

Information on the Common Assessment for Use in Department of Juvenile Justice Education Programs

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide information on the common assessment to be administered to youth in Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) education programs.

Background

In 1999, Florida Statute (F.S.) 228.081(2)(e) identified specific requirements for measuring student academic progress in the basic skill areas and for designing instruction during placement of students in detention and commitment facilities. State Board of Education Rule 6A-6.05281 addressed the legislative requirements in F.S. 228.081(2)(5) for student assessment. The 1999 legislation resulted in a list of thirty-two approved assessments for use as youth enter and exit DJJ education programs.

The 2004 Legislature passed Florida Statute 1003.52(3)(b), which requires the Department of Education (DOE), with the assistance from school districts, to select a common assessment instrument for measuring progress of students in a juvenile justice education program. To this end, a common assessment instrument also addresses Title I, Part D, of the No Child Left Behind Act requirement for reporting pre- and post assessment results at least once every three years.

Several common assessment workgroup meetings identified key criteria for selecting the common assessment instrument. From the selected criteria, a request for proposal was issued. An evaluation committee was formed, which reviewed the submitted assessments and selected the Basic Achievement Skills Inventory (BASI) as the common assessment.

The BASI Assessment

The BASI is a multi-level assessment that

- Is norm referenced
- Was developed to help identify a student's academic strengths and weaknesses
- Is to be used as an entry/exit assessment only

REFER QUESTIONS TO:

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John L. Winn, Commissioner

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PAPERS (TAPs) are produced periodically by the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services to present discussion of current topics. The TAPs may be used for inservice sessions, technical assistance visits, parent organization meetings, or interdisciplinary discussion groups. Topics are identified by state steering committees, district personnel, and individuals, or from program compliance monitoring.

BUREAU OF EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION AND STUDENT SERVICES

- Can be administered individually or in a group setting
- Covers grades 3 through 12
- Covers content areas of reading, language arts, and math
- Can be administered on the computer or with paper and pencil

In addition, the BASI assessment is very comprehensive. There are six subtests: vocabulary, spelling, language mechanics, reading comprehension, math computation, and math application. Each subtest is timed, allowing a total test administration time of 115 minutes. The assessment should always be administered timed.

Exceptional education students should always be administered the BASI timed. In instances in which flexible scheduling is needed, the assessment can be administered over several days. The BASI allows for the test to be paused between each subtest.

Procedures for Administering the BASI

The BASI is to be administered only in residential and day treatment programs. The following procedures must be followed for administration of the BASI:

- Programs will begin administering the BASI on July 1, 2006. Youth enrolled in the program prior to July 1 will not need to be entry assessed with the BASI. Only youth who were entry assessed with the BASI should be exit assessed with the BASI.
- Entry assessments should be administered within five school days of entry into the program. The DOE will continue to pursue change in statute to align with recommendations to require entry assessment administration within ten school days.
- Exit assessments will be required for youth who have spent 45 school days or more in the program.
- Youth in long term commitment programs (more than one year) should be assessed with the BASI on an annual basis. Youth who meet this criteria should be assessed as long as the youth has 45 school days or longer remaining in the program. If the youth has 45 school days or less remaining, the program should only exit test the youth.
- If a youth re-offends within 30 days of exit from the program, the youth's exit assessment should be used as the entry assessment in the next placement.
- Youth who transfer to another DJJ program after spending 45 school days or longer in the program should receive an exit assessment. The exit assessment results in this case can be used as the entry assessment for the new program placement.
- For youth transferred within 45 school days, the new placement should use the existing entry assessment.
- Programs will use the standard score for MIS reporting. After July 1, 2006, only BASI assessments should be reported through the MIS system.

Additional Information on the BASI

The DOE will cover the cost of the assessments, which includes the BASI classroom kit; Q Local™ software; BASI student report summary administrations; Q Local™ answer sheets, levels 1 through 4; and BASI test booklets, levels 1 through 4. Programs may order materials not included in the BASI contract at their own expense. Regional trainings will be provided annually to new staff on the administration of the BASI.

Programs will have two opportunities per year to order assessments—in May and November. Pearson Assessments has developed an on-line ordering system to order BASI materials at www.fdj-j-basi.com. The materials ordered for the administration of the BASI will include a report counter, which tracks the number of assessments available to the program. On the same Web site, Pearson Assessments will be posting responses to frequently asked questions regarding the BASI.

When programs open in between the ordering periods, the school district contact (contract manager) for DJJ education programs will need to notify the DOE. The DOE will ensure that the program has sufficient BASI assessments to administer at entry and exit. The school district contact will need to notify the DOE when a program closes and return the report counter.

Program Support

Pearson Assessments staff are available to answer questions related to:

- Software approval process: contact Gary Therens, 800-627-7271, extension 3342, or by e-mail at gary.therens@pearson.com
- On-line ordering: contact Tom Brown, 800-627-7271, extension 3314, or by e-mail at thomas.brown@pearson.com
- BASI assessments: contact Julie Ethier, 800-627-7271, extension 3352, or by e-mail at julie.ethier@pearson.com
- BASI assessments: contact Julie Lackaff: 800-922-7343, extension 4381, or by e-mail at julie.lackaff@pearson.com

Please direct questions regarding procedures for administering the BASI to:

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