

ATTACHMENT A

Massachusetts Department of Education Policies for Using the TABE Test for Career Centers

Overview

The Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) has content areas that measure reading, language, mathematics, and spelling. There are five overlapping levels – **L** (Literacy, which will not be used), **E** (Easy), **M** (Medium), **D** (Difficult), or **A** (Advanced) that range from GLE 0 to GLE 14.9 (GLE = Grade Level Equivalent). The Locator test is administered to determine the appropriate level of the TABE test to administer to the individual student.

Massachusetts' assessment policy for ABE Reading, ABE Writing, and ABE Math is to use only the TABE Test, Forms 7 and 8, Levels E, M, D, A until the new ABE Assessment is completed.

Basic Assessment Policies

The Massachusetts Department of Education has been charged by the US Department of Education to use assessments that are valid, reliable and comparable to report our students' educational gain. A committee of directors and practitioners across the state from different constituencies of ABE (including Workforce Development) met and went through a process to recommend that our state use the TABE, BEST (and eventually BEST Plus) and REEP assessments tools. Career Center staff will only use the TABE assessment tool, not the BEST, BEST Plus or REEP.

In order for the TABE assessment to accurately reflect students' gains, it is imperative that it be administered and scored as the test developers intended. If testers make what seem like small changes to how test directions are given to students, or give a test for shorter or longer than the recommended test times, the scores lose much of their accuracy. Likewise, efforts at having accurate statewide scores on which to base projections with the US DOE will be compromised. If you have questions about how to administer or score an assessment, please email Jane Schwerdtfeger, Curriculum and Assessment Development Specialist at Department of Education, Adult and Community Learning Services. Her email address is janes@doe.mass.edu.

All staff who administer the TABE assessment must be certified. To become certified staff must attend training offered through the System for Adult Basic Education Support (SABES). Staff who have not received TABE certification may not administer or score the TABE until they have been trained and certified. Additionally, certified career center staff *may not* train other staff to administer and score the TABE.

Required Test Forms and When to Administer

1. Use only TABE Forms 7 and 8; no other forms of the test may be used.
2. The TABE may be given any time after the intake date. This should be the 2nd or a subsequent contact date any time within 3 weeks after the individual's enrollment date.

3. **TABE L** (Literacy level) won't be used—there is little connection between the test questions and the learning standards of the ELA and Math curriculum frameworks. Instead, centers should use the same instrument used last year for students at the GLE 0 – 1.9 level.
4. **Locator Test:** Use the Locator to determine which level of the test to give to a student – E, M, D, or A. It is important to use the Locator--the results of the TABE tests will not be valid if the proper level of test difficulty is not administered. Using the right level of a test is essential to obtain the most accurate measurement of knowledge. It is an un-timed test.

The Locator has reading, mathematics, and language test items, and gives separate scores for each content area. To use the Locator, total the number of correct test items to determine the corresponding level of test to administer.

Locator Test Scores Evaluation Chart			TABE Test Level to Administer
Reading	Mathematics	Language	
6 and below	6 and below	6 and below	E
7 – 10	7 – 11	7 – 9	M
11 – 14	12 – 15	10 – 12	D
15 and above	16 and above	13 and above	A

5. **Use the Complete Battery, not the Survey:** The Complete Battery is a more reliable measure of student knowledge and skill because it has more test items and more breadth for each test objective, compared to the Survey. Also, the standard error of measurement for the Survey Form is too great to obtain reliable measures of progress for students over a year of instruction. The standard error of measurement for the Survey Form was large enough to inaccurately inflate or deflate the students' scores up or down one entire GLE level.

6. **Required Sub-Tests:** Depending on the primary area selected by the student, centers are only required to administer one of the sub-tests below. One area must be selected as the primary area to report educational gain every four months. The Mathematics Computation and Spelling sub-tests are not required (or recommended) for use.

Primary Area	Sub-Test Required	# Test Items	Time
ABE Reading	Reading	50	50 minutes
ABE Writing	Language	55	39 minutes
ABE Math	Applied Mathematics	50	50 minutes

7. **When to Use Different Levels and Forms of the TABE:** Different levels of the TABE can be given for initial, mid-year (if administered), and post-test. Since all levels of TABE are calibrated on the same scale, results may be compared across levels. Never give the same Form (either 7 or 8) of the test at the same Level (either E, M, D, or A) sequentially to a student. In other words, if a student is functioning at the same level, switch Forms; if the student has shown strong progress in class, move to the test at the next level with the same Form.

8. Required Materials

- TABE 7 Complete Battery (includes Examiner's Manual) Levels E, M, D, A
- TABE 8 Complete Battery (includes Examiner's Manual) Levels E, M, D, A
- Practice Exercise and Locator Test
- Answer Sheets: Scoreze for each Form and Level OR CompuScan with Stencils
- Norms Book, Forms 7 and 8

A copy of the TABE Order Form can be obtained by emailing acls@doe.mass.edu and providing the name of One-Stop Career Center you are from.

When You Need to Re-Test Using the TABE

There have been some difficulties about knowing when a student's TABE test score is a reliable measure of what the student knows and is able to do. The Center for Educational Assessment at UMASS Amherst has developed *Guidelines for Re-testing with the TABE, Forms 7/8*. You must check the student's score using the *Guidelines* to ensure the students' scores are accurate. The *Guidelines* are located at the end of this document in Appendix A.

For Reporting, Use Scale Scores, not GLEs

Record scale scores, not GLEs, in MOSES. The scale score is the basic or "primary" score for the TABE, and is used to compute and derive all other scores. Since GLE scores are derived from scale scores, using scale scores to report educational gain gives more accurate results of student achievement. Use the TABE Norms Book (Forms 7 and 8) to convert the number-correct score (the number of test items a student answers correctly on a test) to scale scores. The Norms Book also gives the GLE level for each scale score.

ABE Reading, Writing, and Math Correlations		
OTHER TESTS		
NO SCALE SCORES	GLE LEVEL	NRS LEVEL
Reading, Math, Language	0 – 1.9	Beginning ABE Literacy
Reading, Math, Language	2 – 3.9	Beginning ABE
Reading, Math, Language	4 – 5.9	Low Intermediate ABE
Reading, Math, Language	6 – 8.9	High Intermediate ABE
Reading, Math, Language	9 – 10.9	Low ASE
Reading, Math, Language	11 – 12.9	High ASE
TABE 7 AND TABE 8		
SCALE SCORES	GLE LEVEL	NRS LEVEL
Language: < 392	0 – 1.9	Beginning ABE Literacy
Language: 392 – 490	2 – 3.9	Beginning ABE
Language: 491 – 523	4 – 5.9	Low Intermediate ABE
Language: 524 – 559	6 – 8.9	High Intermediate ABE
Language: 560 - 585	9 – 10.9	Low ASE
Language: >585	11 – 12.9	High ASE

TABE 7 AND TABE 8, continued		
SCALE SCORES	GLE LEVEL	NRS LEVEL
Math: < 314	0 – 1.9	Beginning ABE Literacy
Math: 314 - 441	2 – 3.9	Beginning ABE
Math: 442 – 505	4 – 5.9	Low Intermediate ABE
Math: 506 – 565	6 – 8.9	High Intermediate ABE
Math: 566 – 594	9 – 10.9	Low ASE
Math: > 594	11 – 12.9	High ASE
Reading: < 368	0 – 1.9	Beginning ABE Literacy
Reading: 368 – 460	2 – 3.9	Beginning ABE
Reading: 461 - 517	4 – 5.9	Low Intermediate ABE
Reading: 518 – 566	6 – 8.9	High Intermediate ABE
Reading: 567 – 595	9 – 10.9	Low ASE
Reading: > 595	11 – 12.9	High ASE

* Do not use the TABE to report educational gain for students between GLE 0-1.9.

Special Needs Accommodations

While the TABE offers some accommodation options, ACLS believes more time is needed to explore what types of accommodations are important to set up for students who need them. This January, PAWG II will look at accommodations that might be provided for students with special needs. For now, any student may be given the large print version of the TABE. Administrators may also extend the time limits for administering the TABE to time and a half for any students with a documented formal diagnosis of a learning disability. (“Formal” means the kind of assessments and associated documentation developed through a core evaluation by an appropriately licensed professional.)

Appendix A

Guidelines for Re-testing with TABE 7/8

ABE programs across Massachusetts have encountered difficulty in determining when retesting using different TABE levels is appropriate and when students' observed scores are a reasonably accurate reflection of their abilities.

To recap the situation with the TABE, students are first administered a Locator test consisting of 15-18 items depending on subject area. The number-correct score obtained by a student on the Locator determines the level of the TABE Complete Battery test in a particular subject area to be administered. For each subject area, the Complete Battery has Easy, Medium, Difficult, and Advanced levels, each level consisting of progressively difficult test items.

The problems emerging in many ABE programs with regard to the TABE involve assignment to levels by the Locator test and the reliability and validity of scores from the Complete Battery. ABE instructors noted that the Locator test scores resulted in varying degrees of accuracy for predicting the appropriate Complete Battery test level. This was confirmed by the Center for Educational Assessment staff at UMASS Amherst. Massachusetts ABE instructors contacted ACLS for guidance as to when it is appropriate to retest students and when scores are a reasonable assessment of students' abilities. UMASS staff have provided this guide below:

To determine whether a student's score on any section of the Complete Battery is a reasonable reflection of that student's ability, please do the following:

- First, determine which of the following six charts fits the Form (either 7 or 8) and Test Subject (Reading, or Language, or Applied Mathematics) you administered to a student.
- Once you have chosen the correct chart, find the student's number-correct score for the difficulty level (Easy, Medium, Difficult, or Advanced) you administered to the student.
- For each possible number-correct score, you will be directed to one of three options: (1) retest using an easier difficulty level of the TABE, (2) not retest at all, or (3) retest using a more difficult level of the TABE.

The guidelines presented in Figures 1-6 were developed given careful *statistical* consideration of the standard error of measurement (SEM)¹. The SEM is a statistical estimate of the amount of error to be expected in a particular score from a particular test, and provides the user with a range within which a student's true score is likely to fall. Lower SEM is associated with more precise measurement, while higher SEM means that an individual's score contains more error and is more unreliable. For this reason, SEM is one reasonable indicator of the reliability of test results. An individual student's observed score from a single testing experience is likely to fall within one SEM of the student's true score 68% of the time, and within two SEMs 95% of the time. The guidelines in Figures 1-6 are computed using the statistical properties of the tests to ensure that decisions as to whether or not students should be retested are based on the statistical levels of errors in the scores.

¹ SEM is computed as $SEM = SD\sqrt{1-r}$ where SD is the standard deviation of the test and r is the reliability. For TABE, reliability coefficients provided by the publisher are KR-20 estimates of internal consistency. SDs were taken from Table 8 of the TABE Technical Report, while KR-20 estimates are from Tables 10-26.

Figure 1. TABE 7 – Reading






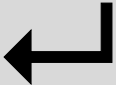
LEVEL E		
If your student's number-correct score is 44 or below, DO NOT RETEST	If your student's number-correct score is 45 or above, RETEST with LEVEL M	
	LEVEL M	
If your student's number-correct score is 18 or below, RETEST with LEVEL E	If your student's number-correct score is between 19 and 43, DO NOT RETEST	If your student's number-correct score is 44 or above, RETEST with LEVEL D
	LEVEL D	
If your student's number-correct score is 19 or below, RETEST with LEVEL M	If your student's number-correct score is between 20 and 45, DO NOT RETEST	If your student's number-correct score is 46 or above, RETEST with LEVEL A
	LEVEL A	
If your student's number-correct score is 20 or below, RETEST with LEVEL D	If your student's number-correct score is 21 or above, DO NOT RETEST	

Figure 2. TABE 8 – Reading







LEVEL E		
If your student's number-correct score is 43 or below, DO NOT RETEST		If your student's number-correct score is 44 or above, RETEST with LEVEL M
	LEVEL M	
If your student's number-correct score is 15 or below, RETEST with LEVEL E	If your student's number-correct score is between 16 and 45, DO NOT RETEST	If your student's number-correct score is 46 or above, RETEST with LEVEL D
	LEVEL D	
If your student's number-correct score is 17 or below, RETEST with LEVEL M	If your student's number-correct score is between 18 and 47, DO NOT RETEST	If your student's number-correct score is 48 or above, RETEST with LEVEL A
	LEVEL A	
If your student's number-correct score is 19 or below, RETEST with LEVEL D		If your student's number-correct score is 20 or above, DO NOT RETEST

Figure 3. TABE 7 - Applied Mathematics







LEVEL E		
If your student's number-correct score is 44 or below, DO NOT RETEST	If your student's number-correct score is 45 or above, RETEST with LEVEL M	
	LEVEL M	
If your student's number-correct score is 19 or below, RETEST with LEVEL E	If your student's number-correct score is between 20 and 45, DO NOT RETEST	If your student's number-correct score is 46 or above, RETEST with LEVEL D
	LEVEL D	
If your student's number-correct score is 17 or below, RETEST with LEVEL M	If your student's number-correct score is between 18 and 46, DO NOT RETEST	If your student's number-correct score is 47 or above, RETEST with LEVEL A
	LEVEL A	
If your student's number-correct score is 21 or below, RETEST with LEVEL D	If your student's number-correct score is 22 or above, DO NOT RETEST	

Figure 4. TABE 8 - Applied Mathematics







LEVEL E		
If your student's number-correct score is 45 or below, DO NOT RETEST		If your student's number-correct score is 46 or above, RETEST with LEVEL M
	LEVEL M	
If your student's number-correct score is 16 or below, RETEST with LEVEL E	If your student's number-correct score is between 17 and 46, DO NOT RETEST	If your student's number-correct score is 47 or above, RETEST with LEVEL D
	LEVEL D	
If your student's number-correct score is 15 or below, RETEST with LEVEL M	If your student's number-correct score is between 16 and 48, DO NOT RETEST	If your student's number-correct score is 49 or above, RETEST with LEVEL A
	LEVEL A	
If your student's number-correct score is 17 or below, RETEST with LEVEL D		If your student's number-correct score is 18 or above, DO NOT RETEST

Figure 5. TABE 7 - Language






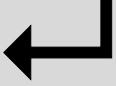

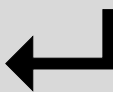




LEVEL E		
If your student's number-correct score is 47 or below, DO NOT RETEST		If your student's number-correct score is 48 or above, RETEST with LEVEL M
<div>  LEVEL M  </div>		
If your student's number-correct score is 21 or below, RETEST with LEVEL E	If your student's number-correct score is between 22 and 48, DO NOT RETEST	If your student's number-correct score is 49 or above, RETEST with LEVEL D
<div>  LEVEL D  </div>		
If your student's number-correct score is 22 or below, RETEST with LEVEL M	If your student's number-correct score is between 23 and 50, DO NOT RETEST	If your student's number-correct score is 51 or above, RETEST with LEVEL A
<div>  LEVEL A  </div>		
If your student's number-correct score is 19 or below, RETEST with LEVEL D		If your student's number-correct score is 20 or above, DO NOT RETEST

Figure 6. TABE 8 - Language

LEVEL E		
If your student's number-correct score is 45 or below, DO NOT RETEST	If your student's number-correct score is 46 or above, RETEST with LEVEL M	
	LEVEL M	
If your student's number-correct score is 18 or below, RETEST with LEVEL E	If your student's number-correct score is between 19 and 48, DO NOT RETEST	If your student's number-correct score is 49 or above, RETEST with LEVEL D
	LEVEL D	
If your student's number-correct score is 18 or below, RETEST with LEVEL M	If your student's number-correct score is between 19 and 49, DO NOT RETEST	If your student's number-correct score is 50 or above, RETEST with LEVEL A
	LEVEL A	
If your student's number-correct score is 18 or below, RETEST with LEVEL D	If your student's number-correct score is 19 or above, DO NOT RETEST	