

# First Mondays

Monthly Notes for Virginia's Adult Education Providers

April 4, 2016

## Calendar

IEL Civics Symposium  
April 28-29  
Richmond

VAILL  
James Madison University  
July 27-29  
Harrisonburg

### Changes to Assessment Policy Concerning the Use of Waivers

At the Regional Program Managers Meeting last month in Charlottesville, Tom Suh announced a number of changes to the 2016-2017 *Assessment Policy for Virginia Adult Education and Literacy Programs*. Since then there has been another change in policy concerning the use of post-testing waivers.

The Post Testing Waivers section and all references to post-test waivers will be removed from the policy document. The individual policies to be removed, along with the explanatory text in the current policy document, are:

#### Policy 2.2

**In certain, limited cases, programs may waive the test publisher's recommended contact hour requirement for post-testing a learner.**

In order for a learner to be post-tested before the required time frame for a given assessment, the learner must have accumulated the required number of contact or proxy (distance education) instructional hours and meet the criteria for exceptions established for each assessment.

#### Policy 2.3

**Documentation of the use of a waiver, including the name of the authorizing staff member, the date, and the reason, must be included in the file of each learner receiving a waiver.**

Local programs must report the use of waivers into the adult education application in SSWS. The name of the staff member responsible for administering the assessment and the reason for the waiver must be entered into the adult education application in SSWS.

## Money Matters

As you prepare your third quarter AEFLA reimbursement requests, please deplete 2014-2015 funds before requesting reimbursement of 2015-2016 funds.

Final reimbursements for technology purchases for the current fiscal year must be submitted by April 18, 2016.

Third quarter reimbursement requests and match, program income, and SLCA expenditure reports are due by April 18, 2016.

### What does this mean for post-testing determination?

Waivers are a means to allow post-testing prior to the time requirements set forth by the test publishers. The guidelines for using waivers are meant to capture learner gains when a student has not received the minimum number of instructional hours but has made sufficient progress in a class to warrant being given a post-test. Previously, waivers were exceptions to publisher recommendations, as noted in Policy 2.2 above.

However, publishers no longer use language referring to exceptions to the recommended number of hours of instruction. They simply refer to recommended number of hours and minimum number of hours of instruction. Since the concept of an “exception” is no longer in place, the need for a waiver to justify an exception is no longer needed. So, if students have received the minimum number of hours of instruction, as set by the publisher (see below), they may be post-tested. A waiver is no longer required.

OAEL requires that a learner must meet the minimum number of instructional hours required by the publisher for post-testing. Some publishers establish recommended hours before post-testing along with the required minimum number of instructional hours while other publishers establish minimum hours only.

BEST Literacy – 80-100 hours recommended; 60 hours minimum

BEST Plus 2.0 – 80-100 hours recommended; 60 hours minimum

CASAS – 70-100 hours recommended; 40 hours minimum

GAIN – 60 hours minimum

TABE – 50-60 hours recommended

40 hours minimum for learners pre-testing in NRS levels 1-4

30 hours minimum for learners pre-testing in NRS levels 5-6

TABE CLAS-E – 60-95 hours recommended; 50 hours minimum

This revised policy will take effect July 1, 2016.

## GED® Stats

January 1 – April 3, 2016

Test takers – 3,118

First-time completers –  
699

Passers – 1,030

### **Building Workforce System Partnerships under WIOA**

By Dr. Susan M. Clair

An OIEL priority under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is to continue to collaborate and build partnerships with key WIOA workforce partners. The purpose is to begin to think and act more like a single workforce system and not as separate programs. On Friday, April 1, I met with several staff members from the Department for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DBVI). I learned that the DBVI has six regional offices and each office has an educational coordinator. I informed the DBVI that there are 22 adult education regional programs in the state with one regional program manager for each region. There was considerable interest in having the DBVI educational coordinator in each DBVI office contact the adult education regional program manager to learn more about adult education and literacy services in the region and to discuss how we can work together to serve the needs of visually impaired adults. Some of you may already have an established partnership with the DBVI educational coordinator in your region. If you have, please let me know how your region partners with DBVI.

On another note, the Virginia Combined State Plan was submitted on April 1, 2016. The plan was submitted to the United States Departments of Labor and Education for review.

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### **VAILL UPDATE**

By Melissa Dixon and Thomas Suh

The 2016 Virginia Institute for Lifelong Learning (VAILL) is scheduled to be held July 27-29, 2016, at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, VA. In keeping with past institutes, VAILL 2016 will start with lunch and a keynote address on Wednesday and end with lunch on Friday.

# OAEL

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Please visit the [OAEL Web site](#) for more information about adult education and literacy in Virginia and for news and updates throughout the month.

This VAILL, however, also marks a departure from previous VAILLs. For example, OAEL is working to develop an online registration process that will accept credit card payments, has made arrangements to offer participants a broad range of meal choices and selections, and has moved VAILL to a more central location.

OAEL staff has been working with an advisory committee to develop program strands that explore how Virginia adult educators can make the transition to a more coordinated system of workforce preparation service delivery. “Learn, Connect, and Achieve” is the theme of this year’s VAILL and will include areas of focus such as implementing standards-based instruction, achieving integrated education and training, and establishing the role of adult education under WIOA.

Please encourage your staff and others to submit proposals for presentations at VAILL. The strands for this year’s VAILL conference fall into four broad categories:

- Instruction
- Career Pathways
- Programmatic Topics
- Support Services

More detailed information about these general categories or strands (and additional strands if identified) will be provided as the planning for the institute progresses.

OAEL expects the VAILL website to go live in April. The website will include participant registration information, steps for submitting workshop proposals, and registration information for vendors and exhibitors. Eventually, information such as lodging alternatives and details about the sessions will be added. OAEL will use the VALRC listserv to notify everyone when the website is operational.