



**COLLEGE & CAREER  
READINESS**

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# New Assessment Training – CASAS and BEST

**Presented by Jenifer Bean**

**December 7, 2023**

This presentation will be recorded and shared for on-demand viewing.

## Purpose

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The purpose of today's webinar is to assist providers who use CASAS and BEST assessments with the transition to the newly-approved test series from those publishers. (A similar webinar will be provided for TABE when their new assessment series receive NRS approval.)



# Objectives

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- To introduce the new CASAS and BEST assessments
- To discuss strategies and resources for implementing the new assessments
- To provide directions for transitioning away from the outgoing assessments



# Poll Time!



## Where is your program in the process of transitioning to the new CASAS/BEST assessments?

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- 1 – Have not started yet
- 2 – Have purchased materials, but have not started using them
- 3 – Have piloted with individual students or small groups
- 4 – Have implemented beyond the pilot stage



# COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS

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Meet the New Assessments!



## Why SO MANY New Assessments?

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- ESL assessments must now be aligned to the English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards (standards document available [here](#)).
- Math GOALS 2 is providing student proficiency data at a greater number of levels (five instead of two).
- **NOTE:** There is no change to the CASAS Reading GOALS assessment at this time.

## BEST Literacy 2.0

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- **Student Population:** ESL (NRS levels 1-4)
- **Subjects Assessed:** Reading and Writing
- **Mode:** Paper-Based
- **Approval Expiration:** July 13, 2030
- **Changes from BEST Literacy:** Alignment to the ELP Standards; questions updated to reflect modern life; sample questions to prepare students at the beginning of the assessment (source linked [here](#))



## BEST Plus 3.0

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- **Student Population:** ESL
- **Subjects Assessed:** Listening and Speaking
- **Mode:** Paper-based or computer-adaptive delivery
- **Approval Expiration:** July 13, 2030
- **Changes from BEST Plus 2.0:** Alignment to the ELP Standards, adaptive questions, cloud-based data storage, questions updated to reflect modern life (source linked [here](#))

## CASAS Listening STEPS

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- **Student Population:** ESL
- **Subject Assessed:** Listening
- **Mode:** Paper-based or computer-based (eTest)
- **Approval Expiration:** July 13, 2030
- **Changes from Life and Work Listening:** Alignment to the ELP Standards, updated reporting, five levels instead of three, Locator for paper-based tests, questions updated to reflect modern life (source linked [here](#))

## CASAS Reading STEPS

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- **Student Population:** ESL
- **Subject Assessed:** Reading
- **Mode:** Paper-based or computer-based (eTest)
- **Approval Expiration:** July 13, 2030
- **Changes from Life and Work Reading:** Alignment to the ELP Standards, updated reporting, five levels instead of four, Locator for paper-based tests, questions updated to reflect modern life (source linked [here](#))

## CASAS Math GOALS 2

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- **Student Population:** ABE/ASE
- **Subject Assessed:** Math
- **Mode:** Paper-based or computer-based (eTest)
- **Approval Expiration:** July 13, 2030
- **Changes from Math GOALS:** Five levels instead of two, updated reporting, questions updated to reflect modern life (source linked [here](#))

## Themes

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- Alignment with the ELP Standards for ESL assessments
- Updated reporting capabilities for CASAS assessments
- Items updated to reflect modern life for all assessments (removing items about writing checks, adding items about digital tools and media, etc.)

## Strategies and Resources



## Strategies: Paying for New Tests

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- Move the money from a different budget item (submit a Budget Modification Form to Carla).
- Use institutional funds (if available).
- Please contact Carla Parnell ([parnellc@nccommunitycolleges.edu](mailto:parnellc@nccommunitycolleges.edu)) with questions about budgeting/allocating money.

## Strategies: Implementation Methods for New Tests

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- CASAS provided three potential options for implementing the new assessments. (Sources are linked [here](#) on slides 22-29 and [here](#) on slide 18.)
- These options can be used with the new BEST assessments as well.
- These are not the only options; do what ultimately makes sense for your program!
- The outgoing assessments can be used until June 30, 2024; you may post-test with them up to that date. (Consider selecting a cutoff date for pre-testing with them.)



## Strategy 1: Flipping the Switch/The Speedboat Strategy

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- Select a date when all students will transition from the outgoing assessment to the new assessment (ex: July 1, 2024).
- Pilot the new assessment with small groups ahead of the full implementation.
- **Advantage:** “Rips the bandage off”
- **Consideration:** Selecting a date that ensures all continuing students have a pre-test in the new assessment

## Strategy 2: Farming Schedule/The Luxury Liner Strategy

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- Split the new assessment implementation into “seasons”. Sample schedule:
  - **January 1-February 14:** Plan the launch.
  - **February 15-March 31:** Communicate the *what* and the *why* of the new assessments to all stakeholders.
  - **April 1-May 15:** Provide targeted PD to instructors and staff.
  - **May 16-June 30:** Conduct a small pilot prior to full implementation date.
- **Advantage:** Provides a great deal of time for stakeholders to immerse themselves into the new tests
- **Consideration:** Planning load for each “season” of transition

## Strategy 3: Blooming Rose/The Inflatable Boat Strategy

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- Plan for an early launch date (ex: January 1, 2024) to start using the new assessments for students in the lowest-level classes.
- The tests will build out to each successive level as the students progress.
- **Advantage:** Testing “follows” students naturally
- **Consideration:** Timing to ensure that the new assessments reach all students before the outgoing assessments expire

## For Any Strategy...

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- Plan carefully; consider your 5 W's and 1 H.
- Have a timeline; schedule your test rollout intentionally.
- Communicate; ensure that everyone – including your students – knows about the new tests and understands why the tests are changing.
- Train; ensure that relevant staff members have the knowledge and materials they need before implementing the new tests.

## Resources and Training: BEST

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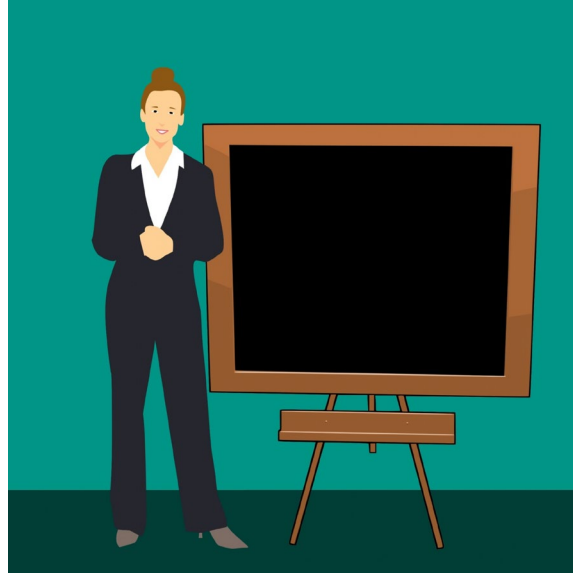
- **BEST Literacy 2.0:** Read the Test Administration Manual.
- **BEST Plus 3.0:** Training is scheduled to become available in early 2024.
  - Training will be online and self-paced.
  - There will be different training protocols for existing BEST Plus 2.0 administrators and brand new BEST Plus 3.0 administrators.
  - BEST Plus training page (link [here](#)); check in later for 3.0 training!

## Resources and Training: CASAS

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- Each new assessment has its own resource page on the CASAS website:
  - Listening STEPS (link [here](#))
  - Reading STEPS (link [here](#))
  - Math GOALS 2 (link [here](#))
- Recommended starting points:
  - FAQs
  - Content Standard Blueprints
  - Sample Items
- Information on new assessments presented in the CASAS News and Updates webinars (link [here](#) to archive).
- CASAS has also announced modules on their Training page (link [here](#)) to introduce the new tests.

Remember that all test administrators need baseline training as documented in the CCR Assessment Manual and the publisher's website!



## Into the Sunset





# Outgoing BEST and CASAS Assessments

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- The test series on this slide will expire on June 30, 2024.
- Outgoing BEST assessments:
  - BEST Literacy
  - BEST Plus 2.0
- Outgoing CASAS assessments:
  - CASAS Life and Work Listening
  - CASAS Life and Work Reading
  - CASAS Math GOALS

## Planning for Closeout

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- Identify your “priority testers”.
- Ensure that as many students as possible post-test in the outgoing test series if they have pre-tested in those assessments.
- Choose a cut-off date for pre-testing students in the outgoing test series.
- Remember that a student cannot pre-test and post-test in different test series!

## Disposing of Expired Paper-Based Testing Materials: BEST

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- Local programs may choose whether to use or destroy expired testing materials.
- There is no guarantee regarding the quality or accuracy of expired testing materials; use with caution.
- Expired tests may not be reproduced.

## Disposing of Expired Paper-Based Testing Materials: CASAS

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- Make a list of all testing materials in your possession for the expired tests. Include how many test books you have at each level as well as the number of test administration manuals and any other items related to the expired tests.
  - Ex: Life and Work – 187D – 5; 188D – 12; Manuals – 3, etc.
- Send the list to CASAS at [orders@casas.org](mailto:orders@casas.org).
- Shred/destroy all expired testing materials.
- Do not continue to use expired testing materials, even for practice!

## Q&A



Here are some miscellaneous questions based on the training needs surveys you submitted earlier in the fall.



## Q&A

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- **Q:** How can I find more resources about starting with and receiving support for CASAS eTests (computer-based testing)?
- **A:** Use the “Going Live!” checklist on the CASAS website (link [here](#)) for more information about starting to use eTests. Support for current eTest users can be requested at [techsupport@casas.org](mailto:techsupport@casas.org).

## Q&A

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- **Q:** How can I find more resources about starting with remote testing for CASAS?
- **A:** Use the “Going Remote!” resources provided on the CASAS website (link [here](#)).



## Q&A

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- **Q:** What is CASAS's policy for re-testing students if they score out of range on an assessment?
- **A:** It depends...
  - Inaccurate/out-of-range low scores are invalid and require retesting.
  - Conservative estimate/out-of-range high scores are acceptable to use for post-tests; we are working with our ADVANSYS vendor to ensure that they can be entered without error. Conservative estimate scores should not be used for pre-tests. (Source linked [here](#))

- **Q:** What are the minimum and recommended instructional hours for post-testing in CASAS?
- **A:** For all CASAS assessments, regardless of level or test series, students must have a minimum of 40 instructional hours to post-test. It is recommended that students have 70-100 hours of instruction before post-testing. (Source linked [here](#))

## Q&A

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- **Q:** How can we apply accommodations for students with disabilities who are taking the new assessments?
- **A:** General information for using accommodations with CASAS can be found on their website (link [here](#)). Please consult your ADA/accommodations office for local guidance regarding specific procedures.

## Q&A

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- **Q:** Where can I find more information about general assessment policies for North Carolina?
- **A:** Please see the Assessment Manual webinar that was delivered in July (link [here](#)).

## Q&A

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- **Q:** How much do the new assessments cost?
- **A:** CAL has not yet released purchasing information about the BEST assessments; please consult their “Resources” page in early 2024 for more information (link [here](#)). Purchasing information for CASAS assessments can be found on their website (use the “Order Now” buttons under the links on Slide 21 of this presentation).

## Q&A

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- **Q:** How can I receive support from test publishers with my specific questions?
- **A:** Use the support e-mail addresses below:
  - **BEST:** [aea@cal.org](mailto:aea@cal.org)
  - **CASAS:** [info@casas.org](mailto:info@casas.org)

Any other questions?



## Technical Assistance

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Please contact Jenifer Bean ([beanj@nccommunitycolleges.edu](mailto:beanj@nccommunitycolleges.edu)) if you would like to request technical assistance for new assessment implementation or anything else related to CCR assessment.



*Thank  
You*