

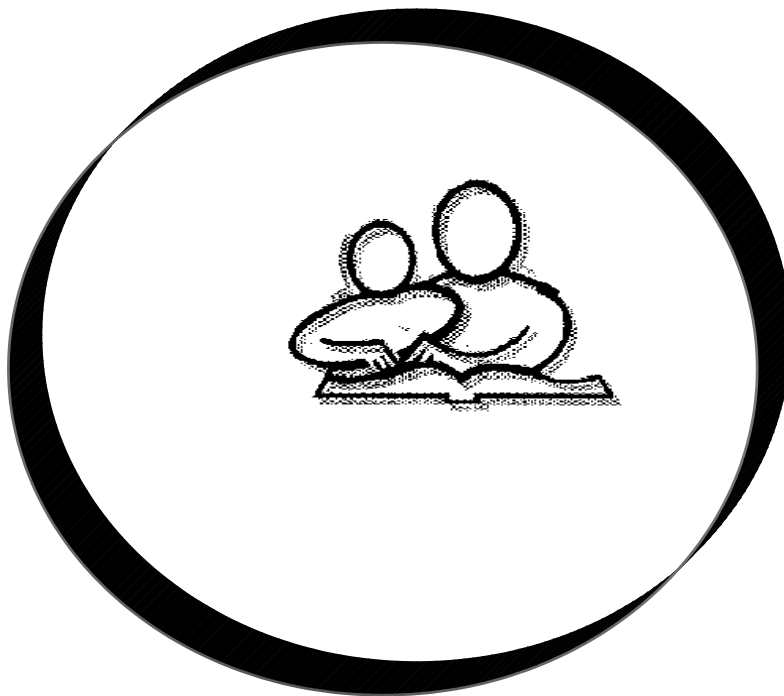
**Maryland State Department of Education**

**Division of Student and School Services**

**Even Start Family Literacy Program**

*Performance and Program Indicators*

**Guidance**



**ADULT EDUCATION**  
***Performance Indicators for Adult Learners***

**#1. Adult participants in Even Start who have attended at least 60 hours of adult education instruction, and will demonstrate achievement in the areas of reading, writing, English language acquisition, problem solving or numeracy by improving one literacy level, as measured by the CASAS or BEST.**

**GUIDANCE:**

- The minimum standard for an instructional cycle is 90 days. Students who do not participate for 90-consecutive days must be withdrawn and considered inactive in Even Start.
- Adult education is guided by learner goals and the assessments listed in this document. Each adult's goal needs to be established and recorded in the Literacy Works Information System (LWIS) when they are enrolled. Well designed lesson plans, applying principles of adult learning, promoting lifelong learning skills, and meeting Workforce Investment Act (WIA) standards, maximize opportunities for learners. Instructional activities incorporate a variety of methods to address a range of learner needs.
- “Literacy levels” are defined in the National Reporting System and National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS) and correspond to specific scaled scores on the CASAS and BEST.
- Adult participants’ entry-level test scores are the basis for determining achievement. Pre-assessment is done at intake; post-assessment is done after every 60 hours of instruction.
- To achieve this indicator, adult participants can increase one or more literacy levels in any one or more of the subject areas. Each adult participant should only be counted once when calculating the percentage of adults who have achieved this indicator. (In other words, if an adult improves one level in more than one subject area, or improves two or more levels in any subject area, he/she is not counted separately for every subject and level.)
- When determining adult participants who have achieved this indicator, programs should also count those who improve one or more literacy levels after 60 hours or less of instruction.
- The assessment tool required by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is CASAS or BEST.
- Parenting education strengthens parent's support of their young children's literacy development and early school success. The adult educator could support the parent as the child's first teacher staying focused on those skills that support MMSR, learning styles, Gardner's Multiple Intelligences, reading, writing and math strategies as well as problem solving skills.

**Literacy levels and test scores that apply to indicator #1 are as follows:**

<p><b>Beginning Literacy (Level 1)</b></p> <p><b>Test Benchmarks:</b> CASAS: 200 and below BEST Oral: 0-15 BEST Literacy: 0-7</p>	<p><b>Improving one literacy level means:</b></p> <p>Participants scoring at the Beginning Literacy level will increase to the Beginning Basic Literacy Level. Participants scoring the Beginning Literacy level will increase to the Beginning ELL level.</p>
<p><b>Beginning Basic Education (Level 1)</b></p>	<p><b>Improving one literacy level means:</b></p>

<p><b>Test Benchmarks:</b>  CASAS: 201- 210  BEST Oral 16-41  BEST Literacy 8-46</p>	<p>Participants scoring at the Beginning Basic Education level will increase to the Intermediate Basic Education level.  Participants scoring the Beginning ELL level will increase to the Advance Beginning ELL level.</p>
<p><b>Intermediate Low Education (Level 2)</b></p> <p><b>Test Benchmarks:</b>  CASAS: 211-220  BEST Oral 42-50  BEST Literacy 47-53</p>	<p><b>Improving one literacy level means:</b></p> <p>Participants scoring at the Intermediate Basic Education level will increase to the Advanced Basic Education level.  Participants scoring at the Intermediate ELL level will increase to the Advanced Intermediate ELL level.</p>
<p><b>Intermediate Education High (Level 2)</b></p> <p><b>Test Benchmarks:</b>  CASAS: 221-235  BEST Oral 51-57  BEST Literacy 54-65</p>	<p><b>Improving one literacy level means:</b></p> <p>Participants scoring at the Advanced Basic Education level will increase to the Adult Secondary level.  Participants scoring at the Advanced Intermediate ELL level will increase to the Advanced ELL level.</p>
<p><b>Adult Secondary Education Low (Level 3)</b></p> <p><b>Test Benchmarks:</b>  CASAS: 236-245  BEST Oral 58-64  BEST Literacy 66 and above</p>	<p><b>Improving one literacy level means:</b></p> <p>Participants scoring at the Adult Secondary level will increase to the Advanced Adult Secondary level.  Participants scoring at the Advanced ELL level will increased to the High Advanced ELL level.</p>
<p><b>Advanced Adult Secondary Education High (Level 3)</b></p> <p><b>Test Benchmarks:</b>  CASAS: 246 and higher  BEST Oral 65 and above</p>	<p><b>Improving one literacy level means:</b></p> <p>Participants scoring at the Advanced Adult Secondary level will earn a high school diploma through the GED, Maryland External Diploma Program, or high school credit.  Participants achieving the benchmark scores listed for the high Advanced ELL level are considered to be proficient and have tested out of the English literacy program.</p>

**#2. English language (ELL) learners in Even Start who have attended at least 60 hours of English language instruction, and will demonstrate achievement in listening, speaking, reading and writing by improving one literacy level, as measured by the CASAS or BEST.**

**GUIDANCE:**

- The minimum standard for an instructional cycle is 90 days. Students who do not participate for 90-consecutive days must be withdrawn and considered inactive in Even Start.
- Adult education is guided by learner goals and the assessments listed in this document. Each adult's goal needs to be established and recorded in the Literacy Works Information System (LWIS) when they are enrolled. Well designed lesson plans, applying principles of adult learning, promoting lifelong learning skills, and meeting Workforce Investment Act (WIA) standards maximize opportunities for learners. Instructional activities incorporate a variety of methods to address a range of learner needs.
- “English language instruction” is defined as classes in secondary education, GED preparation, functional skills and advanced instruction in English Language Learner of Other Languages (ELL)
- “Literacy levels” are defined in the National Reporting System and National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS) and correspond to specific scaled scores on the CASAS. Scores for the BEST and SPL that are equivalent to the CASAS have been included below.
- Adult participants’ entry-level test scores are the basis for determining achievement. Pre-assessment is done at intake; post-assessment is done after every 60 hours of instruction.
- To achieve this indicator, adult participants will increase at least one literacy level in all of the skill areas. Each adult participant should only be counted once when calculating the percentage of adults who have achieved this indicator. (In other words, if an adult improves two or more levels, he/she is not counted separately for each level of improvement.)
- When determining adult participants who have achieved this indicator, programs should also count those who improve one or more literacy levels after 60 hours or less of instruction.
- The assessment instrument required by MSDE is either CASAS Listening, BEST Oral or BEST Literacy.
- The Student Performance Levels (SPLs) are not tests - they are descriptions of general proficiency. The Student Performance Levels document provides standard descriptions of adult refugee students' ability at a range of levels. SPL descriptions provide a summary of a student's general language ability upon entry into an instructional level in the Core Curriculum.

**Literacy levels and test scores that apply to indicator #2 are as follows:**

<p><b>Beginning ELL Literacy (Level 1)</b></p> <p><b>Test Benchmarks:</b>  CASAS (Life Skills-Listening) 180 and below  SPL (Speaking) 0-1  SPL (Reading and Writing) 0-1  BEST Oral: 0-15  BEST Literacy: 0-7</p>	<p><b>Improving one literacy level means:</b></p> <p>Participants scoring the Beginning ELL Literacy level will increase to the Beginning ELL Low level.</p>
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<p><b>Beginning ELL Low (Level 1)</b></p> <p><b>Test Benchmarks:</b>  CASAS (Life Skills-Listening) 181-190  SPL (Speaking) 2-3  SPL (Reading and Writing) 2-4  BEST Oral 16-28  BEST Literacy 8-35</p>	<p><b>Improving one literacy level means:</b></p> <p>Participants scoring at the Beginning ELL Low level will increase to the Advanced Beginning ELL High level.</p>
<p><b>Beginning ELL High (Level 2)</b></p> <p><b>Test Benchmarks:</b>  CASAS (Life Skills-Listening) 191-200  SPL (Speaking) 5  SPL (Reading and Writing) 4  BEST Oral 29-41  BEST Literacy 36-46</p>	<p><b>Improving one literacy level means:</b></p> <p>Participants scoring at the Beginning ELL High level will increase to the Advanced Intermediate ELL Low level.</p>
<p><b>Intermediate ELL Low (Level 2)</b></p> <p><b>Test Benchmarks:</b>  CASAS (Life Skills-Listening) 201-210  SPL (Speaking) 5  SPL (Reading and Writing) 6  BEST Oral 42-50  BEST Literacy 47-53</p>	<p><b>Improving one literacy level means:</b></p> <p>Participants scoring at the Intermediate ELL Low level will increase to the Intermediate ELL level.</p>
<p><b>Intermediate ELL High (Level 3)</b></p> <p><b>Test Benchmarks:</b>  CASAS (Life Skills-Listening) 211-220  SPL (Speaking) 6  SPL (Reading and Writing) 7  BEST Oral 51-57  BEST Literacy 54-65</p>	<p><b>Improving one literacy level means:</b></p> <p>Participants scoring at the Intermediate High ELL level will increase to the Advanced ELL level.</p>

<p><b>Advanced ELL (Level 3)</b></p> <p><b>Test Benchmarks:</b>  CASAS (Life Skills-Listening) 221-235  SPL (Speaking) 7  SPL (Reading and Writing) 8  BEST Oral 58-64  BEST Literacy 66 and above (SPL 7)</p>	<p><b>Improving one literacy level means:</b></p> <p>Participants achieving the benchmark scores listed for the Advanced ELL level are considered to be proficient and have tested out of the English literacy program.</p>
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<p><b>#3. Within six months of completing instruction at the Adult Secondary or Advanced Secondary Level, 78% of adult participants in Even Start with a goal of earning a high school diploma will obtain a high school diploma or its equivalent, as evidenced by documentation.</b></p>
<p><b>GUIDANCE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The six months may extend across program years.</li> <li>▪ “Literacy levels” are defined in the National Reporting System and National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS).</li> <li>▪ “High school diploma or its equivalent” is defined as a Maryland high school diploma obtained through the GED, Maryland adult external diploma program, or evening high school program.</li> <li>▪ “Documentation” means data match with the Maryland Department of Education's data bases identifying graduates.</li> </ul>

**#4. Within six months of completing their adult education goals in the Even Start program, adult participants with a goal of future education and/or employment will enter into a postsecondary school, job training program or career advancement, including the military, as evidenced by self-report on a six-month follow-up telephone call or as shown by documentation on the adult education reporting system.**

**GUIDANCE:**

- The six months may extend across program years.
- Goals must be established and recorded when parents enroll.
- “Postsecondary school/education” is defined as a learner enrolled in a postsecondary or training program that does not duplicate other training or services received, regardless of whether the prior services were attained or completed.\*
- “Employed” is defined as individuals who work as paid employees, work in their own business or farm, or who work 15 hours or more per week as unpaid workers on a farm or in a business operated by a member of the family. This also includes individuals who are not currently working, but who have jobs or businesses from which they are temporarily absent.\*
- “Career advancement” is defined as obtaining a job with increased pay or benefits, a higher level of responsibility, or one that requires a higher level of skills compared to current or most recent job. *(For example: A participant was working part-time and earned \$5.15 per hour. She is now working full-time and earns \$5.75 per hour. This participant would be counted as having achieved the outcome for this indicator.)*
- For parents not in the adult education system, programs need to follow-up to obtain documentation/verification.

*Reference:*

*United States Department of Education, National Reporting System Definitions for Adult Education: Core and Secondary Measures, and NRS Implementation Guidelines and Reporting Tables.*

***EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION***  
***Performance Indicators for Children***

**#5. Eighty percent (80%) of children, birth through age 2, who attend Even Start for six consecutive months or more will show progress in their emerging language and literacy development in accordance with state, local school system or program standards for language and literacy development.**

**GUIDANCE:**

- The six months may extend across program years.
- To “attend Even Start” means that a family is not merely enrolled but is participating in the program. Infants and toddlers are participating in early childhood activities (licensed child care, family day care, child development, nursery programs) and engage Interactive Literacy Activities for parents and children (ILA).
- Programs are encouraged to assess children holistically, and to use developmental screening/assessment tools that have been approved by and/or are used by local programs and supported by scientific reading research.
- Initial screening/assessment should occur within 30 days of the family being enrolled.
- Ongoing screening/assessment should occur after every six months of participation, or as befits the purpose of the screening/assessment instrument used.
- Screening and assessment tools frequently used throughout the state include, but are not limited to, the following:

**Screening and Assessment Tools for infants and toddlers:**

- High Scope Infant-Toddler Child Observation Record (COR)
- Denver II Developmental Screening
- Brigance Inventory of Early Development
- Ounce Scale

**#6. Eighty percent (80%) of children, ages 3 through grade 3, who attend Even Start for six consecutive months or more will improve in reading readiness or the ability to read on grade level in accordance with state, local school system or program standards for reading readiness or grade level performance.**

**GUIDANCE:**

- The six months may extend across program years.
- To “attend Even Start” means that a family is not merely enrolled but is participating in the program. Preschool children are participating in early childhood and Interactive Literacy Activities for parents and children (ILA) activities, and school-age children are attending school.
- Programs are encouraged to use assessment tools that have been approved by and/or are used by the local school system and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and is supported by scientific reading research. In addition, programs are encouraged to assess children holistically.
- Pre-assessment should occur when the family is enrolled. For preschool children, ongoing assessment should occur at a minimum, after every six months of participation, or as befits the purpose of the assessment instrument used. For school-age children, school-administered assessments conducted closest to the date of reporting should be used as post-assessments.
- Assessment tools frequently used throughout the state include, but are not limited to the following:

Age/Grade	Assessment Tools
Ages 3, 4, 5 and kindergarten	High/Scope Child Observation Record (COR), ages 2 ½ to 6 Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS-PreK) Work Sampling System Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT-III) Brigance Comprehensive Inventory of Basic Skills – (use appropriate subtests for child’s age and development)
Grade 1	Integrated Language Assessment Brigance Comprehensive Inventory of Basic Skills - (use appropriate subtests for child’s age and development)
Grade 2 and above (through age 8)	Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS)/5 Maryland School Assessment (MSA)

**#7. All children, birth through grade 3, who attend Even Start for six consecutive months or more will meet the state standard for attendance during the school or program year.**

**GUIDANCE:**

- The six consecutive months may extend across program years.
- To “attend Even Start” means that a family is not merely enrolled but is participating in the program. Preschool children are participating in early childhood and Interactive Literacy Activities for parents and children, and school-age children are attending school.
- Attendance data is to be kept on all children in the family through grade 3. For school-age children, after the child (or children) meets the six month criteria, attendance data for the entire school year should be counted.
- The State standard for school attendance for K-3 is 94% of the days the local school system operates.
- The program standard for children enrolled in Early Head Start, Head Start center-based programs, licensed child care, family day care, or nursery programs is 85% of the days the program operates.
- Programs are encouraged to establish attendance policies/standards for Even Start children.
- Programs are expected to keep separate attendance records during the summer months to document summer services.

**#8. All children, in grades kindergarten through grade 3, who attend Even Start for six consecutive months or more will meet the criteria for promotion established by the local school system for that grade level.**

**GUIDANCE:**

- The six consecutive months may extend across program years.
- To “attend Even Start” means that a family is not merely enrolled but is participating in the program, and school-age children are attending school.
- Promotion data is to be kept on all children in the family in grades kindergarten through grade three.

***FAMILY FUNCTIONING***  
***Performance Indicators for Family Members***

**#9. Seventy-five percent (75%) of parents/guardians who attend Even Start for six consecutive months or more will create a home environment that supports their children's literacy development, as evidenced by documenting at least three new or expanded literacy-related family activities during the program year.**

**GUIDANCE:**

- The six consecutive months may extend across program years.
- To “attend Even Start” means that a family is not merely enrolled but is participating in the program.
- “Home environment” is defined as the principle residence of the family members who attend Even Start. Staff should be aware of and document changes in residence.
- For a program to determine whether families are achieving the expected outcomes of this indicator, it must document a set of home environmental factors and literacy-related family activities when families enroll to create a basis for comparison and subsequent recordkeeping.
- Recordkeeping for the factors and activities related to this indicator should include quantity (of materials) and frequency (of activities).
- Adult education is guided by learner goals and the assessments listed in this document. Each adult's goal needs to be established and recorded in the Literacy Works Information System (LWIS) when they are enrolled. Well designed lesson plans, applying principles of adult learning, promoting lifelong learning skills, and meeting Workforce Investment Act (WIA) standards, maximize opportunities for learners. Instructional activities incorporate a variety of methods to address a range of learner needs.
- “Literacy-related family activities” may take place within and outside the home, and include changes made to the physical home environment and in the types of activities engaged in by parents/guardians and children. The types of environmental factors and literacy-related family activities that are appropriate for this indicator include, but are not limited to, the following:

**Home environment** – the following materials exist and/or increase in the home:

- Print materials (e.g., age-appropriate books, newspapers, magazines, labeling objects)
- Writing materials (e.g., paper, pens/pencils, crayons, coloring books)
- Educational, commercial, or homemade toys (e.g., letters, numbers, blocks, games, puzzles)

**Literacy-related family activities** – the family engages in and/or increases the frequency of the following activities:

- Reading, writing and playing with the above-mentioned materials (parent and child, parent to child, child to child, or child encouraged to play with materials independently)
- Obtain a library card
- Visits to the library and checking out books
- Visits to multicultural and recreational events and places (e.g., museums, zoos, parks, sports games)
- Using everyday routines and activities as learning activities (e.g., talking about and doing household chores together)

**#10. Seventy-five percent (75%) of parents/guardians who attend Even Start for six consecutive months or more will support their children's literacy development by being actively involved in school and community life, as evidenced by documenting at least three school or community literacy-related activities during the program year.**

**GUIDANCE:**

- The six consecutive months may extend across program years.
- To “attend Even Start” means that a family is not merely enrolled but is participating in the program.
- Recordkeeping for the activities related to this indicator should include frequency of activities.
- “School or community literacy-related activities” may take place within and outside the home. The types of activities that are appropriate for this indicator include, but are not limited to, the following:

**School or community literacy-related activities**

- Preparing children for school and supporting school work and requirements (e.g., comply with school schedule, rules and attendance, review and help children with homework)
- Attending school and/or other early childhood programs orientation and parent-teacher conferences
- Attending and/or participating in family literacy and school or program sponsored special events (e.g., multicultural events, family nights, concerts, plays)
- Volunteering at child's school or early childhood program
- Participating in the PTA, PTO, or parent advisory groups or councils
- Participating in community events and organizations (e.g., fundraisers, boys and girls clubs)

***EVEN START PROGRAM DESIGN***  
***Program Indicators for Service Delivery and Implementation***

**#11. Each program year, local Even Start programs will enroll the families most in need of Even Start services, as evidenced by documentation of multiple measure selection criteria.**

**GUIDANCE:**

- “Most in need” is defined by the Even Start statute as individuals with low incomes and low levels of literacy and English language proficiency. Other need-related indicators also may be considered, such as disabling conditions, homelessness or chronic unemployment.
- “Documentation” means a program will have written selection criteria and policies as part of its recruitment plan, including Even Start eligibility requirements, and will collect recruitment data. A program should evaluate its recruitment efforts regularly and modify them as necessary, based on changes in community demographics, unemployment rate and other factors, to ensure it is reaching and recruiting the most-in-need families.

**#12. Each program year, retention of Even Start families will increase by 5%, as evidenced by documentation showing participation in program services.**

**GUIDANCE:**

- Retention is emphasized in the Even Start statute where it states that “programs must encourage participating families to attend regularly and to remain in the program a sufficient time to meet their goals.” [Section 1235(11), ESEA, No Child Left Behind Act of 2001]
- “Participation” is defined as family members’ regular involvement in all core components – adult education, early childhood education, parenting education, parent-child interactive literacy activities, and home visitation.
- To determine “retention rates,” a program must have written policies concerning enrollment, attendance/participation, continuing eligibility and exit/graduation. Such policies should include unusual circumstances that cause temporary absences, such as a family crisis or health condition.
- “Documentation” means a program will collect data on enrollment, attendance/participation and exit/graduation.

*References:*

*The Even Start Family Literacy Programs Statute, Part B of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, reauthorized by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.*

*Guide to Quality: Even Start Family Literacy Program, Volume I (revised), August 2001 (unpublished draft). Developed by RMC Research Corporation for the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Compensatory Education.*

*The Literacy Works: Program Self-Review*

*The Maryland Adult English as a Second Language Program Standards*