

April 17, 2006

DIRECTIVE:	JOB CORPS INFORMATION NOTICE NO. 05-29
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TO: ALL JOB CORPS NATIONAL OFFICE STAFF
ALL JOB CORPS REGIONAL DIRECTORS
ALL JOB CORPS CENTER DIRECTORS
ALL JOB CORPS CENTER OPERATORS
ALL NATIONAL TRAINING AND SUPPORT CONTRACTORS
ALL OUTREACH, ADMISSIONS AND CTS CONTRACTORS

FROM: ESTHER R. JOHNSON
National Director
Office of Job Corps

SUBJECT: Transition to the Online Tests of Adult Basic Education Forms 9/10

1. Purpose. To announce the planned, transition from the current Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) Forms 7/8 to Online TABE Forms 9/10 and the development of the Student Testing System (STS), a test delivery and management system being developed by the Job Corps Data Center (JCDC) to replace the current Test Management System (TMS). The transition to the online version of TABE Español for the Puerto Rico centers will be addressed in a separate Information Notice.

2. Background. Job Corps uses the TABE to measure students' understanding and application of conventions and principles in reading and mathematics. Literacy and numeracy gains, measured through students' individual TABE test results, are factored into Job Corps' Outcome Measurement System (OMS). Job Corps centers currently use TABE Forms 7/8 in all initial and follow-up testing, as specified in the Policy and Requirements Handbook (PRH) Appendix 301.

As Job Corps continues to focus on ways to improve training content and delivery to meet the challenges of the 21st century workplace, it will also upgrade students' basic skills assessments in reading and mathematics with the transition to the Online TABE Forms 9/10. Planning for this transition began last year and was significantly impacted when the National Office of Job Corps purchased the TABE 9/10 content from CTB McGraw-Hill in December 2005. The license to the content of the

TABE 9/10 has enabled Job Corps to move forward in the design and development of the STS. Furthermore, the content and structure of these newer forms of the TABE more accurately measure the skills students need in the job market, and results are better predictors of student performance on the 2002 General Educational Development (GED) test.

The STS is a Web-based system that will be fully integrated into the Center Information System (CIS) to deliver the TABE 9/10. The STS is a major component of a comprehensive system design that will eventually integrate student assessment, delivery of instruction, and the management of education and training in Job Corps.

Extensive planning, design and development work, and field testing is needed to ensure a smooth transition to the Online TABE 9/10 and the effective implementation of the new STS. The National Office of Job Corps' ad hoc TABE Team (National Office staff, support contractors, and selected centers) will spend the remainder of this year and the first half of 2007 in preparing for this system-wide transition for Program Year 2007. Centers participating in the field testing will not be held accountable for the results of the pilot in OMS.

The following anticipated timeline and activities are provided for your information.

Task	Timeframe	Activity
Pilot Study Planning Period	March–April 2006	The ad hoc TABE Team will explore issues associated with the national rollout from a variety of perspectives, finalize the plan for two pilot studies, develop procedures for conducting the pilot studies, and coordinate the pilot studies at identified centers.
Center Survey	May–June 2006	Job Corps centers will be asked to complete a survey to assist in planning the transition and implementation of the new TABE tests. The survey will include questions on the center's testing schedule, the number of students tested per week, facilities, Internet connection, and computer equipment.
Pilot Study #1	May–August 2006	The goal of the first pilot study will be to compare how students perform on the TABE 7/8 and the TABE 9/10 (both given in paper-and-pencil format). The current plans are to collect data at 16 centers over a 3-month period.

Task	Timeframe	Activity
Software Review	August–September 2006	The goal is to review the STS software that will be used to manage and deliver the Online TABE 9/10. The STS is currently in development by the JCDC.
Pilot Study #2	October–December 2006	The goal of the second pilot study is to compare the TABE 9/10 paper-and-pencil format with the Online TABE 9/10 version.
National Implementation	January–June 2007	Full-scale implementation of the Online TABE 9/10 is planned during the first two quarters of 2007. National implementation will include center preparation for changes in facilities, equipment, scheduling, and national adjustments in the OMS. During the second quarter of 2007, a series of training conferences, both online and live, will be conducted to ensure centers are prepared for full implementation of the Online TABE 9/10 in July 2007.

3. Action. Addressees are to ensure that a copy of this Notice is distributed to the appropriate staff, particularly the center’s senior education administrator, designated test administrator, training managers, and technology points of contact (POC).

4. Expiration Date. Until superseded.

5. Inquiries. Inquiries should be addressed to John Chowning, at (202) 693-3102, or e-mailed to chowning.john@dol.gov, or Lynne Fry, at (202) 693-3101, or e-mailed to fry.lynne@dol.gov.