

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

ID/No:	AEL 09-20
Date:	December 21, 2020
Keyword:	AEL
Effective:	October 15, 2020

3 **To:** Adult Education and Literacy Grant Recipients
4 Adult Education and Literacy Special Initiative 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:** **Math Assistance Call Center**
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13 **PURPOSE:**

14 The purpose of this AEL Letter is to provide Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) grantees¹ with
15 information and guidance on how to properly enter participant direct contact hours for the Math
16 Assistance Call Center (MACC) into the Texas Educating Adults Management System
17 (TEAMS). This AEL Letter provides guidance on:

- 18 • MACC activities, which count as direct contact hours; and
- 19 • the requisites for reporting direct contact hours achieved through participant engagement
20 with MACC instructors.

21 **RESCISSIONS:**

22 AEL Letter 06-17, Change 1

23 **BACKGROUND:**

24 The Distance Learning Call Center Pilot Project grant was awarded to the StudentNest
25 Foundation (StudentNest) on July 1, 2016, to provide assistance in mathematics to adults who
26 meet eligibility requirements for AEL services. In this pilot, which ended June 30, 2019,
27 StudentNest instructors provided one-on-one instruction using a combination of phone, chat, and
28 interactive whiteboard technology. On April 14, 2020, TWC's three-member Commission
29 approved a second round of funding for the call center. This round of funding was to provide
30 virtual math support to AEL customers during the COVID-19 pandemic. StudentNest was
31 awarded this grant, now referred to as MACC, to provide math support in multiple languages,

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

1 seven days a week, to AEL participants working to obtain a Texas certificate of high school
2 equivalency (TxCHSE) or improve their math skills. The MACC offers instructional delivery
3 through live video chat and phone calls.

4 **PROCEDURES:**

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

9 **Local Flexibility (LF)**: This rating indicates that AEL entities have local flexibility in
10 determining whether and/or how to implement guidance or recommended practices set
11 forth in this AEL Letter. All information with an LF rating is indicated by “may” or
12 “recommend.”

13 **NLF**: AEL grantees must be aware that all MACC instructors meet the teacher qualifications
14 and professional development qualifications required of AEL instructors, as outlined in
15 TWC Chapter 805 Adult Education and Literacy rule §805.21.

16 **NLF**: AEL grantees must designate a staff member to serve as the MACC point of contact for
17 StudentNest.

18 **NLF**: AEL grantees must be aware that StudentNest may contact the grantee’s staff point of
19 contact to help identify AEL participants who call the MACC but do not have their
20 TEAMS participant identification (ID) number.

21 **NLF**: AEL grantees must be aware that real-time interaction between an AEL participant and
22 MACC staff is considered to be direct contact hours. Direct contact hours include contact
23 by telephone, video, teleconference, or online communication in which the provider can
24 verify the identity of the participant and the amount of time spent on the activity. Live
25 online discussions, telephone conference calls, and live video broadcasts to remote
26 locations are also examples of direct contact hours under this definition.

27 **NLF**: AEL grantees must be aware that direct contact hours obtained through the MACC must
28 be recorded as direct contact hours, not proxy hours, in TEAMS. This includes
29 instruction offered through video chat and phone calls.

30 **Required MOU with StudentNest**

31 **NLF**: To report direct contact hours obtained through the MACC, AEL grantees must first
32 establish a no-cost business agreement with StudentNest through a formal letter of
33 agreement or memorandum of understanding (MOU). The agreement is no-cost because
34 StudentNest operates under a grant from TWC to provide the MACC at no cost to AEL
35 grantees. TWC does not supply a template for such an agreement.

36 **LF**: It is recommended that AEL grantees include the following elements in the MOU with
37 the MACC:

- 1 • The signatures of an authorized representative of the AEL grantee and an authorized
2 representative of StudentNest
- 3 • A statement of the responsibilities of each organization, including the assurance that
4 StudentNest will provide biweekly attendance reports to the program
- 5 • Contact information for each organization, including the AEL program point of
6 contact
- 7 • A data management plan, which includes deadlines for receiving from StudentNest
8 a record of direct contact hours for AEL participants
- 9 • A statement of commitment by each organization to carry out the responsibilities
10 outlined in the agreement

11 **LF:** AEL grantees may establish another business agreement if they choose to establish
12 services beyond the scope of the TWC grant award with StudentNest.

13 **Eligibility and Use of MACC Services**

14 **NLF:** AEL grantees must be aware that MACC services are available for AEL grantees and
15 providers participating in AEL special initiatives, such as Accelerate Texas and Ability-
16 to-Benefit.

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18 **NLF:** AEL grantees must be aware that only AEL participants or AEL reportable individuals,
19 meaning AEL students who have not achieved 12 direct contact hours in the program
20 year, may use the MACC.

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22 **NLF:** AEL grantees must be aware that MACC users must provide their TEAMS participant ID
23 number to the StudentNest instructor to access MACC instructional services.

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25 **LF:** AEL grantees may provide a referral form to potential MACC users that includes their
26 TEAMS participant ID.

27
28 **NLF:** AEL grantees must be aware that if an AEL participant is unable to provide a TEAMS
29 participant ID to the MACC, a MACC instructor may obtain the participant’s contact
30 information, such as full name, phone number, and other, non-personally identifiable
31 information, to obtain the TEAMS participant ID from the AEL grantee. The MACC
32 instructor may contact the AEL participant after obtaining the TEAMS participant ID
33 from the grantee in order to provide math services.

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35 **LF:** AEL participants may use the MACC on an as-needed basis or schedule regular tutoring
36 sessions.

37
38 **NLF:** AEL grantees must be aware that MACC instructors may administer a math assessment
39 to a new MACC user if a learning plan is created.

40
41 **Tracking Direct Contact Hours**

42 **NLF:** In order to create a class in TEAMS, AEL grantees must assign an instructor of record
43 from the AEL program to record direct contact hours for participants receiving MACC
44 services.

1 **LF:** The instructor of record may be the AEL grantee point of contact for StudentNest as
2 outlined in the MOU.

3 **NLF:** AEL grantees must be aware that TWC AEL staff will assign a MACC site to every
4 provider that requests that one be created. Providers must contact
5 teams.technicalassistance@twc.state.tx.us to request the creation of a MACC site
6 following the naming convention “MACC_Site Description.” AEL providers may be
7 funded with AEL special initiatives, such as Accelerate Texas and Ability-to-Benefit.

8 **NLF:** AEL grantees must follow the process to enter direct contact hours obtained through the
9 MACC into TEAMS, as follows:

- 10 1. Create a class or classes under the MACC site, as assigned by TWC AEL staff, for
11 each provider in TEAMS using a naming convention that begins with “MACC_Class
12 Name.”
- 13 2. Assign the instructor of record to the MACC class.
- 14 3. Assign AEL participants receiving MACC services to the MACC class.
- 15 4. Receive the student report from StudentNest, which provides the direct contact hours
16 for AEL participants.
- 17 5. Enter direct hours for the AEL participants in the MACC class as reflected from the
18 StudentNest student report, which provides the direct contact hours for each MACC
19 participant.

20 **Data Management Plan**

21 **NLF:** When a participant is receiving AEL services from more than one AEL provider, AEL
22 grantees must implement a method to ensure that participant contact hours from the
23 MACC are entered into and tracked only once in TEAMS, meaning the direct contact
24 time for one MACC session must only be recorded once and not duplicated across AEL
25 grantees. AEL grantees must document this method in the data management plan.
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27 **NLF:** AEL grantees must include the following elements in the data management plan:

- 28 • MACC site names, as assigned by TWC AEL staff
- 29 • MACC class names, with the “MACC_Class Name” naming convention
- 30 • The AEL program contact for StudentNest
- 31 • The instructor of record who is assigned to the MACC class
- 32 • Description of the process in the MOU on the manner and frequency with which
33 StudentNest will send the AEL grantee the MACC direct hours report
- 34 • Statement about how the AEL grantee will maintain documentation from StudentNest
35 that documents direct contact hours attained by AEL students for monitoring
36 purposes
- 37 • Biweekly process for entering MACC direct contact hours into TEAMS

38 **INQUIRIES:**

39 Send inquiries regarding this AEL Letter to AELpolicy.clarifications@twc.state.tx.us.

1 **REFERENCES:**

- 2 Texas Workforce Commission Chapter 805 Adult Education and Literacy Rules