

TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION LETTER

ID/No: WD 08-05

Date: January 13, 2005

Key Word: TANF/Choices;
Adult Basic Education

To: Local Workforce Development Board Executive Directors
Commission Executive Staff
Integrated Service Area Managers
Commission Local Offices

From: Mimi Purnell, Acting Director, Workforce Development Division

Subject: **Test of Adult Basic Education Forms 9&10**

PURPOSE:

To provide Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) with information on release of the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) forms 9&10—the statewide literacy assessment for Choices individuals.

REFERENCES:

United States Department of Education *Federal Register* Notice, issued May 11, 2004, and entitled “List of Approved ‘Ability to Benefit’ (ATB) Tests and Passing Scores” (Vol. 69, No. 91)
Texas Workforce Commission Choices Rules: 40 TAC §811.22(e)(1)(B)
Choices: A Comprehensive Guide, Section B-600.4.2, Literacy Assessment

FLEXIBILITY RATINGS:

No Local Flexibility (NLF): This rating indicates that Boards must comply with the federal and state laws, rules, policies, and required procedures set forth in this WD Letter and have no local flexibility in determining whether and/or how to comply. Federal and state laws, rules, policies, and required procedures with a “No Local Flexibility” rating are indicated by the acronym, **NLF**, in the margin to the right of the applicable paragraph. Additionally, all information with a “No Local Flexibility” rating is indicated by “must” or “shall.”

Failure to comply with the federal and state laws, rules, policies, and required procedures with a “No Local Flexibility” rating may result in corrective action, up to and including sanction and penalty.

Local Flexibility (LF): This rating indicates that Boards have local flexibility in determining whether and/or how to implement guidance or recommended practices set forth in this WD Letter. All guidance or recommended practices with a “Local Flexibility” rating are indicated by the acronym, **LF**, located in the margin to the right of the applicable paragraph. Additionally, guidance or recommended practices with a “Local Flexibility” rating are indicated by “may” or “recommend.”

Boards are not subject to corrective action for failure to comply with guidance or recommended practices with a “Local Flexibility” rating.

BACKGROUND:

On May 11, 2004, the U.S. Secretary of Education gave notice in the *Federal Register* that:

the CTB/McGraw-Hill Ability-to-Benefit Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE): (Reading, Total Mathematics, and Language)—Forms 7 and 8, Level A, Complete Battery and Survey test is being removed from the list of approved Ability-to-Benefit (ATB) tests.

As of September 8, 2004, only the tests and passing scores listed in the notice may be used.

The use of these tests applies to institutions that use TABE to determine whether a student who does not have a high school diploma—or its recognized equivalent—is eligible to receive funds under any Title IV, Higher Education Act program including:

- Federal Pell Grant;
- Federal Family Education Loan;
- William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan;
- Federal Perkins Loan;
- Federal Work-Study;
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant; and
- the Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership (LEAP) program.

In April 2003, CTB/McGraw Hill released TABE 9&10, which:

- aligns with the latest changes in national standards for adult education programs;
- meets the needs of new federal legislation for workforce improvement programs; and
- makes it easier to assess skills that are essential for employability and career advancement.

These new tests are designed to help adult students assess their basic skills, prepare to take the recently revised General Educational Development (GED) test, and further their educational, career, and life goals. TABE 9&10 continues to cover core reading, language, and math skills, and offers optional tests in language mechanics, vocabulary, and spelling. New advanced-level, criterion-referenced tests in writing, social studies, science, and algebra/geometry link TABE 9&10 even more closely to the new advanced-content areas of the GED.

Currently, Choices individuals are assessed using TABE Locator tests to determine which TABE 7&8 Survey level to administer. At this time, the U.S. Department of Education’s removal of TABE 7&8 does not directly affect

Choices individuals who are administered these tests for the purpose of determining time limits. Eventually, however, CTB/McGraw Hill will phase TABE 7&8 out of production.

This WD Letter supersedes and rescinds WD Letter 114-99, issued December 17, 1999, and entitled “Procedural Change in Administering the Test of Adult Basic Education to Choices Clients.”

PROCEDURES:

Boards must notify all staff working with Choices individuals to replace TABE 7&8 Locator and Survey tests with new TABE 9&10 Locator and Survey tests.

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However, Boards may:

LF

- implement the change immediately; or
- wait until they deplete their current supplies of TABE 7&8 materials.

Boards may return tests that are still in the original, unbroken packages to CTB/McGraw Hill for credit.

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Boards must continue to use SUPERA, the literacy assessment instrument for Spanish-speaking Choices individuals who cannot communicate in English.

NLF

Boards must continue to make TABE Survey scores of Choices individuals available to Texas Education Agency (TEA) grant recipients when individuals are referred to adult education programs, which TEA administers.

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Boards must continue to enter TABE scores into The Workforce Information System of Texas (TWIST). The procedures for entering TABE scores in TWIST will remain the same.

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Additional information on administering TABE and entering TABE scores in TWIST will be available in Section B600.4.2 of *Choices: A Comprehensive Guide* within one week of the issuance of this WD Letter. The guide is on the Texas Workforce Commission’s Web site at:

<http://www.twc.state.tx.us/boards/guides/choicesguide.pdf>.

Boards may order TABE 9&10 Locator and Survey tests from CTB/McGraw Hill online at <http://www.ctb.com> or by calling 1-888-538-9547.

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ACTIONS REQUIRED:

Boards must ensure that appropriate staff is apprised of and complies with the requirements in this WD Letter.

INQUIRIES:

Direct inquiries regarding this WD Letter to the assigned contract manager for your local workforce development area.

Rescissions: WD Letter 114-99

Expiration: Continuing