# NEW MEXICO HIGHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT



**NMHED Adult Basic Education Division Data Management**

**Procedures**

## SECTION I: INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

This policy is intended to provide programs with guidance on intake, enrollment and goal-setting procedures. A standardized process is required to ensure that programs are consistent in collecting and maintaining accurate information. It is necessary for local AE programs to reliably report high-quality data to the State Adult Education Division for analysis, trending and required reporting to the NRS, various agency officials and legislative representatives.

## SECTION II: GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

### A.  Data Collection

The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA, WIA, Title II, Section 212), via the NRS Implementation Guidelines, and the New Mexico State Plan require the use of a standardized process (and forms) to collect student data and information for annual reporting. This data collection includes student demographics, assessment, attendance, goal-setting, pre-and post-testing among others.

Data technicians are required to be trained on the NRS system as well as the LACES database. Certifications must be readily available to present to the State Office Site Visit Review Team. Local AE programs must enter data into LACES on a timely basis (at least monthly).

WIOA (Section 212, A) and the New Mexico State Plan require the collection of program information related to the core indictors of performance in order to analyze program  performance:

"(i) Demonstrated improvements in literacy skill levels in reading, writing, and speaking the English language, numeracy, problem solving, English language acquisition, and other literacy skills.

(ii) Placement in, retention in, or completion of, postsecondary education, training, unsubsidized employment or career advancement.

(iii) Receipt of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent."

**Goal-Setting**

The state AE division requires local AE programs to collect information related to student goals (please see *State policy on Enrollment, Intake and Goal- setting*). The performance-based funding formula is partially based on the degree to which students achieve the goals that they set.

Local AE programs must help students establish goals based on assessment results,
Student's personal and professional interests, and other factors, such as student work schedule, family responsibilities and other issues. Classroom instruction will better meet student needs and expectations, become more meaningful, help improve attendance, aid retention and enhance program success if there are opportunities for periodic review of goals in ways that support student goal achievement. Local AE programs must advise students about goals as they relate to the requirements associated with adult education level gains, progress in English language learning activities, citizenship, employment, postsecondary education and training.

**Follow-up Process**

To comply with National Reporting System (NRS) requirements, State performance in Adult Basic Education is based on several indicators of student achievement (*See NRS Implementation Guidelines*). These **core outcome** measures are:

| Topic | Measures | Definitions |
|---|---|---|
| Educational Gains | Pre- and Post-testing for Educational Level Gains | Improvements in educational functioning levels in reading, writing, speaking and listening and functional Areas |
| Follow-up Measures | Entered employment | Learners who obtain a job by the first quarter after exit quarter |
| | Retained employment (Includes Improved Employment) | Learners who entered employment who are employed in the third quarter after program exit |
| | Receipt of secondary school diploma or HSE | Learners who obtain a HSE, secondary school diploma or recognized equivalent |
| | Placement in postsecondary education or training | Learners who enroll in a postsecondary educational or occupational skills program building on prior services or training received |

The NRS has identified several optional, secondary outcome measures that students may want to select as secondary goals (please refer to *NRS Implementation Guidelines* for further information:

- ✓ Achieved work-based project learning goal
- ✓ Reduced or left public assistance
- ✓ Achieved citizenship skills
- ✓ Voted or registered to vote
- ✓ Increased involvement in community activities
- ✓ Increased involvement in children's education
- ✓ Increased involvement in children's literacy activities

Even though States are not required to collect and report on these optional outcome measures, students may find them to be an important part of their educational effort. Achievement status on these goals is reported annually on Table 11.

Local AE programs must follow-up on students who designate as a main or secondary goal to obtain or retain a job, enter postsecondary education, or obtain a secondary credential (i.e., HSE). Local AE programs must explain the follow-up process to students in orientation. Follow-up activities may be conducted according to the student's preferred method of contact (phone call, email, mail or personal contact), but local AE programs may use other contact methods if the preferred method is ineffective. New Mexico allows a hybrid follow-up strategy (survey and data matching).

**Survey Method**

Programs must set in place a process to identify appropriate students for follow-up and conduct the survey. As previously discussed, student preferred methods of contact must be collected via the intake/enrollment and goal setting processes. The survey must be translated for ESL students, if necessary. A suggested survey template from the NRS Implementation Guidelines is approved for use by local ABE programs.

Using the survey method for Table 5, NRS requires a *minimum* response rate of 50%.

| Outcome Measure | Total Students with 1st or 2nd Goal Who Exited | Total Number of Students Sampled | Total Number of Students Responding | Number Achieving Outcome | Response Rate (Total Responding/Total Sampled) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Entered Employment | | | | | |
| Retained Employment | | | | | |
| Entered Postsecondary Education/Training | | | | | |
| Obtained GED | | | | | |

Local ABE programs are required to provide training to all staff conducting the survey, and this training must include:

- Criteria for determining the sample of students to survey
- Reaching students (e.g., email, text or telephone) to survey
- Introducing the survey procedure to the participant
- How to ask survey questions of the participant
- Ways to encourage cooperation to participate in the survey
- How to record survey participant responses
- How to answer student questions about the survey
- Reviewing effective survey methods and practices (e.g., evaluate the response rate)

For any core outcome, if the total number of *exited* students is 300 or less, all students must be surveyed.

- If the number is from 301 to 5,000, then the minimum sample size must be 300.
- If the number is from 301 to 5000 then the minimum sample size must be 300
- If the number is more than 5000 the minimum sample size should be 1000

**Data Matching Method**

Data matching is a process used to match data from different databases, using a common identifier (e.g., social security number). Local AE programs are responsible for verifying the validity of student social security numbers (e.g., identifying duplicate social security numbers, errors in data entry, etc.). The State AE Division office will conduct data matching for local AE programs. The format by which the data must be submitted for data matching is programmed into the statewide database.

The timeframe for conducting follow-up for employment outcomes are listed below:

| If the student exited: | Their Follow-Up Should be Done: | In this Date Range | And will populate in this Fiscal Year's Table 5: |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7/1/16 to 9/30/16 | 2nd Quarter Follow up should be done | 1/1/17 to 3/31/17 | NRS Table 5 2017-2018 |
| | 4th Quarter Follow up should be done | 7/1/17 to 9/30/17 | NRS Table 5 2017-2018 |
| 10/1/16 to 12/31/16 | 2nd Quarter Follow up should be done | 4/1/17 to 6/30/17 | NRS Table 5 2017-2018 |
| | 4th Quarter Follow up should be done | 10/1/17 to 12/31/17 | NRS Table 5 2017-2018 |
| 1/1/17 to 3/31/17 | 2nd Quarter Follow up should be done | 7/1/17 to 9/30/17 | NRS Table 5 2017-2018 |
| | 4th Quarter Follow up should be done | 1/1/18 to 3/31/18 (Third Quarter) | NRS Table 5 2018-2019 |
| 4/1/17 to 6/30/17 | 2nd Quarter Follow up should be done | 10/1/17 to 12/31/17 | NRS Table 5 2017-2018 |
| | 4th Quarter Follow up should be done | 4/1/18 to 6/30/18 | NRS Table 5 2018-2019 |

**B. Data Security**

All local AE programs must have procedures in place to keep data secure and confidential.

**C. Student Access to Records**

Local AE programs must ensure that students are informed about their rights to have access to and review their records, assessment results, and any educational files, notes or information related to their participation in the program. Student records must be updated on a timely basis (at least monthly). In accordance with Section 443 of the General Education Provisions Act, local AE programs must maintain records for 3 years. (Also, please see FERPA section below).

**D. Training Required**

There are three types of training required to have access to the NMHED LACES database:

- LACES database training

- NRS online courses training

- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) training

NRS Training-STOPPED HERE

Local ABE program staff must provide documentation of completed training (certification) whether they have full or limited database access (e.g., read only or LEA administrator type access). For NRS training, a certification notice is sent upon completion of a training module. All NRS online courses must be completed and can be accessed from the NRS online courses website:

http://www.nrsweb.org/trainings/online.aspx

LACES Training

Local ABE program staff must provide documentation of completed training (certification) whether they have full or limited database access (e.g., read only or LEA administrator type access). For the NMHED LACES database training, the local AE program director must certify that local AE employees have completed the online training activities which can be accessed from the LiteracyPro website:

http://info.literacypro.com/solutions/laces/documentation_base_ABE.htm

FERPA training

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of

Education (U.S. Department of Education). Informed written consent must be obtained prior to releasing protected information under FERPA.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each institution/organization.

Local AE program staff must provide documentation of completed training (certification) whether they have full or limited database access (e.g., read only or LEA administrator type access). For the FERPA training, the local AE program director must certify that local AE employees have completed the online training activities which can be accessed from their institutional websites (e.g., UNM or NMSU) or in the case of community-based non-profits organizations, a higher education institution's FERPA training of the local AE program's choice.

FERPA training for UNM

http://registrar.unm.edu/privacy-rights/ferpa.html

FERPA training for NMSU

https://trainingcentral.nmsu.edu/Saba/Web/Main/goto/GuestOfferingDetails?offeringId=dowbt00 0000000001260

Community-based non-profits organizations providing ABE services must obtain certification from their program directors that staff have read and/or completed all of the following:

1. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), U. S. Department of Education:

   http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html

2. 34 CFR Part 99.  Family Educational Rights and Privacy (e-CFR):

   http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?c=ecfr&sid=11975031b82001bed902b3e73f33e604&rgn=div5&view=text&node=34:1.1.1.1.33&idno=34

3. (With approval from the State AE Division Office), one of the online or face-to-face FERPA trainings of your choice (sponsored by a higher education institution).

SECTION III: DATA MONITORING AND REPORTING

## A. Data Audit

In order to comply with NRS guidelines, local AE programs must collect designated student information and analyze the resulting data to determine that the local AE program is providing educational services that are of " sufficient intensity and duration for participants to achieve substantial learning gains" [WIOA, Section 231, (e) (4)].

At the State level, program data is aggregated to measure progress against negotiated program performance standards. According to the NRS, States must develop policies and implement procedures that meet NRS requirements and work within the State environment to produce valid and reliable data. It is also important that this data be comparable across New Mexico and at the national level. Toward these ends, the audit process is intended to help the State ABE Division Office as well as local programs to periodically check their data for accuracy and completeness. A standardized audit process is presented here as the process by which the State ABE Division will monitor data accuracy and integrity.

To meet the requirements of AEFLA and the Implementation Guidelines (June 2013), the State ABE Division Office will conduct on-site data audits (see *NRS State Data Quality Checklist*, 2013). The State ABE Division Office has the responsibility to "verify that local reports accurately reflect data collected (e.g., through review of local program documentation, onsite auditing)." Local programs may also use the data audit form and process or another process that will accurately identify any errors to conduct their own program data audits, and to assure that the program maintains the required 80% standard of data accuracy (Please see *Appendix A* for data audit instructions). The State ABE Division Office may conduct unannounced onsite data audits to assure that local programs are meeting the 80% data accuracy standard. If the State ABE Division Office finds through an onsite data audit that programs have not met the required 80% accuracy standard, the local ABE program may be placed on a Program Improvement Plan or Probation (see NMHED ABE Division *Probation Policy*). If the local ABE program is placed on a Program Improvement Plan or Probation, the ABE program may be required to conduct its own and submit quarterly data audit reports until the program can demonstrate that it meets the 80% accuracy standard.

**Audit Form Terminology**

Educational Functioning Level

Each NRS level is assigned a number to facilitate State information accumulation and reporting. The level selected should represent the student educational functioning level *at entry.*

The Random Sample

The State ABE Office is responsible for creating the random sample and identifying the students to be checked during an onsite data audit of a local ABE program. The random sample process will follow standard statistical procedures to determine the number of students that will result in statistical validity to determine the degree to which the local ABE program complies with the 80% accuracy standard.

Audit errors, codes and descriptions

The *number* of errors found for each error code will be recorded in the Audit Form.
To help identify/track issues and trends, the State has designated a **code** for each *type* of error. To help identify/track issues and trends, the State ABE Division has designated a code for each type of error.  The error codes and their corresponding descriptions are listed below:

**Data Audit Form Description**

The Data Audit Form is in an Excel spreadsheet format. The spreadsheet collects the following important information:

1. Educational Functioning Level
2. Assessment Instrument Used
3. Total # Students per Level
4. # Students in Random Sample per Level
5. # of Errors found in the random sample
6. # Errors found per Error Code (Frequency)

**Error Code and Error Description**

a) Incorrect entries on SSN, DOB, student name, student demographic information and scale scores; no entries in required fields.

b) Incorrect interpretation of assessment results including class placement; student hard-file assessment information does not match that in LACES; student level is undefined; student scores indicate above the 12.9 grade equivalent and student is not enrolled in ESL or ASE.

c) Inappropriate NRS core goals selected based on student employment status or assessment scores; student hard-file goal setting information does not match that in LACES

d) Post-testing too early, impacting NRS level-gain results; same post-test used multiple times within a 6 month period; not re-testing when student attendance has lapsed for 6 months or more; student hard-file post-test information does not match that in LACES.

e) Hours in LACES do not agree with information in student hard-file; student in LACES with zero hours; logs inaccurate, incomplete or lacking teacher or administrator signature.

f) Students should be included in NRS tables, but found not exited in LACES; students in LACES with more than 40 hours of instruction who are not post-tested and/or exited

g) Follow-up not performed on students per NRS regulations/timing;  follow-up information is inaccurate/incomplete, not in student hard file or not captured in LACES (negatively impacts NRS tables).

**Data Audit Form Completion Instructions**

The Excel spreadsheet/form is ready for use with the appropriate formulas pre-programmed in the cells. The Operations Research Analyst will use this form to enter the results of audit findings. The audit results will be kept as part of the local ABE program performance records at the State ABE Division Office. Local ABE programs have the right to request a copy of the audit results conducted by State ABE Division Office staff for the purpose of reviewing the results and/or challenging the accuracy of the results.

<u>Assessment</u>

Please enter the appropriate **code** for the assessment instrument used (listed on page 3).

<u>Total # of Students</u>

Please enter the total number of students in each category from which the random sample is drawn.

<u>Random Sample #</u>

Please enter the number of students in each level that were selected for the random sample.

➢ For any level, if no students were selected, please enter zero (0).

<u>Number of Errors</u>

Please enter the *total* number of errors found for each level.

➢ If no errors were found, please enter zero (0).
➢ If there were no students selected in the random sample for the level, please enter **N/A**.

<u>Error Code and Frequency</u>

For each level, and for each of the error code columns "**a**" through "**g**," please enter the **number of times** this type of error was detected. For example, if error code "**a**" was found 5 times for a level, enter the number **5** under the "a" column

**Audit Submission and Timing**

The data audit will be completed by the State ABE Division Office staff and may be performed in conjunction with a site visit, or an unannounced visit. Local ABE programs will no longer be required to conduct these data audits, unless the State ABE Division has determined that the local ABE program is not in compliance with the 80% accuracy standards. If it is determined that the local ABE program is not in compliance with the 80% accuracy standards, the local ABE program may be subject to a Program Improvement Plan, which may also include the requirement to conduct quarterly reporting of data audit results, among other requirements (as stated in the Program Improvement Plan, or Corrective Action Plan).

**B. State Performance Checks**

The State Performance Checks are prepared by State ABE Division office in October and April for each local program. The purpose of the State Performance Checks is to provide feedback to local ABE program on performance in terms of progress toward State or Program Performance Measures. It is expected that the State Performance Checks will be conducted twice per year, as reflected in the schedule below:

| State ABE Division Activity | *Full* Months Included | Due Date |
|---|---|---|
| *Fall State Performance Check* | July 20XX– September | October FYXX |
| *Spring State Performance Check* | July 20XX – March | April FYXX |

The State Performance Checks will provide reports to the local ABE programs about the following program performance activities:

1) Total enrollment by demographics
2) Enrollment distribution by EFL
3) Enrollment by follow-up measure
4) Number of students with 12 hours or more
5) Number of instructional hours per level gain
6) Number of students completing a level, including by ethnicity
7) Post-testing rate, including by ethnicity
8) Post-testing with level gains
9) GED pass/fail rate
10) Retention rate by EFL and/or Follow-up Measure
11) Number of students entering employment
12) Number of students entering postsecondary education/training

**C. Questions and Technical Assistance**

For questions, training and/or technical assistance on data collection and reporting requirements, please contact the State ABE Operations Research Analyst:

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For questions on State ABE Division procedures, contact:

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Appendix A

| | NM Adult Basic Education - Program Site Data Audit Form | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | Error Code and Code Frequency | | | | | | |
| | Ed. Functioning Level | Name of Assessment | Total # Students | Random Sample # | # of Errors | a | b | c | d | e | f | g |
| 1 | ABE Beginning Literacy | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | ABE Beginning Basic Ed | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | ABE Intermediate Low | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | ABE Intermediate High | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | ASE Low | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | ASE High | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | ESL Beginning Literacy | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | ESL Beginning Low | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | ESL Beginning High | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 10 | ESL Intermediate Low | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 11 | ESL Intermediate High | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 12 | ESL Advanced | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total | | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |