



OFFICE OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT
ADULT EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT TEAM
89 WASHINGTON AVE., ROOM 306 EB
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12234
(518) 474-8940; FAX: (518) 486-1751
[HTTP://WWW.NYSED.GOV/WORKFORCE/](http://www.nysed.gov/workforce/)

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TO: Directors of Continuing Education
Coordinators of Adult Basic Education

FROM: Tom Orsini

SUBJECT: New Policy on use of the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE)

In order to improve the quality and reliability of New York State's assessment data, State Education Department policy regarding the use of the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) has been revised as follows:

1. Because the standard error of measurement for the TABE Survey is so large as to affect its usefulness in obtaining reliable measures of student progress, only the complete battery of the TABE 7 & 8 and 9 & 10 may be used for reporting for the National Reporting System (NRS). This policy will go into affect on July 1, 2006. However, to assist in the transition, ALIES will continue to accept survey scores until October 1, 2006. A new version of ALIES will be provided at that time.
2. There has been a great deal of confusion regarding the range of acceptable scores for the TABE test. In statewide staff development on administering the TABE test, participants were told that scores on the high and low end of each range of scores on each TABE subtest were unreliable because of a large standard error of measurement. This means that high and low scores on each of the tests are less likely to be a true indication of the student's ability. Retesting with a higher or lower level of the test has been recommended for students scoring on the extremes of each range. It became clear that many test administrators either did not understand the concept or had differing opinions as to when a test was outside the acceptable range and consequentially when to retest. Using a methodology developed by the University of Massachusetts for the Massachusetts Department of Education, the State Education Department has established acceptable ranges for the Reading, Mathematics Computation and Applied Mathematics sections of the TABE 7 & 8 and 9 & 10. A comprehensive explanation of the new TABE testing policy and tables indicating the acceptable testing ranges can be found at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/workforce/offices/adult.html> . This policy also goes into affect as of July 1, 2006. The new version of ALIES will not accept TABE scores outside of the acceptable ranges as of October 1, 2006.