the assessment training, it is natural that the areas of NRS, performance measures, goal setting, accountability, and AIMS be included in the assessment workshop. Some of these items are always addressed at the annual AE conference in October. In October, 2009, CAL representatives will be present at the annual AE Conference to conduct a refresher session for BEST Plus and also a session on administering the BEST Literacy.

Each August, at the directors' meeting, the new/revised assessment policy will be an agenda item; the local program directors are then responsible for sharing the new/revised policy and related information with their local program staff before all classes begin for the year.

TABE training can be done locally by an experienced TABE examiner. BEST Plus training can be done only by those five state trainers approved by CAL in August 2009.

TABE Assessment Policy, Forms 9 & 10

Revisions Effective July 2011

CTB McGraw-Hill developed the Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) to assess basic reading, math, and language for skills usually learned in Grades 1-12. TABE 9 & 10 are norm-referenced tests designed to measure achievement of basic skills commonly found in adult education curricula and taught within the instructional programs. The student diagnostic profile, which tabulates scores for instructional purposes, provide the basis for demonstrating student educational gains. The tests also provide percentile and scale scores, along with grade equivalent scores.

Five levels of TABE 9 & 10 assessments are available:

TABE Test Level	Grade Level Range	NRS Grade Level(s)
L (literacy)	0-1.9	Beginning ABE Literacy
E (easy)	2.0-3.9	Beginning Basic Education
M (medium)	4.0-5.9	Low Intermediate Basic Education
D (difficult)	6.0-8.9	High Intermediate Basic Education
A (advanced)	9.0-12.9	2 NRS levels: Low and High Adult Secondary

All students entering a Nebraska Adult Education program must be given either the TABE, (Form 9 or10) or the BEST Plus assessment, depending upon which program the student enters. It is recommended that the assessment be given prior to the first day of class, preferably at program orientation or an intake testing session. However, if this is not possible, the assessment must be administered either by the end of the first week of class or by 12 hours of instruction, whichever comes first.

The Core TABE battery must be used for assessment. This includes Reading, Mathematics Computation, Applied Mathematics, and Language. The core battery of tests must be timed and directions for test administration, found in the Examiner's Manual, must be followed. TABE tests (reading, math, & language) may be administered on different days, but each specific content area test (i.e. reading) must be completed during one test session.

Use of the Vocabulary, Language Mechanics, and Spelling tests is optional and has no bearing on EFL determination/movement.

The TABE Survey Test is not an acceptable assessment.

The use of the Locator Test is optional, but recommended. It helps to define the most accurate TABE pre-test assessment level; however, it does not count in determining the EFL and is not used for pre or post-

testing. The Locator Test is especially helpful to new teachers and when testing in a group situation, such an orientation.

The Locator Test is to be administered to help determine the correct level of TABE to be administered. It takes approximately 37 minutes to administer and there are a total of 40 test items in the areas of reading, math computation, applied math, and language.

According to McGraw-Hill, the publishers of TABE, the Locator Test predicts the correct level of TABE to administer approximately 70% of the time.
Other items to consider when determining the appropriate level of TABE to administer include:

1. the student's ability to independently complete the information/registration form
2. the student's writing sample
3. the interview with the student to determine academic strengths and weaknesses, possible participation in special education/remedial classes, and/or diagnosed disabilities

Both the TABE Examiner's Manual and Norms Book must be available in each classroom for test administration. Only Forms 9 & 10 are to be used. Select one form for initial assessment and the alternate form for progress assessment, or post-testing. Only those personnel who have been trained by local or state staff are eligible to administer the TABE assessment.

If a student is believed to have very low literacy skills or whose level of achievement is not apparent, it is recommended that the **TABE Word List** (included with Level L testing materials) be administered to determine the student's reading level. The next step is to administer the Locator Test.

TABE levels E, M, D, & A can be administered at the same testing session; each take approximately 3 hours to administer. See exact times below:

TABE Forms 9 & 10 – Levels E, M, D, A*		
Test	Number of Questions	Time Limit
Reading	50	50 minutes
Applied Math (may use calculator for this section only)	50	50 minutes
Math Computation	40	24 minutes
Language	55	55 minutes
Total Testing Time: 2 hours 59 minutes		

** See Examiner's Manual for complete test instructions and for administration of the L level test.*

The TABE Math assessment is divided in two sections: Applied Mathematics and Math Computation. **The calculator is used for Applied Math ONLY so this section of the test must be given first.** The calculator is not allowed for Math Computation. Calculators must be distributed by, and returned to, the person giving the assessment before the Computation section of the test is administered.

The student diagnostic profile **must** be completed after scoring the assessment and used to determine the curriculum and materials to be used with the student.

The **D level and M levels of TABE are used most frequently.** The L level is for non-readers and beginning literacy students; the E level can be used for students with some basic literacy skills (grade level 2.0 – 3.9). The A level can be used for those students transitioning to post secondary education/training.

In addition to the Test Manual and Norms Book guidelines, the following Nebraska policies must be followed:

1. The reading and math assessments will be used for initial placement in the appropriate educational functioning level (EFL). **The lowest pre-test score of the reading and math assessments determine the EFL.** The exception is if the student will be studying in only one area, such as language or math. The student would be assessed only in that particular area and the EFL would be determined by the particular test given.

2. The language assessment is required after a student reaches a reading level of 7.0 on the D level of TABE. However, it can be administered prior to that time at the discretion of the instructor. The language assessment does not determine EFL unless the reading and math TABE are not given because they are not required for that student's specific educational plan.

3. Scores are most reliable when they are near the middle (40-75%) of the distribution table. Those scores near or at the high end of the distribution table indicate that a student may know more than what is demonstrated in this particular level of test. This student should be given a higher level test. (e.g. TABE M to a TABE D) The scores at the lower end of the distribution table may give little or no information about the student's ability. At this level, a student should be given a lower level test to determine the individual's true academic achievement. (e.g. TABE D to TABE M) **When this occurs, the second, more reliable level of test needs to be given immediately; the scores from the second assessment are used to determine placement in the EFL and is the pre-test for that individual. <u>The first pre-test scores are not reported in AIMS</u>.**

4 Within a program year, if a student "drops or stops out" of class and then returns after an absence of less than 180 days (six months), a new pre-test should not be given.

   Within a program year, if a student "drops or stops out" of class, and then returns after 180 or more days (six months) of absence, the pre-test should be re-administered to assure correct placement in the program.

5. **If a student is attending class at the end of the program year and continues in the program at the beginning of the next program year, that student's contact hours from the previous year carries over and counts toward the post-testing requirement in the new program year. For example, a student enrolls in an AE class in March and accumulates 51 hours of instruction by June 30. She continues with the class when it resumes in July. Therefore, she only has to attend 9 hours in July to be eligible to post-test.**

6. TABE is a progressive test, meaning, for example, that a person can progress from Level M to Level D testing. Depending upon the pre-test score and student progress in his/her studies, the teacher shall determine if post-testing is done at the pre-test level or the next higher level.

7. Accommodations should be given only to those students who have a documented formal diagnosis of a disability. If a student has been approved for accommodations because of a disability, these same accommodations apply to the pre/post TABE assessment. Instructors need to be aware of the guidelines for accommodations. There are other accommodations available if requested by the students that do not require approval. (See Appendices)

Contact your program director if you need to administer the large print, audiocassette or Braille TABE tests. The State Office has these assessments available for checkout.

8. Scale scores, grade level, and EFL are determined at the time of testing and are later entered into AIMS. Scale scores or grade level can be used to indicate educational gain to a higher EFL. In those cases where an EFL gain is not made, but there is some improvement in the scale score(s), share the scale score gain with the student. Some increment gain shows evidence of student learning.

9. **To show progress within a level or movement to a higher educational functioning level, the post-assessment must show progress in the area of the *lowest pre-test score.*** Example: A student takes the reading and math TABE assessments. The Reading pre-test score on Level D, Form 9 is 9.8 (Low Adult Secondary); the Math score on Level D, Form 9 is 6.8 (High Intermediate ABE). This person would have an initial EFL of High Intermediate ABE, based on the lower score of 6.8 in Math. Post-testing on the alternate form of Level D 10 can include both Reading and Math, but ***only the Math score gain will be used to show EFL movement.*** A student is considered to have made an educational gain when the student's post-test indicates that the student has completed one or more educational functioning levels (EFL) above the level in which the student was initially placed by pre-test score. This is applicable only for ASE Low or ASE High.

10. **When a student pre-tests and ONLY when the educational functional level (EFL) is High Adult Secondary** and **the goal is to earn the GED, it is not necessary to post-test**. The successful completion of the GED demonstrates the educational movement.

11. A post-test must be given at least one time each program year (July 1 – June 30) in order to show level and EFL gain. **See chart below for the required number of hours of attendance required for TABE post-testing for the different NRS levels .**

TABE Assessment	Required Number of Instructional Hours Between Pre-Test and Post-Test
TABE 9 & 10 Alternate Form	50-60 hours **of instruction is recommended when testing with alternate form (i.e. 9M to 10M) for students that pre-test into NRS Levels 1-4 (ABE) with a minimum of 40 hours required.** **For students testing into NRS Levels 5 and 6 (ASE Low and High) 30-59 hours of instruction is required.**
TABE 9 & 10 Same Form Testing	**120 hours of instruction is required when testing with the same form (i.e. 9M to 9M).** **Post-testing on the same form is not recommended. All sites should have both forms (9 and 10) of TABE available for pre and post testing.**

The only exception is: An individual has made significant skill gains and these skill gains are documented by the instructor(s), who feel(s) that an EFL gain is likely. Evidence of those skill gains must be presented, in writing, to the program director for approval or denial prior to early post-testing. A form will be distributed for this purpose. This exception should be used discriminately and only after careful consideration. **This is applicable only for ASE Low and ASE High; no exceptions for any ESL levels.**

Performance standard: Instructors must post-test at least 90% of all students who meet the post-test criteria enumerated above.

Those classes with intensive instruction, such as corrections, should post test no more than once quarterly, or if the student will be leaving the institution and 60 hours of instruction has taken place.

If a student has post-tested and has shown an EFL gain, continued post-testing is not required, but may be done at the discretion of the instructor.

12. The student diagnostic profile helps the teacher determine the course of study for the student and also guides appropriate goal setting activities. **Goals that students want to achieve need to be reasonable and obtainable during the program year**. It is the instructor's responsibility to guide students in selecting appropriate goals – both long term and short term - based on assessment levels and the testing profile.

    Student goals may not be the same or appropriate as those goal(s) documented in AIMS. For example, a student enters the AE class with a 4th grade reading level and a 3rd grade math level. When completing the registration form, "earn a GED diploma" was selected as the student's goal for being in the program. The student's personal goal is a long term goal and that is acceptable. However, GED completion is not an appropriate goal for AIMS during the current program year because it is not a **reasonable or obtainable** goal for the student's first year in class. The goal of "increasing basic literacy skills" would be most appropriate for purposes of AIMS. Meeting small goals can consistently help students measure their own progress and may encourage student persistence.

13. **Educational Functioning Level (EFL) Descriptors for ABE are a part of the NRS Outcome Measure Definitions**. There are three descriptors: Basic Reading and Writing; Numeracy Skills; Functional and Workplace Skills. These three areas are defined within each of the six literacy levels. (See the Appendices for a copy of the Outcome Measures).

    Learning activities that reflect each of these skill levels should be incorporated into the AE curriculum. The ability to meet the skills described in these six levels should be taken into account when determining if students are meeting their individual goals and making steady progress.

14. Post-testing must be done before administering an Official GED Practice Test (OPT). The OPT is NOT a substitute for the post-test and cannot be used to document EFL gain.

15. A grade equivalent score of 10.4 on each of the three core TABE tests: Reading, Math, and Language, is recommended prior to administering the Official GED Practice Tests.

ESL TESTING GUIDELINES

Revisions Effective November 16, 2009

BEST Plus was developed by the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), to be administered individually, as a scripted oral interview to assess the English language proficiency of adult English Language learners. Its intent is to assess communication skills using everyday language to determine the level of speaking and listening skills of the individual assessed.

The BEST Plus is the only approved and required assessment to test the listening and speaking skills of ESL and EL/Civics students in Nebraska. The BEST Literacy is an optional test that assesses reading and writing skills. All ESL and EL/Civics students are to be given the BEST Plus upon entry into the program.

There are two applications of the BEST Plus; a computer-adaptive version and a semi-adaptive print version (forms A, B, and C).

With the computer-based version, the administrator asks the examinee a question presented on the computer screen; listens to the response, uses the *BEST Plus Scoring Rubric* to determine the scores for that item, and enters the scores in the computer. The computer then selects the next test item, choosing the item most appropriate for the examinee according to the scores entered for the previous responses.

In the print-based version, a brief locator test determines the level of test items (Level 1, 2 or 3) that will be most appropriate for the ability level of the examinee. These items are arranged in fixed-form tests. The test administrator asks the examinee each item on the selected level test and scores the items using the same scoring rubric that is used with the computer-adaptive version. A full score report is obtained by entering the scores from the test booklet into the *Score Management Software* from BEST Plus. Full testing instructions are available in the Test Administrator's Guide.

The initial BEST Plus assessment takes from 5 to 20 minutes to administer, and is also the post-test used to show student progress.

Only those individuals who have been certified through approved training by CAL may administer the BEST Plus Assessment. Anyone certified may administer the pre test, but no instructor may administer the post-test to his/her own students.

All students entering a Nebraska Adult Education program must be given either the TABE, (Form 9 or 10) or the BEST Plus assessment, depending upon which program the student enters. It is recommended that the assessment be given prior to the first day of class, preferably at program orientation or an intake testing session. However, if this is not possible, the assessment must be administered either by the end of the first week of class or by 12 hours of instruction, whichever comes first.

CORRELATING NRS LEVELS AND BEST SCORES	
NRS Level	BEST Plus Scale Score Range*
Beginning ESL Literacy	88- 400
Low Beginning ESL	401 - 417
High Beginning ESL	418 – 438
Low Intermediate ESL	439 – 472
High Intermediate ESL	473 – 506
Advanced ESL	507 – 540
Exit Criteria from NRS	541 and higher

**Scale scores must be used for both pre-test and post-test reporting.*

To comply with NRS reporting for each student, there are three descriptors for each level of student placement: Listening and Speaking; Basic Reading and Writing; and Functional and Workplace Skills. These areas are defined within each of the six ESL levels. (See the Appendices for a copy of the Outcome Measures).

Effective July 2010 – If a student is attending class at the end of the program year and continues in the program at the beginning of the next program year, that student's contact hours from the previous year carries over and counts toward the 60 hour post-testing requirement in the new program year. For example, a student enrolls in an AE class in March and accumulates 51 hours of instruction by June 30. She continues with the class when it resumes in July. Therefore, she only has to attend 9 hours in July to be eligible to post-test.

Random and frequent testing will not present a valid gain and could create a practice effect, thus producing questionable results.

Pre-Test Guidelines

1. Pre-tests should be administered to new students at orientation, entry or no later than 12 hours, or one week into instruction, whichever comes first.

2. Pre-tests may only be given by certified BEST Plus administrators.

3. Pre-tests should be given BEFORE **AIMS** goals are determined and classroom instructional materials are selected for the student.

4. Within a program year, if a student "drops or stops out" of class and then returns after an absence of less than 180 days (six months), a new pre-test should not be given.

   Within a program year, if a student "drops or stops out" of class, and then returns after 180 or more days (six months) of absence, the pre-test should be re-administered to assure correct placement in the program.

Post-test Guidelines

Test publishers recommend a minimum of 60 class hours of instruction before post-testing, to ensure valid skill gains. (See the appendices for specifics for BEST Plus).

A post-test must be given at least one time each program year (July 1 – June 30) in order to show level and EFL gain. All students with 60+ hours of instruction must be post-tested. **Post-testing is to take place after 60 hours of instruction.**

Performance standard: Instructors must post-test at least 90% of all students who meet the post-test criteria enumerated above.

Those classes with intensive instruction, such as corrections, should post test no more than once quarterly, or if the student will be leaving the institution and 60 hours of instruction has taken place.

If the paper version of BEST Plus is used, Forms A, B, and C should be alternated when given.

Instructors who are BEST Plus certified may administer the pre-test to their own students, BUT they may NOT post-test their own students.

If a student has post-tested and has shown a gain to a higher EFL, continued post-testing is not required, but may be done at the discretion of the instructor.

Training for Administering Assessments

Every person administering the BEST Plus Assessment must be certified to assess by a professional CAL trainer. Names are sent to the CAL certification office. Refresher courses will be provided for assessment staff as outlined by CAL.

Records of those state staff members who have been certified by CAL trainers will be kept at the state office. Programs are expected to maintain records of local staff members who have been trained by the state approved trainers.

NRS policy, accountability policies, and data collection process, definitions of measures and conducting assessments are topics covered repeatedly at yearly conferences, meetings and workshops. Directors at the local program level are responsible for assuring that new staff members receive the appropriate training.

BEST Plus training can be done only by those five trainers approved by CAL in August 2009.

BEST Literacy

The BEST Literacy assessment was developed by the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) and is a competency-based assessment and uses a variety of functional literacy tasks to measure adult English language learners' ability to read and write in English is authentic situations.

The BEST Literacy has three parallel forms, B, C, and D. This test may be administered individually or in groups with a maximum testing time of one hour. Careful attention should be paid to follow all guidelines in the *Best Literacy Test Manual* when using this assessment.

BEST Literacy is an OPTIONAL assessment for ESL students in Nebraska to measure reading and writing skills. The scores will be of great assistance in determining a student's reading and writing ability, but may not be used for reporting EFL movement or used as an exit score. It can be given individually or in a group. One hour should be allowed to administer the BEST Literacy Skills Assessment. It provides information about reading and writing. Refer to the Administrator's manual for testing instruction. While not required at this time, **it is strongly encouraged and recommended that the BEST Literacy Assessment be given as a way of gauging the ESL student's reading and writing skills.**

(NOTE: BEST Literacy scores may NOT be used as placement or exit criteria for an ESL student and may not be used for demonstrating Educational Functioning Level (EFL) movement).

To assist in understanding the scores from the BEST Literacy assessment:

NRS Level	BEST Literacy Score Range
Beginning ESL Literacy	0 –20
Low Beginning ESL	21 - 52
High Beginning ESL	53 – 63
Low Intermediate ESL	64 – 67
High Intermediate ESL	68 – 75
Advanced ESL	76 – 78*

**If a student comes into the program testing at 76 or higher, a different assessment should be given, such as the TABE reading and language tests, Level E. In addition, the BEST Literacy assessment cannot be used to exit the ESL program.*

- Bridge (Transition) Classes -

Continuing students who score 541 or higher on BEST Plus are ready for a Bridge (Transition) Class. This class is designed to "bridge" the gap between ESL and ABE.

The Bridge Class will combine low-level ABE materials and high-level ESL materials. Students will begin to improve their high-level ESL communication skills while using ABE materials to develop reading, writing, math and vocabulary skills. Students will be assessed with BEST Literacy as well as TABE Level E Reading test. See the TABE Test Administration Manual for specific instructions.

Students scoring 4.0 or higher on the TABE E Reading can be considered for regular ABE classroom placement.

New ESL students who score 540 or higher on the initial BEST Plus assessment will be immediately given a TABE Level E Reading test. This TABE reading score becomes the pre-test score in AIMS. The student contact hours are considered ABE, even though the student is enrolled in an ESL Bridge Class.

- Accommodations Information -

At this time no standard instrument is available to assess for learning disabilities in the ESL population, best practices in teaching is the best alternative.

When administering the BEST Literacy assessment, reasonable accommodations may be made provided that they do not compromise the purpose of the test as a measure of reading and writing in English. CAL lists as permissible accommodations; the use of eyeglasses or magnifying glasses, earplugs, color overlays or rulers. Environmental accommodations could include frequent breaks or individual administrations.

It is not an appropriate accommodation for someone to read the test questions to an examinee with sight impairment, as the BEST Literacy is a test of reading and writing.

All examinees must be made aware of the available accommodations.

Appendices

NRS Function Level Table with Literacy Levels and Outcome Measure Definitions

Recommended Time Frames for Pre & Post Testing of Adult Education Assessment

Correlation of NRS Levels & TABE Assessments

Nebraska Adult Education Performance Measures/Yearly Standards for FY 2001 - FY2010

Suggestions for Student Goal Success & NRS Performance Standard Gains

GED Accommodations Available Upon Request

Exhibit 2.1
Functioning Level Table

Outcome Measures Definitions			
EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONING LEVEL DESCRIPTORS—ADULT BASIC EDUCATION LEVELS			
Literacy Level	Basic Reading and Writing	Numeracy Skills	Functional and Workplace Skills
Beginning ABE Literacy *Test Benchmark:* TABE (9–10) scale scores (grade level 0–1.9): Reading: 367 and below Total Math: 313 and below Language: 389 and below CASAS scale scores: Reading: 200 and below Math: 200 and below Writing: 200 and below	Individual has no or minimal reading and writing skills. May have little or no comprehension of how print corresponds to spoken language and may have difficulty using a writing instrument. At the upper range of this level, individual can recognize, read, and write letters and numbers but has a limited understanding of connected prose and may need frequent re-reading. Can write a limited number of basic sight words and familiar words and phrases; may also be able to write simple sentences or phrases, including very simple messages. Can write basic personal information. Narrative writing is disorganized and unclear, inconsistently uses simple punctuation (e.g., periods, commas, question marks), and contains frequent errors in spelling.	Individual has little or no recognition of numbers or simple counting skills or may have only minimal skills, such as the ability to add or subtract single digit numbers.	Individual has little or no ability to read basic signs or maps and can provide limited personal information on simple forms. The individual can handle routine entry level jobs that require little or no basic written communication or computational skills and no knowledge of computers or other technology.
Beginning Basic Education *Test Benchmark:* 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	Individual can read simple material on familiar subjects and comprehend simple and compound sentences in single or linked paragraphs containing a familiar vocabulary; can write simple notes and messages on familiar situations but lacks clarity and focus. Sentence structure lacks variety, but individual shows some control of basic grammar (e.g., present and past tense) and consistent use of punctuation (e.g., periods, capitalization).	Individual can count, add, and subtract three digit numbers, can perform multiplication through 12, can identify simple fractions, and perform other simple arithmetic operations.	Individual is able to read simple directions, signs, and maps, fill out simple forms requiring basic personal information, write phone messages, and make simple changes. There is minimal knowledge of and experience with using computers and related technology. The individual can handle basic entry level jobs that require minimal literacy skills; can recognize very short, explicit, pictorial texts (e.g., understands logos related to worker safety before using a piece of machinery); and can read want ads and complete simple job applications.

Note: The descriptors are *entry-level* descriptors and are illustrative of what a typical student functioning at that level should be able to do. They are not a full description of skills for the level.
CASAS = Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System ● TABE = Test of Adult Basic Education

Exhibit 2.1 (Continued)
Functioning Level Table

Outcome Measures Definitions			
EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONING LEVEL DESCRIPTORS—ADULT BASIC EDUCATION LEVELS			
Literacy Level	Basic Reading and Writing	Numeracy Skills	Functional and Workplace Skills
Low Intermediate Basic Education *Test Benchmark:* TABE (9–10) scale scores (grade level 4–5.9): Reading: 461–517 Total Math: 442–505 Language: 491–523 CASAS scale scores: Reading: 211–220 Math: 211–220 Writing: 226–242 Wonderlic Verbal 175-255 Quantitative 170-245	Individual can read text on familiar subjects that have a simple and clear underlying structure (e.g., clear main idea, chronological order); can use context to determine meaning; can interpret actions required in specific written directions; can write simple paragraphs with a main idea and supporting details on familiar topics (e.g., daily activities, personal issues) by recombining learned vocabulary and structures; and can self and peer edit for spelling and punctuation errors.	Individual can perform with high accuracy all four basic math operations using whole numbers up to three digits and can identify and use all basic mathematical symbols.	Individual is able to handle basic reading, writing, and computational tasks related to life roles, such as completing medical forms, order forms, or job applications; and can read simple charts, graphs, labels, and payroll stubs and simple authentic material if familiar with the topic. The individual can use simple computer programs and perform a sequence of routine tasks given direction using technology (e.g., fax machine, computer operation). The individual can qualify for entry level jobs that require following basic written instructions and diagrams with assistance, such as oral clarification; can write a short report or message to fellow workers; and can read simple dials and scales and take routine measurements.
High Intermediate Basic Education *Test Benchmark:* TABE (9–10) scale scores (grade level 6–8.9): Reading: 518–566 Total Math: 506–565 Language: 524–559 CASAS scale scores: Reading: 221–235 Math: 221–235 Writing: 243–260 WorkKeys scale scores: Reading for Information: 75–78 Writing: 75–77 Applied Mathematics: 75–77 Wonderlic Verbal 260 - 340 Quantitative 250 – 325	Individual is able to read simple descriptions and narratives on familiar subjects or from which new vocabulary can be determined by context and can make some minimal inferences about familiar texts and compare and contrast information from such texts but not consistently. The individual can write simple narrative descriptions and short essays on familiar topics and has consistent use of basic punctuation but makes grammatical errors with complex structures.	Individual can perform all four basic math operations with whole numbers and fractions; can determine correct math operations for solving narrative math problems and can convert fractions to decimals and decimals to fractions; and can perform basic operations on fractions.	Individual is able to handle basic life skills tasks such as graphs, charts, and labels and can follow multistep diagrams; can read authentic materials on familiar topics, such as simple employee handbooks and payroll stubs; can complete forms such as a job application and reconcile a bank statement. Can handle jobs that involve following simple written instructions and diagrams; can read procedural texts, where the information is supported by diagrams, to remedy a problem, such as locating a problem with a machine or carrying out repairs using a repair manual. The individual can learn or work with most basic computer software, such as using a word processor to produce own texts, and can follow simple instructions for using technology.

Note: The descriptors are *entry-level* descriptors and are illustrative of what a typical student functioning at that level should be able to do. They are not a full description of skills for the level.
CASAS = Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System ● TABE = Test of Adult Basic Education

Exhibit 2.1 (Continued)
Functioning Level Table

Outcome Measures Definitions			
EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONING LEVEL DESCRIPTORS—ADULT SECONDARY EDUCATION LEVELS			
Literacy Level	Basic Reading and Writing	Numeracy Skills	Functional and Workplace Skills
Low Adult Secondary Education *Test Benchmark:* TABE (9–10): scale scores (grade level 9–10.9): Reading: 567–595 Total Math: 566–594 Language: 560–585 CASAS scale scores: Reading: 236–245 Math: 236–245 Writing: 261–270 WorkKeys scale scores: Reading for Information: 79–81 Writing: 78–85 Applied Mathematics: 78–81 Wonderlic Verbal 345-500 Quantitative 330-500	Individual can comprehend expository writing and identify spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors; can comprehend a variety of materials such as periodicals and nontechnical journals on common topics; can comprehend library reference materials and compose multiparagraph essays; can listen to oral instructions and write an accurate synthesis of them; and can identify the main idea in reading selections and use a variety of context issues to determine meaning. Writing is organized and cohesive with few mechanical errors; can write using a complex sentence structure; and can write personal notes and letters that accurately reflect thoughts.	Individual can perform all basic math functions with whole numbers, decimals, and fractions; can interpret and solve simple algebraic equations, tables, and graphs and can develop own tables and graphs; and can use math in business transactions.	Individual is able or can learn to follow simple multistep directions and read common legal forms and manuals; can integrate information from texts, charts, and graphs; can create and use tables and graphs; can complete forms and applications and complete resumes; can perform jobs that require interpreting information from various sources and writing or explaining tasks to other workers; is proficient using computers and can use most common computer applications; can understand the impact of using different technologies; and can interpret the appropriate use of new software and technology.
High Adult Secondary Education *Test Benchmark:* TABE (9–10): scale scores (grade level 11–12): Reading: 596 and above Total Math: 595 and above Language: 586 and above CASAS scale scores: Reading: 246 and above Math: 246 and above Writing: 271 and above WorkKeys scale scores: Reading for Information: 82–90 Writing: 86–90 Applied Mathematics: 82–90	Individual can comprehend, explain, and analyze information from a variety of literacy works, including primary source materials and professional journals, and can use context cues and higher order processes to interpret meaning of written material. Writing is cohesive with clearly expressed ideas supported by relevant detail, and individual can use varied and complex sentence structures with few mechanical errors.	Individual can make mathematical estimates of time and space and can apply principles of geometry to measure angles, lines, and surfaces and can also apply trigonometric functions.	Individual is able to read technical information and complex manuals; can comprehend some college level books and apprenticeship manuals; can function in most job situations involving higher order thinking; can read text and explain a procedure about a complex and unfamiliar work procedure, such as operating a complex piece of machinery; can evaluate new work situations and processes; and can work productively and collaboratively in groups and serve as facilitator and reporter of group work. The individual is able to use common software and learn new software applications; can define the purpose of new technology and software and select appropriate technology; can adapt use of software or technology to new situations; and can instruct others, in written or oral form, on software and technology use.

Note: The descriptors are *entry-level* descriptors and are illustrative of what a typical student functioning at that level should be able to do. They are not a full description of skills for the level.
CASAS = Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System ● TABE = Test of Adult Basic Education

Exhibit 2.1 (Continued)
Functioning Level Table

Outcome Measures Definitions			
EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONING LEVEL DESCRIPTORS—ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE LEVELS			
Literacy Level	Listening and Speaking	Basic Reading and Writing	Functional and Workplace Skills
Beginning ESL Literacy *Test Benchmark:* CASAS scale scores: Reading: 180 and below Listening: 180 and below BEST Plus: 400 and below (SPL 0–1) BEST Literacy: 0–20 (SPL 0–1) TABE CLAS-E scale scores:* Total Reading and Writing: 225-394 Total Listening and Speaking: 230-407	Individual cannot speak or understand English, or understands only isolated words or phrases.	Individual has no or minimal reading or writing skills in any language. May have little or no comprehension of how print corresponds to spoken language and may have difficulty using a writing instrument.	Individual functions minimally or not at all in English and can communicate only through gestures or a few isolated words, such as name and other personal information; may recognize only common signs or symbols (e.g., stop sign, product logos); can handle only very routine entry-level jobs that do not require oral or written communication in English. There is no knowledge or use of computers or technology.
Low Beginning ESL *Test benchmark:* CASAS scale scores Reading: 181–190 Listening: 181–190 Writing: 136–145 BEST Plus: 401–417 (SPL 2) BEST Literacy: 21-52 (SPL 2) TABE CLAS-E scale scores:* Total Reading and Writing: 395-441 Total Listening and Speaking: 408-449	Individual can understand basic greetings, simple phrases and commands. Can understand simple questions related to personal information, spoken slowly and with repetition. Understands a limited number of words related to immediate needs and can respond with simple learned phrases to some common questions related to routine survival situations. Speaks slowly and with difficulty. Demonstrates little or no control over grammar.	Individual can read numbers and letters and some common sight words. May be able to sound out simple words. Can read and write some familiar words and phrases, but has a limited understanding of connected prose in English. Can write basic personal information (e.g., name, address, telephone number) and can complete simple forms that elicit this information.	Individual functions with difficulty in social situations and in situations related to immediate needs. Can provide limited personal information on simple forms, and can read very simple common forms of print found in the home and environment, such as product names. Can handle routine entry level jobs that require very simple written or oral English communication and in which job tasks can be demonstrated. May have limited knowledge and experience with computers.

Note: The descriptors are *entry-level* descriptors and are illustrative of what a typical student functioning at that level should be able to do. They are not a full description of skills for the level.
CASAS = Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System ● BEST= Basic English Skills Test ● TABE CLAS-E = Test of Adult Basic Education Complete Language Assessment System—English

* Refer to the TABE CLAS-E Technical Manual for score ranges for individual reading, writing, listening and speaking tests. Table shows total scores.

Exhibit 2.1 (Continued)
Functioning Level Table

Outcome Measures Definitions			
EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONING LEVEL DESCRIPTORS—ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE LEVELS			
Literacy Level	Listening and Speaking	Basic Reading and Writing	Functional and Workplace Skills
High Beginning ESL *Test benchmark:* CASAS scale scores Reading: 191–200 Listening: 191–200 Writing: 146–200 BEST Plus: 418–438 (SPL 3) BEST Literacy: 53–63 (SPL 3) TABE CLAS-E scale scores:* Total Reading and Writing: 442-482 Total Listening and Speaking: 450-485	Individual can understand common words, simple phrases, and sentences containing familiar vocabulary, spoken slowly with some repetition. Individual can respond to simple questions about personal everyday activities, and can express immediate needs, using simple learned phrases or short sentences. Shows limited control of grammar.	Individual can read most sight words, and many other common words. Can read familiar phrases and simple sentences but has a limited understanding of connected prose and may need frequent re-reading. Individual can write some simple sentences with limited vocabulary. Meaning may be unclear. Writing shows very little control of basic grammar, capitalization and punctuation and has many spelling errors.	Individual can function in some situations related to immediate needs and in familiar social situations. Can provide basic personal information on simple forms and recognizes simple common forms of print found in the home, workplace and community. Can handle routine entry level jobs requiring basic written or oral English communication and in which job tasks can be demonstrated. May have limited knowledge or experience using computers.
Low Intermediate ESL *Test Benchmark:* CASAS scale scores: Reading: 201–210 Listening: 201–210 Writing: 201–225 BEST Plus: 439–472 (SPL 4) BEST Literacy: 64– 67 (SPL 4) TABE CLAS-E scale scores:* Total Reading and Writing: 483-514 Total Listening and Speaking: 486-525	Individual can understand simple learned phrases and limited new phrases containing familiar vocabulary spoken slowly with frequent repetition; can ask and respond to questions using such phrases; can express basic survival needs and participate in some routine social conversations, although with some difficulty; and has some control of basic grammar.	Individual can read simple material on familiar subjects and comprehend simple and compound sentences in single or linked paragraphs containing a familiar vocabulary; can write simple notes and messages on familiar situations but lacks clarity and focus. Sentence structure lacks variety but shows some control of basic grammar (e.g., present and past tense) and consistent use of punctuation (e.g., periods, capitalization).	Individual can interpret simple directions and schedules, signs, and maps; can fill out simple forms but needs support on some documents that are not simplified; and can handle routine entry level jobs that involve some written or oral English communication but in which job tasks can be demonstrated. Individual can use simple computer programs and can perform a sequence of routine tasks given directions using technology (e.g., fax machine, computer).

Note: The descriptors are *entry-level* descriptors and are illustrative of what a typical student functioning at that level should be able to do. They are not a full description of skills for the level.
CASAS = Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System ● BEST= Basic English Skills Test ● TABE CLAS-E = Test of Adult Basic Education Complete Language Assessment System—English

* Refer to the TABE CLAS-E Technical Manual for score ranges for individual reading, writing, listening and speaking tests. Table shows total scores.

Exhibit 2.1 (Continued)
Functioning Level Table

Outcome Measures Definitions			
EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONING LEVEL DESCRIPTORS—ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE LEVELS			
Literacy Level	Listening and Speaking	Basic Reading and Writing	Functional and Workplace Skills
High Intermediate ESL *Test Benchmark:* CASAS scale scores: Reading: 211–220 Listening: 211–220 Writing: 226–242 BEST Plus: 473–506 (SPL 5) BEST Literacy: 68-75 (SPL 6) TABE CLAS-E scale scores:* Total Reading and Writing: 515-556 Total Listening and Speaking: 526-558	Individual can understand learned phrases and short new phrases containing familiar vocabulary spoken slowly and with some repetition; can communicate basic survival needs with some help; can participate in conversation in limited social situations and use new phrases with hesitation; and relies on description and concrete terms. There is inconsistent control of more complex grammar.	Individual can read text on familiar subjects that have a simple and clear underlying structure (e.g., clear main idea, chronological order); can use context to determine meaning; can interpret actions required in specific written directions; can write simple paragraphs with main idea and supporting details on familiar topics (e.g., daily activities, personal issues) by recombining learned vocabulary and structures; and can self and peer edit for spelling and punctuation errors.	Individual can meet basic survival and social needs, can follow some simple oral and written instruction, and has some ability to communicate on the telephone on familiar subjects; can write messages and notes related to basic needs; can complete basic medical forms and job applications; and can handle jobs that involve basic oral instructions and written communication in tasks that can be clarified orally. Individual can work with or learn basic computer software, such as word processing, and can follow simple instructions for using technology.
Advanced ESL *Test Benchmark:* CASAS scale scores: Reading: 221–235 Listening: 221–235 Writing: 243–260 BEST Plus: 507–540 (SPL 6) BEST Literacy: 76-78 (SPL 6) ** TABE CLAS-E scale scores:* Total Reading and Writing: 557-600 Total Listening and Speaking: 559-600	Individual can understand and communicate in a variety of contexts related to daily life and work. Can understand and participate in conversation on a variety of everyday subjects, including some unfamiliar vocabulary, but may need repetition or rewording. Can clarify own or others' meaning by rewording. Can understand the main points of simple discussions and informational communication in familiar contexts. Shows some ability to go beyond learned patterns and construct new sentences. Shows control of basic grammar but has difficulty using more complex structures. Has some basic fluency of speech.	Individual can read moderately complex text related to life roles and descriptions and narratives from authentic materials on familiar subjects. Uses context and word analysis skills to understand vocabulary, and uses multiple strategies to understand unfamiliar texts. Can make inferences, predictions, and compare and contrast information in familiar texts. Individual can write multi-paragraph text (e.g., organizes and develops ideas with clear introduction, body, and conclusion), using some complex grammar and a variety of sentence structures. Makes some grammar and spelling errors. Uses a range of vocabulary.	Individual can function independently to meet most survival needs and to use English in routine social and work situations. Can communicate on the telephone on familiar subjects. Understands radio and television on familiar topics. Can interpret routine charts, tables and graphs and can complete forms and handle work demands that require non-technical oral and written instructions and routine interaction with the public. Individual can use common software, learn new basic applications, and select the correct basic technology in familiar situations.

Note: The descriptors are *entry-level* descriptors and are illustrative of what a typical student functioning at that level should be able to do. They are not a full description of skills for the level.
CASAS = Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System ● BEST= Basic English Skills Test ● TABE CLAS-E = Test of Adult Basic Education Complete Language Assessment System—English

* Refer to the TABE CLAS-E Technical Manual for score ranges for individual reading, writing, listening and speaking tests. Table shows only total scores
** Students can be placed into advanced ESL using Best Literacy but the test does not assess skills beyond this level so students cannot exit Advanced ESL with this test. Retesting of students who enter this level with another assessment is recommended.

Recommended Timeframes for Pre- and Post-testing Adult Education Assessments

Test Name	Recommended Pre- and Post-testing Timeframes	Contact
BEST Plus	60 hours minimum 80-100 hours recommended	Bryan Woerner
BEST Literacy	60 hour minimum 80-100 hours recommended	Bryan Woerner CAL 866/845-BEST
TABE, Forms 9 & 10	For alternate forms (i.e. 9M to 10M), a minimum of 40 hours of instruction is required and 50-60 hours is recommended for students pre-testing at NRS levels of 1-4, and for students testing into NRS levels 5&6, 30-59 hours of instruction is required. For same form testing, 120 hours of instruction is required.	Michaeline M. Powell, District Manager CTB/McGraw-Hill mpowell@ctb.com 703/698-1325

Correlation of NRS Levels and TABE Assessments

Level	EFL	Grade Equivalent	Scale Score
1	Beginning ABE Literacy	0-1.9	Reading: 367 and below Total Math: 313 and below Language: 389 and below
2	Beginning Basic Education	2-3.9	Reading: 368-460 Total Math: 314-441 Language: 390-490
3	Low Intermediate Basic Education	4-5.9	Reading: 461-517 Total Math: 442-505 Language: 491-523
4	High Intermediate Basic Education	6-8.9	Reading: 518-566 Total Math: 506-565 Language: 524-559
5	Low Adult Secondary Education	9-10.9	Reading: 567-595 Total Math: 566-594 Language: 560-585
6	High Adult Secondary Education	11-12.9	Reading: 596 and above Total Math: 595 and above Language: 586 and above

NEBRASKA ADULT EDUCATION
PERFORMANCE MEASURES/YEARLY STANDARDS

Core Indicator #1: Demonstrated Improvements in literacy skill levels in reading, writing, and speaking in English language, numeracy, problem-solving, English language acquisition, and other literacy skills.

Performance Measures	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010
Beginning Literacy ABE The percentage of adult learners enrolled in Beginning Literacy ABE who completed the level, as validated by standardized assessment (# completed level ÷ # enrolled = completion rate)	20% - State Performance Standard **Achieved** 27%	23% 34%	28% 38%	29% 40%	39% 47%	41% 46%	43% 25%	47% 37%	43%	38%
Beginning Basic Education ABE The percentage of adult learners enrolled in Beginning Basic ABE who completed the level, as validated by standardized assessment. (# completed level ÷ # enrolled = completion rate)	25% - State Performance Standard **Achieved** 30%	28% 33%	30% 40%	32% 38%	40% 37%	40% 40%	40% 30%	41% 31%	40%	32%
Low Intermediate ABE The percentage of adult learners enrolled in Low Intermediate ABE who completed the level, as validated by standardized assessment. (# completed level ÷ # enrolled = completion rate)	30% - State Performance Standard **Achieved** 30%	33% 35%	33% 32%	34% 33%	33% 34%	34% 38%	35% 28%	39% 31%	35%	32%
High Intermediate ABE The percentage of adult learners enrolled in High Intermediate ABE who completed the level, as validated by standardized assessment. (# completed level ÷ # enrolled = completion rate)	30% - State Performance Standard **Achieved** 23%	33% 30%	27% 34%	28% 31%	35% 34%	35% 35%	36% 25%	36% 28%	36%	29%
Low Adult Secondary Education The percentage of adult learners enrolled in Low Adult Secondary Education who completed the level, as validated by standardized assessment. (# completed level ÷ # enrolled = completion rate)	40% - State Performance Standard **Achieved** 50%	43% 64%	47% 42%	48% 39%	42% 39%	42% 42%	42% 31%	43% 31%	42%	32%

NEBRASKA ADULT EDUCATION
PERFORMANCE MEASURES/YEARLY STANDARDS

Core Indicator #1: Demonstrated Improvements in literacy skill levels in reading, writing, and speaking in English language, numeracy, problem-solving, English language acquisition, and other literacy skills.

Performance Measures	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010
Beginning Literacy (ESL) The percentage of adult learners enrolled in Beginning Literacy (ESL) who completed the level, as validated by standardized assessment. (# completed level ÷ # enrolled = completion rate)	19% - State Performance Standard Achieved 19%	22% 36%	23% 38%	24% 40%	39% - 39%	40% 43%	40% 50%	43% 46%	45%	46%
Beginning ESL (2001-2006) **Low & High Beginning ESL (2007 -)** The percentage of adult learners enrolled in Beginning ESL who completed the level, as validated by standardized assessment. (# completed level ÷ # enrolled = completion rate)	20% - State Performance Standard Achieved 21%	23% 35%	24% 31%	25%. 33%	32% - 35%	33% 39%	Low - 30% 39% High – 36% 35%	Low - 31% 46% High – 37% 48%	Low - 39% High – 36%	Low – 44% High – 43%
Low Intermediate ESL The percentage of adult learners enrolled in Low Intermediate ESL who completed the level, as validated by standardized assessment. (# completed level ÷ # enrolled = completion rate)	22% - State Performance Standard Achieved 33%	23% 35%	34% 39%	35% 47%	40% - 43%	43% 50%	44% 36%	48% 43%	44%	43%
High Intermediate ESL The percentage of adult learners enrolled in high Intermediate ESL who completed the level, as validated by standardized assessment. (# completed level ÷ # enrolled = completion rate)	22% - State Performance Standard Achieved 27%	25% 41%	28% 36%	30% 49%	38% 40%	43% 53%	42% 36%	45% 42%	42%	42%
Low Advanced ESL (2001-2006) **Advanced ESL (2007 -)** The percentage of adult learners enrolled in Low Advanced ESL who completed the level, as validated by standardized assessment. (# completed level ÷ # enrolled = completion rate)	20% - State Performance Standard Achieved 38%	23% 33%	27%. 31%	28% 38%	32% 34%	36% 30%	35% 29%	31% 43%	35%	43%

NEBRASKA ADULT EDUCATION
PERFORMANCE MEASURES/YEARLY STANDARDS

Core Indicator #2: Placement in, retention in, or completion of postsecondary education, training, unsubsidized employment or career advancement.

Performance Measures	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010
Placement in Unsubsidized Employment The percentage of adult learners not employed at program entry, with an employment goal, who entered unsubsidized employment by the end of the first quarter after program exit quarter. (# adults obtaining unsubsidized employment in the first quarter after program exit quarter ÷ # not employed adults, at entry, with an employment goal = employment rate)	30% - State Performance Standard 28%	33% 39%	30% 32%	31% 39%	30% 34%	35% 41%	36% 45%	42% 37%	46%	40%
Retention in Unsubsidized Employment The percentage of relevant adult learners who retained unsubsidized employment in the third quarter after exit quarter from the program. (# relevant adults still employed in an unsubsidized job in the third quarter after program exit quarter ÷ # of relevant adults = job retention rate)	25% - State Performance Standard Achieved 28%	28% 53%	28% 49%	28% 31%	47% 74%	33% 62%	51% 77%	62% 74%	64%	68%
Placement in Postsecondary Education or Training The percentage of adult learners (with a goal of advanced education or training) who entered postsecondary education or training. (# entered postsecondary education/training and who have exited the program , # with goal of advanced education/training = postsecondary placement rate)	20% - State Performance Standard Achieved 28%	23% 61%	29% 25%	30% 25%	27% 40%	27% 59%	34% 47%	59% 31%	49%	32%

NEBRASKA ADULT EDUCATION
PERFORMANCE MEASURES/YEARLY STANDARDS

Core Indicator #3: Receipt of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent.

Performance Measures	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010
High School Completion The percentage of adult learners, with a high school completion goal, who earned a high school diploma or recognized equivalent. (# adults obtaining high school credential ÷ # adults with high school completion goal and who have exited the program = high school completion rate)	**32%** - State Performance Standard **Achieved 35%**	**35%** **63%**	**40%** **44%**	**42%** **46%**	**46%** **64%**	**47%** **64%**	**55%** **58%**	**64%** **55%**	**60%**	**58%**

Suggestions for Student Goal Success…….. and NRS Performance Standards Gain

1. Learner **goals must be reasonable** and **obtainable** within the program year (July 1 – June 30).

2. NRS/AIMS goals **may indeed be different** than the learner's long-term goals.

3. In most cases, **both the GED and/or Post Secondary goals** should be noted in AIMS only for those learners who are in the upper three levels of ABE (or ASE – Adult Secondary Education) – high intermediate, low adult secondary, and high adult secondary.

4. In most cases, those persons in the **lower three educational levels of ABE** should have **Improve Basic Literacy Skills** as a goal, **NOT** GED completion and/or post secondary education enrollment.

5. **ESL learners, levels 1-6,** should **NOT** have GED completion and/or post-secondary enrollment as goals for AIMS.

6. Goal choices and the three employment choices **refer to the program year only – not beyond!**

7. **Goals may change** within the program year!

8. **Use the AIMS reports or Student Snapshots** to help remind you when students need to be post-tested – or if you have students that have not been pre-tested!

GED Testing Accommodations Available Upon Request

NOTE: A GED candidate can request certain accommodations that do not require prior approval from a state's GED Administrator and/or GED Testing Service. Candidates should request any of these accommodations prior to arrival for testing. The accommodations include:

Colored transparent overlays: These devices, which resemble tinted overhead transparencies, are widely used by persons with visual impairments and those with learning disabilities who have difficulty decoding written words and symbols.

Clear transparent overlays and highlighter: The combination of clear (untainted) overlays and a highlighter can be used with the candidate who needs to use a highlighter while reading. The highlighting takes place on the clear overlay and protects the test booklet from becoming marked. All used overlays must be collected at the end of each testing session.

Temporary adhesive notes with spatial directions: Candidates can affix temporary "sticky" notes (e.g., Post-it® Notes) on the answer sheet to accommodate a disability affecting spatial orientation. For example, the candidate might flag the sheet for top, bottom, right, and left. For security reasons, the GED Testing Center must supply these adhesive notes to the examinee.

Earplugs: The candidate may use earplugs as an aid in concentration.

Large print test: The candidate may use the large print edition (18 point font) of the tests under normal time limits upon request to the GED Examiner.

Magnifying device: The candidate may use his or her preferred type of magnifying device during test taking. Note: Measuring devices such as rulers and scales may not be used because they may serve as an unauthorized aid in certain portions of the tests.

Priority Seating: A candidate may request to be seated near the front of the room in order to better hear instructions, or in some other location (in the same room) to avoid distractions.

Straightedge: Candidates may use a plain, unmarked straightedge made from any safe materials as an aid in spatial orientation and reading. If the straightedge is an additional piece of scratch paper issued by the Examiner, it must be collected at the end of the testing session and destroyed with any other scratch paper.

Fluorescent Lighting: GED candidates may request permission to: 1) wear hats or caps to limit the effects of fluorescent lighting or 2) sit near a window or away from fluorescent lighting.

Other Adaptive Devices: such as pencil holders, wrist braces, or graph paper so long as it does not provided an unfair advantage to the test-taker.

Note: **Because the GED Testing Center may not have the candidate's preferred device on hand, the candidate may be permitted to bring his or her own magnifier, overlays, etc., to the testing session. It is the Chief Examiner's prerogative to examine these materials to ensure that they do not contain any unauthorized testing aids.**