

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Bureau of Early Childhood, Career and Adult Education
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TO: Adult Education Directors
Federal Funded Grantees
Cooperating Eligible Entities

FROM: Paul F. Flinter, Chief

DATE: November 21, 2005

SUBJECT: Adult Education Operational Memorandum # 02-06

- Statewide Policy Forum
- Assessment Policy for Students in GED Preparation
- Fiscal Year (FY) 2007 Preliminary Adult Education Support Percentages
- Adult Education Grant Application Revision—Forms ED-245 and ED-245A
- Connecticut Adult Reporting System (CARS) Updates
- Profile Report
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- Family Learning Curriculum Connections Pilot Project
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Statewide Policy Forum

The second statewide policy forum for Fiscal Year 2005-06 will be held on Friday, January 20, 2006 from 9:00 to 12:00 AM at the Four Points Sheraton in Meriden (for directions please click <http://www.crec.org/atdn/workshops/directions/sheraton4pts.htm>). A detailed agenda will be emailed in a future correspondence.

Assessment Policy for Students in GED Preparation

As we mentioned in Operational Memorandum # 01-06, the U.S. Department of Education – Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) notified the State Department of Education (SDE) to discontinue the use of General Educational Development (GED) practice tests for reporting progress under the National Reporting System (NRS). The SDE was required to implement standardized pre-and-post-testing of students in GED preparation programs.

Consequently, the Connecticut Competency System (CCS) assessment policy for Fiscal Year 2006 was revised to require the implementation of standardized CASAS pre-and-post-testing for students in GED preparation programs. The new policy was presented at the statewide forum on September 23, 2005 and the CCS policy manual can be downloaded from the SDE Web site at

<http://www.state.ct.us/sde/deps/Adult/>. Fiscal Year 2006 is a transition year for the implementation of this policy. Thus, programs may choose to implement this policy in the current year or use this year to plan and implement it next year. Please email Ajit Gopalakrishnan at ajit.gopalakrishnan@po.state.ct.us with the specific month and year the program will begin implementation of this new policy.

Fiscal Year (FY) 2007 Preliminary Adult Education Support Percentages

The Adult Education Preliminary Support Percentages for FY 2007 are now available on the Adult Education Web site. These percentages are based on current law and are considered **preliminary** in nature until approval by the General Assembly. The Regional Education Service Center (RESC) support percentages are based upon the FY 2005 membership and may be subject to change. If you have any questions or concerns please contact Valerie Marino at (860) 807-2130 or valerie.marino@po.state.ct.us.

Adult Education Grant Application Revision—Forms ED-245 and ED-245A

The Adult Education Grant Application Revision form ED-245 and the Supplemental Application form ED-245A for FY 2006 will be due to the Bureau of Early Childhood, Career and Adult Education not later than **February 15, 2006**. These forms will be available on the Adult Education Web site the week of November 28, 2005.

Remember, that the **Budget Revision Form (ED-114)**, a required component of the ED-245 and ED-245A submissions, is **not** available on the Web site. The ED-114 along with an important memorandum from George A. Coleman, Associate Commissioner will be mailed to all provider superintendents, adult education directors, and CEE agency heads the week of November 28, 2005. Please be sure to include the ED-114 with the ED-245 and ED-245A submissions. This year programs must also include a copy of the **current** FY 2006 Local Program Profile with their ED-245 and ED-245A submissions.

Connecticut Adult Reporting System (CARS) Updates

The final CARS Policy Manual for FY 2006 is available on the Department's Web site at <http://www.state.ct.us/sde/deps/adult/accountability/carspolicies.pdf>. Please print and use this version. Some minor changes were made after the CARS training in early September. The footnote was corrected. The data verify list has been updated to include two warnings that were discussed at the training: W209 and W210.

“GED Subsections Passed” is no longer available as a student achievement. Students who may have passed one or more subsections in prior years will see those subsections listed but they will be “grayed out”. Programs can continue to record GED practice test information under Tests > GED Practice. As a result of the new assessment policy for students in GED preparation programs, the reporting of GED practice test information is now optional. Furthermore, the profile report for FY 2006 will not utilize practice test information to determine whether a student completes an instructional level.

The following test forms along with raw/total and scale score ranges have been added to CARS.

Test Type	Series	Level	Form#
Reading	Life and Work	C	185, 186
	Life and Work	D	187, 188
	Life Skills	4A	332, 333
	Citizenship (New series)	A	951, 952, 951X, 952X
Writing			410, 411, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466
Speaking (new test type)	Workforce Learning Systems		273, 274

Profile Report

The Profile Report was implemented through CARS in FY 2004. The relevant and timely information contained in this report has resulted in its being used for critical decision-making by the SDE and by local programs. Over the past year, substantial consideration has been given by leaders and state-level workgroups to the important role that adult education can play in improving Connecticut's economic competitiveness and preparing its residents for continued education or training. The profile report has enabled the SDE to provide a more accurate representation of adult education's successes and challenges especially using the demographic, participation, and performance data. Therefore, the SDE will be removing the "Internal Use Only" label from all profile reports.

Competencies and Basic Skills

The [CASAS competencies](#) form the basis of an integrated curriculum and assessment framework for Connecticut's adult education programs. They identify more than 300 essential skills that youth and adults need to be successful members of families, communities, and the workforce. These critical competencies continue to be refined and validated at state and national levels, based on field research and recommendations from education providers, learners, business and industry representatives, and community-based agencies.

CASAS-trained teachers identify the basic skills embedded in the competencies and teach those basic skills in the context of priority competencies that are targeted for instruction. For the past two years, CASAS has been developing standards in the basic skill areas (e.g. reading, math, listening, etc.) that specify what adults should know and be able to do at various educational functioning levels. CASAS has also been aligning those standards to its numerous assessments.

Draft standards in reading were shared at the Regional Program Facilitator meetings held recently. An updated version of the reading standards along with their correlation to all Life and Work reading assessments will be sent to Program Facilitators in the coming weeks. Basic skill standards and aligned assessments can be valuable in curriculum development and can better connect assessment results to instruction. Program Facilitators will also be notified of future opportunities where additional information about using these standards will be discussed. In the meantime if there are any questions, please contact Don Chao of the Adult Training and Development Network (ATDN) at dchao@crec.org or 860-524-4044 with any questions.

Family Learning Curriculum Connections Pilot Project

The SDE, through the Capitol Region Education Council (CREC)/ATDN, is pleased to announce the Family Learning Curriculum Connections Pilot Project. This new project is an exciting opportunity to strengthen school-family partnerships and build unique collaborations between adult education programs and elementary schools, specifically targeting families of children in kindergarten, first and second grades.

Schools and homes are the two most important contexts of children's learning and development. Research shows that there is a correlation between parents' literacy levels and children's academic achievement when families are engaged in literacy practices. The Family Learning Curriculum Connections Project is designed to link school and home learning by promoting meaningful two-way interactions between parents and teachers around curriculum and learning expectations.

Ten school district teams will be selected to participate and each will receive a \$5,000 mini-grant. Look for the letter and application that were mailed from CREC this week. You should have also received an electronic version from our office. Please contact Gail Brooks-Lemkin at gail.brooks-lemkin@po.state.ct.us or (860) 807-2121 if you have any questions about the project or about the application.

Accommodations for the GED Test in Connecticut

Verification of documented disabilities must occur before a GED candidate can request accommodations during testing. The GED Testing Service requires the use of specific forms for the verification of a disability. These forms must be used if an individual in Connecticut is requesting an accommodation for the GED Test. They can be downloaded at <http://www.acenet.edu/AM/Template.cfm?Section=TestTakersInfo&Template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=11512>. Please contact Carl Paternostro at (860) 807-2110 or carl.paternostro@po.state.ct.us if there are any questions or concerns.

I wish you a happy and bountiful Thanksgiving holiday.

Thank you.