

Below are the questions verbatim as submitted at the Technical Assistance workshops held on January 16, 2013, and the appropriate responses from the Office of Adult Education.

Question	Answer
PANEL DISCUSSION	
Walled Lake - You charge \$400 if the participant does not want to pre/post-test. How do you get the money if they left the program?	The fee is not for missing the test; the fee would be the cost of tuition to take the class without the assessment testing requirement. We have not yet had a student pay tuition. When given the choice, they choose to take the pre/post-test.
NRS TABLES / PERFORMANCE	
What is an EFL gain?	EFL stands for educational functioning level. An EFL gain or educational gain means the participant completes or advances one or more EFLs from the starting level as measured by a state-approved assessment test upon entry into the program. An EFL roughly equates to 2 grade levels.
What is the definition of "Response Rate" on NRS Table 5? What input into MAERS is considered a response?	On NRS Table 5, the response rate is defined as the percentage of participants that responded to the survey out of the total number of participants in that cohort (previously with that goal). For example, if there are 10 participants in a cohort requiring follow up, and 4 respond, then the response rate is 40%. NRS requires a response rate of 50% or greater for the outcome to be considered valid. The entry of follow up data into MAERS, whether the participant achieved the measure or not, is considered a response.
How are weighted averages calculated?	On NRS Table 5, the weighted average percent achieving outcome is calculated based on the percentage that achieved the measure out of the number responding to the survey. For example, if there are 10 participants in a cohort (previously with that goal), 4 responded to the survey, and 2 achieved the outcome, then the weighted average achievement is 50% (2/4).

For programs that have small numbers (2 to 5) participants in an EFL, if just a couple leave it is impossible to meet the benchmark. Is there any way to account for this?	No, there is no adjustment made based on the number of participants within the benchmark per NRS requirements.
If a student drops prior to 12 hours of instruction do they count against you?	Participants with less than 12 hours of instruction are not included in the NRS tables, but all participants with a pre-test are included in the post-test rate.
Are participants who are entered into MAERS but do not have any (0) instructional hours included in the pre/post-test rate?	All participants with a pre-test, regardless of the number of instructional hours, are included in the post-test rate. Programs may choose to delete the pre-test record for any participants with zero (0) instructional hours to avoid negatively impacting the post-test rate.
ASSESSMENT POLICY	
Is GAIN expiring as an NRS-approved assessment in February 2013?	No, the NRS just announced that the deadline has been extended to September 30, 2013. https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2013/01/25/2013-01574/extension-of-approval-period-for-certain-tests-used-in-the-national-reporting-system-for-adult
Are participants who exit/drop before reaching the minimum hours required to post-test counted in the post-test rate?	Yes, all participants with a pre-test regardless of the number of instructional hours are included in the post-test rate.
Are programs penalized if a participant is not tested at 40 hours but leaves at less than 60? Sometimes we know a student is not making progress by 40 hours and 60 hours makes a difference, but we can't hold them that long.	Yes, because there is no post-test in MAERS and therefore no way to show educational gain. Programs must maintain a post-test rate of 65 % or higher. It is understood wanting to wait to post-test until the participant has made progress but the lack of a post-test negatively impacts the program's performance.
K-12 merit allows for "testing out" to demonstrate mastery. Credit is then granted. If we allow a like testing to demonstrate mastery, we can retain students up to this test – but we cannot enter their post-test since they will not accrue. (FINAL UNIT TEST, ETC.)	Awarding of high school credits is at local district's discretion; however, any participant that receives instruction must adhere to the assessment policy.

<p>Is there any guidance for retention after testing to reach required hours to allow for MAERS data entry of the post-test?</p>	<p>Please plan to attend with teachers, "Student Persistence: Why they leave and what we can do to help them stay" at our February Institute. To register, go to http://www.maepd.org/training.html.</p>
<p>Are the programs that reached 65% or higher post-test rate only Adult Ed or do they have other programs they are responsible for (e.g., Alternative Ed, Kindergarten Round Up, etc.)?</p>	<p>All programs are different but many do offer other programs besides adult education.</p>
<p>I give a CASAS, the score is low. I can't give the next highest, they will do very poorly. Now I can't give the lower test – do I give the same test?</p>	<p>Yes, you would give the equivalent test.</p>
<p>All my students take the TABE survey at registration. Some choose instruction in Science and Social Studies. After 40 hours, "a post-test can only be administered in the same subject/assessment area where instructions are provided" so what post-test should be given?</p>	<p>They can only be tested in reading in this example. Federal and state policy requires that participants be assessed at a minimum in reading, writing, or mathematics.</p>
<p>How do you see post-testing when new GED test comes out in 2014?</p>	<p>The post-testing requirements will stay the same. The new GED test will not impact assessment requirements.</p>
<p>Any suggestions on how to improve post testing in institutional programs?</p>	<p>Communication and collaboration between local jail programs or Michigan Department of Corrections and community adult education programs is recommended to create a system where everyone knows when a participant is being transferred or released.</p>
<p>If students pass the official GED test (all 5) why must we show post-test?</p>	<p>It is a federal and state requirement that all participants must be pre and post-tested during each program year. The GED tests are not accepted as assessment tests.</p>

<p>40 hour min to 60 hrs. max. for TABE post testing, I was told by one of the ladies from your office for those students who do stay we may post test later than 60 hours – still ok? (At today's workshop, Sue Johnson indicated we may post test at 40 hours, then post-test again, if student is still there – delete 1st – that's ok?)</p>	<p>You can post-test a second time as long as the participant has reached the required minimum publishers guidelines for instruction hours to post-test. NRS requires a pre and post-test and the longer a participant stays in a program, the more likely they are to achieve a higher educational gain. Per the publisher's testing guidelines for TABE: Forty (40) hours minimum to 60 hours maximum for levels 1-4 (ABE), Thirty (30) hours minimum to 59 hours maximum for levels 5 and 6, and using the 9 & 10 same form 120 hours of instruction is required. Yes, you would delete the prior post-test in MAERS as only one pre-test and one post-test is allowed in MAERS per program year, unless dually enrolled in ESL.</p>
<p>Can we use 85R + 86R, 187R + 188R, 84R pre and 83R post? (CASAS)</p>	<p>If we understand this question correctly, it is asking if these pre and post-test combinations can be used. In CASAS, 83R and 84R are level B tests; 85R and 86R are level C tests; and 187R and 188R are level D tests. The assessment policy states, "when publishers allows assessments using forms with multiple levels, programs must post-test with the equivalent or higher of the two forms suggested".</p>
<p>Do we have to administer an appraisal if using CASAS?</p>	<p>CASAS publishing guidelines strongly recommend that programs administer the CASAS appraisal test.</p>
<p>Can a teacher post-test under 40 hours for ABE-GED students? If they see attendance dropping & they think they will be dropping.</p>	<p>No, the post-test can NOT be given before the minimum required hours according to the publisher's guidelines. Teachers may utilize other instruments to assess participant progress in the interim. The 65% post-test requirement accounts for the reality that not all participants persist in the program and will leave before reaching the minimum hour requirement.</p>
<p>Are the 65% people who simply have a post-test recorded or is it those whose post-test showed an EFL gain?</p>	<p>On page 5 of the assessment policy, it states "A minimum of 65% of enrolled participants must be post-tested with a state-approved assessment". The 65% that have been post-tested have not necessarily made an EFL gain.</p>

<p>Is only one post-test required no matter how many hours of attendance (i.e., in excess of 40 hours)?</p>	<p>A second post-test can be administered as long as the participant has reached the required minimum instruction hours between tests. Federal and state law requires a pre and post-test each program year, and the longer a participant stays in a program, the more likely they are to achieve a higher educational gain.</p>
<p>ADULT LEARNING PLAN (ALP)</p>	
<p>When are you going to make ALP able to complete on the computer and then print out?</p>	<p>The electronic copy of the ALP is already available on the Office of Adult Education website for programs to download and complete electronically. http://www.michigan.gov/mdcd/0,4611,7-122-1680_2798_47498-281107--.00.html</p>
<p>MAERS</p>	
<p>Will there be any way to enter into MAERS post-tests for participants that have under the minimum hours of instruction?</p>	<p>No, MAERS has been programmed to align with Office of Adult Education policies. The assessment policy states that participants cannot be given a post-test prior to reaching the minimum hours of instruction per the publisher’s guidelines, unless the participant qualifies for the waiver. Any post-test administered before the minimum hours of instruction is an invalid test and MAERS does not accept invalid tests. Refer to the Assessment Policy for more information on the waiver exemption and testing guidelines.</p>
<p>What if you conduct a post-test and the student does worse than they did on the pre-test? Should that even be entered – is it better to show a post-test was administered, even though they scored lower?</p>	<p>Yes, post-test scores must be entered even if the participant does worse than on the pre-test. To enter only tests in which the participant improves is manipulation of data and is not allowed.</p>

<p>Do participants that register and are enrolled in MAERS count against our program in any way if they never show up for class? Should we delete them from MAERS?</p>	<p>Participants with less than 12 hours of instruction are not included in the performance measures on the NRS table; however, all participants with a pre-test are included in the pre and post-test rate calculation. The pre-test can be deleted for participants that never showed up for class to avoid negatively impacting the post-test rate.</p>
<p>What is the current status of system exits?</p>	<p>The System Exit process has not yet been implemented and is scheduled to begin on April 1, 2013. Information will be forthcoming via listserv messages, and refer to Chapter 5 of the MAERS Manual for more information on the System Exit process.</p>
<p>What is the difference between "90 Days of No Service" and "No Attendance for 3 Months"?</p>	<p>There is no difference between "90 Days of No Service" and "no attendance for 3 months".</p>
<p>If a participant stays long enough (e.g., 120 hours) to post-test a second time, how do we delete the first post-test entered into MAERS?</p>	<p>If you need to delete an assessment test out of MAERS, you would select the appropriate assessment test from the Assessment History page, and click on the Delete button at the bottom of the Update Assessment page. Refer to Chapter 3 - Participant Functions (Section 3.2) of the MAERS Manual for more information on deleting assessments.</p>
<p>How are hours actually entered as attendance? So it actual hours students attended or scheduled class hours?</p>	<p>Attendance hours are defined by the NRS as the number of instructional hours the learner receives. Activities counted include: time in class receiving instruction, including passing time; time in a learning lab; time spent with a program-sponsored tutor; and/or time on assessment activities. Refer to the Attendance Policy on the Office of Adult Education website for more information.</p>
<p>If your program only runs through the school year, with no classes in the summer, do you re-register returning students in the fall, or is there a way to carry them over?</p>	<p>Beginning in PY 2011-12, participants continuing into the following program year - regardless of whether classes were offered during the summer months - do not need to be exited from MAERS and re-registered. The next data entry step for continuing registrations is to enter the pre-test in the new program year. A planned gap may need to be entered if the summer break or next class enrollment is more than 90 days to avoid the participant being system exited.</p>
<p>Is STUREC post-test advice as accurate as MAERS Post-Test Listing Report?</p>	<p>The Office of Adult Education cannot respond for STUREC. We are not aware of the advice that is given to the programs using STUREC.</p>

When is the next MAERS training?	A number of resources have been developed and made available on the Office of Adult Education website, http://www.michigan.gov/mdcd/0,4611,7-122-1680_2798_2804---,00.html , to assist data entry staff with MAERS 2.1, including the manual with step-by-step instructions and training videos. There will be MAERS related sessions at the Michigan Adult Education and Training Conference on April 8-11, 2013.
Why do we have to enter people with 1-11 hours of attendance in MAERS? Doesn't that really hurt our performance goals to include those people in the totals?	The Office of Adult Education requires that all participants with 1 or more hour of instruction must be entered into MAERS. Participants with less than 12 hours of instruction are not included in the NRS performance tables.
What is gained by putting "attendance" and "test scores" in both STUREC and MAERS?	Participant data, including attendance and assessment is required by federal and state law to be entered into MAERS. STUREC is not a state-administered database, and decisions to enter into STUREC and/or other data systems are based on local requirements and needs.
COHORTS	
Is every participant that obtains a GED or high school diploma put into the postsecondary cohort for follow up?	Yes, all participants that earned a secondary credential during the program year or who had a secondary credential at entry into the program will be in the postsecondary cohort.
Where can Follow Up procedures be found? A link with some scripts, etc., would be helpful on the state's website.	The Follow Up Manual is available on the Office of Adult Education's website, http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdcd/Follow Up Manual -- Oct 2011 WDA-OAE Final 02-07-12 376073 7.pdf . The Follow Up Manual includes an overview of the follow up process, as well as sample surveys, telephone scripts, and contact logs.
Why must follow up be done within 3months of program exit? Why not be Oct. deadline of next school year?	Follow up is a federal and state requirement and each cohort (previously goal) has different follow up requirements and timelines. The associated timelines are dictated by NRS, and can be found in the Follow Up Manual.

<p>Can transitory participants be picked up at next enrolled district/program and credited for program completion?</p>	<p>On the General tab of the Follow Up screen, one of the questions asks whether the participant re-enrolled with another adult education program, so that information would be reported. The first program could report whether the participant took and passed the GED after leaving their program, entered postsecondary, or achieved one of the employment related goals. However, any assessment scores from the subsequent program cannot be entered. (HSD?)</p>
<p>TUITION, FEES, & FUNDING</p>	
<p>Are there any penalties that would affect our funding when charging a non-refundable registration fee?</p>	<p>No, however, federal and state law requires that tuition and fees can not adversely affect participation of economically disadvantaged adults. Programs cannot deny access to individuals that are not able to pay the tuition/fee. Any fee charged must be applied and/or used for adult education programs.</p>
<p>What are some possible sources of funding for incentive programs? Any online resources that you may have heard of?</p>	<p>Federal and state funding can be used to offer incentives for participant retention and/or post-testing. Programs can explore other grant opportunities.</p>
<p>OTHER</p>	
<p>For Learning Labs, is there a way to track outside student work that is not online work?</p>	<p>Attendance hours are defined by the NRS as the number of instructional hours the learner receives. The time the learner spends in program-sponsored activities designed to promote participant learning in the curriculum should be counted. For Learning Labs, instructional hours are tracked through direct contact hours and proxy hours - instructional hours received in a distance education program. Proxy hours can be measured in one of three ways: Clock Time Model, Teacher Verification Model, and Learner Mastery Model. For further information on the activities that can be included in attendance and proxy hours, please refer to the Attendance Policy and the Distance Learning Policy available on the Office of Adult Education website, www.michigan.gov/adulteducation.</p>

<p>Any insight on when students earning their GEDs will not count against the yearly GAD (graduation & drop out report)</p>	<p>The GAD is a Michigan Department of Education (MDE) requirement for K-12. Please contact MDE with any questions or concerns.</p>
<p>Intake & Drop out – Is there a magic number (20 hours) that distinguishes early dropouts from finishers?</p>	<p>Allen Quigley is quoted as saying "the first critical three weeks", and there is a National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL) brief with the research and strategies that can be found at http://www.ncsall.net/index.html?id=420.html.</p>
<p>How many other literacy councils exist in Michigan?</p>	<p>There are 58 literacy councils in Michigan that the Office of Adult Education communicates with and 12 that receive federal funding.</p>
<p>Can we get the results of the survey submitted to programs? Please make sure the questions are included with the answers.</p>	<p>Yes, the survey and results will be posted on the Office of Adult Education website along with the other Technical Assistance Workshop materials.</p>