



WIA YOUTH PROGRAM – LITERACY & NUMERACY GAINS PERFORMANCE MEASURE POLICY

POLICY NUMBER: 007, Revision 2

REVISION EFFECTIVE DATE: September 12th, 2014

SUPERSEDES: WIA Title 1-B Youth Literacy Numeracy Performance Measure Policy #Y-11-16-12, Revision 1, Released September 16, 2013 and CASAS for Basic Skills Assessment Policy Memorandum Released July 1, 2014

PURPOSE

The purpose of this revision is to incorporate updates regarding CASAS appraisal and pre-tests as defined in [WorkSource System Policies 1011, Revision 1](#) and [1011 Revision 2 - CASAS for Basic Skills Assessment](#) and [WorkSource Information Notice \(WIN\) 0045 - Educational Functioning Levels and the Literacy Numeracy Measure](#).

BACKGROUND

Department of Labor (DOL) released Training and Employment Guidance Letter ([TEGL 17-05, Common Measures Policy](#)), on February 17, 2006 which provided directives on the Literacy and Numeracy Gains performance measure for out-of-school youth who are basic skills deficient (BSD) at program entry. In-school youth, and out-of-school youth who are determined not to be basic skills deficient, are excluded from this measure.

The literacy and numeracy gains indicator measures the increase in skills of participants through the *Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) Life & Work (reading) and Life Skills (math) Series at program entry and regular intervals thereafter.

***Note:** The CASAS Life & Work (reading) and Life Skills (math) Series replaced the CASAS ECS Series that expired July 1, 2014. The transition from the ECS Series to the CASAS Life & Work (reading) and Life Skills (math) Series must be completed by September 1, 2014. ECS pre-tests should be discontinued by that date at the latest. For out-of-school youth who have taken a pre-test or a post-test with the ECS series, they will continue to test with the ECS series.

Positive performance measures include those out-of-school youth who increase one educational function level (EFL) in math, reading or both, during each year of program participation.

POLICY

All out-of-school youth must be assessed for basic skills using the CASAS Life & Work (reading) and Life Skills (math) Series appraisal test at initial program intake, followed by the appropriate pre-test, as a first step in determining the youth's BSD status for the Literacy and Numeracy Gains performance measure. The CASAS appraisal test cannot be used in lieu of the CASAS pre-test to determine the EFL level of an out-of-school youth.

The results of the CASAS appraisal test only determines the appropriate CASAS pre-test; it does not determine the educational functioning level (EFL) of an out-of-school youth. The pre-test determines the EFL (BSD status). If the youth is basic skills deficient, then the youth is included in the Literacy and Numeracy Gains performance measure.

DOL ETA has established the following guidelines for basic skills deficiencies in math and reading (TEGL 17-05, Change 1):

- Learners scoring 236 or above are not basic skills deficient.
- Learners scoring 235 or below are basic skill deficient.

Following the CASAS appraisal test, all out-of-school youth must be given a CASAS diagnostic pre-test within 60 days following the date of first youth program service unless scores from pre-tests administered up to six (6) months prior to the date of the first youth service are available. The pre-test score sets the baseline for the measure, from which Literacy and/or Numeracy gains are tracked.

No out-of-school youth are exempt from testing based on their education status (e.g., high school graduate, attending post-secondary education). If there is no pre-test, the youth will be included in the denominator for the measure for the first participation year and all future years (up to a maximum of three participation years) until a pre-test and successful post-test have been taken or until the youth exits the program.

To be included in the numerator (positive Literacy/Numeracy outcome), a participant must demonstrate through a CASAS post-test that he/she has advanced one or more educational functioning levels (EFL) beyond the level in which he/she was initially placed at pre-test within one year from the date of first youth program service. Literacy/Numeracy outcomes for a particular participation year are not measured until the anniversary date for that participation year falls within the reporting period.

Note: *The one-year time period is from the date of the first youth program service, not the date of the pre-test. For example, if the youth has a first youth program service on June 1, 2012 and took a pre-test on July 7, 2012, the post-test must be given on or before June 1, 2013.*

A. Testing Interval

Service providers are advised to administer appropriate levels of CASAS post-tests every three (3) months (or more frequently) throughout the year to accurately represent student gains and to leave time prior to the calendar year deadline for additional assistance if it appears the youth may fail to make an EFL gain.

B. Documentation

CASAS pre-tests and all post-test CASAS scores, whether reflecting an EFL gain or not, must be documented in case notes and under Job-Seeker-Testing in SKIES as soon as the test results are received.

Basic skills deficiency must be noted on the Objective Assessment and strategies for addressing basic skills deficiencies must be addressed on the Individual Service Strategy and in case notes located in SKIES. Documentation must include dates of pre- and post-tests, skill levels at pre- and post-tests and strategies to improve EFL gains.

C. Youth with Disabilities

When administering the CASAS test, individuals with disabilities (as defined in [29 CFR 37.4](#)) should be accommodated according to [Section 188 of WIA](#); [29 CFR Part 37, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#); [Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act](#); guidelines associated with the assessment tool used to determine functioning levels; and State law or policies.

In a client centered system under [Workforce Investment Act \(WIA\)](#), the youth and their parents or guardians, not the service providers, properly decide whether a youth is or is not disabled. Likewise, it is up to the youth client and his or her family to disclose or not to disclose the disability to service providers. It is appropriate for service providers to inform clients that reasonable accommodations are available, and then to let the client make an accommodation request. The youth may be asked if there are issues in taking a test such as CASAS, and if there are, how best to accommodate such issues. The client may also be asked how such issues have been handled in the past.

At this point, it may be appropriate to ask for documentation of disability and past accommodations; however documentation of a disability is not a requirement for the provision of accommodations. Although such decisions can be very subjective, workforce professionals are cautioned not to make the decision for the youth or their parents or guardians. Testing aides and/or accommodations must be made available to youth whether requested through formal documentation or based on an undocumented need.

Appropriate accommodations should be based on needs and requests of the individual learners and not on a specific disability category. Any testing accommodation for a disability must address or remove the barrier that hampers the learner's ability to demonstrate performance on the test.

All documentation of a youth's need for specific testing accommodations for disabilities must be confidentially and securely maintained in alignment with [WorkForce Central Policy #005 . Protecting Personal & Confidential Information Policy, Revision 2](#).

Accommodations for assessment tools generally fall into the following categories:

- Changes to the methods of **presentation** of the test used as the assessment tool, (e.g., providing Braille versions of the test, interpreter, large print, visual clues, repeating directions, or reading aloud).
- Changes to the methods of **response** to the test questions, (e.g., having the test taker point to a response, mark answers in a book, use reference aids, calculator, tape recorder, word-process, or computer administration).
- Change to the **setting** in which the test is provided, (e.g., permitting the test to be taken at home, or in small groups, separate room, or special lighting).
- Changes to the **time/scheduling** of the test, (e.g., permitting frequent breaks, extending the amount of time generally provided for completion of the test, or giving the test over several days).

Please refer to Attachment B of [WorkSource Policy 1011, Revision 2 . CASAS for Basic Skills Assessment](#) for additional guidance for accommodating learners with disabilities or other special needs. This policy can be accessed at <http://www.wa.gov/esd/1stop/policies/systems.htm>.

Note: It is the policy of WorkForce Central that youth whose disabilities may prohibit them from benefiting from training to increase EFL gains, may be excluded from the testing requirement. Documentation must be located in case notes supporting their exclusion. Providers must understand that even though their participant may be excluded from CASAS pre-testing, the out-of-school participant will still be included in the denominator for the Literacy and Numeracy Gains performance measure.

DEFINITIONS

Outcomes for the Literacy and Numeracy Gains measure are based on multiple criteria including technical definitions of terminology such as **out-of-school** and **basic skills deficient**, pre-and post-test timing and results, reporting cohorts that are determined by the participant's first youth service anniversary dates, and various exit considerations. Listed below are some of the main definitions:

Basic skills deficiency - Is defined as out-of-school youth participants who have at least one (1) Pre-test score that is 235 or less or equal to EFL 6 (Reference: [TEGL 17-05, Change 2](#)).

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

Literacy - [Section 203 \(12\) of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Title II of WIA](#), defines **literacy** as **the ability to read, write, and speak in English, compute, and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family of the individual, and in society.** Without these skills, youth struggle in entering the world of work and are unable to transition from low-skilled jobs to careers that offer family sustaining wages.

Out-of-school youth - Are youth who have dropped out of school, or who have received a secondary school diploma or its equivalent but are basic skills deficient, unemployed, or underemployed [[WIA Sec. 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 (Reference: [TEGL 17-05](#)).

Participation Years-

- *First participation year* – From the date of first youth service to the first anniversary date, inclusive.
- *Second participation year* – From the day after the first anniversary date to the second anniversary date. (Youth are only included in the measure if they complete the full second year.)
- *Third participation year* – From the day after the second anniversary date to the third anniversary date. (Youth are only included in the measure if they complete the full third year.)
- *After third participation year* – Youth are excluded from the measure.

Partner Collaboration -If a pre-test was conducted by a partner (e.g., adult education) using one of the approved CASAS assessment instruments within six (6) months of the date of participation, grantees may use the scores for pre-test purposes. It should be documented in the case notes that the test occurred within six (6) months of enrollment. [*Note: The same standardized test must be used for both pre- and post- assessments.*]

Pre-test . A test used to assess a participant's basic literacy skills which is administered to a participant up to six months prior to the date of first WIA youth service, if such pre-test scores are available, or within 60 days following the date of first youth program service.

Post-test . A test administered to a participant at regular intervals during program participation. (*To be counted in the numerator, the post-test must be on or before the anniversary date and the date of exit. A post-test is only required for the second and third participation years if the youth completes the full participation year and remains basic skills deficient in reading and/or math.*)

REFERENCES

- [WIA Sec. 136](#) - WIA Performance Accountability System
 - [TEGL 17-05](#) and [17-05, Change 2](#) . Common Measures Policy
 - [TEGL 18-11](#) - Improving Literacy and Numeracy Gains of WIA Youth Program Participants
 - [TEGL 4-13](#) . WIA Performance Reporting System
 - [Section 504 in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#)
 - [ADA Amendments Act of 2008](#) . Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004
 - [The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001](#)
 - [WorkSource System Policy 1011, Revision 1, and Revision 2](#) - CASAS for Basic Skills Assessment
 - [WorkSource Information Notice \(WIN\) 0045](#) - Educational Functioning Levels and the Literacy and Numeracy Measure
- Free online CASAS training is available at <http://training.casas.org/>.

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APPROVED



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