

**Subject:** Transition from BEST Plus 2.0 to BEST Plus 3.0

**To:** Adult education program leaders, assessment coordinators, BEST Plus test administrators

**Cc:** UMass Center for Educational Assessment Staff, ACLS Staff, SABES Staff

**From:** Wyvonne Stevens-Carter, Adult Education State Director

**Date:** April 5, 2024

As announced in previous ACLS FY24 mailings, the U.S. ED Office of Technical and Career Education (OCTAE) approved the BEST Plus 3.0 version for NRS pre- and post-testing of ESOL Speaking and Listening.

On March 18, 2024, OCTAE announced the extension of the BEST Plus 2.0 until June 30, 2025 (see federal register [here](#)).

Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) - the publisher of the BEST Plus test - recently announced that the release of the BEST Plus 3.0 training (to certify test administrators to administer the BEST Plus 3.0) is postponed until further notice.

In light of this announcement, below is the plan for MA adult education to transition to BEST Plus 3.0.

#### **BEST Plus 2.0 Use in FY25**

1. ACLS-funded programs that use the BEST Plus test for pre- and post-assessment must continue to use the BEST Plus 2.0 version of the test until June 30, 2025. Programs must not use BEST Plus 2.0 as a pre-test and BEST Plus 3.0 as a post-test.
2. BEST Plus 3.0 must not be used for NRS pre- and post-assessment until July 1, 2025.
3. FY24 BEST Plus 2.0 tests administered after April 1, 2024 are eligible to be moved forward in FY25 and used as FY25 pre-tests until December 2024.

#### **BEST Plus 2.0 and BEST Plus 3.0 Trainings in FY25**

1. UMass CEA will continue to provide BEST Plus 2.0 certification training in FY25 (dates to be announced). If necessary, UMass CEA will give priority to programs with limited to no staff BEST Plus 2.0 trained staff.
2. Once released, the CAL BEST Plus 3.0 asynchronous self-paced training will be available for free for a limited period of time (dates to be announced by CAL). After this period closes, UMass CEA will provide BEST Plus 3.0 training.

#### **BEST Plus 2.0 Recertification in FY25**

1. Due to the transition to BEST Plus 3.0, there will be no recertification process for BEST Plus 2.0 in FY25.

#### **Program Budget Implications in FY25**

1. Programs must continue to purchase BEST Plus 2.0 tests in FY25 directly from CAL.

2. Programs must budget funds in FY25 to purchase BEST Plus 2.0 tests, pay for staff time to certify in BEST Plus 2.0 (if they have no currently certified BEST Plus 2.0 on staff), pay for staff time to certify in BEST Plus 3.0, and purchase Test Administrator Guides (TAG) for staff from CAL.

Note:

- The current BEST Plus 2.0 training administered by UMass CEA is seven hours of synchronous instruction plus additional time for test administration practice.
  - The future BEST Plus 3.0 asynchronous training is anticipated to be six to eight hours.
3. Programs should first prioritize certification of staff in BEST Plus 3.0 during FY25 and allocate FY25 funds to this priority. FY26 funds can be used to purchase BEST Plus 3.0 tests (when they become available for purchase).

## **Communication during the Transition**

### **1. BEST Plus Transition Informational Webinar**

ACLS and UMass CEA will hold an informational webinar on Thursday, May 9 from 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM. We will provide up to date information on the transition as we learn the details from CAL and practitioners will have the opportunity to ask questions. Register for the webinar [here](#).

### **2. Useful Links**

Please visit the [ACLS Test Help Blog](#) to read FAQ, the BEST Plus 3.0 test version price list, and scale score conversions to the NRS levels. Additionally, you can also read CAL's BEST Plus [FAQ](#) here.

### **3. The chart below provides an at-a-glance view of the BEST Plus Transition**

**BEST Plus Transition At A Glance**

Items	FY25	FY26
Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Attend the <a href="#">informational webinar</a> from UMass CEA-ACLS on May 9.</li> <li>b) Stay up to date by visiting the <a href="#">ACLS Test Help Blog</a> and the <a href="#">CAL BEST Plus page</a>.</li> <li>c) Read ACLS monthly mailings.</li> </ul>	
Pre- and post-testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Pre- and Post-Test with BEST Plus 2.0</li> <li>b) FY24 BEST Plus 2.0 tests administered after April 1, 2024 can be moved forward in FY25 and used as FY25 pre-tests until December 2024.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Pre- and post-Test with BEST Plus 3.0</li> <li>b) FY25 BEST Plus 2.0 tests administered after April 1, 2025 <b>must not</b> be moved forward in FY26.</li> </ul>
BEST Plus training and certification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Have staff certify in BEST Plus 2.0 if limited or no certified staff available to administer BEST Plus 2.0.</li> <li>b) Have all BEST Plus test administrators train and certify in BEST Plus 3.0</li> <li>c) Prioritize certification of staff in BEST Plus 3.0.</li> <li>d) CAL BEST Plus 3.0 training available for free for a limited period of time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Continue to have BEST Plus test administrators certified in BEST Plus 3.0 as needed.</li> <li>b) BEST Plus 3.0 trainings available via UMass CEA.</li> </ul>
BEST Plus test administration purchase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Purchase BEST Plus 2.0 test administrations directly from CAL.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Purchase BEST Plus 3.0 test administrations directly from CAL.</li> </ul>
BEST Plus budget allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Budget funds to purchase BEST Plus 2.0 test administrations.</li> <li>b) Allocate funds to pay for staff time to certify in BEST Plus 2.0 if needed.</li> <li>c) Allocate funds to purchase BEST Plus 2.0 TAGs as needed (see b) above).</li> <li>d) Allocate funds to pay for staff time to certify in BEST Plus 3.0.</li> <li>e) Allocate funds to purchase BEST Plus 3.0 TAGs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Allocate funds to purchase BEST Plus 3.0 test administrations.</li> <li>b) Allocate funds to pay for staff time to certify in BEST Plus 3.0.</li> <li>c) Allocate funds to purchase BEST Plus 3.0 TAGs.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) No BEST Plus 2.0 recertification.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) BEST Plus 3.0 recertification (process to be announced).</li> </ul>