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May 23, 2012

MEMORANDUM

TO: Adult Education Directors – Districts
Adult Education Directors – Florida Colleges
Adult Education CBOs

FROM: Mr. Rod Duckworth, Chancellor, Division of Career and Adult Education

SUBJECT: **Changes in Approved Assessments for NRS Reporting**

CASAS Life and Work Listening Series

The Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) authorizes approved assessments for use by federally funded programs with ESL, ABE, and ASE students. The assessments must be approved by the Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE), in compliance with the National Reporting System (NRS) standards and goals.

The FLDOE has recently been informed that the CASAS Life and Work Listening - 80 Series is not yet approved and that CASAS must submit additional information. This means that approval will not be granted by June 2012. Therefore, OVAE has indicated that the CASAS Life and Work Listening assessments cannot be used for NRS reporting purposes after June 30, 2012. It is important to determine which students might be impacted by the June 30 deadline so that you can make assessment plans now. Students who have been pre-tested with the CASAS Life and Work Listening assessments and have the required number of contact hours should be post-tested by June 30 with the Life and Work Series for reporting purposes.

CASAS guidelines state that there should be 70-100 hours of instruction between pre-test and post-test. An exception to this requirement can be made if instructional evidence is documented to show that the student has gained skills that would justify post-testing.

We will continue the state assessment policy of requiring programs to administer both listening and reading tests to all Adult Education students enrolled in the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program (#9900040). Beginning July 1, 2012, you will report students' initial Educational Functional Level (EFL) and Literacy Completion Points (LCPs) based on reading assessments only. Although you will continue to test students in both skill areas, you will use the reading assessment only for determination of an ESOL course initial EFL. The listening test will be used locally to help guide instruction. For determination of completion, you will compare the reading post-test scale score to the reading pre-test scale score; you will not be authorized to use CASAS listening scores for determination of LCPs that you will report to the state.

BEST Plus

Another assessment for which OVAE/NRS approval will expire in February 2013 is BEST Plus. In general, OVAE will allow programs a period in which to sunset an expiring test and transition to other tests suitable for use in the National Reporting System (NRS). Programs may use the transition time to select new tests, purchase appropriate inventories of assessment materials, and provide training to staff. Specifically, tests with NRS approvals expiring in February 2013 may continue to be used until June 30, 2014. Any use beyond that date will be subject to guidance from OVAE that will be issued after the next round of NRS test reviews which begins on October 1, 2012. The BEST Literacy, Reading and Writing test continues to be approved by OVAE for use through 2017.

If you have any questions about this memo, please do not hesitate to contact Zelda Rogers at Zelda.Rogers@fldoe.org or Mark Baird at Mark.Baird@fldoe.org.