**Frequently Asked Questions**

Adult Education and Literacy

Staff Qualifications & Training

Requirements: 40 TAC §805.21

**1. Q. Where can I find the rules for AEL Staff Qualifications and Training?**

**A**. Adult Education and Literacy providers funded by TWC must ensure that staff providing grant services meet required staff qualifications and training. The applicable rules for staff qualifications and training can be found in Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Part 20, Subchapter B §805.21: [AEL Rules Chapter 805](http://www.twc.state.tx.us/files/twc/rules-chapter-805-adult-education-literacy-twc.pdf)

**2. Q. Will the requirements related to required Tier 1 training change as a result of the new staff qualifications and training rules published by TWC? For example, is goal setting training still required?**

**A**. No, the revisions to the staff qualifications and trainingrules do not impact contract requirementsrelated to Tier 1 training. AEL contracts for 2016-17 require the following Tier 1 trainings, including:

* training for the administration of pre- and post- tests in compliance with the AEL Assessment Guide and test publisher’s administration guidelines;

basic training on TEAMS;

student intake, enrollment, and orientation;

goal setting as defined in the AEL Assessment Guide;

career awareness; and

other training in topics where local staff have subject matter expertise.

**3. Q. What kind of training counts toward the new principles of adult learning requirement?**

**A.** TheTexas Administrative Code (TAC) 805.2 defines principles of adult learning as: “A wide variety of research-based professional development topics that include instructional and advising characteristics specific to adults, and support the range of knowledge, skills, and abilities adults need to understand and use information, express themselves, act independently, effectively manage a changing world, and meet goals and objectives related to career, family, and community participation. Instructional principles include, but are not limited to, engaging adults and customizing instruction on subjects that have immediate relevance to their career and personal goals and objectives, building on their prior knowledge and experience, and supporting them in taking responsibility for their learning.”

TWC is providing trainers and providers flexibility in developing training courses that meet this definition; the training agenda and curriculum should clearly indicate how the training meets this definition.

TWC envisions that many training courses will meet this definition, and, because these principles represent effective practices in adult instruction in general, other training courses, such as a training on teaching English as a Second Language, or reading instruction training, may also have principles of adult learning embedded in the curriculum.

To ensure adequate intensity in the training topic, TWC is recognizing training that has as its main objective principles of adult learning content as meeting the three hour requirement. If providers are uncertain if a training meeting this definition, they should consult their Professional Development Specialist at TRAIN PD. Additionally, TRAIN PD is working with TWC to identify existing training courses that will count as principles of adult learning courses and will identify those in the training title, with an extension of. PAL (ex: adultinstruction.pal). TRAIN PD has also published a list of training currently available that has been identified as PAL.

**4. Q. What kind of training would satisfy the requirement for “relevant areas of literacy instruction?”**

**A**. 40 TAC 805.21 defines Literacy as “an individual’s ability to read, write, and speak in English, and to compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family of the individual, and in society.” TWC is providing trainers and providers flexibility in developing training courses that meet this definition. The training agenda and curriculum should clearly indicate how the training meets this definition. If providers are uncertain whether training meets this definition, they should consult their Professional Development Specialist at TRAIN PD. Additionally, TRAIN PD is working with TWC to identify existing training courses that will count as “relevant areas of literacy instruction”, and will identify those in the training title, with an extension of. LIT (ex: mathinstruction.lit). TRAIN PD has also published a list of training of training currently available that has been identified as .LIT.

**5. Q.**  **Will a certificate of completion from TRAIN PD show that a particular training fulfills the principles of adult learning or literacy instruction requirement?**

**A**. Yes, a certificate issued by TRAIN PD or the PD Portal will identify which requirement the training fulfills, and how many hours of professional development have been earned from the training. If the certificate of completion is issued by the local program, it should also include which requirement the training fulfills, and how many hours of PD are earned. If the training meets more than one requirement it should be noted by the local program which one the training is intended to fulfill. The PD Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that PD requirements are fulfilled for all AEL staff.

**6. Q. How will TEAMS reflect which requirement a training fulfills?**

**A**. As trainings are put into TEAMS, the title will be tagged so you will know which requirement it fulfills. TEAMS version 2.9, expected to be released at the end of September, 2016, will also add the additional training types. As reports are remediated, reports will also reflect these new requirements. The process of reports remediation will take place over the next year.

**7. Q. Are there PD requirements for clerical and janitorial staff?**

 **A.** No. Clerical and janitorial personnel are exempt from PD requirements.

**8. Q. Is “preservice” no longer a requirement?**

**A**. The term “pre-service” was removed in February of 2014 when the original Chapter 805 rules were approved. In historical practice, “pre-service” were sometimes work-related activities that were required before an individual was hired or were unpaid, both practices that may violate wage and hour laws. In 2014, pre-service was replaced with in-service requirements that must be completed before an individual begins instructional or assessment activities.

The new rules provide additional flexibility as “instructors new to AEL or direct student service delivery”must receive at least 6 clock hours of professional development within 30 calendar days of providing instructional activities, rather than prior to conducting those activities as with the previous rules. 30 days will be counted from the time they are assigned instructional activities in TEAMS.

**9. Q. There is an option for “preservice” in TEAMS, when do I use that?**

**A**. Do not use the “preservice” option in TEAMS. All PD should be tagged as in-service. While it may appear simple to non-computer programmers, removing the “pre-service” option in TEAMS is a costly and time consuming re-programming issue. TWC is prioritizing other TEAMS enhancements at this time.

**10. Q. Are the 6 hours for new instructors in addition to the 15 required hours?**

**A.** No, the 6 hours count toward the total of 15. All AEL instructional staff, except substitutes, paid with AEL grant funds, or who acquire student contact hours, including volunteers, shall receive at least 15 clock hours of professional development each program year; at least 6 clock hours of the required professional development must be received within 30 calendar days of providing instructional activities, if new to AEL or to direct student service delivery (3 principles of adult learning, 3 relevant areas of literacy instruction).

**11. Q. Does the reduction in required PD hours for staff hired after Jan. 1 apply to all staff?**

 **A**. No. This applies only to the following positions:

* AEL Directors, Supervisors, and other staff with program oversight or coordination responsibilities;
* AEL instructional staff, including volunteers, that acquire student contact hours (except substitutes)

**12. Q. Do we have to give the waiver for 18 hours of college credit?**

**A.** No, that is the decision of the local Program Director.

**13. Q. Is the 18 hour waiver for college credit in a literacy instructor’s primary content area a yearly or a one-time waiver?**

**A**. 40 TAC §805.21 (6)(A)(iv) allows for six clock hours of content area in staff professional development to be waived for individuals who have 18 or more college semester undergraduate or graduate credit hours in relevant areas of literacy instruction.

The waiver falls under Section 805.21 (6), which describes professional development requirements for AEL instructional staff in “each program year”, thus, the waiver may be granted each program year by the local Program Director. Local Program Directors may require additional professional development at their discretion.

**14. Q. What documentation do I need for the waiver for the 18 hours of college credit in the primary content area?**

**A.** You need a copy of an official college transcript on file, as well as documentation from the Program Director (email in the file is fine) that states the waiver is granted, and for what period.

**15. Q. I have an instructor that teaches more than one content area. Do they need 6 hours of PD in both content areas?**

**A.** No, 6 total hours of literacy instruction in one or both content areas fulfills the requirement. How many hours in each content area of literacy instruction would be at the discretion of the Program Director (ex: if an instructor teaches two distinctly separate areas of instruction, the Program Director may allow 3 hours of each content area).

**16. Q. What are the Staff Qualifications and PD requirements for Career Pathways Navigators?**

1. Career Pathways Navigators are “staff providing support services or college and career transitional support” and thus must meet the following minimum requirements found under Staff Qualifications and Training (40 TAC §805.21):
2. AEL aides, administrative, data entry, proctoring staff, and staff providing support or employment services to students shall have at least a high school diploma or high school equivalency certificate.
3. All staff providing support services or college and career transitional support, who are paid through an AEL grant, shall receive at least three clock hours of professional development each program year.