

Adult Education and Literacy Outcomes Report to the Texas Legislature for State Fiscal Year 2022

Background

Texas Labor Code §315.002 requires the Texas Workforce Commission’s (TWC) three-member Commission to report the Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) program’s educational and employment outcomes to the Texas Legislature by December 1 of every even-numbered year. Additionally, Rider 43 of the General Appropriations Act (GAA), passed by the 87th Texas Legislature, Regular Session (2021), requires TWC to report to the legislature on adult literacy activities and performance measures. Rider 43 further requires that the report “identify the types of literacy programs conducted by providers and the measurable outcomes on literacy performed by the program.”¹ This report fulfills both legislative requirements and includes the following appendices that provide additional details on AEL programs:

- [Appendix A: AEL Performance Measures for State Fiscal Year 2022](#), contains tables that provide AEL enrollment, employment, and educational outcomes of AEL participants in addition to educational functioning level (EFL) gains data.
- [Appendix B: List of AEL Core Grant Recipients](#), provides a list of the current AEL grant recipients (through June 30, 2023) to whom TWC has awarded AEL grant funds for providing AEL services.
- [Appendix C: National Reporting System Approved Tests for Use in AEL Programs](#), provides the list of AEL tests that grant recipients may use for the purpose of identifying an AEL participant’s EFL.

AEL Grant Recipients

On July 1, 2018, TWC awarded AEL providers with multiyear grants funded by the federal Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), as authorized under Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The grant awards are scheduled to end on June 30, 2023. Currently, TWC contracts with 33 grant recipients to provide AEL services. These grants are composed of sole and consortium entities, which include 19 colleges, seven education service centers (ESCs), five independent school districts (ISDs), four Local Workforce Development Boards, and two nonprofit organizations. Twelve of the grant recipients are organized as a consortium and contract with other eligible organizations, such as colleges, ISDs, nonprofits, and ESCs, to provide AEL services. Appendix B provides a list of the 33 AEL core grant recipients.

WIOA requires TWC to award multiyear grants to AEL providers through a competitive process. To fulfill this requirement, TWC issues requests for applications (RFAs) on [Texas SmartBuy](#).

¹ [General Appropriations Act of the 87th Texas Legislature \(Regular Session\), page VII-43, Rider 43](#)

Eligibility for AEL Services

TWC's eligibility requirements for individuals enrolling in AEL services mirror those outlined in WIOA. To be eligible to receive AEL services, an individual must be at least age 16, not enrolled in or required by Texas law to be enrolled in secondary school, and:

- is basic skills deficient;
- does not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and has not achieved an equivalent level of education; or
- is an English Language Learner.

Each of these eligibility criteria indicates that the individual needs academic supports—whether to increase numeracy or literacy skills or improve English fluency—in order to attain an educational or employment goal. Therefore, AEL grant recipients provide all AEL participants basic skills instruction in math, reading, writing, and/or English.

Requirement for Literacy Skill Advancement in All AEL Programs

AEL grant recipients are required to perform a comprehensive assessment of each individual entering into the AEL program. The assessment includes the administration of a test to determine the individual's EFL. The test must be approved by the US Department of Education's (ED) Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) to report AEL participants' information in the National Reporting System (NRS), the reporting system for all agencies administering the federal AEL program.

After fully assessing an individual, AEL grant recipients enroll the participant in the appropriate AEL services based on the participant's educational and employment goals and their EFL. AEL grant recipients must track and report on the outcomes of each participant as well as their skill advancements, referred to as measurable skill gains (MSGs).

In February 2021, ED expanded the ways that participants' progress in reaching educational and employment outcomes are measured and reported. Previously, AEL programs were limited to measuring participant progress mostly through testing.

In the NRS, participants may achieve MSGs by using any of the following six options:

1. Pre- and posttesting using the NRS-approved tests—All participants are pretested with an NRS test, but not all participants are required to be posttested with the same test if they show an MSG through another manner.
2. Successful enrollment in postsecondary education after exiting the AEL program in the same program year
3. Achievement of a Texas Certificate of High School Equivalency (TxCHSE)—AEL programs provide coursework to prepare for the GED exam. TWC is currently overseeing and administering the HSE voucher program, through funding from the Texas Education Agency, to support TxCHSE attainment statewide.
4. Transcript or report card showing satisfactory progress
5. Progress in reaching established milestones set by an employer

6. Passage of an occupational exam or attainment of occupational skills

Of all participants in PY'22 who were pre- and posttested using a TWC-approved test, 68 percent made an EFL gain in at least one of the following competencies: reading, writing, math, speaking (ESL), or listening (ESL).

Appendix B provides a list of TWC-approved tests used to measure a participant's success in completing an EFL gain.

AEL Content Standards

All AEL-funded providers must align curriculum with the TWC AEL Content Standards. First developed in 2016, the Content Standards increased the rigor of the AEL program as well as the relevance of adult education in general by aligning the standards with established assessments and other standards such as the following:

- The Texas College and Career Readiness Standards (TCCRS)
- The End-of-Course Exams for the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR)
- The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)
- The Texas Certificate of High School Equivalency (TxCHSE)
- The Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA)

Approximately every two years, the Content Standards are reviewed, and since inception, there have been multiple revisions to ensure that Texas is responsive to the changing educational needs of adult learners seeking employment and postsecondary education options. Revisions are as follows:

- 2016: Texas AEL Content Standards (new academic standards)
- 2019: Texas AEL Content Standards v.2, Alignment to Industry Clusters: Advanced Manufacturing; Construction and Extraction; Healthcare Sciences; and Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics
- 2021: Texas AEL Content Standards v.3, Standards for Family and Civics
- 2023 (underway): Texas AEL Content Standards v.4, Standards for Digital Literacy

Appendix A: AEL Performance Measures for State Fiscal Year 2022

The Legislative Budget Board (state) defines the AEL program’s performance accountability measures, as published in the GAA, and ED (federal) measures, as negotiated every year.

State targets are both enrollment- and performance outcome–based. Federal measures are performance outcome–based; there are no federal enrollment measures.

During each AEL program year—July 1 to June 30—AEL grant recipients are assigned enrollment and performance measures to meet both state and federal accountability measures.

Enrollment targets, which are TWC-assigned contracted measures, are linked to types of AEL services. Each AEL grant recipient is assigned enrollment targets in the following categories:

- **Intensive AEL Services:** This service model includes workplace literacy programs, services for internationally trained professionals, and transition to reentry and post-release services for incarcerated individuals.
- **Integrated Education and Training (IET) Services:** This service model provides basic skills instruction in reading, writing, and math, which is contextualized to support workforce training. (For example, a participant receives instruction in reading and writing skills specific to the health care field while training to be a phlebotomist.) IET services for English Language Learners also include a civics component.
- **Overall Participant Enrollment:** Each AEL grant recipient is assigned an overall enrollment target. This target is composed of participants in Intensive and IET services, as well as individuals receiving services for TxCHSE preparation, bridge programs to postsecondary education and training, and English as a Second Language programs.

Table 1: Participants Enrolled

| Participants Served (September 2021–August 2022) | Number |
|---|---------------|
| Number of AEL Participants Served “Participants” are defined as individuals who complete at least 12 instructional hours. | 61,668 |
| Number of AEL Participants in Career Pathways Courses See table with Career Pathways by year for more details. | 11,696 |
| Integrated Education and Training IET includes basic skills instruction in reading, writing, and math contextualized to support workforce training. | 7,458 |
| Work-Based Services Services are provided in collaboration with an employer or employee organization at a workplace or off-site location and are designed to improve the productivity of the workforce. | 757 |
| ESL Professionals Services are provided to professionals with degrees or credentials from their native countries. | 3,453 |

| Participants Served (September 2021–August 2022) | Number |
|---|---------------|
| Reentry Corrections Services are provided to promote successful adjustment to the community and prevent recidivism. | 723 |
| Number of Distance Learners (any AEL students with more than zero proxy hours) “Distance Learner” is defined as any student who receives asynchronous instructional learning. | 25,669 |

Table 2: Employment Outcomes

| Outcomes (Employment) | Numerator | Denominator | Rate |
|--|------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| AEL Participants Employed and/or Enrolled in the 2nd Quarter after Program Exit (exiters July 20–June 21) Denominator: All participants who exited the program during the reporting period Numerator: The number of participants who are either employed or enrolled in a postsecondary education or training program in the 2nd quarter after exiting the AEL program | 13,022 | 31,851 | 40.88% |
| AEL Participants Employed and/or Enrolled in the 2nd–4th Quarters after Program Exit (exiters January 20–December 20) Denominator: The number of participants who were employed or enrolled in postsecondary education during the 2nd quarter after exit Numerator: The number of participants who exit and were employed or enrolled in postsecondary education in the 3rd and 4th quarters after exit | 10,818 | 15,995 | 67.63% |

Table 3: Educational Outcomes (Credential Rate)

| Outcomes (Credential Rate) | Numerator | Denominator | Rate |
|---|-----------|-------------|--------|
| <p>Percent of High School Diplomas or HSEs Issued to Adults as a Result of Program (exiters June 21–May 22)²</p> <p>Denominator: AEL exiters who were enrolled in an HSE program (took all components of the HSE test) Numerator: AEL exiters who received a Texas Certificate of High School Equivalency (TxCHSE)</p> | 2,657 | 4,205 | 63.19% |
| <p>Credential Attainment Rate for IETs (exiters January 20–December 20)</p> <p>Denominator: AEL exiters who were enrolled in an IET program</p> <p>Numerator: AEL exiters who received a credential within a year of exit</p> <p>Note: This measure aligns with the federal methodology for credential attainment rate.</p> | 1,795 | 4,887 | 36.73% |

² The deadline for exiters to obtain the HSE was August 31, 2022.

| Outcomes (Credential Rate) | Numerator | Denominator | Rate |
|--|------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| <p>Credential Attainment Rate for Non-IETs (exiters January 20–December 20)</p> <p>Note: This measure aligns with the federal methodology for credential attainment rate.</p> | 639 | 2,388 | 26.76% |

Table 4: Outcomes (EFL Gains)

| Outcomes (EFL Gains) This performance supports a federal performance measure. | Numerator | Denominator | Rate |
|--|------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| <p>Percent of AEL Participants Who Completed the Level in which They Are Enrolled (participants September 21–August 22)</p> <p>Denominator: All AEL participants</p> <p>Numerator: AEL participants who made an MSG through pre/posttesting within the reporting period</p> | 18,711 | 61,668 | 30.34% |

Table 5: Career Pathways Enrollments

| Number of AEL Participants in Career Pathways Courses by SFY | |
|---|--------|
| SFY'19 September 18–August 19 | 11,185 |
| SFY'20 September 19–August 20 | 11,341 |
| SFY'21 September 20–August 21 | 9,782 |
| SFY'22 September 21–August 22 | 11,696 |
| Unduplicated Total for SFY'19–'22 | 37,420 |
| SFY'23 September 22–August 23 (projected—Avg of SFY'19–'22) | 11,001 |
| SFY'24 September 23–August 24 (projected—Avg of SFY'19–'22) | 11,001 |
| Projected Total SFY'19–'24 ³ | 59,422 |

³ The SFY'23 SFY'24 totals were added to the unduplicated total for SFY'19–'22 to calculate the projected total for SFY'19–'24.

Appendix B—List of AEL Core Grant Recipients

- Amarillo College
- Abilene Independent School District
- Angelina County Junior College
- Austin Community College
- Brazos Valley Council of Governments
- Brownsville Independent School District
- Central Texas College
- Community Action, Inc., of Central Texas
- Dallas County Local Workforce Development Board
- Denton Independent School District
- Grayson College
- Grayson College (Collin County)
- Houston–Galveston Area Council
- Howard College (Concho Valley) and Howard College (Permian Basin)
- Laredo Community College
- Literacy Council of Tyler
- McLennan Community College
- Midland College
- Navarro College
- Odessa College
- Paris Junior College (North Central) and Paris Junior College (Northeast)
- Region 1 Education Service Center
- Region 2 Education Service Center
- Region 5 Education Service Center
- Region 9 Education Service Center
- Region 17 Education Service Center (Permian Basin) and Region 17 Education Service Center (South Plains)
- Region 20 Education Service Center
- Southwest Texas Junior College
- Workforce Solutions Tarrant County
- Temple College
- Texarkana College
- Victoria College
- Weatherford Independent School District
- Ysleta Independent School District

Appendix C—National Reporting System—Approved Tests for Use in AEL Programs

OCTAE determines which tests AEL programs may use to report performance through the NRS.⁴ Each December, TWC must submit to OCTAE the names of the tests that will be used in the AEL program for the following program year. OCTAE must approve this policy each year.

| Test Name | Type of Test | Content Domains Tested | Approved by TWC for Use in Texas? |
|---|------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| Tests of Adult Basic Education 11&12 (TABE 11&12) | Adult Basic Education | Literacy/English, Language Arts, and Mathematics | Yes |
| Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) Reading GOALS | Adult Basic Education | Literacy/English, Language Arts | Yes |
| Massachusetts Adult Proficiency Test— College and Career Readiness (MAPT-CCR) for Reading | Adult Basic Education | Reading | No |
| Massachusetts Adult Proficiency Test— College and Career Readiness (MAPT-CCR) for Mathematics | Adult Basic Education | Mathematics | No |
| Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) Math GOALS Series | Adult Basic Education | Mathematics | Yes |
| Basic English Skills Test (BEST) Literacy | English as a Second Language | Reading and Writing | Yes |
| Basic English Skills Test (BEST) Plus 2.0 | English as a Second Language | Speaking and Listening | Yes |

⁴ *The Federal Register* Notice, Tests Determined to Be Suitable for Use in the National Reporting System for Adult Education, may be accessed at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/09/23/2022-20684/tests-determined-to-be-suitable-for-use-in-the-national-reporting-system-for-adult-education>.

| Test Name | Type of Test | Content Domains Tested | Approved by TWC for Use in Texas? |
|---|------------------------------|--|--|
| Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS) Life and Work Listening Assessments (LW Listening) | English as a Second Language | Listening | Yes |
| Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS) Reading Assessments (Life and Work, Life Skills, Reading for Citizenship, Reading for Language Arts—Secondary Level) | English as a Second Language | Reading | Yes |
| Tests of Adult Basic Education Complete Language Assessment System English (TABE CLAS-E). | English as a Second Language | Reading and Writing, Listening, and Speaking | Yes |