

WIAB 05-04

(revised)

DATE: October 20, 2004
TO: All Local Workforce Investment Areas
FROM: Cheryl A. Brush, Chief, Workforce Systems Bureau
SUBJECT: Idaho Standards Achievement Tests (ISAT) for Determining Basic Skill Deficiencies

Recently, a question was raised as to whether the ISAT can be used to document basic skill deficiency for WIA youth at program entry. After consulting with staff from the State Board of Education, we have concluded that the ISAT scores can be used for this purpose if the following thresholds are adhered to:

- Math scores below 240 would indicate that the youth is functioning below the 9th grade.
- Reading and Language Usage scores below 221 would indicate that the youth is functioning below the 9th grade.

On either of these tests, if the student requires test adaptation (assistance on a test that would structurally change what is being tested - e.g., reading a reading test to a student), it may be assumed that the test would not provide a valid picture of their ability level. It is recommended that another measure be employed to determine the student's level of knowledge.

Test results must be current; normally this would mean the test was administered within the last 12 months or within the past school year. Also, local plans must include language in Chapter 3, Section II (B)(1)(6) that authorizes the use of this instrument.

We have also researched the possibility of using the ISAT for measuring skill attainments and have determined that the complexity of using and interpreting statistical significant gains on this instrument prevent it from being a viable tool for this purpose. Usage of the ISAT must therefore be limited to identification of the presence or absence of basic skill deficiency as a demographic at program entry (much like the TABE Locator). If the ISAT indicates that the individual is basic skill deficient, additional diagnostic testing is warranted.

Please contact Laura Gleason at 332-3570, ext. 3319, if you have questions or require additional information.

