

AEBG English Crosswalk Meeting Notes

Tuesday, December 5, 2017

The purpose of this meeting was to develop a draft crosswalk between the new English Educational Functioning Level descriptors (ELF) for the National Reporting System (NRS) and the competencies associated with the California community college Common Assessment Initiative (CAI), which describe the specific competencies that students master in courses that are below the transfer-level course (English Composition).

Once the revised CASAS test is released, this crosswalk will help to establish equivalencies between measurable skills gains associated with assessment test scores and the gains associated with moving from one level of the college English sequence to the next, for the purpose of legislative reporting for the Adult Education Block Grant (AEBG). In addition, adult education consortia can leverage this crosswalk to support regional efforts to align adult schools' evolving curricula and determine placement methodologies. Finally, the findings of the group will be shared with the Chancellor's Office to support implementation of AB705.

The meeting was attended by English faculty from K-12 adult education providers, community college noncredit programs, and community college credit programs. The group spent the meeting reviewing and editing a crosswalk of EFL descriptors to the CAI competencies.

The group established the following pre-requisite framework, which encompasses both the current and revised EFLs.

A Student Who Completed the New EFL Level	Is Ready for CAI Level		A Student Who Completed the Current EFL Level	Is Ready for CB21 Level
Level 6: High Adult Secondary	transfer-level			
Level 5: Low Adult Secondary	one level below (CB21 A-B)		High Adult Secondary Education	CB21 B
Level 4: High Intermediate	one or two levels below (CB21 A-D)			
Level 3: Low Intermediate	two levels below (CB21 C&D)		Low Adult Secondary Education	CB21 C
Level 2: Beginning Basic	three levels below (CB21 E)		High Intermediate Basic Education	CB21 D
Level 1: Beginning Literacy (with supports)	four levels below (CB21 F)		Low Intermediate Basic Education	CB21 E
			Beginning Basic Education	CB21 F
			Beginning ABE Literacy	CB21 G

In the prior exercise of mapping the current EFLs to CB21, practitioners noted that it was difficult to establish equivalencies, given the level of description. CB21 descriptors, like the current EFLs, provide less detail than the CAI descriptors. Therefore, for the mapping exercise with the new EFLs, WestEd elected to use the CAI descriptors, which provide a similar level of specificity. However, the CAI descriptors do not specify the CB21 level for the competencies. Four levels are specified, but they do not correspond to the CB21 descriptors. Therefore, CB21 may benefit from a revision that more clearly delineates the specific skills taught at each level.

Other issues flagged by the committee included the following:

- The CAI competencies describe the use of authentic and academic text, whereas the EFLs do not specify whether text at each level is authentic or adapted (instead mentioning “level-appropriate texts”). Therefore, students may need some additional supports when transitioning from adult education, where they are likely to be reading adapted and functional texts, to college coursework. It will be important for regional AEBG consortia to examine the specific local curricula, as the types of reading materials emphasized in both adult schools and colleges may influence the success of a student when they transition between the two systems.
- When placing students who have completed the new High Intermediate level, it will be particularly important to examine the types of text used and the level of research skills expected by the adult education provider. Additional supports may be needed to help familiarize students with academic language and complex sentence structures once the student enters community college. The group felt that both individual aptitude and local curricula should be taken into consideration in decisions regarding whether students are prepared for the second or first level below in CAI.
- When students transition from Low Intermediate to the second level below in CAI, additional supports may be needed to ensure that students are prepared for timed writing prompts. While Adult Secondary Education (ASE) curricula include preparation for timed writing, which is required for high school equivalency exams, Adult Basic Education (ABE) may not include this type of preparation.
- The increase in complexity of skills between the new Beginning Literacy and Beginning Basic levels is significant. This is another place where attention to local curriculum and the students being served will be important, to ensure that students have adequate support, whether moving forward in the context of adult education, or when transitioning to the lowest level of the college sequence.
- The committee identified the same crosswalk of skills when examining reading versus writing skills, assuming the four levels below outlined in the CAI competencies are equivalent (which is not the case in CB21).

- With the new EFLs, the gap noted in the crosswalk of current EFLs to CB21 levels was eliminated, such that a student who completes the adult education sequence should be ready for transfer-level English. However, the group noted that the CAI competencies place a greater emphasis on analyzing fiction texts than the EFLs do, so adult education students may need a bridge course or a co-requisite that would support them in conducting literary analyses.