**Adult and Community Learning Services (ACLS)**

**To**: Program Directors, Adult Basic Education Teachers, UMass Center for Educational Assessment Staff, SABES Directors, SABES Staff

**From**: Wyvonne Stevens-Carter, Adult Education State Director

**Re:** Revised Assessment Policies, TSTM Academies Application Reminder

**Date**: June 22, 2021

1. **Pre-Testing Policy Update**
* Effective July 1, 2021, the pre-COVID-19 policy that **students must be pre-tested within the first 18 hours of instruction** is reinstituted for FY2022 and beyond. This will ensure a higher percentage of pre-testing.
* Effective July 1, 2021 (i.e., in FY2022 and beyond), **there is no longer an exception to the 18-hour pre-testing policy**. This means that programs using the CLAS-E Reading and the CLAS-E Writing assessments can no longer administer these pre-tests after students have reached 18 attendance hours and must therefore administer these tests within the first 18 hours of instruction.
* ACLS strongly recommends that programs **pre-test students as soon as they are enrolled in the program or even prior to enrollment**. While the policy stipulates that pre-testing can be conducted within the first 18 hours of attendance, ACLS recommends that programs **not wait 18 hours to pre-test students**. (Note: This recommendation does not apply to the MAPT-CCR. See the MAPT-CCR section in Chapter 5 of the ACLS Assessment Policies Manual.)
1. **BEST Plus 2.0 and CLAS E Writing Recertification in FY2022**

Note: In winter 2021, ACLS and UMass CEA will email program directors relevant recertification information and recertification deadlines.

* **In FY2022, annual recertification for BEST Plus 2.0 and CLAS-E Writing scoring will be the same as in FY2021.** UMass CEA staff will email program directors the names and emails of currently certified BEST Plus 2.0 test administrators and CLAS-E Writing scorers. Directors will then respond to the email confirming which test administrators and scorers are current. This will ensure that CEA’s records are up-to-date and ensure that the outreach to administrators and scorers is successful.
* For FY2022, currently certified test administrators and scorers must complete the following to maintain their certification status and continue as an administrator/scorer in FY2023.
* **FY2022 CLAS-E Writing Scoring Recertification Activities**

Practitioners who are eligible for recertification will receive a link to the following materials:

* a video refresher of the CLAS-E Writing Scoring rubrics
* survey to attest to successful completion of recertification activities

Practitioners must:

1. watch the video refresher of the CLAS-E Writing Scoring rubrics
2. complete an attestation that they watched the video
3. update their contact information using the link from the CEA

**Completion of the three steps listed above will serve as the CLAS-E Writing Scoring recertification activities for FY2022**.

* **FY2022 BEST Plus 2.0 Recertification Activities**

Practitioners who are eligible for recertification will receive a link to the following materials:

* A video refresher of the BEST Plus 2.0 rubric and scoring considerations
* survey to attest to successful completion of recertification activities

Practitioners must:

1. watch the video refresher of the BEST Plus 2.0 rubric and scoring considerations
2. complete an attestation that they watched the video
3. update their contact information using the link from the CEA

**Completion of the three steps listed above will serve as the BEST Plus 2.0 recertification activities for FY2022**. All individuals recertifying for BEST Plus 2.0 in this recertification period will obtain a score of R-R-R for tracking purposes.

Programs may choose to watch the videos as a group professional development activity over videoconferencing or allow individual practitioners to watch the video(s) they need independently.

1. **Moving Assessments Forward-Reminder**
* Effective July 1, 2021, the moving assessment forward policy will be:
* **Any assessment administered after April 1, 2021 may be moved forward in FY2022 and used as a pre-test until December 31, 2020.**
* If a student has two previous assessments, the most recent assessment may be moved forward. For example, a student’s test administered in April 2021 (FY2021) can be moved forward and used as a pre-test into the next fiscal year from July 1, 2021 (i.e., FY2022) until December 31, 2021.
* If the student has an assessment administered in April 2021 and another assessment administered in June 2021, **only** the June 2021 assessment can be moved forward.
* If the student leaves before June 30, 2021 and returns after December 31, 2021, the student must be pre-tested again.
1. **Teaching the Skills That Matter Academies Application Deadline Reminder**

There is still time to take advantage of [this free professional development opportunity](https://lincs.ed.gov/state-resources/federal-initiatives/teaching-skills-matter-adult-education/toolkit-overview) from the American Institute for Research (AIR[[1]](#footnote-1)) and send your application now! Join a cohort of adult education teachers to learn effective strategies on how to engage adult learners in problem-based and project-based learning using the nine skills that matter for adult learner academic and job readiness success. This is a unique opportunity to integrate a suite of relevant and rigorous instructional resources into your existing repertoire -- including high-quality lesson plans!

**Participating teachers will be compensated for their time.**

Research shows that the most important factor in student achievement is high-quality teaching. To be most effective, teachers need to engage in professional development, expand their knowledge, sharpen their skills, and engage in collegial sharing and reflective practice. Research also shows that educator PD paired with coaching and careful instructional planning are more likely to lead to student outcomes.

If you want to:

* Teach your students transferrable **skills** that will help them succeed in the 21st century workplace
* Provide instruction focused on **topics** relevant to their lives
* Use **instructional approaches** that blend academic skills and meaningful, relevant content

Then **Teaching the Skills that Matter** is the right fit for you!

Read more about the Teaching the Skills That Matter Academies and apply [here](https://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/frameworks/resources.html). The application deadline of June 30, 2021 is fast approaching.

**Contact information**: For assessment policies and questions related to Teaching Skills That Matter, please contact Dana Varzan-Parker, curriculum, instruction, and assessment coordinator at dana.varzan-parker@mass.gov.

1. AIR is one of the world's largest behavioral and social science research and evaluation organizations. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)