

1 **TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION**
2 **Adult Education and Literacy Letter**

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| ID/No: | AEL 07-17, Change 1 |
| Date: | July 21, 2021 |
| Keyword: | AEL |
| Effective: | Immediately |

3 **To:** Adult Education and Literacy Grant Recipients
4 Adult Education and Literacy Special Project Grantees
5 Local Workforce Development Board Executive Directors
6 Commission Executive Offices
7 Integrated Service Area Managers



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9 **From:** Courtney Arbour, Director, Workforce Development Division

10 **Subject:** **Required Syllabus Design for Adult Education and Literacy**
11 **Instruction—Update**

12
13 **PURPOSE:**

14 The purpose of this AEL Letter is to provide Adult Education and Literacy (AEL)
15 grantees¹ with updated information and guidance on developing syllabi for AEL
16 instructional programs, including specific guidance on English as a Second
17 Language² (ESL) programs, high school equivalency (HSE) programs, and
18 Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs.

19 This updated AEL Letter adds a requirement that all ESL services and curricula
20 include a civics component beginning July 1, 2021.

21 **RESCISSIONS:**

22 AEL Letter 07-17

23 **BACKGROUND:**

24 A syllabus provides information on course content, course requirements, the
25 policies of the provider, and the responsibilities of students. As of July 1, 2018,

¹ For the purposes of this AEL Letter, AEL grantees are entities that receive AEL funds through the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC).

² Capitalization indicates terms that are defined in this AEL Letter or in other AEL Letters, the Adult Education and Literacy Guide, state or federal laws, or other publications cross-referenced in this AEL Letter.

1 AEL grantees are required to provide all participants with a syllabus for each
2 course in a program of study.

3 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title II, the Adult Education
4 and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), expands and clarifies the variety of programs,
5 activities, and services required under AEFLA, including program objectives for
6 ESL, HSE, and IET, and establishes more rigorous performance requirements.

7 TWC uses the syllabus as a means by which AEL grantees can document how the
8 services they deliver address the new federal requirements.

9 Under AEFLA, TWC must ensure that AEL grantees align their courses with the
10 [Texas AEL Content Standards v. 3](#) (content standards), last revised in spring 2021
11 to include parent/family and civics standards.

12 AEL Letter 01-17, Change 1, “Implementing Programs, Activities, and Services
13 for English Language Learners—*Update*,” clarifies an AEFLA requirement that
14 ESL courses must lead to high school completion, transition into postsecondary
15 education or training, or employment. Although these outcomes might not be
16 realized initially by students who function at lower academic levels, the
17 instruction must be offered at all ESL levels to provide an interconnected
18 sequence of coursework that supports the ultimate achievement of these
19 outcomes. An ESL syllabus must explain how the course objectives, curriculum,
20 and services fit into the sequence, lead to high school completion, and achieve
21 transition goals using the methods outlined in AEL Letter 01-17, Change 1.

22 WIOA performance requirements outlined in US Department of Education Office
23 of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) Program Memorandum 17-
24 2, “Performance Accountability Guidance for Workforce Innovation and
25 Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I, Title II, Title III, and Title IV Core Programs,”
26 describes requirements for reporting performance under WIOA. The memo
27 outlines specific performance criteria for participants who attain an HSE
28 credential. To be included in the HSE credential attainment measure for
29 performance, participants who earn an HSE credential must also be employed or
30 enrolled in an education or training program leading to a recognized
31 postsecondary credential within one year after exit from the program.

32 Syllabi for HSE preparation courses must describe how course outcome
33 objectives address these performance criteria.

34 **PROCEDURES:**

35 **No Local Flexibility (NLF)**: This rating indicates that AEL entities must comply
36 with the federal and state laws, rules, policies, and required procedures set forth in
37 this AEL Letter and have no local flexibility in determining whether and/or how
38 to comply. All information with an NLF rating is indicated by “must” or “shall.”

39 **Local Flexibility (LF)**: This rating indicates that AEL entities have local
40 flexibility in determining whether and/or how to implement guidance or

1 recommended practices set forth in this AEL Letter. All information with an LF
2 rating is indicated by “may” or “recommend.”

3 **NLF**: AEL grantees must be aware of the following definition:

4 **Program of study**—A grouping of courses that deliver academic and/or career
5 and technical education to prepare students for postsecondary education and
6 career success.

7 **Minimum Syllabus Elements**

8 **NLF**: AEL grantees must provide all participants with a syllabus that includes, at a
9 minimum, the following elements:

- 10 • General information, including any fees or costs related to the course
- 11 • Information about the instructor, including the instructor’s name and contact
12 information
- 13 • The course’s location
- 14 • The course calendar, including class hours, start and end dates, and holidays
- 15 • The course objectives and how they align with the content standards
- 16 • The attendance policy, including methods for making up missed classes or
17 completing missed work
- 18 • The expectations for course participation, homework, and outside instructional
19 support such as distance learning
- 20 • The methodology for evaluation and/or grading
- 21 • A list of the necessary learning tools and resources (such as textbooks, digital
22 resources and applications, laptops, and calculators) and information on which
23 of these resources are provided by the program and which must be acquired
24 by the student
- 25 • A list of additional forms of support for students, such as contacts for career
26 navigators and counselors; contacts for TWC resources, such as Vocational
27 Rehabilitation and Workforce Solutions Offices; and contacts for services
28 offered by collaborating organizations

29 **Additional Requirements for an ESL Syllabus**

30 **NLF**: In addition to the minimum syllabus elements, AEL grantees must include
31 information in the syllabus for each course in an ESL program showing how the
32 course addresses the AEFLA requirements to:

- 33 • align with the content standards, including a civics component that aligns with
34 AEL content standards’ civics standards;
- 35 • fit into a sequence of courses leading to attainment of a certificate of HSE
36 and/or enrollment in postsecondary education, training, or employment; or
- 37 • be part of a career pathway.

38 **Additional Elements for an HSE Preparation Syllabus**

39 **NLF**: In addition to the minimum syllabus elements, AEL grantees must explain in the
40 syllabi for courses in an HSE program how, within one year after exit, the courses
41 address the AEFLA requirement of leading to:

- 42 • employment; or
- 43 • enrollment in an education or training program leading to a recognized
44 postsecondary credential.

1 Syllabi for HSE preparation courses must describe how course outcome
2 objectives address WIOA performance criteria.

3 **Additional Elements for an IET Syllabus**

4 **NLF:** In addition to the minimum syllabus elements, AEL grantees must provide the
5 following in the syllabus for a course in an IET program of study:

- 6 • A description of each of the three following core components of an IET
7 program of study:
 - 8 ➤ AEL activities
 - 9 ➤ Workforce Preparation Activities
 - 10 ➤ Workforce Training
- 11 • A single set of learning objectives that identifies specific adult education
12 content, Workforce Preparation Activities, and Workforce Training
13 competencies
- 14 • The schedule for the IET program of study, showing how the core
15 components are provided concurrently at points within the overall scope of the
16 program
- 17 • Information on the recognized postsecondary credential that participants will
18 prepare for, including how the credential is earned and what organization
19 administers the credential
- 20 • For IET programs of study for English language learners, a description of the
21 civics component that aligns with AEL content standards' civics standards

22 **Syllabus Distribution**

23 **NLF:** AEL grantees must distribute the syllabus to students on the first or second day of
24 class, or, in the case of distance-learning participants, within one week after
25 completing the first hour of distance learning or the student's first proxy hour.

26 **INQUIRIES:**

27 Send inquiries regarding this AEL Letter to aelpolicy.clarifications@twc.state.tx.us.

28 **ATTACHMENTS:**

29 Attachment 1: Revisions to AEL Letter 07-17 Shown in Track Changes
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31 **REFERENCES:**

32 The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act
33 US Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education
34 [Program Memorandum 17-2, "Performance Accountability Guidance for](#)
35 [Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act \(WIOA\) Title I, Title II, Title III,](#)
36 [and Title IV Core Programs,"](#) issued August 23, 2017
37 [Texas Adult Education and Literacy Testing Guide](#)
38 [Texas Adult Education and Literacy Guide](#)
39 AEL Letter 01-17, Change 1, "Implementing Programs, Activities, and Services
40 for English Language Learners—*Update*," and any subsequent issuances
41 AEL Letter 02-16, Change 1, "Implementing the Integrated Education and
42 Training Service Approach—*Update*," issued October 13, 2016, and any
43 subsequent issuances

1 AEL Letter 04-16, Change 2, “Implementing Integrated Education and Training
2 English Literacy and Civics Education—*Update*,” and any subsequent
3 issuances