2026-2027 Assessment Policy

Minnesota Adult Education (ABE)

Effective July 1, 2026-June 30, 2027

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Contents

Policy Overview

Introduction and Context

This document provides the Minnesota Department of Education's guidelines for developing and implementing a comprehensive state and local Adult Education assessment policy for Adult Basic Education (ABE), English as a Second Language (ESL), and Adult Secondary Education (ASE) programs, including workforce and family literacy programs. This document identifies key assessment policies that support:

- Selection and use of appropriate assessment instruments
- Appropriate test administration, scoring, and reporting of test scores
- Appropriate use of test results to inform instruction and improve programs
- Reporting valid and reliable assessment results and related information for accountability to local, state, and federal funding sources and policymakers

Minnesota's Assessment Policy guidelines include the selection and use of appropriate learner assessment and procedures for:

- Accurate learner placement into appropriate program and instructional level
- Diagnostic information to inform instruction
- Pre- and post- testing to monitor progress toward goals
- Certification of level and program completion

These policy guidelines also include staff training and test security requirements for all staff that administer assessments and use the results from these assessments.

Need for Assessment Policy

Standardized, ongoing assessment of learner progress is essential to ensure that all learners become proficient in literacy and language skills for adult learners. To ensure accuracy and consistency, the Minnesota Department of Education prescribes that adult education agencies use BEST Plus, CASAS, or TABE assessments with proven validity and reliability that correlate to the National Reporting System (NRS). Data from these assessments are used to place learners at appropriate levels of instruction, to diagnose learner strengths and weaknesses, to monitor progress, and to certify learner mastery at specific levels of instruction or readiness to exit adult education.

Validity and Reliability: All BEST Plus, CASAS, and TABE assessment instruments have undergone rigorous test development and validation procedures and meet the standards of the American Education Research Association (AERA), the National Council for Measurement in Education (NCME), and the American Psychological Association (APA). The BEST Plus, CASAS, and TABE technical manuals, contain detailed information about test validity and reliability.

Validity: The Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (1999) states that validity refers to the appropriateness, meaningfulness, and usefulness of the specific inferences made from test scores. There are various evidences of validity, with construct validity encompassing the overriding issue of proper use and construction of test items, and with content-related and criterion-related validity as subcomponents. Item content evidence is a measure of the extent to which test items measure what they are intended to measure. For a detailed discussion of BEST Plus, CASAS, and TABE content validity evidence, see the respective technical manuals.

Results from BEST Plus, CASAS, and TABE tests are reported using scale scores vertically equated across all forms. These scales have each been correlated to the NRS levels with specific cut scores corresponding to the NRS competency descriptors of performance in employment and adult life skills contexts. During the late 1990s, staff from the Center for Applied Linguistics and CASAS worked together to review and update the correlation between BEST Student Performance Levels (SPLs) and CASAS levels to ensure that the NRS Skill Level Descriptors used for reporting learner gains were consistent with research already done in the field. Large-scale CASAS implementing states such as California, Connecticut, and Oregon participated in a national-level NRS advisory committee and provided guidance in the initial development and implementation of the NRS, including the development of the levels and descriptors. Once the NRS educational functioning levels were finalized, CASAS conducted a review and confirmed that the CASAS Skill Level Descriptors align with the skill levels of the NRS.

Reliability: The BEST Plus, CASAS, and TABE technical manuals provide data on the reliability of their respective item banks and specific test series. The test administration manuals for each test series also contain information about reliability.

For each scale score, all three testing systems provide a conditional standard error of measurement (SEM) and a range of accuracy for each test form. For every score in the accurate range, a SEM for each scale score is given.

BEST Plus, CASAS, and TABE tests are all constructed using Item Response Theory (IRT), which is the most researched and recommended methodology in current educational measurement practice, to establish indexes of item bank, test, and test score reliability. In addition, traditional item statistics, including item point biserial correlations and their p-values, are presented for all the test series.

Purposes and Uses of Assessment

Subsequent sections of this document provide a more detailed discussion of the purposes, descriptions, policies, and test administration procedures for the BEST Plus, CASAS, and TABE standardized assessments. In general, these assessments are used to ensure accuracy in learner placement (appraisal tests), in diagnosis of learner strengths and weaknesses, to inform instruction (pre-tests), in monitoring progress (post-tests), and in certifying learner mastery (certification tests). These tests are administered in a standardized fashion, and assessment results provide the basis for state and federal accountability reporting.

Use of Informal Assessments

The Minnesota Department of Education encourages local adult education agencies to use a variety of informal assessments to assist in informing instruction. The use of teacher-made tests, unit tests, portfolios, applied performance assessments, and teacher and learner observations should be encouraged to monitor learning and to inform instruction on a regular, ongoing basis.

Appraisals, Locators, Pre- and Post-Tests

Appraisal/Locator Tests: Appraisal tests identify the appropriate pre-test level. The Minnesota Department of Education strongly encourages the use of appraisals or locators whenever feasible to ensure that appropriate decisions are made regarding:

- Which pre-test form to administer
- Selection of short- and long-term instructional goals

Learners who are placed in an instructional level that is not at their ability level may be frustrated or bored and leave the program. Learners who take an inappropriate level pre-test may "top out" or score below the accurate range of the test level, and agencies will not have accurate baseline pre-test information to inform instruction and monitor progress. Learners who have low skill levels and identify a secondary diploma or high school equivalency (GED or HiSET) as a goal will not achieve their goal within a reasonable timeframe and may become discouraged. Establishing short-term goals in addition to long-term goals enables the learner to document success leading to the long-term goal. Federal reporting is based on learning gains and achievement of learner goals within a program year, although some longer-term learner goals are not reported until the learner exits the program.

Appraisals and/or locators may not be used as a pre-test or to measure learner progress. The CASAS and TABE test administration manuals include specific recommendations about which level of pre-test to administer, based on the appraisal and/or locator test score. Agencies should administer appraisal/locator tests prior to learner placement and prior to administering the appropriate pre-test.

Note that the BEST Plus, which is computer adaptive, does not require use of an appraisal.

Progress Testing (Pre-test and Post-Test): The BEST Plus, CASAS, and TABE standardized tests are designed to assess learning along a continuum from beginning literacy and English language acquisition through completion of secondary level skills. The CASAS and TABE systems include several test series designed to measure various content domains over a wide range of educational functioning. Each test series includes alternate test forms parallel in content and difficulty.

The Minnesota Department of Education encourages agencies to select the test series based on a learner's goals and the instructional focus of the program. Pre-tests should be administered as soon as feasible after enrollment into the program, preferably during the intake process after an appraisal and/or locator is given. The CASAS Next Assigned Test Chart and TABE Scoring Levels: Best Practice Guidance documents should be consulted to guide pre- and post-test selection. Post-testing will be at either the same level or a higher level, depending on the pre-test score. An alternate test form within the same test

series and content area is required for post-testing. Programs cannot use a reading pre-test and a math post-test to determine learner gains.

Post-testing policies and procedures are covered at greater length in "Uniform Test Administration Times" later in this document.

Resources for Assessment Information and Assistance

Minnesota Department of Education: Contact Brad Hasskamp via phone at 651-582-8594 or via e-mail (brad.hasskamp@state.mn.us).

State ABE Assessment Training (Southwest ABE): State assessment trainers and information can be found on their web site (www.mnabeassessment.com).

BEST Plus: Center for Applied Linguistics, the publisher of the BEST Plus, has information available at their web site (www.cal.org/aea/).

CASAS: CASAS, the publisher of the CASAS assessments, has information available at their web site (www.casas.org).

TABE: Data Recognition Corporation (DRC), the publisher of the TABE, has information available at their web site (www.tabetest.com).

General Assessment Requirements

Learners to be Assessed

All learners reported in the National Reporting System (NRS) must be assessed using federally- and state-approved standardized assessments.

Assessments Permitted

Minnesota has authorized the BEST Plus, CASAS, and TABE standardized assessments for use in establishing NRS educational functioning levels. Additionally, assessments within these test systems:

- Are appropriate for measuring literacy and language development of adult learners
- Have standardized administration and scoring procedures
- Have alternate, equivalent, forms for pre- and post-testing
- Have evidence linking them to the NRS Educational Functioning Levels

BEST Plus

For Levels: ***ESL 1-6***

Name/Series	*Content*	*Format*	*Forms/Levels*	*Usage Date*
Basic English Skills Test (BEST) Plus 3.0	ESL	Computer-Adaptive and Form, Paper Form	1 and 2	Now–July 13, 2030

CASAS

For Levels: ***ABE 1-6***

Name/Series	*Content*	*Format*	*Forms/Levels*	*Usage Date*
Reading GOALS 2	Reading	Computer Form, Paper Form	921R—930R	Now–June 30, 2032*
Math GOALS 2	Math	Computer Form, Paper Form	921M-930M	Now–July 13, 2030

For Levels: ***ESL 1-6***

Name/Series	*Content*	*Format*	*Forms/Levels*	*Usage Date*
Listening STEPS	Listening	Computer Form, Paper Form with CD	621L-630L	Now–July 13, 2030
Reading STEPS	Reading	Computer Form, Paper Form	621R-630R	Now–July 13, 2030

TABE

For Levels: ***ABE 1-6***

Name/Series	*Content*	*Format*	*Forms/Levels*	*Usage Date*
13 and 14	● Reading ● Math ● Language	Computer Form, Paper Form	L (Literacy) E (Easy) M (Medium) D (Difficult) A (Advanced)	Now–June 20, 2027*

**Notes about Usage Date: 1. The federal approval date may end midyear, but providers are typically allowed to use the test through the end of the federal reporting year, which ends June 30; and 2. Usage Date could be extended, if the U.S. Department of Education extends the approved usage dates.*

Learners should be assessed in the modality(s) that most closely match the needs and instructional plans identified in the required personal education planning process. Note that all participants must be pre- and post-tested with an approved form in an approved test series in at least one approved content and format.

Approved Test Delivery Options

Tests must be delivered according to publisher guidelines. Each delivery method may have unique training requirements for staff administering the test. Please consult the publisher's website (which can be found in "Resources for Assessment Information and Assistance," p.8) for approved delivery methods, training requirements, and other test delivery guidelines for each test.

Test Delivery Format

Programs may administer tests to learners in the following methods:

- In-person (with computer form, computer-adaptive, or paper form tests)
- Remotely (with computer form or computer-adaptive tests)

Uniform Test Administration Times: Specific Guidance on Pre- and Post-Testing

Learners should be assessed in the areas that are the focus of instruction, using the appropriate BEST Plus, CASAS, or TABE standardized test in reading, math, writing, speaking, or listening comprehension.

Pre-Tests: All students (100 percent) must be pre-tested within the first 12 hours of participation in adult education unless there is an approved exception. If a student already has a current and valid pre-test in the same subject in the state ABE database, another pre-test should not be administered.

Post-test scores obtained during a previous reporting period may serve as a pre-test for the current reporting period, as long as testing occurred within the previous federal reporting year (July-June), which is called the "look-back" period. The "look-back" period for tests extends to July 1st of the previous Federal reporting year. Similarly, the most recent assessment results for "stop outs" (learners that temporarily stop attending classes) returning to adult education classes must be used, provided that the last test administered occurred within the "look-back" period.

Program personnel may wish to retest "stop out" learners or learners returning the following semester or reporting period if they have reason to believe that during the learner's absence or over a break in programming a significant learning intervention occurred that may invalidate the learner's previous assessment results. These test results may not be reported unless at least 40 hours of instruction have occurred since the previous test.

Post-Tests: Adult education providers should administer post-tests, using an alternate form, at the end of a semester, term, quarter, or other substantial block of instruction to document learning gains. The statewide target for post-testing is for programs to post-test a minimum of 60 percent of all eligible students who have not earned a measurable skill gain 1d, 2, 3, 4, or 5 and according to the timeframe(s) specified by the test publisher. Regardless of the testing schedule adopted, all students who participate in ABE for at least 60 hours should be post tested. Note that:

- Programs offering **high** intensity courses (for example, a class meets more than 15 hours per week) may, at local discretion, choose to test at the end of a semester, term, quarter, or other

substantial block of instruction, even though the instructional intervention is more than 60 hours of instruction.

- Programs offering **low** intensity courses with fewer than 60 hours in a semester, quarter, term, or other substantial block of instruction, may, at local discretion, choose to administer a post-test at the end of the instructional period.

Post-testing must not occur before at least 40 hours of instruction unless a specific, individual waiver is granted by a local program administrator. Post-tests may be administered before 40 hours of instruction since their last assessment with an alternate form of the same test type and modality only if a student completes a course of study and/or is ready to complete a diploma, a college-ready credential, or an occupational assessment or credential, and plans to exit the program. Waivers must be kept in the student file.

Programs need not provide additional documentation for students who are post-tested at intervals of greater than 40 hours. Note, however, that providers must post-test more than 90% of participants with 60+ contact hours and during the federal reporting period (excluding those who have earned a measurable skill gain 1d, 2, 3, 4, or 5).

Factors that affect learning gains include intensity and duration of instruction, motivation of learners, competence of instruction, the link between learner goals and instruction, and other instructional factors.

Testing Exemptions: Types of approved testing exemptions include:

- A student has one or more disabilities where an appropriate and accessible accommodated version is not available
- Another type of exemption approved by the Minnesota Department of Education

NRS Level: NRS levels must be determined according to pre-test scores using the score ranges provided in the attached NRS Functional Level Descriptors tables (found later in this document). If a student has been assessed in more than one modality, e.g. reading and math, the score for the modality that corresponds to the lowest Functioning Level should be used to establish the student's Entering Educational Functioning Level with level progress determined by post-testing in that same modality.

Expected Post-Testing Rates: The Minnesota Department of Education expects that local adult education providers post-test at least 60 percent of participants attending their programming.

Accommodations for Learners with Disabilities or Other Special Needs

Accommodations in testing alter the conditions for administering a test or change the nature of an assessment instrument, allowing test takers with disabilities to demonstrate their skills and abilities more accurately. Proper accommodations meet the needs of examinees without changing what a test is intended to measure.

Local Adult Education Agencies: Local agencies are responsible for providing accessible services and for ensuring that these services meet reasonable criteria. Adult learners with disabilities are responsible for

requesting accommodations and for submitting documentation of their disability at the time of registration, program entry, or after diagnosis. The need to use an accommodation should be documented in official learner records, such as the Personal Education Plan (PEP). The documentation must show that the disability interferes with the learner's ability to demonstrate performance on the test. The information can come from a doctor's report, a diagnostic assessment from a certified professional, and other clinical records. Agencies often can contact the local division of vocational rehabilitation or a secondary school to request documentation of a disability.

Accommodations in Test Administration Procedures: Accommodations are reasonable adjustments in procedures to accommodate a documented area of disability. Appropriate accommodations meet the needs of the person with a documented disability without changing what the test is supposed to measure.

BEST Plus 3.0: When administering the BEST Plus 3.0, Minnesota Adult Basic Education programs should seek guidance from the Center for Applied Linguistics, publisher of the BEST Plus 2.0, at their web site (www.cal.org).

CASAS: When administering CASAS tests, Minnesota Adult Basic Education programs must follow the accommodations guidelines provided by CASAS, publisher of the CASAS tests, in their publication *Guidelines for Providing Accommodations Using CASAS Assessment for Learners with Disabilities* available at the CASAS Testing Accommodations and Accessibility web page (www.casas.org/training-and-support/testing-guidelines/Assessment-Accommodations).

TABE: When administering TABE tests, Minnesota Adult Basic Education programs must follow the accommodations guidelines provided by Data Recognition Corporation, publisher of the TABE, in their publication *TABE Guidelines to Inclusive Testing Accommodations* available at their web site (https://tabetest.com/PDFs/TABE_Guidelines_to_Inclusive_Testing_2017.pdf).

Testing Exceptions: All students must participate in pre- and post-testing with a few exceptions:

A. Second language learners for whom standardized testing does not yield a valid pre-test score can be placed at the ESL level 1 (please note that a minimum valid score from an NRS-approved assessment must be recorded in SiD for these learners)
B. Learners with disabilities that cannot be tested and no appropriate accommodation is available (e.g. students with visual loss and not fluent in Braille) can be exempted and must be marked in the student's file on SiD
C. Learners who are initially placed at the ABE level 6 level and who have a goal of passing a high school equivalency (HSE) assessment or obtaining a high school diploma are strongly encouraged but not required to be post-tested

Guidelines for Each Assessment

Test Administration Manuals

The Minnesota Department of Education requires that local adult education programs follow the test administration guidelines in each test administration manual (TAM) for each test series used. All local adult education agencies must maintain copies of TAMs onsite for all assessments used. Test administration manuals provide quality control guidelines to ensure proper test use, administration, scoring, and interpretation of results. These manuals typically contain information about the following:

- The Assessment System
- Overview of Testing
- Description of Tests
- Determining Pre- and Post-Test Level
- Test Security
- Instructions for Administering Tests
- Scoring
- Data Collection
- Interpretation of Results
- Curriculum Planning, Instruction, and Assessment
- Resources
- Testing Accommodations
- Skill Level Descriptors
- Suggested Next Test Charts
- Answer Keys and Score Conversion Charts (for converting raw scores to scale scores)
- Learner Profile Sheets
- Learner Performance by Competency
- Class Profile by Competency

Training Requirements for Administering Assessments

Training is essential to a quality assessment. For local training purposes, instructors may examine CASAS or TABE tests for review purposes only. It is essential that this occurs in a controlled, supervised environment with test security safeguards in place. Agencies should take special care to ensure the collections of all test booklets at the completion of training.

BEST Plus 3.0: The BEST Plus 3.0 assessment can only be administered by instructors who have completed the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) training.

CASAS: CASAS assessments cannot be used by instructors that have not completed CASAS training by certified personnel provided and/or approved by Minnesota State ABE Supplemental Service Assessment Trainers.

TABE: TABE assessments cannot be administered by instructors that have not completed TABE training provided and/or approved by Minnesota State ABE Supplemental Service Assessment Trainers.

Training Resources: Southwest ABE (Minnesota's ABE supplemental service provider for assessment training) will provide CASAS and TABE assessment training for instructors and other test administrators. Trainings will be provided at the annual Support Services Conference, at Summer Institute, and at the request of program administrators. In addition to test administration, trainings will include NRS policy, state accountability policies, and data collection procedures.

CASAS and TABE assessment training are provided in two ways:

- By state assessment trainers (contracted through Southwest ABE) who have been certified through the established certification system
- Online certification courses available through the CASAS and TABE websites

BEST Plus 3.0 training will be provided by CAL certified trainers when there is sufficient demand.

State assessment training information can be found on Minnesota ABE Assessment web site (www.mnabeassessment.com).

Assessment Training Guidelines: New instructors should not administer assessments until they have participated in assessment training, which is offered by ABE supplemental service providers or complete an online certification training provided by the test developers on their websites. All instructors administering tests must participate in ABE supplemental services-provided or test publisher recertification training for each test they administer at least once every five (5) years.

Programs must maintain a record for each instructor administering tests that includes the date, trainer, and location of each training completed by the instructor.

Staff involved in gathering, analyzing, compiling, and reporting NRS-related data must participate in ongoing data system, NRS policy, state accountability policies, and data collection procedures training provided by SiD staff and are also encouraged to attend the annual Support Services Conference.

Post-Testing

Post-testing requirements are presented in the section Uniform Test Administration Times (found earlier in this policy).

Guidelines for Developing and Using Scale Scores

The Raw Score Conversion to Scale Scores and Using Scale Scores to Place Learners into NRS Levels: Each test administration manual (TAM) provides charts and guidelines for converting raw scores to scale scores. The Minnesota Department of Education requires adult education agencies to use these as reference points. Scale scores for each test series have been subdivided into ranges that correspond to

the NRS levels. NRS guidelines prescribe that for learners whose pre-tests place them in different levels for different instructional categories (for example, reading and math), their identified level in SiD will be in the category with a score at the lower level, as long as the learner will receive instruction in that instructional category.

Test Security Agreements

The Minnesota Department of Education requires that all approved programs sign the program grant and test assurances, which include test security. This agreement includes the following stipulations:

- The local adult education program director assumes responsibility for safeguarding all assessment materials, including test administration manuals and answer sheets (which contain marks or responses).
- All assessment materials should be stored in a locked, preferably fireproof, file cabinet accessible to the program director, the director's designee(s), and approved test-certified staff.
- Staff who administer assessments should return all materials immediately after use to the program director or the director's designees.
- All answer sheets and writing samples are treated as confidential until destroyed.
- No duplication of any test form or any portion of any test form is permitted for any reason.
- Providers and programs may not use displays, questions, or answers that appear on any test to create materials designed to teach or prepare learners to answer test items.

Quality Control Procedures

Entry of Assessment Data: The Minnesota Department of Education requires that assessment data be entered into the Student Information Database (SID) at least quarterly and submitted for a desk audit.

Quality Control Procedures: The Minnesota Department of Education has the following quality control procedures in place to ensure that appropriate assessment procedures have been followed: desk audits of local program data are conducted quarterly, controls have been built into MABE to ensure that appropriate assessments are entered and scores match EFLs, and data quality is monitored during site visits. Trainings are provided annually to data entry staff and local directors; bi-monthly user meetings and daily tech support by phone and e-mail are available as well.

Purchasing Procedures for Each Assessment: The Minnesota Department of Education requires programs to order assessments authorized for use in Minnesota directly from the publishers.

Unacceptable methods for determining an NRS Educational Functioning Level

The following procedures/instruments may not be used to define a learner's official NRS Educational Functioning Level:

- CASAS Appraisal tests
- College Placement Tests, such as the Accuplacer
- GED Test (but can be used to document completion of a secondary credential)
- GED Ready
- HiSET Official Practice Test (OPT)
- TABE Locator tests
- Teacher/program designed tests
- Teacher observation
- TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language)
- Using different instruments for pre- and post-testing
- Using the same form of the test for pre- and post-testing

Distance Education

Background

The Division of Adult Education and Literacy (DAEL) in the United States Department of Education defines Distance Education as:

> "Formal learning activity where students and instructors are separated by geography, time, or both for the majority of the instructional period. Distance learning materials are delivered through a variety of media, including but not limited to, print, audio recording, videotape, broadcasts, computer software, Web-based programs, and other online technology. Teachers support distance learners through communication by mail, telephone, e-mail, or online technologies and software.
>
> Note: For participants who receive both distance education and traditional classroom instruction during a program year (such as through a blended distance-classroom approach or concurrent enrollment in both types of instruction), the State must have a policy, consistent with the NRS definition, that defines how local programs are to classify the participant (e.g., 50% of time). For NRS reporting, States can count a participant only once per PoP, either as a distance education participant or a traditional classroom participant.
>
> *Source: Technical Assistance Guide for Performance Accountability under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act: National Reporting System for Adult Education, found online at the NRS Web site (www.nrsweb.org).*

In Minnesota Adult Education, the term "distance learning" is used to refer to asynchronous learning. It is part of a larger umbrella of distance education models and practices:

- Asynchronous distance learning: Learning through distance learning (DL) platforms, teacher-created courses in a learning management system and TVM (Teacher Verification Model) lessons
- Remote synchronous learning: Real-time interactions via video conferencing tools
- Digital education: Using digital tools to enhance and extend learning

Distance education is a good fit for many adult learners, including those with non-traditional learning schedules. It may hold particular potential for learners who live some distance from the nearest Adult Basic Education (ABE) program, those with work or childcare schedules that make regular class attendance difficult, and learners who are in classes and want to further study on their own. It can also be helpful when social or public health concerns make it inadvisable to attend class in person. Distance education can benefit all adult learners by fostering the independent learning, digital literacy skills, and digital resilience essential for jobs, training, higher ed experiences, and full civic engagement.

Studies and experience demonstrate that ABE learners participating in hybrid or blended learning, which combines face-to-face (synchronous) instruction with distance (asynchronous) learning, show increased NRS achievement over those participating in only one of these components.

Digital literacy, including basic computer skills and information literacy, is integral to distance education. Learners need the ability to access online resources, and to effectively assess, evaluate, and use a broad range of information. To meet this need, Minnesota ABE has adopted the Northstar Digital Literacy Standards as one of the three sets of Minnesota adult education content standards, and a Northstar location license is provided to each ABE consortium. Integrating digital literacy instruction into a wide range of ABE courses is strongly encouraged, and passing the core basic digital literacy skills assessments is required for the Minnesota Standard Adult High School Diploma.

Digital literacy and digital resilience are essential to success in the workplace and in higher education. Building the capacity to offer more distance education opportunities across Minnesota ABE programs in an equitable fashion is one of the primary goals identified by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) ABE Office.

Overview of Minnesota Adult Education Distance Learning Delivery Requirements

Intake and orientation may be provided face-to-face or remotely. Pre- and post-testing for ABE learners accessing distance learning can also be provided either face-to-face or remotely, according to test vendor requirements. Training recommendations for ABE staff to deliver distance education vary according to the distance education platform(s) utilized and the instructional model being used by the ABE program. Only staff who have completed state mandated DL professional development (see Professional Development section of this policy) will be allowed to count reimbursable proxy hours for their learners.

Minnesota allows a time-on-task approach, a unit completion (mastery) approach, or a teacher verification model to assign asynchronous distance learning (DL) proxy hours for work accomplished.

1. Time-on-task DL platforms have a mechanism to track actual learner time engaged with the platform.
2. Unit completion (i.e. learner mastery) on DL platforms or through teacher-created courses utilize achievement or demonstration of skills sufficient for a learner to move from one unit to the next, through completion of curriculum units and/or passing quizzes assessing lesson comprehension and completion. Mastery proxy hours are not necessarily equal to time spent working online. These proxy hours are established based on pilot studies showing the average learner time required to master specific material.
3. Teacher Verification Model (TVM) allows staff who have been trained and TVM certified to assign asynchronous lessons, verify work completed, and assign proxy hours, adhering to state guidance.

Note that proxy hour allotments can include an allowance above actual time on task spent in a given platform or on assigned asynchronous student work. This allowance accounts for staff time associated with varying tasks, such as managing student use of the platform, verifying student work, and providing feedback to students. It also accounts for a learner's meaningful online activity that is not tracked by the distance learning platform, such as reviewing test score answers, communicating with their teacher, and taking time to write down notes or questions.

ABE programs must maintain records of proxy hours to meet state and federal reporting requirements. Proxy hour reporting and documentation varies by distance learning platform. Reporting guidance for each platform can be found on the Minnesota ABE Distance Learning Platforms page (www.literacymn.org/distancelearning/dl-platforms). Proxy hours must be recorded in the statewide ABE data system (SiD) in classes with titles that use standard naming conventions that include the name of the distance learning curricula and the words "proxy hours," for example: "Edmentum Proxy Hours." Note that programs must also maintain records for each learner identifying the unit/lesson/module completed along with the corresponding proxy hours. (More information about required documentation can be found in the ABE Auditing Requirements section of this policy, as well as in the Platforms page of the DL website.) In most cases a digital document, such as a PDF or a spreadsheet from a platform's reporting/admin system should be sufficient.

Distance Learning Requirement Details

Professional Development

Professional development (PD) designed to facilitate effective distance learning delivery is a key component of distance learning in Minnesota ABE.

PD Requirements: All ABE staff who work in distance learning must complete the online course *Distance and Blended Learning Basics for Minnesota Adult Education* before engaging in any aspect of distance learning programming.

Distance and Blended Learning Basics for Minnesota Adult Education provides an overview of DL essentials for managers, instructors, and support staff. More information about this training can be found on the Literacy Minnesota Digital & Distance Learning webpage (www.literacymn.org/distancelearning-PD). This course provides strategies and resources that are essential for both setting up and implementing distance education or teaching with a blended approach. It includes six modules:

1. Getting Started with Distance and Blended Learning;
2. Outreach, Screening, & Orientation: Supporting Distance Learners From The Start;
3. Effective Distance & Blended Learning Instruction;
4. Assessment;
5. MN ABE Distance Education Policy and Procedures; and
6. Teacher Verification Model (TVM) in Practice.

Modules 1 through 5 are required for instructional and administrative staff who want to offer distance learning and who have not previously completed DL 101, Best Practices in Digital Education, or DL Basics online (the precursor to this online course). Module 5 is required for support staff with no instructional responsibilities. Modules 5 and 6 are required components of the Minnesota Teacher Verification Model Certification.

Teacher Verification Model Certification: In order to become certified to use the Teacher Verification Model, a teacher must:

1. Complete the Distance and Blended Learning Basics for Minnesota Adult Education online course, including Modules 5 and 6;
2. Participate in a TVM Certification Coaching Call Session (as an individual) or Webinar (with a group); and
3. Have a sample TVM lesson approved.

More information about the TVM certification process can be found on the Minnesota ABE Distance Learning Teacher Verification Model page (www.literacymn.org/teacher-verification-model).

Best Practices in Digital Learning: Formerly known as Distance Learning 101 and 102, this professional development cohort opportunity supports ABE teachers, staff, and administrators in setting learners up for success in distance (asynchronous) learning and online class formats (fully online, blended, HyFlex, etc.). Topics include learner orientation, ongoing digital navigation and support, and instructional and assessment best practices.

More information about Best Practices in Digital Education can be found on the Minnesota ABE Distance Learning Professional Development page (www.literacymn.org/distancelearning-PD)

Assessing Learners Using Distance Learning Curriculum

Distance learners must be assessed under the same guidelines as all adult learners in the state and ABE programs must adhere to the Minnesota ABE Assessment Policy, which can be found online at the Minnesota ABE Policies page (www.mnabe.org/abe-law-policy/mn-abe-policies).

Counting Distance Learning Hours

There are two possible types of hours involved in distance education:

1. **Contact Hours (Synchronous Hours)**: Face-to-face or synchronous remote interactions between an instructor and learner(s). These occur for orientation, counseling, pre- and post-testing, or classroom instruction, either in person or via online technologies such as webinars, Facetime, Google Meet, Teams, Zoom, etc. For all synchronous hours, Minnesota ABE programs will follow the ABE Contact Hour Policy (found online at the MNABE Policies page (www.mnabe.org/abe-law-policy/mn-abe-policies). **This time needs to be recorded as contact hours (similar to in-class time).**

2. **Distance Learning Proxy Hours (Asynchronous Hours)**: Proxy hours can be counted for asynchronous instruction provided to an eligible learner who:

    a. Works independently using one or more of the approved distance learning platforms listed on the Minnesota ABE Distance Learning Platforms page (www.literacymn.org/distancelearning/dl-platforms);

    b. Works independently in an approved teacher-created course through a Learning Management System (LMS); and/or

    c. Completes a lesson assigned by a Teacher Verification Model (TVM)-certified teacher.

Additional Details on Proxy Hours

Learners must meet requirements for distance learning curricula/course/lesson used, such as the minimum test scores for entry and complying with intended product use, as defined by the distance learning curriculum developer.

Distance learning proxy hours can be earned off-site or on-site, as long as contact hours are not counted for the same activity. Off-site asynchronous hours could be completed at a learner's home, at a public library, or any other location a learner is utilizing a distance learning curriculum. An example of on-site asynchronous hours includes a learner working on an approved DL platform in an ABE program's computer lab after class, when this time is not counted as in-class contact hours. **This time needs to be recorded and entered in the statewide ABE data system (SiD) as proxy hours for the DL platform the student was using.**

For asynchronous hours, the manner in which proxy hours are determined will vary depending upon the platform used. For information on proxy hours assigned to specific approved DL platforms, please refer to the Minnesota ABE Distance Learning Platforms page (www.literacymn.org/distancelearning/dl-platforms).

For more details on ABE distance education guidelines, including platform and course approval forms, go to the Minnesota ABE Distance Learning Policies and Procedures page (www.literacymn.org/distancelearning-mn-policies-procedures).

ABE Auditing Requirements

For auditing purposes, programs must keep records documenting student distance learning achievements and proxy hours claimed. In an audit, programs must present all required documentation or risk having to pay back state and federal money earned from undocumented proxy hours. For information about how long and in what format records need to be retained by the adult education program, please refer to the Records Retention Policy, found on the Minnesota ABE Policies page (www.mnabe.org/abe-law-policy/mn-abe-policies).

Distance Learning Platforms and Teacher-Created Courses

For distance learning platforms and teacher-created courses, a digital document, PDF, or spreadsheet from a platform's reporting or admin system is generally sufficient documentation. Some other acceptable measures of documentation include:

- Printed or digital learner screenshots;
- Printed or digital software-generated reporting tables;
- Teacher-signed learner logs; and/or
- Other approved documentation as identified in the distance learning platform listings on the Minnesota ABE Distance Learning Platforms page (www.literacymn.org/distancelearning/dl-platforms).

The documentation for platforms and courses that are approved for **unit-completion** (i.e. learner mastery) proxy hours must include all of the following:

- The name of the distance learning product or course;
- The learners' names;
- The total number of unit(s) and/or lessons each learner completed or mastered; and
- A date or date range of completion.

The documentation for platforms and courses that are approved for **time-on-task** proxy hours must include all of the following:

- The learners' names;
- The name of the distance learning product or course;
- The total amount of time each learner spent on the platform or course; and
- A date or date range of completion.

For specific documentation requirements by distance learning platform, go to the Minnesota ABE Distance Learning Platforms page (www.literacymn.org/distancelearning/dl-platforms).

Teacher-Verified Lessons (Teacher Verification Model)

A record of every TVM lesson delivered must be submitted on the TVM Lesson Checklist and Submission form. The link to this form is provided to those who complete TVM certification.

The completion of teacher-verified lessons and proxy hours claimed must be documented on lesson logs. A TVM lesson log template is available on every class summary page in the statewide ABE data system (SiD), but it is allowable to make your own lesson log, which then must include all of the following:

- Learner name;
- Learner ID (badge) number from SID;
- Lesson title as submitted in the TVM Lesson Checklist and Submission Form;

- Proxy hours for the lesson; and
- Date that the learner(s) completed the lesson.

Federally Reported Distance Learning Participants

The Minnesota Department of Education's ABE Office has defined "Distance Education" participants as those ABE students with at least 50% of their annual participation generated via proxy hours. Distance Education students are reported by the Minnesota Department of Education to the U.S. Department of Education in statewide reports.

Approved Distance Learning Curricula

Overall, there are three types of distance learning curricula that can get approved for proxy hours:

1. A pre-packaged **distance learning curriculum platform**;
2. A teacher-created **course offered through a learning management system**; and
3. A **TVM lesson created by a TVM Certified teacher**.

Approval for each type of distance learning differs.

For Distance Learning Curriculum Platforms: There are two categories of approved DL platforms available to Minnesota ABE programs:

1. State-supported platforms: Statewide product licenses purchased and supported with state funds.
2. Products that are purchased by individual programs/consortia (or are free).

A current list of approved DL platforms can be found on the Minnesota ABE Distance Learning Platforms page (www.literacymn.org/distancelearning/dl-platforms).

To Get a Distance Learning Curriculum Platform Approved: Information and forms detailing the process to request approval of a distance learning curriculum platform for proxy hour purposes can be found on the Minnesota ABE Distance Learning Policies and Procedures page (www.literacymn.org/distancelearning-mn-policies-procedures).

For Courses in a Learning Management System: To get approved, a course must meet the requirements and an application process must be completed. Information and forms detailing the process to request approval of a teacher-created course for proxy hour purposes can be found on the Minnesota ABE Distance Learning Policies and Procedures page (www.literacymn.org/distancelearning-mn-policies-procedures).

For Teacher-Created Lessons: Only TVM certified teachers can use the Teacher Verification Model. In order to count proxy hours for a TVM lesson, the teacher must develop and deliver the lesson, complete an online form, and verify student completion of the lesson. The TVM certification and documentation

process is described on the Minnesota ABE Distance Learning Teacher Verification Model page (www.literacymn.org/teacher-verification-model).

Helpful Distance Education Definitions

These definitions were created using national resources (e.g. OTAN, IDEAL, AIR) and adapted by and for Minnesota Adult Education leadership and providers.

Asynchronous: Instruction is not happening with teachers and students at the same time. Examples include pre-recorded video or audio, online discussion and comments, self-paced online courses, paper-based distance learning lessons, etc.

Digital Learning: Learning experiences that utilize digital tools for teaching and learning.

Digital Literacy: The ability to find, evaluate, organize, create, and communicate digital information.

Digital Resilience: The awareness, skills, agility, and confidence to be empowered users of new technologies and adapt to changing digital skill demands.

Blended Learning (BL): A form of hybrid learning in which the asynchronous components and synchronous components are integrated and support each other.

HyFlex (Hybrid-Flexible): An instructional model that allows students to choose how they participate in a class: synchronously in person, synchronously online, or, in some cases, asynchronously online.

Distance Learning Proxy Hours : DL hours entered in SiD that may be earned based on time on task, unit completion (i.e. learner mastery), or teacher verification model.

Synchronous : Instruction is happening with teachers and students at the same time; interactions are conducted in real time, either in-person or online via Zoom, Google Meet, phone, etc.

Teacher Verification Model (TVM): A distance learning model that allows proxy hours to be counted for completed asynchronous lessons that have been verified by a TVM certified teacher.

For More Information

This **policy**, along with all other ABE policies and resources, can be found online at the Minnesota ABE Policies Page (www.mnabe.org/abe-law-policy/mn-abe-policies).

Distance Learning resources can be found online at the Minnesota ABE Digital & Distance Learning Website (www.literacymn.org/distancelearning).

If you have any questions about Minnesota ABE policies, performance or data, contact:

- Brad Hasskamp, (651) 582-8594 or brad.hasskamp@state.mn.us

Outcome Measures Definitions

These are the leveled scores for the approved tests utilizing the Educational Functioning Level Descriptors for Adult Basic Education, as established by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE). The level descriptors outline Language/English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics and English as a Second Language (ESL) skills at the 12 levels for ABE students according to pre- and post-tests (levels ABE 1-6 and ESL 1-6). The ABE levels include Language/English Language Arts and Mathematics descriptions of student abilities at each level.

Test Benchmarks

Adult Basic Education (ABE) Levels 1-6

Educational Functioning Level (EFL)	Test Benchmarks
ABE Level 1 Beginning ABE Literacy	**Approved Tests Aligned to ABE EFL Descriptors** **TABE[1] (13–14)** scale scores (grade level 0–1): ● Reading: 300–441 ● Mathematics: 300–448 ● Language: 300–457 **CASAS[2]** scale scores: ● Reading GOALS 2: 203 and below ● Mathematics GOALS 2: 192 and below
ABE Level 2 Beginning Basic Education	**Approved Tests Aligned to ABE EFL Descriptors** **TABE (13–14)** scale scores (grade level 2–3): ● Reading: 442–500 ● Mathematics: 449–495 ● Language: 458–510 **CASAS** scale scores: ● Reading GOALS 2: 204-216 ● Mathematics GOALS 2: 193-203
ABE Level 3 Low Intermediate Basic Education	**Approved Tests Aligned to ABE EFL Descriptors** **TABE (13–14)** scale scores (grade level 4–5): ● Reading: 501–535 ● Mathematics: 496–536 ● Language: 511–546 **CASAS** scale scores: ● Reading GOALS 2: 217-227

[1] TABE = Tests of Adult Basic Education

[2] CASAS = Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System

	● Mathematics GOALS 2: 204-213
ABE Level 4 High Intermediate Basic Education	**Approved Tests Aligned to ABE EFL Descriptors** **TABE (13–14)** scale scores (grade level 6–8): ● Reading: 536–575 ● Mathematics: 537–595 ● Language: 547–583 **CASAS** scale scores: ● Reading GOALS 2: 228-238 ● Mathematics GOALS 2: 214-224
ABE Level 5 Low Adult Secondary Education	**Approved Tests Aligned to ABE EFL Descriptors** **TABE (13–14)** scale scores (grade level 9–10): ● Reading: 576–616 ● Mathematics: 596–656 ● Language: 584–630 **CASAS** scale scores: ● Reading GOALS 2: 239-248 ● Mathematics GOALS 2: 225-235
ABE Level 6 High Adult Secondary Education	**Approved Tests Aligned to ABE EFL Descriptors** **TABE (13–14)** scale scores (grade level 11–12): ● Reading: 617–800 ● Mathematics: 657–800 ● Language: 631–800 **CASAS** scale scores: ● Reading GOALS 2: 249 and above ● Mathematics GOALS 2: 236 and above

English as a Second Language (ESL) Levels 1-6

Educational Functioning Level	Test Benchmarks
Beginning ESL Literacy ESL Level 1	**CASAS STEPS** scale scores: ● Reading: 183 and below ● Listening: 181 and below **BEST[3] Plus 3.0:** 600-677
Low Beginning ESL ESL Level 2	**CASAS STEPS** scale scores: ● Reading: 184–196 ● Listening: 182–191 **BEST Plus 3.0:** 678-702
High Beginning ESL ESL Level 3	**CASAS STEPS** scale scores: ● Reading: 197–206 ● Listening: 192–201 **BEST Plus 3.0:** 703-726
Low Intermediate ESL ESL Level 4	**CASAS STEPS** scale scores: ● Reading: 207–216 ● Listening: 202–211 **BEST Plus 3.0:** 727-752
High Intermediate ESL ESL Level 5	**CASAS STEPS** scale scores: ● Reading: 217–227 ● Listening: 212–221 **BEST Plus 3.0:** 753-785
Advanced ESL ESL Level 6	**CASAS STEPS** scale scores: ● Reading: 228–238 ● Listening: 222–231 **BEST Plus 3.0:** 786-849

More information on the level descriptors and assessment can be found at the National Reporting System website's Technical Assistance for Assessment Page (https://nrsweb.org/training-ta/ta-tools/assessment).

[3] BEST = Basic English Skills Test

EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONING LEVEL DESCRIPTORS FOR ADULT BASIC EDUCATION (ABE)[4]

LITERACY/ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Introduction

The educational functioning level (EFL) descriptors for Literacy/English Language Arts are intended to guide both teaching and assessment for adult learners. They are divided into six EFLs: Beginning Literacy; Beginning Basic; Low Intermediate; High Intermediate; Low Adult Secondary; and High Adult Secondary. The descriptors do not provide a complete or comprehensive delineation of all of the skills at any given level but provide examples of the most critical concepts and skills for the level. The descriptors use the College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards for Adult Education (CCR) as the foundation.

While these narrative descriptors address the most critical concepts for assessment and instruction for adult learners, lesson plans and test items should be based on additional critical concepts from State instructional frameworks and standards, as appropriate for the learner and State requirements.

The EFLs for Literacy/English Language arts are organized into reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language domains. Emphasis was placed on reading and writing because most instruction and assessment attention will be paid to these domains for ABE students. In addition, the descriptors were further informed by OCTAE's Framework for Employability Skills to ensure the levels paid adequate attention to workforce preparation.

Reading

The reading sections of the descriptors are consistently more comprehensive than the other domains. Reading is a critical area for college and career readiness. One of the elements in the reading descriptors that draws clear distinctions between competencies required at each level is the complexity of the text that students are to be reading. The EFLs specify a staircase of increasing text complexity for students to master from beginning basic reading through the college and career readiness level. The comprehension skills of reading are to be applied to level-appropriate complex text. The reading domain elements of the descriptors carry within it references to other key skills from the other domains and workforce preparation skills. Examples of this include listening comprehension as a supplement to reading comprehension at levels 1 and 2 so students can work with the richer ideas adult students can handle intellectually, if not yet independently through their own reading. It also includes integrating and evaluating information from a variety of media, including translating quantitative or technical information presented visually or in words. Learning to work with diverse media is an important job skill as well as a critical applied academic skill. Another example is an emphasis on research that includes a combination of reading, writing, and speaking

[4] These descriptors are included in the AEFLA information collection (OMB control number 1830-0027) and were implemented with Federal Register notice 82 FR 42339.

and listening skills—again as a way to connect the domains in important ways and to create the EFLs as a focused and useful document.

Writing

Details about the level of writing proficiency required at each level have been pared to draw clear distinctions between competencies required at each level. The descriptors emphasize writing arguments and writing to inform and explain from Level 3 and beyond. Both writing types stress writing to sources, and asking students to draw evidence from texts is emphasized in the descriptors. With writing, many of the process standards were not included because process proficiency is hard to measure. In addition, reference is consistently made to research skills in both the reading and writing sections of each level, as these skills are important to writing.

Speaking and Listening

The speaking and listening descriptors at each level ware connected closely to workforce preparation and the Employability Skills Framework. These skills have the benefit of both being measurable and clearly related to citizenship, work and life success. Collaborative conversations and teamwork are emphasized at *every* level, as is students' use of evidence. In this context of speaking and listening, the descriptors reflect use of listening comprehension capacities (particularly in Levels 1 and 2 to augment students' lower reading comprehension abilities), evidence in conversation, ability to evaluate what others are saying, and the capacity to share information effectively with others.

Language

In the language domain, descriptors consistent with workforce preparation from the Employability Skills Framework and are vital to attaining college and career readiness from each level such as a growth in students' grammar and punctuation skills, as well as their growth in vocabulary.

ABE Level 1: Beginning Literacy (ELA)

Reading: Individuals ready to exit the Beginning Literacy Level comprehend how print corresponds to spoken language and are able to demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sound-letter relationships (phonetic patterns), including consonant digraphs and blends. In particular, students at this level are able to recognize and produce rhyming words, blend and segment onsets and rhymes, isolate and pronounce initial, medial, and final sounds, add or substitute individual sounds, and blend and segment single syllable words. They are able to decode two- syllable words following basic patterns as well as recognize common high frequency words by sight. Individuals are able to read simple decodable texts with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression. They are able to determine the meaning of words and phrases in texts with clear and explicit context.

Individuals ready to exit this level are able to determine main ideas, retell key details, and ask and answer questions about key details in simple texts. Individuals are also able to use the illustrations in the text(s), whether print or digital, to describe its key ideas (e.g., maps, charts, photographs, cartoons). They also are able to use text features, both print and digital, to locate key facts or information. When listening to text above their current independent reading level, they are able to identify the reasons an author gives to

support points in a text, describe the connections between ideas within a text, and examine the basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic.

Writing: Individuals ready to exit the Beginning Literacy Level are able to write basic sight words and familiar words and phrases as they compose simple sentences or phrases. This includes writing simple informative texts in which they supply some facts about a topic and narratives that include some details regarding what happened. They use simple transition and temporal words to signal event order (e.g., so, and, because, when, next, finally). With support, they are able to gather and use information from provided sources, both print and digital, to answer a simple research question.

Speaking and Listening: Individuals ready to exit this level are able to participate in conversations of short duration, collaborating with diverse partners and groups, while respecting individual differences. This includes following agreed upon rules for discussion and responding to the comments of others through multiple exchanges. Individuals are able to describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, producing complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation. They can discuss what they have heard read aloud and ask and answer questions about it.

Language: When writing and speaking, individuals ready to exit this level are able to correctly use frequently occurring nouns, verbs (past, present, and future), adjectives, pronouns, prepositions and conjunctions. When writing sentences individuals correctly use capitalization, ending punctuation, and commas in dates and to separate single words in a series. They are able to spell words with common patterns and frequently occurring irregular words. Other words they spell phonetically. In response to prompts, they are able to produce and expand complete simple and compound declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentences orally. Individuals are able to determine the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words, by applying their knowledge of frequently occurring roots and affixes, as well as sentence-level context. They are able to distinguish shades of meaning among verbs (e.g., look, glance, stare, glare) and adjectives differing in intensity (e.g., large, gigantic) by choosing them or acting out their meanings.

ABE Level 2: Beginning Basic (ELA)

Reading: Individuals ready to exit the Beginning Basic Level are able to decode multi- syllable words, distinguish long and short vowels when reading regularly spelled one-syllable words, and recognize the spelling-sound correspondences for common vowel teams. They also are able to identify and understand the meaning of the most common prefixes and suffixes. They can read common irregular sight words. Individuals are able to read level appropriate texts (e.g., texts with a Lexile Measure of between 420 and 820) with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression.[5] They are able to determine the meaning of words and phrases in level-appropriate complex texts. Individuals ready to exit this level are able to determine main ideas, ask and answer questions about key details in texts and show how those details support the main idea. Individuals also are able to explain how specific aspects of both digital and print illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words of a text. They are able to compare and contrast the most important points and key details of two texts on the same topic. When listening to text above their current

[5] Refer to the Text Complexity Chart at the end of this document for the CCR standards for adult education for the appropriate range of complexity for this level.

independent reading level, they are able to describe the relationship between ideas in a text in terms of time, sequence, and cause/effect, as well as use text features and search tools, both print and digital, to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently. They also are able to describe how reasons support specific points an author makes in a text and identify the author's main purpose or what the author wants to answer, explain or describe, as well as distinguish their own point of view from that of the author's.

Writing: Individuals ready to exit the Beginning Basic Level are able to write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons. They are able to write simple informative texts in which they examine a topic and convey information clearly. They also are able to write narratives with details that describe actions, thoughts, and feelings. They use transition and temporal words (e.g., also, another, more, but) to link ideas and signal event order. Individuals ready to exit this level are able to use technology to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others. They are able to conduct short research projects and summarize their learning in print. This includes taking brief notes from both print and digital sources, and sorting evidence into provided categories.

Speaking and Listening: Individuals ready to exit this level are able to participate in a range of collaborative conversations with diverse partners and groups, respecting individual differences. This includes gaining the floor in respectful way, linking their comments to the remarks of others, and expressing their own ideas, clearly in light of the discussions. Individuals are able to report on a topic or text or recount an experience, with appropriate facts, and relevant, descriptive details. They are able to speak in complete sentences appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification. They can discuss what they have heard read aloud and provide the main ideas and appropriate elaboration and detail about the information presented.

Language: When writing and speaking, individuals ready to exit this level are able to correctly use regular and irregular nouns and verbs, comparative and superlative adjectives and adverbs, and coordinating and subordinating conjunctions. When writing simple, compound and complex sentences, individuals use correct subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement. They also use correct capitalization, ending punctuation, commas, and apostrophes to form contractions and possessives. They also are able to spell words with conventional patterns and suffixes. They are able to use spelling patterns and generalizations (e.g., word patterns, ending rules) in writing words. In response to prompts, they are able to produce, expand, and rearrange simple and compound sentences. Individuals are able to determine the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words in level-appropriate complex texts, including academic words, by applying their knowledge of roots and affixes, as well as sentence-level context. They are able to distinguish literal from non-literal meaning of words, and shades of meaning among related words that describe states of mind or degrees of certainty (e.g., knew, believed, wondered, suspected). They are able to demonstrate understanding of and use general academic words that signal spatial and temporal relationships.

ABE Level 3: Low Intermediate (ELA)

Reading: Individuals ready to exit the Low Intermediate Level are able to read fluently text of the complexity demanded of this level (e.g., a Lexile Measure of between 740 and 1010).[6] They are able to use knowledge of letter-sound correspondences, syllabication patterns, and roots and affixes to accurately decode unfamiliar words. They are able to determine the meaning of words and phrases (e.g., metaphors and similes) in level-appropriate complex texts. Individuals ready to exit this level are able to make logical inferences, summarize central ideas or themes, and explain how they are supported by key details. They are able to explain events, procedures, or ideas in historical, scientific, or technical texts, including what happened and why. They are able to describe the overall structure of a text and compare and contrast the structures of two texts. Individuals ready to exit this level are also able to interpret information presented visually, orally or quantitatively to find an answer to a question or solve a problem. They display this facility with both print and digital media. Individuals are able to explain how authors use reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text and can integrate information from several texts, whether print, media, or a mix, on the same topic. They are able to describe how point of view influences how events are described. They are able to analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting similarities and differences. They are able to produce valid evidence for their findings and assertions.

Writing: Individuals ready to exit the Low Intermediate Level are able to write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with facts and logically ordered reasons. They are able to produce informative texts in which they develop a topic with concrete facts and details. They convey information clearly with precise language and well-organized paragraphs. They link ideas, opinions and reasons with words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., another, specifically, consequently, because). They are also able to use technology (including the Internet) to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others. They are able to conduct short research projects, making frequent use of on-line as well as print sources. This includes the ability to draw evidence from several texts to support an analysis. They are able to summarize or paraphrase information from and provide a list of those sources.

Speaking and Listening: Individuals ready to exit this level are able to participate in a range of collaborative conversations with diverse partners and groups, respecting individual differences. This includes demonstrating an understanding of teamwork and working well with others by carrying out their assigned roles, and posing and responding to specific questions, and making comments that contribute to and elaborate on the remarks of others. Individuals are able to report on a topic or text or present an opinion, sequencing ideas logically and providing appropriate facts, and relevant, descriptive details that support the main ideas or themes. They are able to differentiate between contexts that call for formal English and situations where informal discourse is appropriate. They also are able to paraphrase and summarize what they have heard aloud and explain how each claim is supported by reasons and evidence.

Language: When writing and speaking, individuals ready to exit this level are able to use verb tenses to convey various times, sequences, states, and conditions correctly and recognize inappropriate shifts in verb tense. They use prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections properly. Individuals write simple, compound

[6] Refer to the Text Complexity Chart at the end of this document for the CCR standards for adult education for the appropriate range of complexity for this level.

and complex sentences and use correct subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement throughout a piece of writing. They also use correct capitalization, commas, and underlining, quotation marks, and italics to indicate titles of works. They are able to correctly use frequently confused words (e.g., to, too, two; there, their) and spell correctly, consulting references as needed. They are able to produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons as well as expand, combine and reduce sentences for meaning, reader interest and style. Individuals are able to determine the meaning of unknown and multiple- meaning words in level-appropriate complex texts, including academic words, by applying their knowledge of roots and affixes, as well as sentence-level context. Individuals are able to interpret figurative language, including similes and metaphors. They also are able to recognize and explain the meaning of common idioms, adages, and proverbs. They are able to demonstrate understanding of and use general academic words that signal precise actions or emotions (e.g., whined, stammered), signal contrast (e.g., however, nevertheless), or other logical relationships (e.g., however, similarly), and are basic to a particular topic (e.g. endangered when discussing animal preservation).

ABE Level 4: High Intermediate (ELA)

Reading: Individuals who are ready to exit the High Intermediate Level are able to read fluently text of the complexity demanded of this level (e.g., a Lexile Measure of between 925 and 1185).[7] They display increasing facility with academic vocabulary and are able to analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone in level-appropriate complex texts. Individuals are able to make logical inferences by offering several pieces of textual evidence. This includes citing evidence to support the analysis of primary and secondary sources in history, as well as analysis of science and technical texts. They are able to summarize and analyze central ideas, including how they are conveyed through particular details in the text. They also are able to analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between ideas or events and how major sections of a text contribute to the development of the ideas. They also are able to follow multistep procedures. Individuals are able to identify aspects of a text that reveal point of view and assess how point of view shapes style and content in texts. In addition, they are able to evaluate the validity of specific claims an author makes through the sufficiency of the reasoning and evidence supplied in the text. This includes analyzing how an author responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints. They are able to analyze how multiple texts address similar themes, including how authors acknowledge and respond to conflicting evidence or viewpoints and include or avoid particular facts. Individuals are also able to analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media as well as integrate and evaluate content from those sources, including quantitative or technical information presented visually and in words. They are able to produce valid evidence for their findings and assertions, make sound decisions, and solve problems.

Writing: Writing in response to one or more text(s), individuals ready to exit this level are able to compose arguments and informative texts (this includes the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes). When writing arguments, they are able to introduce claims, acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence, and organize them logically in a manner that demonstrates an understanding of the topic. When writing informative texts, individuals are able to examine a topic through the selection, organization, and analysis of

[7] Refer to the Text Complexity Chart at the end of this document for the CCR standards for adult education for the appropriate range of complexity for this level.

relevant facts, concrete details, quotations and other information to aid comprehension. Individuals create cohesion in their writing by clarifying the relationships among ideas, reasons, and evidence; using appropriate transitions; and including a logical progression of ideas, and maintaining consistency in style and tone. Individuals are able to use specific word choices appropriate for the topic, purpose, and audience. They also are able to use technology to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources. They conduct short research projects, drawing on several sources. This includes the ability to draw evidence from several texts to support an analysis. It also includes the ability to locate and organize information, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and communicate the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism.

Speaking and Listening: Individuals ready to exit the High Intermediate level collaborate well as a member of team by building on others' ideas, expressing their own clearly and maintaining a positive attitude. This includes following the rules for collegial discussions and decision-making and tracking progress toward specific goals and deadlines. It also includes the ability to pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence and ideas. During these discussions, individuals are able to qualify, alter, or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented by others. Just as in writing, individuals are able to delineate a speaker's argument, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance of the evidence. They are able to identify when irrelevant evidence is introduced. They also are able to present their own claims and findings that emphasize salient points in a focused and coherent manner, with relevant evidence, valid reasoning, and well-chosen details. Individuals adapt their speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Language: When writing and speaking, individuals ready to exit the High Intermediate level are able to ensure pronouns are in the proper case, recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person, and correct vague or unclear pronouns. They know how to form all verb tenses, and recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood. They know how to recognize and correct misplaced and dangling modifiers. They are able to adapt their speech to a variety of contexts and tasks when indicated. They are able to choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating redundancy and wordiness as well as maintaining consistency in style and tone. Though errors may be present, the meaning of their written and oral communications is clear. Individuals are able to determine the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases as they are used in level–appropriate complex texts through context clues, knowledge of affixes and roots, and use of reference materials.

ABE Level 5: Low Adult Secondary (ELA)

Reading: Individuals who are ready to exit Low Adult Secondary Level are able to read fluently texts that measure at the secondary level of complexity (e.g., a Lexile Measure of between 1050 and 1335).[8] This includes increasing facility with academic vocabulary and figurative language in level-appropriate complex texts. This includes determining the meaning of symbols and key terms used in a specific scientific or technical context. They are able to analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone. Individuals are able to make logical and well- supported inferences about those

[8] Refer to the Text Complexity Chart at the end of this document for the CCR standards for adult education for the appropriate range of complexity for this level.

complex texts. They are able to analyze the development of central ideas over the course of a text and explain how they are refined by particular sentences, paragraphs, or portions of text. They are able to provide an objective summary of a text. They are able to analyze in detail a series of events described in text and determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them. They also are able to follow complex multistep directions or procedures.

Individuals are able to compare the point of view of two or more authors writing about the same or similar topics. They are able to evaluate the validity of specific claims an author makes through the sufficiency and relevance of the reasoning and evidence supplied. They also are able to identify false statements and fallacious reasoning. They are able to analyze how multiple texts address related themes and concepts, including challenging texts, such as seminal U.S. documents of historical and literary significance (e.g., Washington's Farewell Address, the Gettysburg Address). In addition, they are able to contrast the findings presented in a text, noting whether those findings support or contradict previous explanations or accounts. Individuals are also able to translate quantitative or technical information expressed in words in a text into visual form (e.g., a table or chart) and translate information expressed visually or mathematically into words. Through their reading and research, they are able to cite strong and thorough textual evidence for their findings and assertions to make informed decisions and solve problems.

Writing: Writing in response to one or more text(s), individuals ready to exit this level are able to compose arguments and informative texts (this includes the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes). When writing arguments, they are able to introduce precise claims, distinguish the claims from alternate or opposing claims, and support claims with clear reasons and relevant and sufficient evidence. When writing informative texts, they are able to examine a topic through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of well chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic. They use appropriate and varied transitions as well as consistency in style and tone to link major sections of the text, create cohesion, and establish clear relationships among claims, reasons, and evidence.

Individuals use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic. They are also able to take advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and display information flexibly and dynamically. They conduct short research projects as well as more sustained research projects to make informed decisions and solve problems. This includes the ability to draw evidence from several texts to support an analysis. It also includes the ability to gather and organize information, assess the credibility, accuracy, and usefulness of each source, and communicate the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism.

Speaking and Listening: Individuals ready to exit the Low Adult Secondary level are able to participate in a thoughtful, respectful, and well-reasoned exchange of ideas as a member of a team. As they collaborate with peers, they are able to set rules for collegial discussions and decision- making, clear goals and deadlines. They are able to propel these conversations forward by clarifying, verifying or challenging ideas that are presented, actively incorporating others into the discussion, responding thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, and summarizing points of agreement and disagreement. They also are able to qualify, alter, or justify their own views and understanding in light of the evidence and reasoning presented by others. Just as in writing, individuals are able to evaluate a speaker's point of view, and in particular, assess the links among ideas, word choice, and points of emphasis and tone used.

They also are able to present their own findings and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning.

Individuals adapt their speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Language: Individuals ready to exit the Low Adult Secondary level demonstrate strong control of English grammar, usage, and mechanics and use these elements to enhance the presentation of ideas both in speech and writing. This includes the use of parallel structure and the correct use of various types of phrases and clauses to convey specific meanings. They are able to adapt their speech to a variety of contexts and tasks when indicated. Though some errors may be present, meaning of their written and oral communications is clear. Individuals are able to determine the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases as they are used in level- appropriate complex texts through context clues, knowledge of affixes and roots, and use of reference materials.

ABE Level 6: High Adult Secondary (ELA)

Reading: Individuals who are ready to exit High Adult Secondary Level are able to read fluently at the college and career readiness level of text complexity (e.g., a Lexile Measure between 1185 and 1385).[9] This includes increasing facility with academic vocabulary and figurative language sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level. They are able to analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone. Individuals are able to make logical and well-supported inferences about those complex texts. They are able to summarize the challenging ideas, concepts or processes contained within them. They are able to paraphrase texts in simpler but still accurate terms. Whether they are conducting analyses of complex primary and secondary sources in history or in scientific and technical texts, they are able to analyze how the ideas and concepts within them develop and interact. Individuals are able to assess how points of view shape style and content in texts with particular attention to distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).

Individuals are able to analyze how multiple texts address related themes and concepts, including challenging texts such as U.S. founding documents (Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights). In addition, they are able to compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources. Individuals are also able to integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media in order to address a question. Through their reading and research at complex levels, they are able to cite strong and thorough textual evidence for their findings and assertions to make sound decisions and solve problems.

Writing: Writing in response to one or more text(s), individuals ready to exit this level are able to compose arguments and informative texts (this includes the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes). When writing arguments, they are able to create an organization that establishes clear relationships among the claim(s), counterclaim(s), reasons and evidence. They fully develop claims and counterclaims, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths

[9] Refer to the Text Complexity Chart at the end of this document for the CCR standards for adult education for the appropriate range of complexity for this level.

and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns. When writing informative texts, they are able to organize complex ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions through the effective selection and analysis of content. They use appropriate and varied transitions to clarify the relationships among complex ideas, create cohesion, and link major sections of the text. Individuals are able to maintain a formal style while they attend to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. They are also able to take advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and display information flexibly and dynamically. They conduct short research projects as well as more sustained research projects that require the synthesis of multiple complex sources to make informed decisions and solve problems. This includes the ability to draw evidence from several texts to support an analysis. It also includes the ability to gather and organize information, assess the credibility, accuracy, and usefulness of each source in answering the research question, noting any discrepancies among the data collected.

Speaking and Listening: Individuals ready to exit the High Adult Secondary level demonstrate flexibility, integrity, and initiative when collaborating as an effective member of a team. They are able to manage their time and other resources wisely in order to contribute to the team's overarching goal(s) and meet the agreed upon deadlines. This includes the ability to exercise leadership, resolve conflicts as they arise, and pose and respond to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas. They are able to express alternative views clearly and persuasively, verify or challenge others' ideas and conclusions, and think creatively and critically in light of the evidence and reasoning presented. Just as in writing, individuals are able to evaluate a speaker's point of view, stance, premises, evidence, reasoning, rhetoric, and tone. They also are able to present their own findings and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, making strategic use of digital media Individuals adapt their speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Language: Individuals ready to exit the High Adult Secondary level demonstrate strong control of English grammar, usage, and mechanics and use these elements to enhance the presentation of ideas both in speech and writing. This includes the use of parallel structure and the correct use of various types of phrases and clauses to convey specific meanings. They are able to adapt their speech to a variety of contexts and tasks when indicated. The meaning of their written and oral communications is clear. Individuals are able to determine the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases as they are used in level-appropriate complex texts through context clues, knowledge of affixes and roots, and use of reference materials.

Exhibit: Quantitative Analysis Chart for Determining Text Complexity[10]

CCR Levels of Learning	ATOS	Degrees of Reading Power	Flesch-Kincaid	The Lexile Framework	Reading Maturity
B (Level 2)	2.75–5.14	42–54	1.98–5.34	420–820	3.53–6.13
C (Level 3)	4.97–7.03	52– 60	4.51–7.73	740–1010	5.42–7.92

[10] This chart only identifies text complexity for levels B through E. At level A, students are just learning how to read, so it is not appropriate to focus on the complexity of the text until level B.

D (Level 4)	7.00–9.98	57–67	6.51–10.34	925–1185	7.04–9.57
E (Level 5)	9.67–12.01	62–72	8.32–12.12	1050–1335	8.41–10.81
E (Level 6)	11.20–4.10	67–74	10.34–14.2	1185–1385	9.57–12.00

MATHEMATICS

Introduction and Process

The EFL Descriptors for Mathematics also use the CCR as the foundation. They are intended to guide both teaching and assessment for adult learners. While these narrative descriptors address the most critical concepts for adult learners (as defined in the Major Work of the Level), there are additional concepts found in the CCR standards that support the major work for each level, and that are included in these descriptors. Lesson plans and assessment items for adult learners should be based on the full text of the CCR standards for each level, using these critical concepts as the foundation for lesson development and assessment.

The mathematics descriptors are divided into six educational functioning levels. The levels are ABE 1 (Beginning Literacy, corresponding to Level A of the CCR); ABE 2 (Beginning Basic, corresponding to Level B of the CCR); ABE 3 (Low Intermediate, corresponding to Level C of the CCR); ABE 4 (Middle Intermediate, corresponding to part of the Level D CCR), ABE 5 (High Intermediate, corresponding to the remainder of the Level D CCR); and ABE 6 (Adult Secondary, corresponding to Level E of the CCR). Each of the levels corresponds roughly to two grade levels, in K-12 terms, except for Level E, which combines the critical concepts of all of grades 9 through 12. Within each level the descriptors are further divided by domain:

- *The Mathematical Practices,*
- *Number Sense and Operations,*
- *Algebraic Thinking,*
- *Geometry (and Measurement), and*
- *Data Analysis (Statistics and Probability).*

The descriptors do not provide a complete or comprehensive delineation of all of the skills at any given level but provide examples of the most critical concepts and skills for the level to guide assessment and instruction. Assessment of the Mathematical Practice descriptors are best performed in the classroom using assessments that could be formative or summative and may be informal. It should be noted that mathematics placement decisions should take into account the reading level of the adult student. Verbally presented application problems at all mathematics levels require a minimum reading level.

ABE Level 1: Beginning Literacy (Math)

The Mathematical Practices: Students prepared to exit this level are able to decipher a simple problem presented in a context and reason about and apply correct units to the results. They can visualize a situation using manipulatives or drawings and explain their processes and results using mathematical terms and symbols appropriate for the level. They recognize errors in the work and reasoning of others. They are able to strategically select and use appropriate tools to aid in their work, such as pencil/paper, measuring

devices, and/or manipulatives. They can see patterns and structure in sets of numbers and geometric shapes and use those insights to work more efficiently.

Number Sense and Operations: Students prepared to exit this level have an understanding of whole number place value for tens and ones and are able to use their understanding of place value to compare two-digit numbers. They are able to add whole numbers within 100 and explain their reasoning, e.g., using concrete models or drawings and strategies based on place value and/or properties of operations. They are able to apply their knowledge of whole number addition and subtraction to represent and solve word problems that call for addition of three whole numbers whose sum is less than 20 by using such problem-solving tools as objects, drawings, and/or simple equations.

Algebraic Thinking: Students prepared to exit this level understand and apply the properties of operations to addition and subtraction problems. They understand the relationship between the two operations and can determine the unknown number in addition or subtraction equations.

Geometry and Measurement: Students prepared to exit this level can analyze and compare 2 dimensional and 3-dimensional shapes based on their attributes, such as their shape, size, orientation, the number of sides and/or vertices (angles), or the lengths of their sides. They can reason with two- dimensional shapes (e.g., quadrilaterals and half- and quarter-circles) and with three-dimensional shapes (e.g., right prisms, cones, and cylinders) to create composite shapes. They are able to measure the length of an object as a whole number of units, which are not necessarily standard units, for example measuring the length of a pencil using a paper clip as the length unit.

Data Analysis: Students prepared to exit this level are able to organize, represent, and interpret simple data sets (e.g., lists of numbers, shapes, or items) using up to three categories. They can answer basic questions related to the total number of data points in a set and the number of data points in each category, and can compare the number of data points in the different categories.

ABE Level 2: Beginning Basic (Math)

The Mathematical Practices: Students prepared to exit this level are able to decipher two-step problems presented in a context, visualizing a situation using diagrams or sketches, and reasoning about and applying the correct units and the proper degree of precision to the results. They can explain their processes and results using mathematical terms and symbols appropriate for the level and recognize errors in the reasoning of others. They strategically select and use the appropriate tools to aid in their work, such as pencil/paper, measuring devices, manipulatives, and/or calculators. They are able to see patterns and structure in sets of numbers, including in multiplication or addition tables, and use those insights to work more efficiently.

Number Sense and Operations: Students prepared to exit this level understand place value for whole numbers to 1000 and can use that understanding to read, write, count, compare, and round three-digit whole numbers to the nearest 10 or 100. They are able to compute fluently with all four operations with whole numbers within 100. They use place value and properties of operations to explain why addition and subtraction strategies work, and can demonstrate an understanding of the inverse relationship between multiplication and division. They can solve one- and two-step word problems involving all four operations within 100 and identify and explain arithmetic patterns. They have an understanding of fractions, especially

unit fractions, and can represent simple fractions on a number line. They understand and can explain equivalence of fractions, can recognize and generate simple equivalent fractions, and can compare two fractions with the same numerator or denominator by reasoning about their size.

Algebraic Thinking: Students prepared to exit this level apply the properties of operations to multiplication and division of whole numbers. They understand the relationship between multiplication and division and can determine the unknown number in multiplication or division equations.

Geometry and Measurement: Students prepared to exit this level are able to reason about geometric shapes and their attributes. They can demonstrate an understanding that different shapes might share common attributes (e.g., four sides) and can compare and classify two-dimensional shapes, particularly quadrilaterals. They are able to partition shapes into parts with equal areas and express the area of each part as a unit fraction of the whole. They can use common U.S. Customary and metric units for linear measurements (e.g., inches, feet, centimeters, and meters) and solve problems involving measurement and estimation of intervals of time, liquid volumes, and masses of objects. They understand the concept of area and can relate it to addition and multiplication to solve real-world problems. They also understand, and can solve, real-world and mathematical problems involving perimeter of polygons.

Data Analysis: Students prepared to exit this level are able to draw and interpret simple graphs (e.g., bar graphs, picture graphs, and number line diagrams) including scaled bar and picture graphs. They can solve one- and two-step problems using scaled bar graphs. They can generate measurement data by measuring lengths to the nearest half- and quarter-inch and display that data by making a line plot marked off in appropriate units.

ABE Level 3: Low Intermediate (Math)

The Mathematical Practices: Students prepared to exit this level are able to decipher multi- step problems presented in a context and reason about and apply the correct units and the proper degree of precision to the results. They can visualize a situation using diagrams or sketches, see multiple strategies for solving a problem, explain their processes and results, and recognize errors in the work and reasoning of others. They can express themselves using mathematical terms and notation appropriate for the level and can strategically select and use tools to aid in their work, such as pencil/paper, measuring devices, and/or technology. They are able to see patterns and structure in sets of numbers and geometric shapes and use those insights to work more efficiently.

Number Sense and Operations: Students prepared to exit this level understand place value for both multi-digit whole numbers and decimals to thousandths, and use their understanding to read, write, compare, and round decimals. They are able to use their place value understanding and properties of operations to fluently perform operations with multi-digit whole numbers and decimals. They can find common factors, common multiples, and understand fraction concepts, including fraction equivalence and comparison. They can add, subtract, multiply and divide with fractions and mixed numbers. They are able to solve multi-step word problems posed with whole numbers and fractions, using the four operations. They also have an understanding of ratio concepts and can use ratio language to describe a relationship between two quantities, including the concept of a unit rate associated with a ratio.

Algebraic Thinking: Students prepared to exit this level are able to apply and extend their understanding of arithmetic to algebraic expressions, using a symbol to represent an unknown value. They can write, evaluate, and interpret expressions and equations, including expressions that arise from formulas used in real-world problems. They can solve real-world and mathematical problems by writing and solving simple one-variable equations and write a simple inequality that represents a constraint or condition in a real-world or mathematical problem. They can represent and analyze quantitative relationships between dependent and independent variables.

Geometry and Measurement: Students prepared to exit this level have a basic understanding of the coordinate plane and can plot points (i.e., ordered pairs) and place polygons in the coordinate plane to solve real-world and mathematical problems. They can classify two-dimensional shapes and use formulas to determine the area of two-dimensional shapes such as triangles and quadrilaterals.

They can determine the surface area of three-dimensional shapes composed of rectangles and triangles, and find the volume of right rectangular prisms. They are able to convert like measurement units within a given measurement system (e.g., convert 5 cm to 0.05 m) and use these conversions to solve multi-step, real-world problems. They are also able to solve measurement word problems (such as those that involve area, perimeter, distance, time intervals, liquid volumes, mass, and money) that involve simple fractions or decimals.

Data Analysis and Statistics: Students prepared to exit this level have a basic conceptual understanding of statistical variability, including such concepts as center, spread, and the overall shape of a distribution of data. They can present data using displays such as dot plots, histograms, and box plots.

ABE Level 4: Middle Intermediate (Math)

The Mathematical Practices: Students prepared to exit this level are able to think critically, determine an efficient strategy (from among multiple possible strategies) for solving a multi-step problem, and persevere in solving challenging problems. They can express themselves using the mathematical terms and notation appropriate to the level. They are able to defend their findings and critique the reasoning of others. They are accurate in their calculations and use estimation strategies to assess the reasonableness of their results. They can create algebraic and geometric models and use them to answer questions and solve problems. They can strategically select and use tools to aid in their work, such as pencil/paper, measuring devices, calculators, and/or spreadsheets. They are able to see patterns and structure in number sets, data, expressions and equations, and geometric figures.

Number Sense and Operations: Students prepared to exit this level have an understanding of the rational number system, including how rational numbers can be represented on a number line and pairs of rational numbers can be represented on a coordinate plane. They can apply the concept of absolute value to find horizontal and vertical distances. They are able to apply the properties of integer exponents and evaluate, estimate, and compare simple square roots and cube roots.

Individuals at this level also understand ratio, rate, and percent concepts, as well as proportional relationships.

Algebraic Thinking: Students prepared to exit this level understand the connections between proportional relationships, lines, and linear equations. They understand numerical and algebraic expressions, and equations and are able to use them to solve real-world and mathematical problems. They are able to analyze and solve linear equations and pairs of simultaneous linear equations.

Individuals at this level are able to define, interpret, and compare linear functions.

Geometry: Students prepared to exit this level can solve real-world and mathematical problems that involve angle measure, circumference, and area of 2-dimensional figures. They are able to solve problems involving scale drawings of 2-dimensional geometric figures. They understand the concepts of congruence and similarity with respect to 2-dimensional figures. They understand the Pythagorean theorem and can apply it to determine missing lengths in right triangles.

Statistics and Probability: Students prepared to exit this level can summarize and describe numerical data sets in relation to their context, including determining measures of center and variability and describing patterns and/or striking deviations from patterns. They understand and can apply the concept of chance, or probability. They are able to use scatter plots for bivariate measurement data to describe patterns of association between two quantities (such as clustering, outliers, positive or negative association, linear or non-linear association).

ABE Level 5: High Intermediate (Math)

The Mathematical Practices: Students prepared to exit this level are able to think critically, determine an efficient strategy (from among multiple possible strategies) for solving a multi-step problem, and persevere in solving challenging problems. They can reason quantitatively, including using units as a way to solve problems. They are able to defend their findings and critique the reasoning of others. They are accurate in their calculations and use estimation strategies to assess the reasonableness of their results. They can create algebraic and geometric models and use them to answer questions and solve problems. They can strategically select and use tools to aid in their work, such as graphing calculators, spreadsheets, and/or computer software. They are able to make generalizations based on patterns and structure they discover in number sets, data, expressions and equations, and geometric figures and use these insights to work more efficiently.

Number Sense and Operations: Students prepared to exit this level can reason about and solve real-world and mathematical problems that involve the four operations with rational numbers. They can apply the concept of absolute value to demonstrate on a number line their understanding of addition and subtraction with negative and positive rational numbers. Individuals at this level can apply ratio and percent concepts, including using rates and proportional relationships to solve multi- step real-world and mathematical problems.

Algebraic Thinking: Students prepared to exit this level are able to use algebraic and graphical representations to solve real-world and mathematical problems, involving linear equations, inequalities, and pairs of simultaneous linear equations. Individuals at this level are able to use linear functions to describe, analyze, and model linear relationships between quantities.

Geometry: Students prepared to exit this level can solve real-world and mathematical problems that involve volume and surface area of 3-dimensional geometric figures. They can use informal arguments to establish facts about various angle relationships such as the relationships between angles created when parallel lines are cut by a transversal. They apply the Pythagorean Theorem to determine lengths in real-world contexts and distances in the coordinate plane.

Statistics and Probability: Students prepared to exit this level can use random sampling to draw inferences about a population and are able to draw informal comparative inferences about two populations using measures of center and measures of variability for numerical data from random samples. They can develop, use, and evaluate probability models. They are able to use scatter plots for bivariate measurement data to interpret patterns of association between two quantities (such as clustering, outliers, positive or negative association, linear or non-linear association) and a 2-way table to summarize and interpret bivariate categorical data.

ABE Level 6: Adult Secondary (Math)

The Mathematical Practices: Students prepared to exit this level are able to think critically, make assumptions based on a situation, select an efficient strategy from multiple possible problem- solving strategies, plan a solution pathway, and make adjustments as needed when solving problems. They persevere in solving challenging problems, including considering analogous, simpler problems as a way to solving a more complex one. They can reason quantitatively, including through the use of units, and can express themselves using the precise definitions and mathematical terms and notation appropriate to the level. They are accurate in their calculations, use an appropriate level of precision in finding solutions and reporting results, and use estimation strategies to assess the reasonableness of their results. They are able to make conjectures, use logic to defend their conclusions, and can detect faulty thinking and errors caused by improper use of technology. They can create algebraic and geometric models and use them to answer questions, interpret data, make predictions, and solve problems. They can strategically select and use tools, such as measuring devices, calculators, spreadsheets, and/or computer software, to aid in their work. They are able to see patterns and structure in calculations, expressions, and equations and make connections to algebraic generalizations, which they use to work more efficiently.

Number Sense and Operations: Students prepared to exit this level have extended their number sense to include irrational numbers, radicals, and rational exponents and understand and use the set of real numbers. They are able to assess the reasonableness of calculation results based on the limitations of technology or given units and quantities and give results with the appropriate degree of precision.

Algebraic Thinking: Students prepared to exit this level understand the structure of expressions and can use that structure to rewrite linear, exponential, and quadratic expressions. They can add, subtract, and multiply polynomials that involve linear and/or quadratic expressions. They are also able to create linear equations and inequalities and quadratic and simple exponential equations to represent relationships between quantities and can represent constraints by linear equations or inequalities, or by systems of linear equations and/or inequalities. They can interpret the structure of polynomial and rational expressions and use that structure to identify ways to rewrite and operate accurately with them. They can add, subtract, and multiply polynomials that extend beyond quadratics. They are able to rearrange formulas to highlight a quantity of interest, for example rearranging Ohm's law, V = IR, to highlight resistance R. They are also able

to create equations and inequalities representing relationships between quantities, including those that extend beyond equations or inequalities arising from linear, quadratic, and simple exponential functions to include those arising from simple rational functions. They are able to use these equations/inequalities to solve problems both algebraically and graphically. They can solve linear equations and inequalities; systems of linear equations; quadratic, simple rational, and radical equations in one variable; and recognize how and when extraneous solutions may arise.

Students prepared to exit this level also have a basic understanding of functions, can use function notation properly, and use such notation to write a function describing a relationship between two quantities. They are able to evaluate functions for inputs in their domains and interpret linear, quadratic, and exponential functions that arise in applications in terms of the context. They are able to construct, graph, compare, and interpret functions (including, but not limited to, linear, quadratic, and exponential). They can sketch graphs given a verbal description of the relationship and identify and interpret key features of the graphs of functions that arise in applications in a context.

They are able to select or define a function that appropriately models a relationship and to compare properties of two functions each represented in a different way (algebraically, graphically, numerically in tables, or by verbal description).

Geometry: Students prepared to exit this level can solve problems involving similarity and congruence criteria for triangles and use volume formulas for cylinders, pyramids, cones, and spheres to solve problems. They can apply the concepts of density based on area and volume in modeling situations (e.g., persons per square mile, BTU's per cubic foot).

Data Analysis and Statistics: Students prepared to exit this level can summarize, represent, and interpret data based on two categorical and quantitative variables, including by using frequency tables. They can compare data sets by looking at commonalities and differences in shape, center, and spread. They can recognize possible associations and trends in data, in particular in linear models, and distinguish between correlation and causation. They interpret one- and two-variable data, including those with linear and non-linear relationships. They interpret the slope (rate of change) and intercept (constant term) for a line of best fit and in the context of the data. They understand and account for extreme points of data in their analysis and interpret relative frequencies (joint, marginal and conditional).

EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONING LEVEL DESCRIPTORS FOR ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE LEVELS (ESL)

Introduction

In the National Reporting System for Adult Education (NRS), the Educational Functioning Level (EFL) descriptors are intended to guide teaching and assessment for adult learners. The descriptors for English as a second language (ESL) are divided into six educational functioning levels: Beginning ESL Literacy, Low Beginning ESL, High Beginning ESL, Low Intermediate ESL, High Intermediate ESL, and Advanced ESL. The descriptors do not provide a complete or comprehensive delineation of all of the skills at any given level but rather provide a description of the most critical concepts and skills for the level.

Although these narrative descriptors address the most critical concepts for assessment and instruction for adult learners, lesson plans and test items should be based on additional critical concepts from state instructional frameworks and standards, as appropriate for the learner and state requirements.

The EFLs for ESL are organized into three modalities: interpretive, productive, and interactive. These modalities include the domains of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. These modalities allow for an integrated or holistic approach to teaching and assessing English language learners (ELLs) in the adult education setting.

- **Interpretive** refers to the learner's ability to process, understand, interpret, or engage with level-appropriate literary and informational written and spoken text to construct meaning. For example, an ELL exiting from the Low Intermediate ESL classroom should be able to, with support, explain the reasons an author or a speaker gives to support a claim and identify one or two reasons an author or a speaker gives to support the main point.
- **Productive** refers to the learner's ability to produce level-appropriate written and spoken text such that it meaningfully transmits meaning. For example, an ELL exiting from the Low Beginning ESL classroom should be able to, with support, communicate information and feelings about familiar texts, topics, and experiences.
- **Interactive** refers to the learner's ability to process and produce level-appropriate written and spoken text interactively with the purpose of understanding, interpreting, engaging in, and transmitting meaning. For example, ELLs exiting from the High Beginning ESL classroom should be able to, with support, gather information from provided print and digital sources, record information in simple notes, and summarize data and information.

Text Complexity and Familiar Topics

Teachers and assessment developers must select appropriately complex literary and informational texts, topics, and events to prepare learners for success. Complexity should show progress within EFLs and in successive levels that reflect increasingly complex and cognitively demanding language structures, academic vocabulary, and concepts.

Language in the revised NRS EFLs for ESL calls for progressive complexity without being prescriptive about the specific complexity measures at each EFL. Terminology in the EFLs such as emerging, developing, increasing, and growing are guides to indicate the needed progression of complexity from level to level.[11]

Instruction and assessment also should involve a progression of topics, from the more familiar to substantive and academic topics, with increasing levels of complexity within and across levels.

Teachers and test developers are encouraged to refer to the guiding principles found in the *English Language Proficiency Standards for Adult Education.* The guiding principles recommend that instruction also include the use of digital tools and resources; academic language; a variety of informational texts and content areas, including science, technology, engineering, and mathematics; and college and career readiness skills as appropriate to learners at a given level.

Level 1: Beginning ESL Literacy

Interpretive: The ability to process, understand, interpret and/or engage with level-appropriate literary and informational written and spoken text to construct meaning (1, 6, 7, 8)[12]

ELLs ready to exit the Beginning ESL Literacy Level are able to, with prompting and support (including context, and visual aids), identify a few key words and phrases from read alouds, visual images, and oral presentations using a very limited set of strategies.

ELLs ready to exit this level can, with prompting and support (including context and visual aids), recognize the meaning of a few frequently occurring words and phrases in simple oral presentations and read alouds about familiar topics, experiences, and events. They can recognize the meaning of some words learned through conversations, reading, and being read to.

Productive: The ability to produce level-appropriate written and spoken text such that it meaningfully transmits meaning (3, 4, 7, 9, 10)

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to, with prompting and support (including context and visual aids), communicate simple information or feelings about familiar topics, events, or experiences. They can express a preference or opinion about a familiar topic.

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to show limited awareness of differences between informal and formal language use.

With support (including context and visual aids), ELLs ready to exit this level are able to recognize and use a small number of frequently occurring nouns and verbs, use a narrow range of vocabulary and syntactically simple sentences, and understand and respond to simple questions.

Interactive: The ability to process and produce level-appropriate written and spoken text interactively with the purpose of understanding, interpreting, engaging in and transmitting meaning (2, 5)

[11] Additional guidance about text complexity in adult education may be found in the *College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education*, "Appendix D—Understanding Text Complexity."

[12] Numbers in parentheses represent ELP Standards.

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to, with limited involvement, participate in short conversations and written exchanges about familiar topics and in familiar contexts. They can respond to simple yes/no questions and some wh-questions.

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to, with prompting and support, participate in short, shared research projects, gather information from a few provided sources, and label some key information.

Level 2: Low Beginning ESL

(ELP Standards for AE Level 1)

Interpretive: The ability to process, understand, interpret and/or engage with level appropriate literary and informational written and spoken text to construct meaning (1, 6, 7, 8)

ELLs ready to exit the Low Beginning ESL Level are able to identify a few key words and phrases in oral communications and simple spoken and written texts using a very limited set of strategies. They can recognize the meaning of some words learned through conversations, reading, and being read to.

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to, with support, identify a point an author or a speaker makes.

Relying heavily on context, questioning, and knowledge of morphology in their native language(s), ELLs ready to exit this level are able to recognize the meaning of a few frequently occurring words, simple phrases, and formulaic expressions in spoken and written texts about familiar topics, experiences, or events.

Productive: The ability to produce level-appropriate written and spoken text such that it meaningfully transmits meaning (3, 4, 7, 9, 10)

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to, with support, communicate information and feelings about familiar texts, topics, and experiences.

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to express an opinion about a familiar topic, experience, or event and give a reason for the opinion.

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to show emerging awareness of differences between informal and formal language use.

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to, with support, use a narrow range of vocabulary and syntactically simple sentences. They can, with support, recognize and use a small number of frequently occurring nouns, noun phrases, verbs, conjunctions, and prepositions and understand and respond to simple questions.

Interactive: The ability to process and produce level-appropriate written and spoken text interactively with the purpose of understanding, interpreting, engaging in and transmitting meaning (2, 5)

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to actively listen to others. They can participate in short conversations and written exchanges about familiar topics and in familiar contexts. They can present simple information and respond to simple yes/no questions and some wh- questions.

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to, with support, carry out short, shared research projects. They can, with support, gather information from a few provided print and digital sources, label collected information, experiences, or events, and recall information from experience or from a provided source.

Level 3: High Beginning ESL

(ELP Standards for AE Level 2)

Interpretive: The ability to process, understand, interpret and/or engage with level appropriate literary and informational written and spoken text to construct meaning (1, 6, 8)

ELLs ready to exit the High Beginning ESL Level are able to identify the main topic in oral presentations and simple spoken and written texts and retell a few key details using an emerging set of strategies.

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to, with support, identify the main argument an author or speaker makes. They can, with support, identify one reason an author or a speaker gives to support the argument.

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to determine the meaning of frequently occurring words, phrases, and expressions in spoken and written texts about familiar topics, experiences, or events.

Productive: The ability to produce level-appropriate written and spoken text such that it meaningfully transmits meaning (3, 4, 7, 9, 10)

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to, with support, deliver short oral presentations and compose simple written narratives or informational texts about familiar texts, topics, experiences, or events.

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to construct a claim about familiar topics, experiences, or events. They can introduce a familiar topic, experience, or event, give a reason to support a claim, and provide a concluding statement.

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to, with support, recount a short sequence of events in order. They can, with support, introduce an informational topic, provide one or two facts about the topic, and use common linking words to connect events and ideas.

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to show increasing awareness of differences between informal and formal language use. They can adapt language choices to task and audience with emerging control in various social and academic contexts.

ELLs ready to exit this level can begin to use some frequently occurring general academic and content-specific words.

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to, with support, use frequently occurring verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, and conjunctions. They can, with support, produce simple and compound sentences.

Interactive: The ability to process and produce level-appropriate written and spoken text interactively with the purpose of understanding, interpreting, engaging in and transmitting meaning (2, 5)

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to participate in conversations and written exchanges about familiar topics and texts. They can present information and ideas, appropriately take turns in interactions with others, and respond to simple questions and wh- questions.

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to, with support, carry out short individual or shared research projects. They can, with support, gather information from provided print and digital sources, record information in simple notes, and summarize data and information.

Level 4: Low Intermediate ESL

(ELP Standards for AE Level 3)

Interpretive: The ability to process, understand, interpret and/or engage with level appropriate literary and informational written and spoken text to construct meaning (1, 6, 8)

ELLs ready to exit the Low Intermediate ESL Level are able to determine a central idea or theme in oral presentations and spoken and written texts, retell key details, answer questions about key details, explain how the theme is developed by specific details in texts, and summarize part of a text using a developing set of strategies.

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to, with support, explain the reasons an author or a speaker gives to support a claim and identify one or two reasons an author or a speaker gives to support the main point.

Using context, questioning, and a developing knowledge of English and their native language(s)' morphology, ELLs ready to exit this level are able to determine the meaning of general academic and content-specific words and phrases and frequently occurring expressions in spoken and written texts about familiar topics, experiences, or events.

Productive: The ability to produce level-appropriate written and spoken text such that it meaningfully transmits meaning (3, 4, 7, 9, 10)

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to, with support, deliver short oral presentations and compose written informational texts about familiar texts, topics, or events. This includes developing the topic with a few details.

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to construct a claim about familiar topics. They can introduce the topic, provide sufficient reasons or facts to support the claim, and provide a concluding statement.

When producing written and spoken texts, ELLs ready to exit this level are able to, with support, recount a sequence of events, with a beginning, middle, and end. They can introduce and develop an informational topic with facts and details, use common transitional words and phrases to connect events, ideas, and opinions, and provide a conclusion.

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to adapt language choices and style according to purpose, task, and audience with developing ease in various social and academic contexts and show developing control of style and tone in spoken and written texts.

In their spoken and written texts, ELLs ready to exit this level can use an increasing number of general academic and content-specific words and expressions.

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to, with support, use simple phrases and clauses. They can produce and expand simple, compound, and a few complex sentences.

Interactive: The ability to process and produce level-appropriate written and spoken text interactively with the purpose of understanding, interpreting, engaging in and transmitting meaning (2, 5)

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to, participate in conversations, discussions, and written exchanges about familiar topics, texts, and issues. They can build on the ideas of others, express their own ideas, ask and answer relevant questions, add relevant information and evidence, restate some of the key ideas expressed, follow rules for discussion, and ask questions to gain information or clarify understanding.

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to, with support, carry out short research projects to answer a question. They can, with support, gather information from multiple provided print and digital sources, paraphrase key information in a short written or oral report, include illustrations, diagrams, or other graphics as appropriate, and provide a list of sources.

Level 5: High Intermediate ESL

(ELP Standards for AE Level 4)

Interpretive: The ability to process, understand, interpret and/or engage with level appropriate literary and informational written and spoken text to construct meaning (1, 6, 8)

ELLs ready to exit the High intermediate ESL Level are able to determine a central idea or theme in oral presentations and spoken and written texts using an increasing range of strategies. They can analyze the development of the themes/ideas, cite specific details and evidence from texts to support the analysis, and summarize a text.

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to analyze the reasoning in persuasive spoken and written texts and determine whether the evidence is sufficient to support the claim. They can cite textual evidence to support the analysis.

Using context, questioning, and an increasing knowledge of English morphology, ELLs ready to exit this level can determine the meaning of general academic and content-specific words and phrases, figurative and connotative language, and a growing number of idiomatic expressions in spoken and written texts about a variety of topics, experiences, or events.

Productive: The ability to produce level-appropriate written and spoken text such that it meaningfully transmits meaning (3, 4, 7, 9, 10)

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to deliver oral presentations and compose written informational texts about a variety of texts, topics, or events. This includes developing the topic with some relevant details, concepts, examples, and information and integrating graphics or multimedia when appropriate.

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to construct a claim about a variety of topics. They can construct a claim, introduce the topic, provide logically ordered reasons or facts that effectively support the claim, and provide a concluding statement.

When producing written and spoken texts, ELLs ready to exit this level can recount a longer, more detailed sequence of events or steps in a process, with a clear sequential or chronological structure. They can introduce and develop an informational topic with facts, details, and evidence, and provide a concluding section or statement.

ELLs ready to exit this level can also adapt language choices and style according to purpose, task, and audience in various social and academic contexts and adopt and maintain a formal and informal style and tone in spoken and written texts, as appropriate.

In their spoken and written texts, ELLs ready to exit this level can also use a wider range of complex general academic and content-specific words and phrases.

ELLs ready to exit this level will use increasingly complex phrases and clauses, produce and expand simple, compound, and complex sentences, and use a variety of more complex transitions to link the major sections of speech and text and to clarify relationships among events and ideas.

Interactive: The ability to process and produce level-appropriate written and spoken text interactively with the purpose of understanding, interpreting, engaging in and transmitting meaning (2, 5)

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to participate in conversations, discussions, and written exchanges about a range of topics, texts, and issues. They can build on the ideas of others, express his or her own ideas, clearly support points with specific and relevant evidence, ask and answer questions to clarify ideas and conclusions, and summarize the key points expressed.

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to carry out both short and more sustained research projects to answer a question, gather information from multiple print and digital sources, evaluate the reliability of each source, and use search terms effectively. They are able to synthesize information from multiple print and digital sources, integrate information into an organized oral or written report, include illustrations, diagrams, or other graphics as appropriate, and cite sources appropriately.

Level 6: Advanced ESL

(ELP Standards for AE Level 5)

Interpretive: The ability to process, understand, interpret and/or engage with level appropriate literary and informational written and spoken text to construct meaning (1, 6, 8)

ELLs ready to exit the Advanced ESL Level are able to determine central ideas or themes in oral presentations and spoken and written texts using a wide range of strategies. They can analyze the development of the themes/ideas, cite specific details and evidence from texts to support the analysis, and summarize a text.

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to analyze and evaluate the reasoning in persuasive spoken and written texts, determine whether the evidence is sufficient to support the claim, and cite specific textual evidence to thoroughly support the analysis.

Using context, questioning, and consistent knowledge of English morphology, ELLs ready to exit this level are able to determine the meaning of general academic and content-specific words and phrases, figurative and connotative language, and idiomatic expressions in spoken and written texts about a variety of topics, experiences, or events.

Productive: The ability to produce level-appropriate written and spoken text such that it meaningfully transmits meaning (3, 4, 7, 9, 10)

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to deliver oral presentations and compose written informational texts about a variety of texts, topics or events. They can fully develop the topic with relevant details, concepts, examples, and information, and integrate graphics or multimedia when appropriate.

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to construct a substantive claim about a variety of topics. They can introduce the claim and distinguish it from a counter-claim. They are able to provide logically ordered and relevant reasons and evidence to support the claim and to refute the counter-claim, and provide a conclusion that summarizes the argument presented.

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to recount a complex and detailed sequence of events or steps in a process, with an effective sequential or chronological order. They can introduce and effectively develop an informational topic with facts, details, and evidence, use complex and varied transitions to link the major sections of speech and text and to clarify relationships among events and ideas, and provide a concluding section or statement.

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to adapt language choices and style according to purpose, task, and audience with ease in various social and academic contexts. They can employ both formal and more informal styles and tones effectively in spoken and written texts, as appropriate.

In their spoken and written texts, ELLs ready to exit this level can use a wide variety of complex general academic and content-specific words and phrases.

ELLs ready to exit this level will use complex phrases and clauses and produce and expand simple, compound, and complex sentences.

Interactive: The ability to process and produce level-appropriate written and spoken text interactively with the purpose of understanding, interpreting, engaging in and transmitting meaning (2, 5)

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to participate in conversations, extended discussions, and written exchanges about a range of substantive topics, texts, and issues. They can build on the ideas of others, express their own ideas clearly and persuasively, refer to specific and relevant evidence from texts or research to support their ideas, ask and answer questions that probe reasoning and claims, and summarize the key points and evidence discussed.

ELLs ready to exit this level are able to carry out both short and more sustained research projects to answer a question or solve a problem. They can gather information from multiple print and digital sources, evaluate the reliability of each source, and use advanced search terms effectively. They can synthesize information from multiple print and digital sources, analyze and integrate information into clearly organized spoken and written texts, include illustrations, diagrams, or other graphics as appropriate, and cite sources appropriately.

For More Information

This **policy**, along with all other ABE policies and resources, can be found online at the Minnesota ABE Policies Page (www.mnabe.org/abe-law-policy/mn-abe-policies).

Resources for **Minnesota Adult Education accountability and performance** can be found online at the Minnesota ABE Accountability and Reporting Page (www.mnabe.org/accountability-reporting).

Minnesota Assessment Training information can be found online at the Southwest ABE Assessment Site (www.mnabeassessment.com).

Distance Learning resources can be found online at the Minnesota ABE Distance Learning Website (www.literacymn.org/distancelearning).

National Reporting System information can be found online on the NRS Web site (www.nrsweb.org).

Information on **SiD, Minnesota Adult Education's database** used by all adult education providers in the state, can be found at the SiD Help Center (https://mnabe.zendesk.com/hc/en-us).

If you have any questions about Minnesota Adult Education (ABE) policies, performance or data, contact:

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