



# CASAS Connection

Fall 2011

## Notes for the CASAS Community

- **Promising Practices** – Helping Students Attain Their Goals
- **Happy Holidays** – Please Note CASAS Closures in November and December

## CASAS Best Practices

- **CASAS eTests® Online** – How to Get Started
- **TOPSpro® Enterprise** – Start Transition Planning Now
- **QuickSearch Online** – Relate CASAS Content Standards to Instructional Materials

## New Resources You Can Use

- **Improve Health Care Access** – CASAS Recommends the Adult Low-Level Literacy Curriculum
- **TOPSpro Version 5.2** – Available Now

## Welcome to Our Website

- **New CASAS Website** – Visit us to connect and learn!



## Notes for the CASAS Community

### PROMISING PRACTICES

#### *Helping Students Attain Their Goals*

The [Promising Practices Awards](#) recognize ABE, ASE and ESL adult education providers in California who have implemented strategies and practices to help students attain their goals. These practices improve program accountability, develop skills that students need in the workplace, promote collaboration and cooperation with other programs or agencies, or promote effective student transitions. Most have potential application in other adult programs.

CASAS manages the Promising Practice Awards for the California Department of Education by identifying worthy agency programs through a process that includes site visits and references feedback from survey responses, student learning outcome data, and reports from other adult educators.

This year, eight different agencies received eleven awards. Practices for instructors and administrators share how these agencies:

- Quickly and effectively register, assess, and place large groups of ESL students
- Convey the importance of CASAS assessments to students
- Engage instructors in collective learning to improve student learning outcomes
- Recruit and train students for quality employment in medical administration
- Monitor student learning outcomes using an evidence-based portfolio system

Other practices focus on students by offering:

- Customized language development and a computer literacy program
- Learning opportunities regarding how to transition to college credit classes
- Flexible adult education options via distance learning (focusing on extremely large and diverse populations)
- Comprehensive preparation support and resources to help obtain citizenship
- Intensive counseling and support via vocational business certification programs
- Support transitioning into adult secondary and career and technical education programs

Summaries of these and other Promising Practices are featured on the CASAS Website ([casas.org](http://casas.org)). Highlights of the award winners can also be found in the Fall 2011 issue of [CALPROgress](#).

## HAPPY HOLIDAYS

*From the CASAS Staff*

We value your interest in CASAS and want to wish you and your family all the best in 2012. Because we are committed to providing the best possible customer service to you throughout the year, we are notifying you now that our office will be closed during the holiday season from November 21-25 and December 19 - January 2, 2012. We look forward to working with you for years to come!



## CASAS Best Practices

## CASAS ETESTS ONLINE

*Test Administration via the Internet – How to Get Started*

Whether you use CASAS paper-based materials or have made the move to computer-delivered tests using the desktop (locally-installed) version now is the time to consider CASAS eTests Online. You won't need any additional hardware or software other than Internet access and a computer's operating system with the latest Microsoft updates such as .NET Framework 4 and Silverlight 4. CASAS eTests Online runs in both Internet Explorer 7.0 (or later) and Mozilla Firefox 3.6 (or later).

Follow the information links to learn about the implementation process.

- [Implementing CASAS eTests Online](#)
- [Steps to Implement CASAS eTests Online](#)

All you need is training (explained in the links above) and you're good to go!

## TOPSPRO ENTERPRISE

*Start Planning Now to Adapt to NRS Changes Effective July 1, 2012*

Are you aware of [NRS-mandated data collection changes](#) coming next program year? Your best strategy is TOPSpro Enterprise, developed by CASAS to address these new requirements. To help you adapt, CASAS now offers two Web-based trainings:

### 1. Introducing TOPSpro Enterprise (TE)

Presents robust new data-collection features that enhance data analysis and help identify solutions to improve performance outcomes. In particular, it will:

- Explain the desktop and online versions; how to access and launch both applications
- Highlight various menus, submenus, and icons
- Demonstrate how to:
  - Exhibit and customize TOPSpro Enterprise lists
  - Find and edit student records
  - Display reports menu and generate a few key sample reports

## 2. Transition Planning for TOPSpro Enterprise (TE)

Learn how to move forward and introduce this new application during Program Year 2011-12. This session showcases the wide variety of assessment and data collection options available in TE and outlines the timeline for continued development. In particular, it will:

- Define and relate TOPSpro, TE Online, and TE Desktop
- Identify timeline for releases and subsequent upgrades
- Describe “data flow” between TOPSpro and TE (online and/or desktop)
- Identify best practices for managing testing and data collection procedures during the “year of transition”
- Discuss managing testing and data collection using multiple methods simultaneously - CASAS e Tests (Online or Desktop) and paper-based testing

To start managing for the coming changes, search [CASAS Online Registration](#) for TOPSpro/TOPSpro Enterprise trainings and register now. When you’re ready to take the next step, contact [Carol Farrell](#) about how to place an order.



## New Resources You Can Use

## CASAS RECOMMENDS THE ADULT LOW-LEVEL LITERACY CURRICULUM

### *Improving Health Care access*

Recently, a graduate research assistant contacted CASAS about communicating cancer risks to patients with low literacy. A colleague suggested the CASAS Adult Low-level Literacy Curriculum might be a good tool to informally evaluate the literacy skills among study subjects.

CASAS was able to recommend several suitable modules for the study population including [Get to Know Your Doctor](#) and [Getting the Help You Need](#). Also, guidance on nutrition is available in the modules [You Are What You Eat](#) and [Planning a Trip to the Store](#). Beyond these, CASAS offers [QuickSearch Online](#) to help educators investigate suitable materials for developing curriculum.

## TOPSPRO VERSION 5.2

### *Available Now*

The latest version of CASAS “Tracking of Programs and Students” database management system — TOPSpro Version 5.2 — is now available. Primary enhancements pertain to:

- WIA, Title II Section 231 (ESL and Citizenship)
- NRS performance goals (PY 2010-11)
- Reports
  - WSCS (Workforce Skills Certification System) reports
  - Carl D. Perkins Vocational-Technical Education Act

For more information, contact [Jay Wright](#) (800-255-1036 ext 141).

Users can upgrade automatically via Live Update on their local installation, or by downloading from the [TOPSpro Webpage](#). Call 800-255-1036 ext 4 or email [CASAS Tech Support](#) for assistance.

## QUICKSEARCH ONLINE

### *Reference CASAS Content Standards to Search for Instructional Materials*

[QuickSearch Online](#) now offers the ability to search for instructional materials by CASAS Content Standards in reading, math, and listening. Writing and speaking standards correlations are in line for future development. Visit the CASAS Website to see the complete set of [CASAS Competencies](#) and [CASAS Content Standards](#).



Welcome to our  
Web site

## NEW CASAS WEBSITE

### *Connect With Your Peers and Learn Best Practices From Across the Country*

Check out the newly redesigned [CASAS website!](#)

- **Home Page**  
Highlighted key offerings help new users better understand CASAS products and services. A clean design and more effective use of space throughout make the site easier to navigate.
- **Multimedia and Social Media**  
The new homepage uses video to share best practices from across the country via our *Voices from the Field* campaign. As we gather more videos, the Social Media Newsroom will provide a searchable gallery of videos and customer stories and case studies. Also, you can “Like” and link to the CASAS Facebook page from the site.
- **Content Reorganization**  
We have rewritten many of the Web pages and are continually updating content. The reorganized content more closely aligns with the way you search for it.

If you previously registered on our old site, your username has changed to your email address. The improved log in and registration process may require you to re-register. If you have any trouble logging in, please contact the [Webmaster](#).

We hope you find the new design and organization an improvement from the old site. We appreciate your feedback and welcome your suggestions.

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