



## **Tompkins County Workforce Development Board WIOA Youth Basic Skills Deficiency Policy**

### **Purpose**

Tompkins County Workforce Development Board WIOA YOUTH Basic Skills Deficiency Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for determining eligibility of youth based on Basic Skills Deficiency criteria.

### **Background**

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act 20 CFR 681.290(a)(1) states that LWDBs must use standardized testing instruments to demonstrate that a youth reads and/or computes math at or below the 8th grade level.

WIOA 20 CFR 681.290(b) states that LWDBs must create a basic skills deficiency policy for youth who are unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.

In order to assess whether a youth meets the Basic Skills Deficiency definition, LWDBs must:

- Use valid and reliable assessment(s) that are appropriate for the target population, showing that the youth is unable to demonstrate the competencies described in the definition;
- Use appropriate, fair, and cost-effective assessments that are well-matched to the test administrator's qualifications, easy to administer, and have results which are easy to interpret
- Provide reasonable accommodation in the assessment process, if necessary, for special populations (i.e. individuals with disabilities and individuals who are English Language Learners)

### **Policy**

For eligibility under WIOA using "Basic Skills Deficiency" as the youth's eligibility criteria, **Out of School Youth (OSY)** must be:

- Between the ages of 16-24 at the time of eligibility determination, and have a high school or HSE diploma, and
- Be basic skills deficient, and
- Be low income.

Being Basic Skills Deficient alone does not make a youth eligible for WIOA services. All four (4) criteria must be met: age 16-24, HS/HSE diploma, Basic Skills Deficient and low income.

For eligibility under WIOA using “Basic Skills Deficiency” as the youth’s eligibility criteria, **In School Youth (ISY)** must be:

- Between the ages of 14-21 at the time of determining eligibility, and
- Attending or enrolled in secondary or for-credit postsecondary school at the time of eligibility determination, and
- Be low income, and
- Be basic skills deficient (either deficient in basic skills or an English Language learner who is deficient in basic skills).

Being Basic Skills Deficient alone **does not** make a youth eligible for WIOA services. All four (4) criteria must be met: age 14-21, attending/enrolled in school, low income, and Basic Skills Deficient.

It is the policy of the TCWDB to determine eligibility under Basic Skills Deficiency by using one (1) of the following assessments. **Use of previous basic skills assessment results are permitted if the assessments were conducted within the past six (6) months.**

**Reasonable Accommodations** will be provided for individuals with documented disabilities and individuals who are English Language Learners. Accommodations to include, but not be limited to: extending test taking time, distraction-free spaces, use of technology aides, paper-based exams, accessible testing stations, web-based accommodations, and other accommodations as based on the policies of the test creators. More information regarding accommodations can be found at: [www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov).

A.) Approved standardized testing instrument to demonstrate a youth reads and/or computes math at or below the **8th grade level**, determined using the National Reporting System (NRS) **Educational Functioning Level 4 (“High Intermediate Basic Education”)**:

- Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE)

B.) Approved standardized testing instrument(s) to demonstrate a youth reads and/or speaks English at or below the **NRS Educational Functioning Level 5 (“High Intermediate English as a Second Language”)**:

- Basic English Skills Test (BEST) Literacy or
- Basic English Skills Test (BEST) Plus 2.0