



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT**  
*STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION*



**TO:** Adult Education Directors,  
Federally Funded Grantees,  
Cooperating Eligible Entities

**FROM:** The Adult Education Unit  
Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education

**DATE:** June 3, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Adult Education Operational Memorandum #4-20

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## **Statewide Meetings**

### **Next Policy Forum**

**Virtual Format – June 12, 2020, 9:00 a.m.**

**Please use this link and password to participate:**

<https://ctsdeevents.webex.com/ctsdeevents/onstage/g.php?MTID=e417d884b291918c6800228580fdb793c>

**Password:** Adult

### **Policy Forums for 2021**

For Fiscal Year 2020-21 the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) will hold Statewide Policy Forums on the following dates at a time and “place” to be determined.

- Friday, September 18, 2020
- Friday, January 8, 2021
- Friday, June 4, 2021

### **Meetings for Program Facilitators for 2020-2021**

Program Facilitator meetings will be held remotely for Fall 2020

The statewide meeting for all Program Facilitators will be held via virtually one week after the Policy Forum on Friday, September 25, 2020 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. Any important or critical updates relative to the Connecticut Competency System (CCS) and the new data system will be discussed at this meeting. This meeting is **MANDATORY** for all Program Facilitators.

**Regional Facilitator Meeting for Fall 2020 (remote)**      October 22, 2020      1:00-3:00 p.m.

## **Grants and Applications**

### **Adult Education State Grant Final Grant Award Letters**

Final Grant Award Notification Letters and Budgets (ED-114) for FY 2019-20 have been disseminated to all school districts via the State Department of Education’s Prepayment Grant System. The final CAP on adult education state grant funds for FY 2019-20 was 6.34%. Grant Award letters are available to business offices at this time. In addition to the State portion of the grant budget, districts received either increased or decreased final amounts after the Prior Year Adjustment (PYA) was applied. If additional funds are received, districts use them to offset the CAP. You can view the amount of all payments on the Grant Payment page: <https://www.csde.state.ct.us/public/dgm/grantreports1/paydetlMain.aspx>

Choose your district under section C, then under section D choose the appropriate grant – CEE, Provider or Cooperator to view the payments that have been issued.

### **Adult Education State Grant FY21 Budget Requests**

All ED-244 and ED-244A budget requests are currently being reviewed by the consultant assigned to each region. The State budget process is still ongoing, but as this is a statutory grant, 2/3 of the funds will be released on or before August 31. Please be aware that CSDE is transitioning to an electronic grant system and the FY21 Adult Education State Grant will be moving from the old system to the new one. I have no details at this time and will provide information to you when it is provided to me.

## **Adult Education State Grant Statement of Expenditure Report**

The FY 2019-20 Statement of Expenditure Report form ED-141, for the Adult Education State Grant must be submitted to the Division of Finance and Internal Operations by **September 1, 2020**. The ED-141 is required for every school district that received adult education state funds whether as a provider, cooperator or a Cooperating Eligible Entity (CEE). The ED-141 is an electronic submission and is usually completed by the district business office. **Please check with your business office to make sure that what they have in the system matches what you list as expenditures!!!**

## **Federal Program Enhancement Project (PEP)**

The Bureau has received Continuation Applications from the current PEP grantees. Thank you for your timely submissions. All applications are being reviewed and providers will be notified of awards later in the summer as soon as the process has been completed.

**Federal PEP grant, end of year reports are due on August 5, 2020. The report forms for 2020 will be sent out soon.**

**Request for Proposal (RFP): The current RFP has been delayed and expected to be released in the Spring of 2021.**

## **Assessment, Accountability and Data Management**

### **CASAS Remote Testing**

Individual agencies already set up to deliver CASAS eTests can begin remote testing after they sign an Agency Remote Testing Agreement. The Agency Remote Testing Agreement can be found on the CASAS website. This signed agreement attests that the agency will adhere to all test security measures and remote testing protocols while testing remotely.

Agencies not yet set up with CASAS eTests can follow the steps laid out in the Going Live! Checklist to get started.

Proctors must already be certified as eTests proctors. They must sign a Proctor Remote Testing Agreement to attest that the proctor will adhere to all test security measures and remote testing protocols. Local agencies are responsible for ensuring that their remote testing proctors are trained and are following remote testing protocols.

Going Remote! Training and certification is available. It is highly recommended, but not required by CASAS, to prepare proctors for the additional challenges presented by remote proctoring.

### **Web conferencing platform**

Proctors can use a variety of web conferencing platforms as long as they have the following functionality:

- Meetings can be password protected
- Webcams can be used to monitor the test taker
- Audio can be limited to the device running the web conferencing platform (having one device for video and another for audio is not allowed)
- Device screens can be shared (proctor and test taker)
- Test takers can remote control the proctor's computer

## CASAS Webinar

The next monthly CASAS National News and Updates webinar is on Thursday, June 11, 2020 at 2:00pm. This is an informational overview and update on CASAS remote testing, training, and eTests. They will be sharing updated remote testing guidelines, training resources, and enhancements to eTests and TOPSpro. They will also describe some assessment practices that are emerging such as face-to-face solutions with social distancing

## New Remote Testing 1:1 Video Demonstration

The first in a series of short video demonstrations showing remote testing in action has been posted [here](#). It is a role play of the one-to-one proctor and student process. The next video in the series will focus on showing one proctor with multiple test takers.

## New and Updated Remote Testing Materials

The following materials have been recently added or updated to the [Remote Testing](#) page on the CASAS website:

- New “Remote Testing Updates” document
- Updated Remote Testing Guidelines and Quick Reference Guides for all approaches
- Step-by-step instructions for a new code to register testing stations remotely
- Updated Approaches Summary Chart
- Remote Testing FAQs, version 2.0
- Proctor Remote Testing Certification (optional)
- Updated Agency Remote Testing Agreement and Proctor Remote Testing Agreement

## Connecticut Adult Reporting System (CARS)

### Data Entry Deadline

As outlined in the CARS policy manual, all data entry for the fiscal year 2019-2020 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 June 19, 2020**. After this date, the CARS system will be locked and no data entry for fiscal year 2019-20 will be possible.

Please consider saving a copy of your Data Downloads files for all years in a secure password protected location. You should also save copies of any CDP transcripts that you may not have access to over the summer.

### Exemptions

If your program has students who were unable to post-test because of site closures due to COVID, please mark each student “COVID Post-Test Exempt” on the student's demographic screen.

If your program has enrolled new students remotely, but you have not given them a pre-test, please mark each student “COVID Pre-Test Exempt” on the student's demographic screen.

## **New Database System Training for 2020-21**

Training for the new data system is to be determined. Please be patient as we negotiate a new contract.

## **Adult Education Personal Confidentiality Statement**

Connecticut Adult Education Providers are responsible for maintaining confidential student information and keeping this information secure. A personal confidentiality statement must be completed by any staff member with access to CARS, GED Manager, GEDPrep Connect or any other source of confidential student data. Confidentiality statements should be kept on file for the duration of employment.

## **Data Collection Forms**

The Data Entry forms for 2020-21 will be made available once we have a new data system.

If you plan on offering summer school, please be aware that CARS will not be available to create courses, enrollments, attendance and assessments. Providers will need to keep this information on paper or other electronic means until the transition to the new database is completed.

## **Program Updates**

### **National External Diploma Program (NEDP)**

The annual NEDP meetings for advisor/assessors were suspended due to the school closures.

#### **CASAS/NEDP updates:**

- CASAS held a pilot for remote In Office Checks (IOC) for NEDP candidates already in the assessment phase. Pilot was so successful that the remote IOC has been released for all NEDP sites to use. Trainings were held by CASAS and will continue as needed.  
**NOTE:** the Diagnostic phase is not ready to be done remotely and absolutely should not be done in that way. New clients will have to be on hold until this is sorted out.
- CASAS did a pilot study for the math GOALS. The required scale score for an applicant taking the CASAS Math GOALS assessment to qualify for participation in the NEDP has been 230. Based on interim data analysis from a Math GOALS 225-229 pilot study for NEDP applicants administered Forms 917 and 918, **CASAS is lowering the cut score to 226** — NRS Educational Functioning Level 5 or High Intermediate (226-235). The required scale score for other CASAS math forms, such as **Life Skills Math Forms 35M, 36M, 37M and 38M, remains at 230.**  
**Agencies with clients who have already been administered the CASAS Math GOALS, Forms 917 and 918, for Diagnostics and received a score of 226 - 230 may contact the clients, inviting them to proceed into Generalized Assessment.**

Contact Susan Pierson at [susan.pierson@ct.gov](mailto:susan.pierson@ct.gov) with any questions.

## **General Educational Development Tests (GED<sup>®</sup>)**

### **GED Online Proctored (O.P) Test Pilot**

- The Online Proctored GED Test pilot will utilize trained, third-party proctoring and will include built-in artificial intelligence (AI) features for additional test security.

- In Connecticut, we plan on participating in this GED online testing pilot for students who had canceled appointments due to COVID site closures initially and then moving onto students who have completed and passed 3 of 4 tests.
- Students must have a GED Ready “Green” Likely-to-Pass score on the subject tests within the past 60 days. There is a GED Ready promotion for 50% off that will expire July 1. It applies automatically in shopping cart.
- During the pilot **only those 18 and older will be eligible.**
- Students who are eligible will be sent an email with instructions on how to register and schedule an online proctored GED test. They will also receive an alert in their GED.com student account. Test-takers will be required to have a laptop or computer with a camera/microphone and a stable internet connection. (There is an online full system check that test-takers are encouraged to do.) The pilot also requires a closed, private/quiet room.

### **Preparing Your Students/ Assisting with GED® Test Scheduling**

- Educators can help ensure students who need O.P. testing be prepared by having a GED Ready “Green”
- A GED Ready “Green” score is required due to retake limitations on O.P.
- Note that the O.P. Pilot may not be available for new GED Ready Green students until at least late July, and in-person testing may be quicker in some areas that might reopen.

### **Resources**

[https://ged.com/educators\\_admins/test\\_admin/](https://ged.com/educators_admins/test_admin/)

Visit the website for:

- Webinar recordings and slides
- Link for full system check
- One page O.P. pilot policy differences highlights

For questions or concerns regarding the GED<sup>®</sup>, please contact Sabrina Mancini at [sabrina.mancini@ct.gov](mailto:sabrina.mancini@ct.gov).

### **Credit Diploma Program**

Credit Diploma students must complete a minimum of 48 hours of instruction for one credit. The 48 hours must include a **minimum of 12 Direct Contact hours**. The use of distance learning may continue until such time as all students return to the adult learning centers. The mandatory 12 contact hours may be provided through telephone calls, video chats and/or other means in which instructional staff are actively interacting, instructing or facilitating discussions with or between students in a structured manner.

Hours to be awarded for each assignment must be pre-determined by instructors and approved by directors. It is imperative that course integrity be maintained and that students are engaged in authentic and meaningful activities. Directors should be working with instructional staff to ensure that the work being provided for students to complete is based on the CCRS and is commensurate with the rigor that would be provided in a face-to-face class. Providers should keep copies of all assignments and documentation for CDP students who continue working on graduation credits.

For students enrolled in CTVHS classes, the online learning coordinator or mentor must provide the 12 hours of direct contact in one of the approved formats. This takes the place of the required 12 hours of seat time until students are able to return to computer labs.

## **Professional Development**

CSDE wants to thank Tony Sebastiano and Nina Tourtellotte for quickly turning professional development offerings into online webinars. With limited staffing, they stepped up and put together a number of exceptional sessions to help teachers turn their classrooms into virtual ones. The attendance numbers were outstanding and gave us all much to consider as we plan professional development for the coming school year. A survey of your upcoming professional development needs will be released next week.

## **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 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 because our CASAS assessments, GED test items and NEDP competencies are aligned with the standards. The 100 series in both math and ELA are all online at the ATDN web site. The 200 series of ELA and Math will continue to be the focus this coming year. The trainings will include lesson development, resource alignment and teacher modeling in the classroom. All programs must have, at a minimum, one ELA and one Math teacher trained in the 200 series to be in compliance.

## **ESL**

The national English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards were released in 2017, and are currently available on the LINCS website. The ELP Standards are derived from CCRS but are designed to more closely adhere to instruction in an ESL classroom. ESL teachers should be aligning curriculum, activities and lessons to the ELP Standards, and plan to attend both ELP Part I and ELP Part II PL sessions. Directors should be incorporating evidence that ESL teachers are using the ELP Standards in the classroom when teacher evaluations resume.

We are currently working to make the ELP Standards sessions available via distance learning. Please stay tuned for further information on ELP Professional Learning opportunities.

## **2020 Summer Institute –SAVE the DATE!**

The CSDE, with EdAdvance will sponsor a FREE Virtual Summer Institute for teachers that will cover topics such as CCRS, GED, Distance Learning and more in August. More details to follow!

## **CSDE Initiatives**

### **Teacher Evaluation**

Due to the current school closures, SDE has issued guidance regarding teacher evaluation:

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Digest/2019-20/Superintendent-Memo\\_Educator-Evaluation\\_3\\_25\\_20.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Digest/2019-20/Superintendent-Memo_Educator-Evaluation_3_25_20.pdf)

SDE Guidance on renewal of certifications:

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Digest/2019-20/Superintendent-Memo\\_Educator-Evaluation\\_3\\_25\\_20.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Digest/2019-20/Superintendent-Memo_Educator-Evaluation_3_25_20.pdf)

SDE Guidance on Fingerprinting: <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Digest/2019-20/Extension-re->

[Fingerprinting-Requirements-04-21-20.pdf](#).

### **Career Pathways in Adult Education**

During school closures, the Career Pathways Taskforce Toolkit is being continually updated with resources, including course content, lesson plans and other career-related resources:

<https://sites.google.com/danbury.k12.ct.us/career-pathways-toolkit>

### **Technology and Digital Learning**

We are currently working to develop training in best practices for creating effective distance learning activities – stay tuned for more information on Professional Learning Opportunities.

### **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)**

The bureau is collaborating with the Department of Labor on several initiatives relating to WIOA. As a core partner, Adult Education is at the table and we intend to share information and any training that we can with the field. As the PEP grants get rolled out in the new fiscal year, we will be providing technical assistance and professional development as the need arises.

A new Unified State Plan has been submitted and under review by the Departments of Education and Labor. Stay tuned as we make plans in the fall to offer training for these initiatives.