The NRS began in the 1990s during the trend toward greater accountability for educational and employment programs. In 1993, all federal agencies were required to develop strategic plans to demonstrate that they are reaching their goals.

The state directors of adult education asked the Division of Adult Education and Literacy (DAEL) to develop a national system for collecting data on adult education student outcomes; a collaborative effort was undertaken to develop the NRS. After the passage of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), the NRS became mandatory.

Implementation of the NRS began in 1999 and continued to be refined. In 2000, states began submitting their student and program outcomes to DAEL. Current NRS activities focus on perfecting the system to demonstrate program effectiveness and improve student outcomes. (For a summary chart Big Picture of the NRS, see page 7.)
Definition and Rationale

Adult Education accountability is defined through the National Reporting System for Adult Education (NRS). It is an outcome-based reporting system established to meet the requirements of Title II of the Workforce Investment ACT (WIA—Public Law 105-220) which authorizes a state grant program for the delivery of adult basic education (ABE), adult secondary education (ASE), and English-as-a-second-language (ESL) instruction. Using a common set of outcome measures and a uniform collection system, the NRS measures and documents learner outcomes resulting from adult education instruction. State and local programs are required to collect and aggregate data into this national database. Specific tables have been developed for this purpose.

Based on the NRS outcome measures, performance standards are negotiated and set annually for Mississippi’s Adult Education programs. Program effectiveness is judged in part by whether these state standards are met. The Mississippi Community College Board’s Adult Education Division utilizes the Adult Education Management System (AEMS) as a vehicle for the standardized collection of required federal data. AEMS data is also used to determine if the local program standards are being met, to show how well students are doing, and to evaluate what is working and what might need improving in our programs.

The NRS defines core and secondary measures. The core measures are required and include outcome, descriptive, and participation measures. These measures must be reported for all students who receive twelve hours or more of service. Teacher status measures are also required for all paid instructors.

Local programs have primary responsibility for collecting these measures using valid, uniform procedures to ensure comparability among programs and must maintain these data in an individual student record system. A discussion of the NRS measures follows including references to the NRS tables wherein specific data are aggregated.

Core Outcome Measures

The NRS requires states to automatically report the follow up measures for all students who meet certain criteria. This automatic cohort designation varies according to each follow-up measure. These five core outcome measures are aggregated on Tables 4 and 5.

☐ Educational Gain—learner completes or advances one or more educational functioning levels from the starting level measured on entry into the program. The six ABE educational functioning levels describe reading, writing, numeracy, and functional workplace skills. The six ESL levels also include speaking and listening skills. (A detailed profile of the educational functioning level descriptors may be found on the NRS website www.nrsweb.org.)

Applicable population/cohort: all learners [Data compiled on Table 4]
- **Entered Employment**—learner enters employment by the end of the first quarter after the program exit quarter

  *Applicable population/cohort:* learners who are unemployed at time of entry who are in the labor force and exit during the program year *([Data compiled on Table 5]*

- **Retained Employment**—learner remains employed in the third quarter after exit quarter

  *Applicable population/cohort:* learners who are employed at entry plus learners who were not employed but were in the labor force at entry who gain employment in the first quarter after exit *([Table 5]*

- **Receipt of Secondary School Diploma**—learner obtains a certification of passing scores on GED®, a state-recognized secondary school equivalency

  *Applicable population/cohort:* learners who take all GED® tests who exit during the program year (also learners who are enrolled in adult high school at the high ASE level or are enrolled in the assessment phase of an External Diploma Program) *([Table 5]*

- **Entered Postsecondary Education or Training**—learner enrolls in a postsecondary educational, occupational skills training program, or apprenticeship training program that does not duplicate other services or training received

  *Applicable population/cohort:* learners who pass the GED® tests or earned a secondary credential while enrolled in adult education, or have a secondary credential at entry, or are enrolled in a class specifically designed for transitioning to postsecondary education who exit during the program year *([Table 5]*

The following table summarizes the times at which data are to be collected and the student population/cohort to which each core follow-up outcome measure applies.

### Student Population and Collection Time for Core Follow-up Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Outcome Measure</th>
<th>Student Population to Include</th>
<th>Time Period to Collect Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entered employment</td>
<td>Learners unemployed at entry in the labor force who exit</td>
<td>First quarter after exit quarter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retained employment</td>
<td>Learners unemployed at entry in the labor force who exit and are employed during first quarter after exit; and learners employed at entry who exit</td>
<td>Third quarter after exit quarter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placement in postsecondary education or training</td>
<td>Learners who earned a secondary credential while enrolled, have a secondary credential at entry, or who are enrolled in a class specifically designed for transition to postsecondary education who exit</td>
<td>Any time after exit through end of the program year (June 30) following the year of program exit [tracked 2 program years]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receipt of secondary or GED diploma</td>
<td>Learners who take all GED tests, are enrolled in adult high school at high ASE level or are enrolled in the assessment phase of the EDP who exit</td>
<td>Any time after exit to end of the reporting period (December 31)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Core Demographic, Status, and Participation Measures

- **Student Demographics:**
  - **Race/Ethnicity**—racial or ethnic category to which the learner self-identifies, appears to belong to, or is regarded in the community as belonging. Ethnicity is either Hispanic/Latino or not. Race may be one of six categories or Two or more races.
  - **Gender**—male or female
  - **Age**—AEMS calculates age by reported date of birth at entry.

  *Applicable populations:* all learners [*Tables 2, 3]*

- **Student Status Measures:**
  - **Labor Force**—employed (paid), not employed (and are seeking employment), or not in the labor force (not employed and not seeking employment) at time of entry
  - **Public Assistance**—learner receiving financial assistance from government agencies including TANF, SNAP, and aid to disabled. Social Security benefits, unemployment insurance, and employment-funded disability are not included.
  - **Disability**—learner has a record of or is regarded as having any type of physical or mental impairment, including a learning disability substantially limiting or restricting a major life activity (e.g. walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, learning, and working.)
  - **Rural Residency**—learner resides in a place with population of less than 2,500 that is not near a metropolitan area with population greater than 50,000
  - **Highest Degree or Level of School Completed**—highest number of years of formal schooling learner completed or highest credential or degree achieved in US or abroad.

  *Applicable populations:* all learners [*Table 6]*

- **Teacher Status Measures:**
  - **Total years of adult education teaching experience** (full years)
  - **Teacher certification** (Experience and certification status are determined at the beginning of the program year.) [*Table 7]*

  *Applicable population:* all paid teachers

- **Student Participation Measures:**
  - **Contact Hours**—hours of instruction or instructional activity the learner receives from the program (including any program-sponsored activity to promote learning—classroom instruction, assessment, tutoring, participating in a learning lab, etc.)

  *Applicable population:* all learners [*Table 4]*

  - **Program Enrollment Type**: ABE, ASE, EL, family literacy, workplace literacy correctional education, homeless, correctional facility, community corrections, other institutional programs, or distance learning

  *Applicable population:* all learners [*Tables 3, 4C, 5A, 6, 8-10]*
Secondary Measures

The additional, optional secondary measures include additional student status measures and outcomes related to employment, family, and community.

Secondary Student Status Measures
Five optional student status measures target special populations identified under WIA. *Applicable population:* all learners [Table 6]

- **Low-Income:** learner receives or is a member of a family receiving public assistance or receiving total income of 70% of standard income level
- **Displaced Homemaker:** learner has been providing unpaid services to family in the home, is no longer supported by another family member, and is un- or underemployed
- **Single Parent:** learner has sole custodial support of dependent child(ren)
- **Dislocated Worker:** learner who receives notice of pending or actual layoff
- **Learning-Disabled Adult:** learner with low-average and above IQ who has deficits (related to neurological impairments) in capacity in defined limited learning areas; can include dyslexia, dysgraphia, and dyscalculia

Secondary Outcome Measures—employment, community, and family

- **Reduction in Receipt of Public Assistance:** TANF or equivalent is reduced or eliminated due to employment or increased income anytime during the program year
  *Applicable population:* learners who are receiving a TANF grant or equivalent public assistance at the time of enrollment [Table 11]

- **Achieved Citizenship Skills:** learner attains the skills needed to pass the U.S. citizenship exam
  *Applicable population:* learners with the goal of obtaining citizenship skills [Table 11]

- **Voting Behavior:** learner registers to vote or votes for the first time anytime during the program year
  *Applicable population:* all learners who at time of enrollment are not registered to vote or who have never voted [Table 11]

- **General Involvement in Community Activities:** learner increases involvement in community activities through attending or organizing community/political organizations; volunteering for or contributing to such organizations; or volunteering to work on community improvement activities
  *Applicable population:* all learners [Table 11]

- **Involvement in Children’s Education:** learner increases involvement in the education of dependent children; includes more frequent help with homework, more contact with teachers, and more involvement with child’s school
  *Applicable population:* all learners enrolled in a family literacy program [Table 11]

- **Involvement in Children’s Literacy-Related Activities:** more reading to child, buying children’s books, visiting libraries, etc.
  *Applicable population:* all learners enrolled in a family literacy program [Table 11]
**Work-Based Project Learner Outcome Measure**: learner completes a work-based project learner activity

*Applicable population*: learners enrolled in a short-term (12-30 hours) course and designated at entry as work-based project learners (Learners are not assigned an EFL, and no additional outcomes are collected.) [Table 12]

Work-based project learning should not be confused with workplace literacy programs which also teach workplace skills. Workplace literacy programs have a longer duration, are open ended, and generally teach a broader range of literacy skills. Students enrolled in workplace literacy programs are counted under the required core outcome measures.

**Teachers** have a very large role in data collection. They must report and update student demographics, descriptors, and attendance or contact time. They assess and reassess students, interpret and report test scores, and help students set realistic goals. In addition, teachers who have direct contact with students are asked to provide student information that was missing or incorrect at other stages of the data collection process. Teachers complete forms and, ideally, have a role in reviewing data and reports.

*Your role in accurate, thorough, and timely data submission is vital to the operation, success, and funding of the adult education class, program, state, and nation!*
# About the NRS

**What is the NRS**

The NRS is an outcome based reporting system for the state-administered federally funded Adult Education program.

**What does the NRS Do?**

The NRS Tracks five important outcomes for adult learners:

- Educational Gain
- Enter Employment
- Retain Employment
- Obtain a Secondary Credential
- Enter Postsecondary Education

... to determine what is already **working well** for adult learners, and where we can make **improvements** to support adult learning and the adult education system.

---

# Big Picture of the NRS

Staff at the federal, state, and local levels use **data** to inform **decision making** and to **improve** adult literacy programs.

## Federal Level

| Develop framework and measures for the NRS | Provide training, technical assistance, materials development, quality control of state data collection efforts | Maintain a database on the performance of adult education nationally and by state |

## State Level

| Establish policy, provide guidance, and train staff for adult education including assessments | Select, collect, and report on outcomes and secondary measures and use them for program improvement | Provide staff development and technical assistance to local programs |

Ensure data is valid, reliable, and of high quality.

## Local Level

| Collect and maintain high quality data | Develop and support MIS to collect and report data | Follow state policy for assessing students and conducting follow up | Use data for program improvement to support effective adult learning |

Visit us online at [www.nrsweb.org](http://www.nrsweb.org)
### 2013 – 2014 ABE Performance Targets and Current Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program:</th>
<th>Class:</th>
<th>Instructor:</th>
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#### Table 4

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<th>Level</th>
<th>TABE 9/10 Scale Score Ranges</th>
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<td>SL1</td>
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<td>SL4</td>
<td>518-566</td>
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<tr>
<td>SL5</td>
<td>567-595</td>
<td>566-594</td>
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</table>

#### Table 5

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<table>
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<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>Entered Employment</td>
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<td>A3</td>
<td>Retained Employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4</td>
<td>Obtained GED</td>
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<tr>
<td>A5</td>
<td>Entered Postsecondary Education or Training</td>
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**Cumulative (year-to-date) participant count:**

**Current active participant count:**

**Average daily attendance:**

**Average hours of contact:**

**% of performance measures met:**
2013 - 2014 ESL Performance Targets and Current Status

<table>
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Table 4

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Table 5

Cumulative (year-to-date) participant count:

Current active participant count:

Average daily attendance:

Average hours of contact:

% of performance measures met: