



Planning for FY25 NRS Assessment Changes

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Agenda

- I. FY25 NRS Assessment Changes: What, Why, How
- II. Key Considerations in Selecting New Assessments
- III. Training for Test Proctors
- IV. How to Learn More
- V. Ongoing Communication & Support

What current tests are changing?
What are the new tests?

New FY25 Tests

English Language Acquisition & Math

FY24 Tests	Will be replaced by...
CASAS Life & Work Reading <i>including Beginning Literacy</i> <i>Forms 27 and 28</i>	CASAS Reading STEPS*
	CASAS Listening STEPS*
BEST Literacy	BEST Literacy 2.0
BEST Plus 2.0	BEST PLUS 3.0
CASAS Math GOALS	CASAS Math GOALS 2
ABE/ASE Tests NOT Changing for FY25 TABE 11/12 (Reading and Math) CASAS Reading GOALS	

**Programs may choose to administer one or both CASAS STEPS tests.*

**Can I pre-test with the FY24
version of a test and post-test
with the new version?**

NO!

Pre- and Post-Test with the Same Test Series

Students must always be pre- and post-tested with the same test series.

For example, you cannot pre-test with **CASAS Life and Work Reading** and post-test with **CASAS Reading STEPS**.

You cannot pretest with **CASAS Math GOALS** and post-test with **CASAS Math GOALS 2**.

**Can I apply the 120-day rule to
carry over FY24 test scores to
FY25?**

Applying the 120-day Rule

Of the FY24 tests, only **TABE 11/12 (Reading and Math)** and **CASAS Reading GOALS** can carry over to FY25 with the 120-day rule.

All other tests are expiring at the end of FY24.

Students with enough instructional hours must be post-tested with the FY24 tests by the end of FY24 instruction and assessed with a new test series for FY25.

FY24 Tests
CASAS Life & Work Reading
BEST Literacy
BEST Plus 2.0
CASAS Math GOALS
ABE/ASE Tests NOT Changing for FY25 TABE 11/12 (Reading and Math) CASAS Reading GOALS

Of the FY24 tests, the 120 day rule applies to these tests **ONLY**

The [Assessment Hub](#) can help with FY24 post-testing!

Why are the tests changing?

NRS Educational Functioning Levels

EFLs

The NRS describes **6 levels** of adult language learners.

The standardized tests that students take place them in one of the 6 levels.

When students move from one level to the next after post-testing, they earn a Measurable Skill Gain (MSG).

Beginning ESL Literacy - NRS Level 1

Low Beginning ESL - NRS Level 2

High Beginning ESL - NRS Level 3

Low Intermediate ESL - NRS Level 4

High Intermediate ESL - NRS Level 5

Advanced ESL - NRS Level 6

For FY25, there are new EFL descriptors & new assessments to measure them.

The tests are changing because...

All New ELA Tests

- Are aligned with the federal *English Language Proficiency Standards for Adult Education* (ELPS)
- Assess new NRS Educational Functioning Level (EFL) descriptors

The ELPS were released in 2016, but the pandemic delayed the development and federal approval of new assessments until now.

The goal of the ELPS is to assist adult English learners to achieve competency in **English language acquisition** and **rigorous academic content** to facilitate transition to post-secondary education, job training, or employment.

CASAS Math GOALS 2

- Is an updated version of the original CASAS Math GOALS test
- Has 5 levels instead of the current 2

Curricula Aligned to the ELPS

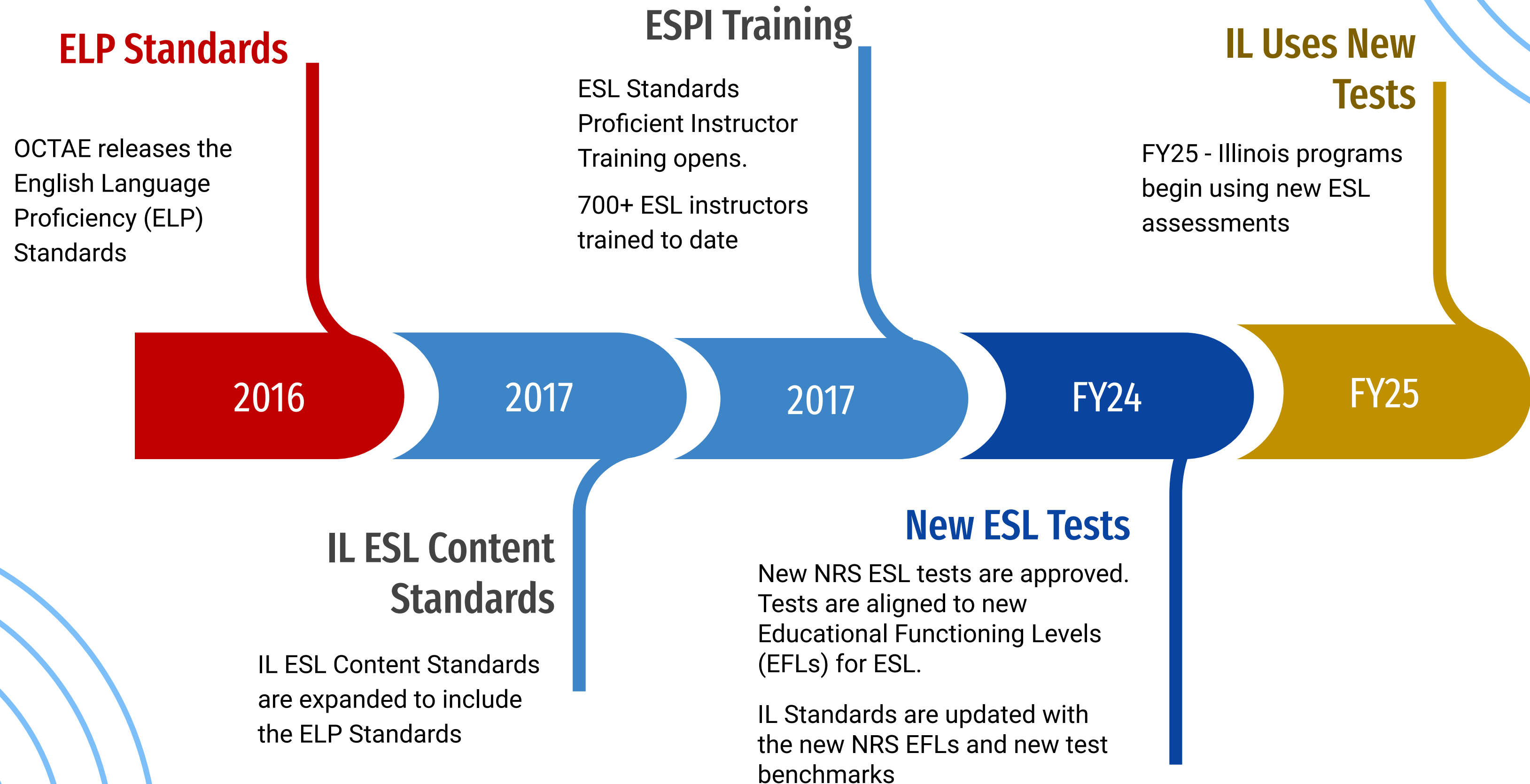
Ensure that your program has a curriculum aligned with the ELP Standards.

- Stand Out
- Step Forward
- Future
- Ventures
- Burlington English



Current editions of these core series are aligned with the ELP Standards

English Language Acquisition: Standards & Assessments in Illinois



**What should I do with unused
expiring tests?
How do I order new tests?**

CASAS Tests

CASAS eTests

- CASAS eTests units (WTUs or TEUs) **never expire** and can be used for **any CASAS test**.
- To add testing sessions for the FY25 tests, contact CASAS Tech Support at techsupport@casas.org
- Programs must order a minimum of one **Test Administration Manual** per test series per program site. To order, access the online CASAS Catalog [HERE](#).

Advantages of eTests

- Automatic and error-free scoring
- Access to student reports
- More efficient use of staff & student time
- Automatically assigns the correct next test
- No need to buy new paper tests
- Can use the [Assessment Hub](#)

CASAS Tests

CASAS Paper Tests

- Paper test booklets for [Life and Work Reading](#) and [Math GOALS](#) expire June 30, 2024, and must be shredded.
- Programs must purchase new paper test materials (including [Appraisals](#) and a minimum of one [Test Administration Manual](#) per test series per site) for CASAS STEPS and Math GOALS 2.

To order, access the online CASAS Catalog [HERE](#).

BEST Plus Tests

- Current BEST Plus 2.0 tests will **NOT** transfer to the new BEST Plus 3.0.
- Unused tests are not returnable or exchangeable. Programs must purchase new BEST Plus 3.0 tests for FY25.
- Programs must order directly from the publisher, the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL). FY25 pricing is found on [this page](#).
- Discounted pricing and ordering through Curriculum Publications Clearinghouse (CPC) will not be available for BEST Plus 3.0.

As of 2/5/24, tests are not yet available for purchase.

BEST Literacy Tests

- Paper test booklets expire June 30, 2024, and **must** be shredded.
- Programs must buy new BEST Literacy 2.0 test booklets for FY25.
- Programs must order directly from the publisher, the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL). FY25 pricing information is found on [this page](#).
- Discounted pricing and ordering through the Curriculum Publications Clearinghouse (CPC) will not be available for BEST Literacy 2.0.

As of 2/5/24, tests are not yet available for purchase.

In deciding which new tests to use for FY25, what are some **key considerations about each new test?**





CASAS Reading STEPS: Key Considerations

- Reading STEPS Level A begins at a **lower level** than CASAS Life Work Reading Level A, thus eliminating the need for a separate literacy level test.
- For students with very low literacy levels or minimal test-taking skills, the Level A test can be administered as a consumable test booklet. The eTest, which is touch screen compatible, is another option for low literacy students.
- Some test items, particularly those at higher levels, are **more academic** in nature than **CASAS Life and Work Reading**. This is because STEPS is aligned with the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS).
- The **exit criteria** for Advanced ESL on Reading STEPS is 239+ (Life and Work Reading is 236+)

NRS Level Breakdown



NRS EFL	ESL Level	Reading STEPS Scale Score Ranges
1	Beginning ESL Literacy	160 - 183
2	Low Beginning ESL	184 - 196
3	High Beginning ESL	197 - 206
4	Low Intermediate ESL	207 - 216
5	High Intermediate ESL	217 - 227
6	Advanced ESL (Completed Advanced ESL)	228 - 238 239+

New ESL Exit Criteria for Reading



CASAS Listening STEPS: Key Considerations



- Listening STEPS should be administered through CASAS **eTests** with students wearing **headsets** to hear the audio test items (microphones not needed).
The **paper version is not recommended** as it relies on CDs to provide the audio test items, and only one level can be administered at a time.
- Listening STEPS can be administered along **with Reading STEPS** to provide a more accurate picture of a student's overall language proficiency than a reading test alone.
- If both Listening STEPS and Reading STEPS are administered as pre-tests, students should be placed according to the lower score and post-tested with the test with the lower score.
- Listening STEPS can be administered to students who meet exit criteria on Reading STEPS to see if they are still in need of ELA instruction for aural/oral skills before transitioning to ABE or workforce instruction.

BEST Plus 3.0: Key Considerations



- Like BEST Plus 2.0, BEST Plus 3.0 is given as a **one-on-one oral interview**. The tester uses a computer to score each item before giving the next. Students do not use a computer.
- The Illinois PDN will **not provide training or technical assistance** for BEST Plus 3.0. All training and technical assistance must be provided by the publisher, the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), at the cost of the program.
- Discounted pricing and ordering through the Curriculum Publications Clearinghouse (CPC) will not be available for BEST Plus 3.0. Programs must order directly from the publisher, the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL).

BEST Literacy 2.0: Key Considerations



- BEST Literacy 2.0 test booklets are **consumable** and cannot be reused.
- BEST Literacy 2.0 only assesses **NRS Levels 1-4**. Students who pre-test into NRS Level 4 (Low Intermediate) will need to be **re-tested with another test series** (such as CASAS STEPS) to show movement out of Level 4, incurring additional expense for programs. *Note: The original BEST Literacy tested NRS Levels 1-5, so this is a significant change.*
- The Illinois PDN will **not provide training or technical assistance** for BEST Literacy 2.0. All training and technical assistance must be provided by the publisher, the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), at the cost of the program.
- Discounted pricing and ordering through the Curriculum Publications Clearinghouse (CPC) will not be available for BEST Literacy 2.0. Programs must order directly from the publisher, the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL).

Math GOALS 2: Key Considerations



- Has **5 levels** as opposed to only 2 in the original version
- Having 5 levels will improve **placement accuracy** and ability to demonstrate **student progress**, as the new test is more tightly aligned with the *Illinois ABE/ASE Content Standards* and the *College and Career Readiness Standards*.

**What training will
test proctors need for
the new tests?**

Training to Proctor the New CASAS Tests

- **Already trained** CASAS proctors (both paper proctors and eTest proctors) will need to complete a **brief iLEARN training** to administer the new FY25 CASAS tests.

Watch the **PDN Pulse** for information on this training, coming in March.

- **New** CASAS proctors are required to attend **CASAS Implementation Training** offered by the Illinois PDN. Implementation Training is required for all persons that proctor CASAS paper or eTests and is applicable to all CASAS tests. Registration for the next training (April 5) opens soon.

CASAS proctors will learn about timing changes.



Test Form	Test Questions	Test Time (minutes)
Appraisal	28	30
Locator	14	15
Level A	33	30
Level B	36	50
Level C	36	75
Level D	36	75
Level E	36	75

Life and Work Reading:
60 minutes,
every level

CASAS proctors will learn about timing changes.



Math GOALS 2 5 levels	Math GOALS 2 Test Time (minutes)
Level A	50
Level B	65
Level C	75
Level D	75
Level E	90

Math GOALS 2 levels	Math GOALS Test Time (minutes)
A/B	60
C/D	75

CASAS proctors will learn about timing for the new tests.



Test Form	Test Questions	Test Time (minutes)
Appraisal	28	30
Locator	14	15
Level A	33	28
Level B	36	45
Level C	36	52
Level D	36	56
Level E	36	38

Training to Administer & Score BEST Plus 3.0

- All BEST Plus 3.0 test administrators, including those currently certified to administer BEST Plus 2.0, are **required** to complete BEST Plus 3.0 training.
- Through August 2024, the test publisher will offer a **free self-access online training** course for BEST Plus 3.0. **As of 2/5/24, this course is not yet available.**
- After August 2024, the online course will be available for \$125 per person.
The publisher will also offer **live virtual training** for \$325 per person.
- The Illinois Adult Education PDN will not provide technical assistance or training for BEST Plus 3.0 test administrators.

Training to Administer & Score BEST Literacy 2.0

- Test administrators and scorers are required to read the [BEST Literacy 2.0 Test Manual](#) before administering and scoring the test.
- A strongly recommended (but optional) [self-access online training course](#) will be available from the test publisher for \$50 per person. *As of 2/5/24, this course is not yet available.*
- The Illinois Adult Education PDN will not provide training or technical assistance for BEST Literacy 2.0 test administrators.

The New Tests: How to Learn More

Learn More!

- The IL PDN will offer PD **this spring** focusing on the new **Math GOALS 2** and **CASAS STEPS** tests. Come learn more about:
 - The content of the tests (the blueprints)
 - Sample test items for all levels
 - The test reports

Coming in FY25

CASAS Tools for Teachers

Instructors learn to analyze test results and target instruction to maximize Measurable Skill Gains (MSGs)

For the new CASAS tests, there is a wealth of information on the CASAS website including [Sample Test Items](#) and [Blueprints](#).

The chart below has links to learn more about each of the new tests.

New Test	Where to Learn More
CASAS Reading STEPS	https://www.casas.org/product-overviews/assessments/reading-steps
CASAS Listening STEPS	https://www.casas.org/product-overviews/assessments/listening-steps
BEST Literacy 2.0	https://www.cal.org/aea/faqs/
BEST Plus 3.0	https://www.cal.org/aea/faqs/
CASAS Math GOALS 2	https://www.casas.org/product-overviews/assessments/math-goals-2

PD to Strengthen Standards-based Instruction

FY24 ESL Instructor Institute:

Supercharge Student Success with Standards In Action!

March 15 & April 12, 2024

- Repeated by popular demand!
- Make connections between the new tests & classroom instruction
- Appropriate for all ESL instructors

ESL Mini-Con

Friday, April 26, 2024

- Instructors share their best standards-based practices

Ongoing Communication & Support for the New Tests

Assessment Office Hours

ICCB and the PDN will be holding monthly [Assessment Office Hours](#) throughout the transition period. Come get answers, learn from other attendees, and more.

FY24 Assessment Office Hours

Wednesdays, 2:30 - 3:30 pm

- February 14
- March 13
- April 10
- May 8
- June 12

Watch the [PDN Pulse](#) for more information!



Ongoing Communication & Support

- Check the Assessment Transition FAQs on [Excellence in Adult Education](#) website. FAQs are being updated throughout the year.
- Watch the [PDN Pulse](#) for announcements of:
 - Training on the new assessments
 - Training related to standards-based instruction



QUESTIONS?

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Slides with examples from STEPS