



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Adult Education Directors
Federally Funded Grantees
Cooperating Eligible Entities

FROM: June Sanford, Bureau Chief
The Adult Education Unit
Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education

DATE: May 27, 2016

SUBJECT: Adult Education Operational Memorandum # 04-16

Contents

Statewide Meetings

- Next Policy Forum: June 10, 2016
- Policy Forums for 2016-17
- Meetings for Program Facilitators

Grants and Applications

- Adult Education State Grant Statement of Expenditure Reports
- Adult Education State Grant Final Grant Award Letters
- Federal Adult Education Grant

Assessment, Accountability and Data Management

- Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) for National Reporting System (NRS) for Adult Education
- Connecticut Adult Reporting System (CARS)

Program Updates

- National External Diploma (NEDP)
- General Educational Development

(GED) Professional Development

- College and Career Readiness Standards
- Teacher Evaluation

CSDE Initiatives

- Workforce Development
- Integrated English Language/Civics
- Developing Career Pathways in Adult Education

Statewide Meetings

Next Policy Forum: June 10, 2016

The last policy forum for FY 2015-16 will be held on **Friday, June 10, 2016**, from 9 a.m.-12 p.m. at the Courtyard by Marriott, 4 Sebethe Drive, Cromwell, CT. Directions are available at www.marriott.com/hotels/maps/directions/bdlhc. Directors are encouraged to bring at least one program facilitator to the forum.

All handouts **will be e-mailed** to directors prior to the policy forum meeting date. Please be sure to bring a copy with you. **No copies of handouts will be distributed at the policy forum.**

Policy Forums for 2016-17

For FY 2016-17, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) will hold Statewide Policy Forums on the following dates from 9 a.m.-12 p.m.:

- Friday, September 30, 2016
- Friday, January 13, 2017
- Friday, June 9, 2017

Policy Forums for FY 2016-17 will continue to be held at the Courtyard by Marriott, 4 Sebethe Drive, Cromwell, CT.

Meetings for Program Facilitators for 2016-17

The statewide meeting for program facilitators only will be held in the afternoon of September 30, 2016, from 1:30-4 p.m. at the Courtyard by Marriott. Any important or critical updates relative to the Connecticut Competency System (CCS) will be discussed at this meeting.

- **Regional Facilitator Meetings for the Fall of FY 2016-17**

| | | |
|------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| October 20, 2016 | 1-3 p.m. | East Haven Adult Education |
| October 21, 2016 | 9:30 a.m.-12 p.m. | CREC Coltsville |
| October 27, 2016 | 1:30-3:30 p.m. | Waterbury Adult Education |

Grants and Applications

Adult Education State Grant Final Grant Award Letters

For FY 2015-16, Final Grant Award Notification Letters and Budgets (ED-114) have been disseminated to all school districts via the CSDE's Prepayment Grant System. Adult Education Directors and Cooperating Eligible Entities (CEE) Agency Heads, should contact their district's business office to obtain a copy of the ED-114 and Grant Award Letter. It is important to remember that Grant Award Notification Letters reflect a district's state grant allocation/entitlement for FY 2015-16. The final May payment received by districts is predicated upon adult education expenditure adjustments from the prior year (FY 2014-15) and the ED-245/A Adult Education Revision Applications. The final cap on adult education state grant funds for FY 2015-16 was 7.01 percent.

Adult Education State Grant Statement of Expenditure Report

For the Adult Education State Grant, the FY 2015-16 Statement of Expenditure Report, Form ED-141, must be submitted to the Division of Finance and Internal Operations by **September 1, 2016**. The ED-141 is required for every school district that received adult education state funds whether as a provider, a cooperator or a CEE. The ED-141 is an electronic submission and is usually completed by someone in your district's business office. Therefore, please be sure that you discuss the data required for submission with your business office. The ED-141 should reflect those line item expenditure amounts requested in the Adult Education State Grant Revision Forms (ED-245 and ED-245A). For additional information regarding the Statement of Expenditure report, please contact Marcy Reed at marcy.reed@ct.gov.

Federal Program Improvement Project (PIP) Grants

PIP Continuation Grant Applications for the Workforce Investment Act, Title II - Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, are due to the CSDE on **Friday, June 3, 2016**. We expect to fund all eligible programs. We will be reviewing all applications and providers will be notified of any changes in the grant awards as soon as reviews have been completed.

Assessment, Accountability and Data Management

CASAS Assessments for NRS Reporting Purposes

Adult education programs may continue to use CASAS Life and Work Reading Series and CASAS Life Skills Math Series for NRS purposes through June 30, 2017.

CASAS Life and Work Reading Series forms:

Appraisal: Form 80
Level A: 81/82, 81X/ 82X
Level B: 83/84
Level C: 185/186
Level D: 187/188
Level A-Citizenship: 951/952, 951X952X

CASAS Life Skills Math Series forms:

Appraisal: Form 50
Level A: 31/32
Level B: 33/34
Level C: 35/36
Level D: 37/38

CASAS Secondary School Assessment Series forms:

Level D 513/514 Reading
505/506 Math

Connecticut Adult Reporting System (CARS)

Data Entry Deadline

As outlined in the CARS policy manual, all data entry for the FY 2015-16 that includes information relative to learner demographics, entry status, reasons enrolled, enrollments, attendance, achievements, credits earned, credits transferred and all appraisal and pre-post assessments **must be entered in CARS by July 22, 2016**. After this date, the CARS system will be locked and no data entry for FY 2015-16 will be possible.

To ensure the completeness of the data, it is recommended that program administrators compare the Program Profile report (see the CARS Web site under the “Reports” menu) for 2015-16, with the same report from the prior year. If the data appear incomplete, then class-level reports within CARS can provide insights into data that may not have been entered.

Programs must also use the “data verify” feature on the CARS Web Site to ensure that their data are error free. Remember, “warnings” indicate data anomalies and may require corrective action while “errors” must be corrected unless indicated in writing by the CSDE.

CARS Training for 2016-17

Training for new and experienced CARS users will be held on the following dates:

- **Experienced Users Training - Conference Call Sessions**

| | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------------|
| Thursday, August 25, 2016 | 9-11 a.m. | Register by August 22, 2016 |
| Wednesday, August 31, 2016 | 1-3 p.m. | Register by August 26, 2015 |
| Wednesday, September 28, 2016 | 1-3 p.m. | Register by September 26, 2016 |

- **New Users Hands-on Training at the CSDE in Middletown**

| | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|
| Wednesday, September 21, 2016 | 9 a.m.-1 p.m. | Register by September 7, 2016 |
| Wednesday, October 19, 2016 | 9 a.m.-1 p.m. | Register by October 12, 2016 |

To register for any of the above trainings, please e-mail gina.hoag@ct.gov, with the name, e-mail address of the participant and the date of the trainings session **by the registration date above**. Critical information about data collection policies and practices are conveyed at these sessions. It is the expectation of the CSDE that at least one person from each adult education program participate in one of the Experienced Users training opportunities being offered.

Data Collection Forms

Changes and additions have been made to the CARS Data Entry forms for 2016-17. These forms will be made available by June 10, 2016, on our Adult Education Web site at [CT Adult Education](#).

Program Updates

National External Diploma Program (NEDP)

In order to continue working in the program next year, all current NEDP advisor/assessors must attend at least **one** annual meeting. The next meeting will take place on **Friday, June 3, 2016**, at the **New Haven Adult Education Center**. Training for new advisor/assessors will be held in August at a date to be determined.

Important: Each NEDP program must have at least two certified scorers for the new NEDP Written Prompt used in the Diagnostic phase of the program. Those who have not completed this requirement will not be able to administer the NEDP at their site until this is resolved. Information about **recertification** was sent out by CASAS in April.

As a reminder:

- Staff certified on or before June 30, 2015, will need to be recertified prior to July 1, 2016.
- Staff certified on July 1, 2015, or after, are valid until June 30, 2017.

The training module for the Written Prompt has been enhanced in the past few months and can be accessed through: CASAS.org→Online Training→CASAS Recertification

Please be sure to select Recertification.

Contact Susan Pierson at susan.pierson@ct.gov with any questions.

General Educational Development Tests (GED®)

1. GED Testing Service has recommended a recalibration of the GED® test passing score and the addition of two new performance levels. These enhancements have now been applied in most states and were made after extensive analysis of test-takers' performance data. More information is available at [GED Testing Service](#).
2. Adult Education providers are prompted to encourage teachers to use the Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) in their classrooms. They are among the most helpful tools for educators working to achieve student success on the GED® test and are available at [GED Testing Service for Educators](#). The PLDs provide descriptions of the specific skills test-takers demonstrate at each performance level of the test – both for the GED® test and the GED® Ready practice test.
3. There are options available to test takers who think their constructed responses were scored incorrectly. While the system the GED Testing Service uses to score constructed responses is highly reliable and accurate, test takers may believe they deserve a higher score on their constructed responses. If a test taker wants to challenge their constructed response score, they can contact customer support at 1-877-EXAM-GED to request a re-score. The fee is \$50 per challenged response. If the challenge results in a score change, the \$50 will be returned to the test taker. If the challenge does not result in a score change, GED Testing Service will retain the fee.

4. CASAS recently released a preliminary study that examines the relationship between CASAS reading and math scores to the GED Ready[®] practice test results in Reasoning through Language Arts (RLA) and Mathematical Reasoning.
5. The *Assessment Guide for Educators* is a frontline resource for adult educators and administrators to better understand the new GED[®] assessment. It dissects the new assessment and explains the decisions behind new item types, assessment targets and other issues.
6. The CSDE is working with the Adult Training and Development Network (ATDN) staff to offer relevant professional development to teachers for all four content areas of the 2014 GED[®] test.

For questions or concerns regarding the GED[®], please contact June Sanford at 860-807-2056 or june.sanford@ct.gov until June 30, 2016, and Glen Peterson at 860-713-6915 or glen.peterson@ct.gov from July 1, 2016, to September 30, 2016.

Professional Development

College and Career Readiness Standards

The CSDE's Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, in partnership with ATDN, will continue to focus this year's professional development on College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) in the areas of math, reading, writing and English language instruction. This focus is in response to the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE), the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), and the adult high school completion programs.

Over this past school year, approximately 300 teachers have been trained in the 100 series. ATDN will continue to train more teachers in that series, as well as in the new 200 series. In order to ease the burden of sending teachers to training, a stipend application was e-mailed from Susan Pierson on May 13, 2016, to all providers. Once teachers attend training and complete all required assignments, a small stipend will be paid to the program.

If your program still needs to have teachers trained, please review the ATDN schedule on their Web site at [CREC ADTN WEEBLY](#) for the remaining 2016 school year.

Teacher Evaluation

In 2012, educator evaluation in Connecticut was overhauled through a combination of statutory changes and guidelines established by the Performance Evaluation Advisory Committee (PEAC). Adult education programs were given flexibility from full implementation of the state model due to the unique settings and structures of adult education programs. However, because Adult Education educators hold Connecticut certification, all programs are required to evaluate staff annually by July 2017 (FY 2018). Educator evaluation is also one component of the Program Compliance and Quality Review (PCQR).

Programs can elect to use either:

- The Adult Education Educator Evaluation Plan developed under the direction of the CSDE; or
- the plan designed and required by their district that has been submitted to CSDE for approval—this may be the SEED model, the Permissive Pilot for Adult Education or a district-developed hybrid.

All evaluators are expected to hold a 092 certification. For those adult education coordinators/directors who do not have 092 certification, evaluators may be permitted to perform the duties of a complimentary evaluator (data collection); however, evaluations must be discussed and approved by an 092 certified administrator having responsibility and supervision over the adult education program and the coordinator/director.

All evaluators using the Adult Educator Evaluation Plan are expected to attend a two-part training series that includes:

- Adopting Evaluation for Adult Education Professionals: plan overview and orientation; and
- Effective Feedback for Adult Education Instruction: the observation process, data collection, matching data to the rubric and providing high-quality feedback.

A certificate of completion will be issued after attending both sessions. Training will be scheduled at a variety of times and locations. Check the EDUCATION CONNECTION ATDN site at www.educationconnection.org/atdn for details.

CSDE Initiatives

Workforce Development

This coming year, the CSDE will provide an opportunity to explore the essential topics specific to workforce development, such as collaborating with Workforce Development Boards, developing job shadowing opportunities for adult learners, college and career transitions and career pathways, including I-BEST. This will help us to expand our knowledge base so that our system is better prepared to assist its students in successful transitions to postsecondary education, training and/or employment.

Integrated English Language/Civics

With the passage of the WIOA, the English Language Civics (EL/Civics) grant has been renamed to reflect the new requirements established by the expectations contained in WIOA. Now referred to as Integrated English Language/Civics (IEL/Civics), classroom activities must include preparing adults for employment in in-demand industries and occupations and developing of student career portfolios with curriculum focused on the skills necessary for the workplace. In addition, programs are expected to coordinate with their local workforce system.

Professional development forums will be offered to grantees with an invitation extended to all ESL classroom teachers who express interest in these new requirements. Forums will include topics such as the development of career portfolios, workplace essential skills and effective contextualization of ESL instruction. Participants will be expected to test various methods in their classrooms and provide feedback for the benefit of the larger learning community.

Developing Career Pathways in Adult Education

With the passage of WIOA into law and the release of the Vice President's Ready to Work report, the role of career pathways systems in improving our nation's economy is more important than ever. Currently, Connecticut is receiving technical assistance through the *Moving Pathways Forward* Project. Virtual mentoring support is helping us to examine Connecticut's current career pathways activities and to implement and identify priority components for further development. The CSDE has a Career Pathways Advisory Group. This group is currently identifying project goals and activities and planning steps that will strengthen and expand key career pathways systems components in adult education.

Stay tuned! We will be making plans in the fall to offer training for these initiatives.

JS