



National Reporting System
for Adult Education

A Project of the U.S. Department of Education

ISSUE 3

Identifying Learner Cohorts for Secondary School Credential Follow-up

Issue Presented at Congress of State Directors

The National Reporting System (NRS) requires States to report attaining a secondary credential or passing the GED tests for 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 students obtained the credential.

OVAE proposed the following change to this policy at the State Congress.

Match GED test records for all students who complete all required subtests during the year to calculate a pass rate. For States with adult high schools, report the number of students in high ASE who obtain a high school diploma. For States with EDP, report the number of students enrolled in the assessment phase who obtain a high school diploma.

The “total students” included would be all students who completed the GED test, were enrolled in adult high school credit programs at the high ASE level, or were enrolled in the assessment phase of the EDP. The performance measure percentage would be the number of students who passed the GED tests, or received their high school diplomas, divided by this total. The proposal also eliminates the requirement that participants must exit the program before reporting may occur.

Summary of State Response

States gave this recommendation near unanimous support and commented that better reporting of this outcome and more student-centered instruction would result as local programs would be free of identifying this goal for students. However, states also wanted OVAE to provide guidance on when to collect this measure and how to define a GED student, and also noted the additional need for training of local staff. Nineteen data match states said there are no barriers to them and five states (Arizona, Florida, Tennessee, Utah, and Wisconsin) are already engaged in following this cohort. Several states did recommend clarifying that students should have taken all of the GED tests to be counted.

Final Recommendation

OVAE proposes to implement in Program Year (PY) 2011 the change as proposed at the State Congress to eliminate the goal setting requirement for the secondary credential measure and have states report all students who complete all GED subtests or attain an adult high school diploma. OVAE further recommends eliminating the requirement that participants must exit the program

before reporting may occur. The revised definition below shows proposed changes in ***bold italics***.

Proposed Change to the Definition of Obtaining a Secondary School Credential

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 complete all GED subtests, are enrolled in adult high school at the high ASE level, or are enrolled in the assessment phase of the EDP. ~~who earn a high school diploma or with a goal of passing the GED tests or obtaining a secondary school diploma (or its recognized equivalent) 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 obtain GED certificates and secondary school diplomas. ***and the number of learners with this goal, who exit during the program year.*** 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 had a goal of secondary credential attainment 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.

Major Implications of Proposed Change

- Programs will no longer be required to set the goal of obtaining a secondary school credential for their learners. Programs will follow up on all learners who took the GED tests at any time from the beginning of the program year to the time of NRS reporting.
- Program exit is no longer a requirement for follow-up to determine and report a successful outcome on secondary school credentials.
- The number of learners requiring follow-up will increase.