

Discussion of NRS Revisions

The NRS instrument consists of 11 required tables and 6 optional tables.

The number of tables will not change.

- 1. Replace goal-setting with automatic cohort identification as a means for defining the population of students on which States report the NRS follow-up measures of (a) employment, (b) obtaining a secondary credential and (c) entry into postsecondary education or training.***

A. Employment Measures

The NRS requires States to identify who among their unemployed students has a goal of “entered employment” and to follow up only with these students after they exit the adult education program to determine whether they have entered employment. States must also follow students who obtain employment after program exit to determine whether they have retained employment.

The data over the last three program years (PYs) indicate that States are under-setting the employment goals. The national percentage of unemployed students who exited the program with employment goals currently ranges from 18 percent to 22 percent. Many States have reported substantially lower percentages of students with employment goals. For example, in PY 2008–2009, one State reported that less than four percent of its unemployed students who exited the program had a goal of entering employment.

Furthermore, the number of students with employment-related goals set and met over the last several years fluctuates among States. This variation suggests instability in the data that likely is due to problematic goal setting, such as not setting an employment goal for unemployed students who are seeking a job and data collection practices rather than differences in the student population over the years. Consequently, it appears that the policy that allows local programs to set individual student goals (related to employment) results in outcome data that is of limited use as a measure of accountability.

To correct this problem and thereby improve the quality of data, OVAE will discontinue the use of goal-setting as a means for States to identify students to track to determine employment. Instead, States will be required to automatically designate all students who are unemployed and in the labor force as the cohort for which “entered employment” must be tracked. In addition, States will automatically designate all students who enter the program employed as the cohort for which “retained employment” must be tracked.

The revised text to the *Implementation Guidelines* with the proposed changes for the entered and retained employment measures is shown below in bold italics.

Proposed Changes to the Definition and Reporting of Entered Employment

Definition: Learner enters employment by the end of the first quarter after the program exit quarter. Employment is working in a paid, unsubsidized job or working 15 hours or more per week in an unpaid job on a farm or business operated by a family member or the learner. The exit quarter is the quarter when instruction ends, the learner terminates or has not received instruction for 90 days, and is not scheduled to receive further instruction. A job attained while a learner is enrolled can be counted for entered employment and reported if the learner is still employed in the first quarter after exit from the program.

Applicable Population: Learners who are not employed at time of entry *and in the labor force* who exit during the program year.

Federal Reporting: States report the total number of *unemployed* learners *in the workforce* who enter employment and exit during the program year and the total number of learners in the workforce who are unemployed at entry who exit during the program year. Entered employment rate is computed by dividing these numbers.

Proposed Changes to the Definition and Reporting of Job Retention

Definition: Learner remains employed in the third quarter after program exit.

Applicable Population: Learners who, at time of entry, were not employed *and in the workforce*, who enter employment by the first quarter after exit quarter, and learners employed at entry.

Federal Reporting: States report the total number of learners *in the applicable population who are employed in the third quarter after program exit* and the total applicable population (i.e., the number of learners in the workforce who were unemployed at entry, and who entered employment; and learners who are employed at entry). *The retained employment rate is computed by dividing these numbers.*

States will be required to report data using the revised version of NRS Table 5 shown in the revised instrument document for the program year beginning July 1, 2012.

B. Obtaining a Secondary Credential Measure

The NRS requires States to report attaining a secondary credential or passing the GED tests for students who set this outcome as a goal. States must track these students after they exit the adult education program to determine whether the students obtained the credential. OVAE will discontinue goal-setting in the collection of the other NRS follow-up measures (employment and postsecondary entry) because data indicate that local programs may not be effective in setting goals, thus resulting in measures of questionable utility.

Although goal-setting and reporting for the secondary credential measure appear to suffer less from inconsistent goal setting, to achieve consistency and simplify reporting, OVAE will eliminate goal-setting for the secondary credential attainment measure. States will instead be required to report the total number of enrolled students who take all the GED tests during the year and the number who pass them to calculate a pass rate. States with adult high schools will report the number of students in the NRS High Adult Secondary Education (ASE) level who obtain a high school diploma. States with an External Diploma Program (EDP) will report the number of students enrolled in the assessment phase who obtain a high school diploma.¹

The revised text to the *Implementation Guidelines* with the proposed changes for the measure of obtaining a secondary credential measure is shown below in bold italics.

Proposed Changes to the Definition and Reporting of Obtaining a Secondary Credential Measure

Definition: The learner obtains certification of attaining passing scores on GED tests, or the learner obtains a diploma or State-recognized equivalent, documenting satisfactory completion of secondary studies (high school or adult high school diploma).

Applicable Population: All learners *who take all GED tests, or are enrolled in adult high school at the high ASE level, or are enrolled in the assessment phase of the EDP* who exit during the program year.

Federal Reporting: States report the total number of learners *in the applicable population (see above) and the number of learners who pass all GED tests or obtain secondary school diplomas*. To compute a rate or percentage of attainment, the number of students receiving a secondary school diploma or GED is divided by the total number of learners *in the applicable population* who exit during the program year. Note that if a State has a policy officially recognizing attainment of a foreign language GED as receipt of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, the State may also report attainment of a foreign language GED in the NRS for adult literacy.

States will be required to report data using the revised version of NRS Table 5 shown in the revised instrument document for the program year beginning July 1, 2012.

C. Entry into Postsecondary Education or Training Measure

The NRS requires States to report student entry into postsecondary education or training for the students who set this outcome as a goal. Local programs must follow up with these students after they exit the adult education program to determine whether they entered postsecondary education or training.

¹ The “total students” included would be all students who take all five GED tests, or enroll in adult high school credit programs, or enroll in the EDP. The performance measure would be the number of students who passed all the GED tests, or received their high school diplomas, divided by this total.

The data indicate that States may not be effective in setting the postsecondary entry goal. Over the last three program years, the national percentage of students with this goal averaged about 27 percent of students at the high adult secondary education (ASE) level and about 12 percent of all ASE students. Many States have reported less than 30 percent of students in ASE have postsecondary entry goals.

In addition, the number of students with postsecondary entry goals set and met over the last several years fluctuates greatly within individual States. This variation suggests instability in the data that is likely due to problematic goal-setting and data-collection practices rather than differences in the student population over the years. Consequently, it appears that the data on postsecondary entry are of limited use as a measure of accountability.

To correct this problem and thereby improve the quality of data, OVAE will discontinue the use of goal-setting as a means for States to identify students to follow up to determine entry into postsecondary education or training. Instead, States will be required to designate all learners who have a GED, a secondary credential, or are enrolled in a class specifically designed for transitioning to postsecondary education (e.g., bridge program, college readiness), as the cohort for which “entry into postsecondary education” must be tracked. Students included in the cohort are those who passed the GED tests or earned a secondary credential while enrolled in adult education, enter with these credentials, or are enrolled in a class specifically designed for transitioning to postsecondary education.

In addition, OVAE proposes to extend the follow-up period for entry into postsecondary education to include the next program year (PY) after exit. For example, States can report entry into postsecondary education for a student who exits in PY 2012 any time from exit till the end of PY 2013. OVAE also clarifies that postsecondary education includes postsecondary occupational skill training and appropriate apprenticeship training, in addition to community colleges and four-year colleges.

The revised text to the *Implementation Guidelines* with the proposed changes for the entry into postsecondary education or training measure is shown below in bold italics.

Proposed Changes to the Definition and Reporting of Entry into Postsecondary Education or Training Measure

Definition: Learner enrolls in a postsecondary educational, occupational skills training program, *or an apprenticeship training program* that does not duplicate other services or training received, regardless of whether the prior services or training were completed.

Applicable Population: All learners *who passed the GED tests or earned a secondary credential while enrolled in adult education, have a secondary credential at entry, or who are enrolled in a class specifically designed for transitioning to postsecondary education* who exited during the program year.

Federal Reporting: The total number of learners who enter postsecondary education or a training program and *the total number of students in the applicable population* (see

above) who exit during the program year are reported. ***Entry into postsecondary education or training can occur any time from the time of exit till the end of the following program year.*** To compute a rate of placement, the number of students enrolling in postsecondary education or training, through the end of the program year following the year of program exit, is divided by the total number of learners ***in the applicable population*** who exited during the program year.

States will be required to report data using the revised version of NRS Table 5 shown in the revised instrument document for the program year beginning July 1, 2012.

2. ***Add new measures to report on (a) students' highest educational level or degree attained and on (b) teacher experience and certification.***

A. Students' Highest Educational Level or Degree Attained

Adult education students have a wide variety of educational backgrounds. Many have been schooled exclusively in the United States, while a growing number of learners from foreign countries arrive with high school diplomas, college degrees, professional certifications, or no schooling at all. Data about the educational background of adult education students can be useful for local programs in curriculum development and student recruitment activities. States may also use this data for planning purposes or to inform broader policy discussions such as those that seek to address the career pathways of highly educated foreign professionals. At the Federal level these data can be useful in responding to national stakeholders and government officials who inquire about the educational attainment of the adult education students who enter our programs.

Beginning July 1, 2012, States will be required to report these data using a revised version of NRS Table 6, shown in the revised instrument document.

B. Teacher Experience and Certification

The professional development and qualifications of teachers is of particular concern of OVAE and the States. Many States have implemented policies articulating the minimum requirements for adult education teachers, and currently collect their own data on teacher educational attainment, certification, and experience for program planning and reporting purposes. These data often support State policy proposals regarding standards for professional credentials, inform the legislative process, and respond to public requests for information about teacher professionalism. States also use these data to plan appropriate professional development opportunities. Adult education researchers use the data to analyze critical policy questions about teacher effectiveness and program performance. At the Federal level, these data can be useful in responding to national stakeholders and government officials who inquire about teacher standards and the credentials of adult education professionals.

Beginning July 1, 2012, States will be required to report these data using a revised version of NRS Table 7, shown in the revised instrument document.

NRS Reporting Tables

Revisions only for tables 5, 5a, 6, and 7

Table 5
Core Follow-up Outcome Achievement

<i>Core Follow-up Outcome Measures</i>	<i>Number of Participants in Cohort</i>	<i>Number of Participants Included in Survey Sample</i>	<i>Number of Participants Responding to Survey or Used for Data Matching</i>	<i>Response Rate or Percent Available for Match</i>	<i>Number of Participants Achieving Outcome</i>	<i>Percent Achieving Outcome</i>
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)
<i>Entered Employment*</i>						
<i>Retained Employment**</i>						
<i>Obtained a GED or Secondary School Diploma***</i>						
<i>Entered Postsecondary Education or Training****</i>						

Instructions for Completing Table 5

* Report in Column B the number of participants who were unemployed at entry and in the labor force who exited during the program year. Do not exclude students because of missing Social Security numbers or other missing data.

** Report in Column B: (1) the number of participants who were unemployed at entry and in the labor force who exited during the program year and who entered employment by the end of the first quarter after program exit and (2) the number of participants employed at entry who had a main or secondary goal of improved or retained employment who exited during the program year.

*** Report in Column B the number of participants who (1) took all GED tests, or (2) were enrolled in adult high school at the high ASE level or (3) were enrolled in the assessment phase of the EDP, who exited during the program year.

**** Report in Column B the number of participants who (1) have earned a GED or high school diploma, or (2) have a secondary credential at entry, or (3) are enrolled in a class specifically designed for transitioning to community college, and who exited during the program year.

If survey is used, then the number in Column C should equal the number in Column B unless random sampling was used. If one or more local programs used random sampling, then enter in Column C the total number of students included in the survey. If data matching is used, then Column C should be left blank.

If survey is used, *then the number in Column D should be less than Column C, unless there was a 100-percent response rate to the survey. If data matching is used, then the number reported in Column D should be the total number of records available for the data match. That number is normally less than the number in Column B. (If the numbers in these two columns are equal, then it means that all Social Security numbers are valid and that there are no missing Social Security numbers.)*

Column E = $\frac{\text{Column D}}{\text{Column B}}$, *unless one or more programs used random sampling. If random sampling was*

used, see Appendix C of the NRS Survey Guidelines for further instructions on reporting.

In Column F, the number should be equal to or less than the number in Column D.

Column G is the number in Column F divided by the number in Column D. Column G should never be greater than 100 percent. If the response rate is less than 50 percent (Column E), then the percent reported in Column G is not considered valid.

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**Table 5A
Core Follow-up Outcome Achievement for Participants in Distance Education**

<i>Core Follow-up Outcome Measures</i>	<i>Number of Participants in Cohort</i>	<i>Number of Participants Included in Survey Sample</i>	<i>Number of Participants Responding to Survey or Used for Data Matching</i>	<i>Response Rate or Percent Available for Match</i>	<i>Number of Participants Achieving Outcome</i>	<i>Percent Achieving Outcome</i>
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)
<i>Entered Employment</i>						
<i>Retained Employment**</i>						
<i>Obtained a GED or Secondary School Diploma***</i>						
<i>Entered Postsecondary Education or Training****</i>						

Include in this table only students who are counted as distance education students.

Follow the same instructions for Completing Table 5 to complete Table 5A, repeated below.

** Report in Column B the number of participants who were unemployed at entry and in the labor force who exited during the program year. Do not exclude students because of missing Social Security numbers or other missing data.*

*** Report in Column B: (1) the number of participants who were unemployed at entry and in the labor force who exited and who entered employment by the end of the first quarter after program exit and (2) the number of participants employed at entry who had a main or secondary goal of improved or retained employment who exited in the first and second quarter*

**** Report in Column B the number of participants who (1) took all GED tests, or (2) were enrolled in adult high school at the high ASE level or (3) were enrolled in the assessment phase of the EDP, who exited during the program year.*

***** Report in Column B the number of participants who (1) have earned a GED or high school diploma, or (2) have a secondary credential at entry, or (3) are enrolled in a class specifically designed for transitioning to community college, and who exited during the program year.*

If survey is used, then the number in Column C should equal the number in Column B unless random sampling was used. If one or more local programs used random sampling, then enter in

Column C the total number of students included in the survey. If data matching is used, then Column C should be left blank.

If survey is used, then the number in Column D should be less than Column C, unless there was a 100-percent response rate to the survey. If data matching is used, then the number reported in Column D should be the total number of records available for the data match. That number is normally less than the number in Column B. (If the numbers in these two columns are equal, then it means that all Social Security numbers are valid and that there are no missing Social Security numbers.)

Column E = $\frac{\text{Column D}}{\text{Column B}}$, unless one or more programs used random sampling. If random sampling was used, see Appendix C of the NRS Survey Guidelines for further instructions on reporting.

In Column F, the number should be equal to or less than the number in Column D.

Column G is the number in Column F divided by the number in Column D. Column G should never be greater than 100 percent. If the response rate is less than 50 percent (Column E), then the percent reported in Column G is not considered valid.

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Table 6
Participant Status and Program Enrollment

Enter the number of participants for each of the categories listed.

Participant Status on Entry into the Program (A)	Number (B)	
Disabled		
Employed		
Unemployed		
Not in the Labor Force		
On Public Assistance		
Living in Rural Area*		
Highest Degree or Level of School Completed ***	US Based Schooling	Non-US Based Schooling
No schooling		
Grades 1-5		
Grades 6-8		
Grades 9-12 (no diploma)		
High School Diploma or alternate credential		
GED		
Some college, no degree		
College or professional degree		
Unknown		
Program Type		
In Family Literacy Program**		
In Workplace Literacy Program**		
In Program for the Homeless**		
In Program for Work-based Project Learners**		
Institutional Programs		
In Correctional Facility		
In Community Correctional Program		

In Other Institutional Setting	
Secondary Status Measures (Optional)	
Low Income	
Displaced Homemaker	
Single Parent	
Dislocated Worker	
Learning Disabled Adult	

*Rural areas are places with less than 2,500 inhabitants and located outside urbanized areas.

**Participants counted here must be in a program specifically designed for that purpose.

***Enter the highest level of schooling or degree attained for each student in US or non-US-based schooling. Provide *only one entry* per student. The total number of students reported here must be the same as the table total reported in Table 1, Column N.

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Table 7
Adult Education Personnel by Function and Job Status

Enter an unduplicated count of personnel by function and job status.

Function (A)	Adult Education Personnel		Unpaid Volunteers (D)
	Total Number of Part-time Personnel (B)	Total Number of Full-time Personnel (C)	
State-level Administrative/ Supervisory/Ancillary Services			
Local-level Administrative/ Supervisory/Ancillary Services			
Local Counselors			
Local Paraprofessionals			
Local Teachers			
Teachers' Years of Experience			
Less than one year			
One to three years			
More than three years			
Teacher Certificate			
Not reported			
Adult Education Certificate			
K-12 Certification			
Special Education Certification			
TESOL Certification			

In Column B, count one time only each part-time employee of the program administered under the Adult Education State Plan who is being paid out of Federal, State, and/or local education funds.

In Column C, count one time only each full-time employee of the program administered under the Adult Education State Plan who is being paid out of Federal, State, and/or local education funds.

In Column D, report the number of volunteers (personnel who are not paid) who served in the program administered under the Adult Education State Plan.

Report experience and certification for paid teachers only, not volunteers. The total number of teachers for which certification experience is reported must equal the total number of teachers reported in Columns B and C.

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