



NATIONAL
REPORTING SYSTEM
for Adult Education

2019

NRS PRODUCT SHOWCASE

An Overview of Selected NRS Products and Their Uses



NRS Product Samples

Technical Assistance Guide
for Performance Accountability under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

DECEMBER 2017
Updated from the 2015 edition
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U.S. Department of Education
www.nrs.gov

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HOME / TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE / TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TOOLS / DATA SYSTEM PLANNING TOOL

DATA SYSTEM PLANNING TOOL

Click to explore a planning phase, or section of our sample data system specification.

INTRODUCTION | **DEVELOPMENT PROCESS** | **SPECIFICATION SAMPLE**

INTRODUCTION

Building a new data system can be a complex and multifaceted activity. A structured approach and clear specifications make it easier to understand the variety of needs and considerations that must be addressed to create a successful solution.

Working through the process with your team helps build greater commitment for the project and ultimately satisfaction with the result.

This simple tool walks you through the basics of developing a system, and provides the elements of a specification that you can use to jumpstart your development effort.

Ready to build your new data system?

NRS Annual Checkup
WIOA Accountability After One Year

Los Angeles, CA | September 13 - 15, 2017
Bethesda, MD | October 11 - 13, 2017
Austin, TX | October 24 - 26, 2017

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education

WIOA
Communication Planning
for Adult Education Administrators

NRS Targeted Training
January - March 2018

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education

Welcome to the NRS!

FEATURED RESOURCES

ADULT EDUCATION FOR SUCCESS
The National Reporting System for Adult Education (NRS) is the accountability system for the President's Adult Education program, authorized by Section 221 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). It provides the WIOA program's objectives of performance, assessed for both the adult education program and the program's objectives, and provides for collecting performance data and program reporting practices.

TRAINING AND ONLINE MATERIALS
The NRS provides technical assistance and training to States to ensure that best practices are used in their adult education programs and that program quality is increased. Use our program development, design, implementation, and reporting technical assistance for your website to learn more.

ANNOUNCEMENTS
Best Benchmark Status: The NRS Best Benchmark Status has been assigned to 10 States for the 2017 reporting cycle. The NRS Best Benchmark Status is an honorific status that is assigned to States based on their performance in the NRS reporting cycle. The new benchmark status is available to use for the 2018 reporting cycle.

CONTACT US

Evaluating Program Effectiveness
NRS Regional Training
SUMMER 2018

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education

INTRODUCTION

The National Reporting System for Adult Education

The National Reporting System (NRS) is the accountability system for adult education programs. It meets the requirements of the Workforce Opportunity and Investment Act (WIOA) for reporting indicators of performance to the U.S. Department of Education. NRS data describe adult education participants, including their characteristics; levels of participation in adult education programs; and performance on measurable skill gains, employment, earnings, and secondary and postsecondary credential attainment.

NRS Products

The following pages contain descriptions of the many products and services that the American Institutes for Research (AIR) has created to assist states in meeting the NRS and WIOA requirements. For example, you will find references to training materials on using data for program improvement, online courses to orient new staff to the NRS, an online database to help you choose an appropriate assessment to measure educational functional level gain, informational briefs that provide practical tips on a variety of adult education topics, and reports that analyze national and state data describing adult education students. To help you find what you are looking for, we organized the products and services into the following areas:

- **Policy guidance:** User-friendly publications and online courses to guide you through NRS policies and procedures
- **Data quality and data use:** Tools and training materials to help you better understand and use data
- **Monitoring:** Adaptable templates and guides to assist you in successfully monitoring local programs for compliance and performance



- **Assessment:** A searchable database and important information to help you select an appropriate assessment
- **Federal data reports:** Accessible reports that provide data and analyses to better understand the characteristics and performance of the adult education population at the state and national levels
- **Data systems for NRS:** Reports and guides that explain the characteristics of effective data systems, NRS requirements for data systems, and states' experiences in developing them

All these products may be accessed on NRSWeb (<https://www.nrsweb.org>) by clicking on the product title unless otherwise noted. Products not housed directly on the website are available upon request.



PRODUCTS BY TOPIC



Policy Guidance

States can request and receive guidance from the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) on implementing the national accountability system. Guidance on NRS policy and procedures comes in several user-friendly formats.

NRS Technical Assistance Guide

<https://nrsweb.org/policy-data/nrs-ta-guide>

The *NRS Technical Assistance Guide for WIOA Accountability (NRS TA Guide)* is the main resource for states on data collection, data matching, and quality control. It also describes the data flow process, provides definitions of WIOA indicators and other NRS measures, and describes NRS reporting requirements. The *NRS TA Guide* is available for download as a PDF. An interactive e-book version that allows for easier navigation is also available and both versions are on the *NRSWeb* site. In addition, supplemental documents and templates related to the NRS and the WIOA reporting requirements are available on the WIOA and NRS Resources (<https://nrsweb.org/policy-data/wioa-and-nrs-resources>) webpage.

NRS Basics: WIOA Edition and NRS Basics II Online Course

(Coming Soon) <https://nrsweb.org/training-ta/online-courses>

These self-paced, online courses provide a general understanding of NRS and specifically address the WIOA indicators and methods for NRS data collection. After completing this course, you should be able to understand the what, why, and how of the NRS.

State Assessment Policy Guidance

https://nrsweb.org/sites/default/files/AsmtPolicyGdlns010618-508_0.docx

All states must annually submit an assessment policy to OCTAE that meets NRS requirements. This guide for state staff, updated in January 2018, describes the key topics and information that must go into this policy.



Data Quality and Data Use

Data quality refers to the collection of relevant, accurate data that can help program staff answer questions about recruitment, retention, and the effectiveness of their programs and components. Data use refers to the understanding and application of data to make decisions on program management and improvement. This section includes examples of products and tools for state adult education staff and local providers to supplement their own knowledge of NRS data quality and data use.

WIOA Communication Planning for Adult Education Administrators

<https://www.nrsweb.org/training-ta/f2f-training/wioa-communications-planning>

The WIOA has created the need for partnerships across state workforce and education agencies to enable a comprehensive approach toward adult education and job training. Adult education plays a key role in these partnerships. This collection of tools and training materials is designed to help states establish partnerships across their state workforce and education agencies by developing an actionable strategic communication plan that leverages NRS and other state program data.

NRSTips: Collecting Data for Post-Exit Indicators in Practice

https://nrsweb.org/sites/default/files/Collecting-Data-Practice-508_0.pdf

Under WIOA, adult education programs must collect data on program participants after program exit for each performance indicator. This *NRSTips* provides examples of successful strategies from one local program and one state for collecting required data on two performance indicators—credential attainment and employment.

NRSTips: Tracking Students Over Time

<https://nrsweb.org/sites/default/files/Tracking-Students-508.pdf>

Tracking student outcomes can take time and effort, however, it is important for local programs to obtain this information to support program management and improvement efforts. This *NRSTips* will help you better understand the WIOA requirements related to following up with students after they exit and tracking their successes. The tip sheet includes information about why it is important to track students and a table with guidelines for whom to track when, and it describes the primary methods for tracking students' outcomes: data matching and supplemental data collection.

NRS Annual Checkup: WIOA Accountability After One Year—Planning Tool

<https://nrsweb.org/training-ta/f2f-training/2017-regional-training>

This tool and its associated training provide state leaders with a detailed look of their current state's data collection and monitoring processes, as well as the training of local programs. The goal of this tool and the training is to help states develop a plan for improving data quality through data collection, data monitoring, and training for local programs.

LEAP Into WIOA, Part I: Planning for Change

<https://nrsweb.org/training-ta/f2f-training/leap-part-i>

This guide and its associated training focus on preparing states for changes related to WIOA. The goal of the guide and the training is to help state teams explore these changes and practice leadership strategies and approaches for communicating with state staff, local programs, and WIOA partners as they plan for adjustments in state reporting and data collection. Major topics include planning for data system changes, staff development, and communication.

LEAP Into WIOA, Part I: Planning for Change—Companion Toolkit

<https://nrsweb.org/training-ta/f2f-training/leap-part-i>

This toolkit is a companion to *LEAP Into WIOA, Part I: Planning for Change*. It includes materials and handouts from the training, as well as supplemental handouts and resources for further reading and exploration. These materials are intended for state adult education staff to extend their learning and understanding of the topics and can be used as training materials for working with both state and local program staff. The toolkit exists in an electronic format to enable ease of sharing and printing.

LEAP Into WIOA, Part II: NRS Measures and Reporting

<https://nrsweb.org/training-ta/f2f-training/leap-part-ii>

This guide and its related training provide state staff with a detailed look at the new NRS reporting requirements and revised tables as a result of WIOA implementation, which will help them develop a plan for meeting these necessary changes. The goal of the guide and the related training is for states to obtain a clear understanding of the NRS data requirements and changes needed in their state data collection and reporting systems, learn ways to implement the changes, and disseminate information to their local programs and state WIOA stakeholders.



LEAP Into WIOA, Part II: NRS Measures and Reporting—Companion Toolkit

<https://nrsweb.org/training-ta/f2f-training/leap-part-ii>

This toolkit is a companion to *LEAP Into WIOA, Part II: NRS Measures and Reporting*. It includes materials and handouts from the training, as well as supplemental handouts and resources for further reading and exploration. These materials are intended for state adult education staff to extend their learning and understanding of the topics and can be used as training materials for working with both state and local program staff.

Defining Adult Education Under WIOA: Messaging With Infographics

This guide and its related training gives an overview of WIOA and focuses on the role of partnerships among adult education programs, the U.S. Department of Labor, the U.S. Department of Education, the Rehabilitative Services Administration, and other agencies identified within WIOA. The goal of the guide and the training is to help states define their adult education programs as valuable and central partners in implementing education and training through the WIOA framework. *This resource is available upon request.*

The Power of Data Visualization: Advanced Presentations of NRS Data

https://nrsweb.org/sites/default/files/Data_Visualization_Guide_508.pdf

This guide and its related training bring NRS data into the world of data visualization. The training focuses on two popular and powerful visualization tools: data dashboards and infographics. The training promotes the use of these tools to convey more powerful and effective messages about state or local programs using NRS data. *This resource is available upon request.*

NRS Data Dashboards Online Course

<https://courses.nrsweb.org/course/view.php?id=7>

This course reviews how to use data dashboards to summarize and present NRS data and other information that you need to make decisions, understand challenges, and highlight progress toward your organization's goals.

Data Quality Guide, Training, and Self-Assessment Checklist

<https://nrsweb.org/training-ta/f2f-training/2014-summer-training>

A guide and training materials are available to help state and local programs clarify the data collection process and ensure the collection of quality data. We also offer an online course (<https://courses.nrsweb.org/course/view.php?id=4>) that helps users understand what goes on at each level of the NRS.

Linking Data Quality With Action: Evaluating and Improving Local Program Performance

<https://nrsweb.org/training-ta/f2f-training/2014-summer-training>

This guide and related training resources offer new approaches and tools for identifying and preventing data quality problems. The guide introduces a local quality checklist—modeled after OCTAE’s state checklist—that states can use to understand and evaluate local data collection practices. The guide also brings together previously developed material on improving data quality into a single resource: a data quality toolkit to support ongoing state and local training related to data quality practices.

NRS Myth Busters: The Truth About Adult Education

<https://nrsweb.org/training-ta/f2f-training/2013-summer-training>

This collection of tools enables state staff to use NRS data to address an evaluation or research topic that will inform practice and improve programs. This training promotes the quality and use of data collected under the National Reporting System for Adult Education.

NRS Myth Busters Online Course

<https://courses.nrsweb.org/course/view.php?id=10>

The *NRS Myth Busters* course is divided into five parts, providing a detailed model and approach to assist state and local adult education programs in using their NRS data to “bust” common myths and conduct research related to adult education students, teachers, or programs.

Diving Deep Into the Local NRS Pool: Attendance, Transition Outcomes, and Educational Gain

This collection of tools assists state and local program administrators to analyze the core NRS outcome measure of educational gain, the four follow-up transition measures, and student attendance. Materials support state and local planning for program improvement. *This resource is available upon request.*



The Local Connection: Building a Data Use Learning Community

Learn about the characteristics and essential elements of data use learning communities at the state and local levels. Training materials include a companion guide for the training, learning community pre and post needs-assessment surveys, and other resources. *This resource is available upon request.*

Building and Sustaining Quality in NRS Data: Strategies for Program Improvement

A guide, training materials, and useful tools create a four-step continuous program improvement process for building and sustaining change. *This resource is available upon request.*

Learning to Be an NRS Data Detective Online Course

<https://courses.nrsweb.org/course/view.php?id=6>

Continue learning about data use and data searching by participating in this online course based on the topics and concepts found in the *Guide to Learning to Be an NRS Data Detective*.

NRS Data Detective Templates, Training, and Guide

Learn to be a data detective with materials from this training, which provide guidance on the policies and procedures for collecting and using data as well as tools that help state and local staff question and analyze data in three areas: assessment, setting goals, and achieving goals. *This resource is available upon request.*

NRSTips: Reporting Race and Ethnicity

<https://nrsweb.org/sites/default/files/RaceandEthnicity.pdf>

The U.S. Department of Education released guidance on how educational institutions and other U.S. Department of Education–funded programs should collect and report data on race and ethnicity beginning July 1, 2010. This *NRSTips* describes changes to the way federally funded adult education programs will collect and report race and ethnicity data based on the U.S. Department of Education’s guidance on the new standards and their implications.

Supporting the Use of Data Through Professional Development

<https://nrsweb.org/sites/default/files/UseofDataThroughPD.pdf>

This resource guide promotes professional development for local programs to support the use of accurate and reliable data for decision-making and program improvement.

Demonstrating Results: Developing State and Local Report Cards for Adult Education

Report cards can be powerful and effective tools for accountability and program improvement. State and local programs can develop attractive, easy-to-understand report cards to evaluate quality, identify levels of performance, and provide information to people so that they can make informed choices.

This resource is available upon request.

NRS Developing Report Cards for Adult Education Online Course

<https://courses.nrsweb.org/course/view.php?id=9>

Learn to develop your own state or local report card in this four-part self-directed course based on the NRS Guide *Demonstrating Results: Developing State and Local Report Cards for Adult Education*. This course provides an overview of how report cards are used in adult education and the five steps for developing a report card.

Guide to Learning to be an NRS Data Detective: The Five Sides of the NRS

<https://nrsweb.org/sites/default/files/Learning to be an NRS Data Detective.pdf>

This guide focuses on five sides to making NRS work: two foundational elements that must be in place to collect and use data (data collection policies and procedures and a state data system) and policies and procedures in three areas (assessment, goal setting, and follow-up measures) for collecting NRS core outcomes.





Monitoring

State administrators are obligated to monitor local programs for performance and compliance with state and federal policies and procedures. NRS products for program monitoring help with performance data review to evaluate the effectiveness of programs and identify areas for improvement.

Evaluating Program Effectiveness

<https://nrsweb.org/training-ta/f2f-training/2018-regional-training>

WIOA requires states to evaluate local programs and includes sanctioning provisions for low-performing states. This collection of tools and related training materials are designed to support states through the process of developing a systematic approach to evaluating local program effectiveness using NRS data, including WIOA performance indicators.

Evaluating Program Effectiveness: Planning Guide

<https://nrsweb.org/sites/default/files/Planning-Guide-508.pdf>

This planning guide is a companion toolkit for the *Evaluating Program Effectiveness* regional training. This guide provides a deeper understanding of how to develop or improve a system for evaluating local performance and implement a state evaluation system. In addition, the guide provides a description of each step in the process of developing or revising an evaluation system, offers examples, and provides a template for drafting an evaluation plan.

Desk Monitoring: Improving Program Performance

Using a quantitative desk monitoring tool reduces the burden on state staff and supplements qualitative information gathered through on-site monitoring visits. The guide and training explain the monitoring process and how a desk monitoring tool fits in the larger process. The monitoring tool is a template for state and local staff and is designed to determine what can be measured and how to evaluate programs using their data system. *This resource is available upon request.*

NRSTips: Desk Monitoring

https://nrsweb.org/sites/default/files/NRS_Tips_Desk_Monitoring.pdf

Desk monitoring is an effective and efficient way to assist states in meeting their monitoring needs. This issue of *NRSTips* provides an approach to reviewing and tracking program performance by using quantitative data that serves as a supplement to on-site monitoring.



Assessment

Assessment provides a measure of student educational gain and is central to program accountability and improvement. The NRS has several products to help select and use the appropriate assessment.

Test Benchmarks for NRS Educational Functioning Levels

<https://www.nrsweb.org/sites/default/files/NRS-Test-Benchmarks-2019-508.docx>

This resource, updated March 2019, is a quick reference to current test benchmarks for educational functioning levels.

NRS Assessment Database: How Do Tests Compare?

<https://nrsweb.org/training-ta/ta-tools/assessment/compare-assessments>

With so many tests available for adult education students, how can you decide which test to choose? The NRS has developed a database to compare more than 20 key features of tests used in adult education settings, including summaries, training required, test administration time, and other features.



Data Analyses and Reports

The NRS is a repository of data collected by the U.S. Department of Education. Several reports analyze national program performance data, the characteristics of the adult education population, and related topics.

Federal Report to Congress on State Performance

<https://nrsweb.org/policy-data/reports-congress>

The annual *Report to Congress on State Performance* provides the federal government and the public with an overview of the adult education program, including data on student enrollment and demographics and a summary of student outcomes across time. State-by-state statistics are provided in tables and graphs; data sheets in the appendix provide further analysis.





Data Systems for NRS

NRS Support Project staff have established guidance on developing data systems that meet WIOA and NRS requirements for reporting and using data for program improvement. The guidance provides tips for developing new database systems and evaluating and updating currently used systems.

21st Century Data Systems for the NRS: WIOA and Beyond

<https://nrsweb.org/training-ta/f2f-training/2017-nrs-targeted-training>

This collection of tools and related training materials is designed to support state administrators as they think through, plan for, and communicate requirements for updating their current data systems to meet the accountability requirements of WIOA, which includes modifying it to produce data reports to support program operations and improvements.

Data System Planning Tool

<https://nrsweb.org/training-ta/ta-tools/dstool>

This tool is an online, integrated version of resources related to data system development that states can use to jumpstart their efforts to develop a new data system.

NRS Data Systems Glossary

<https://nrsweb.org/training-ta/ta-tools/data-systems-glossary>

This glossary contains definition of terms related to data systems.

NRS Data Flow and Planning Workbook

[https://nrsweb.org/sites/default/files/NRS Data Flow Workbook 508 0.pdf](https://nrsweb.org/sites/default/files/NRS_Data_Flow_Workbook_508_0.pdf)

This workbook will help you through the process of creating a graphical flowchart to document and communicate your state's needs and challenges for obtaining and using data. The workbook includes information about creating flowcharts and an accompanying data management workbook to guide you through a detailed look at the data you collect and manage. It uses a general model of the data collection process from intake until student exit to help you understand data flow in your state or adult education program.

NRS Data Systems Online Course

<https://courses.nrsweb.org/course/view.php?id=8>

This course presents the key steps for planning and implementing a data system that can be used for years to come. The course chronicles the process for identifying needs, recognizing key challenges, preparing for key elements of planning, implementing the system, and launching the data system process. Integrated planning worksheets help apply the course's content to your state's specific needs.

NRS Data Flow Online Course

<https://courses.nrsweb.org/course/view.php?id=4>

Learn who does what with NRS data, where it comes from, where it goes, and how it gets there. After completing this course, you should be able to give a detailed account of what goes on at each level of the NRS data collection and reporting processes.

Going Longitudinal: Building an Adult Education Longitudinal Data System

<https://nrsweb.org/training-ta/f2f-training/2012-summer-training>

This collection of tools has a twofold purpose: The tools (1) allow state and local program administrators to bring the adult education program into the world of state longitudinal data systems and (2) create a plan for developing an adult education longitudinal data system independently or in collaboration with existing systems.

***NRSTips*: Creating a Longitudinal Data System**

https://nrsweb.org/sites/default/files/NRS_Tips_Long_Data.pdf

This edition of *NRSTips* describes some benefits of and the elements necessary to create a quality longitudinal data system.

***NRSTips*: Planning for a Successful Data System**

https://nrsweb.org/sites/default/files/NRS_Tips_Data_Sys.pdf

Your data system can provide a trove of information to help identify opportunities to strengthen adult education in your state. Planning a new system offers an opportunity to reflect on current and future needs and then to identify tools to help address those needs. This edition of *NRSTips* outlines a process to plan and build a successful data system.

PRODUCTS FOUND AT *NRSWeb*

Training and Guides

- *WIOA Communication Planning for Adult Education Administrators (2018)*
- *Evaluating Program Effectiveness (2018)*
- *NRS Annual Checkup: WIOA Accountability After One Year (2017)*
- *21st Century Data Systems for NRS: WIOA and Beyond (2017)*
- *LEAP Into WIOA, Part I: Planning for Change (2016)*
- *LEAP Into WIOA, Part II: NRS Measures and Reporting (2016)*
- *Defining Adult Education Under WIOA: Messaging With Infographics (2015)*
- *The Power of Data Visualization: Advanced Presentations of NRS Data (2014)*
- *NRS Linking Data Quality With Action: Evaluating and Improving Local Program Performance (2014)*
- *NRS Myth Busters Evaluation Research Guide (2013)*
- *NRS Guide to State Longitudinal Data Systems (2012)*
- *Evaluation Research Planning Model for the Evaluation Learning Community (2011)*
- *Diving Deep Into the Local NRS Pool: Attendance, Transition Outcomes, and Educational Gain (2010)*
- *The Local Connection: Building a Data Use Learning Community (2009)*
- *Building and Sustaining Quality in NRS Data: Strategies for Program Improvement (2008)*
- *Desk Monitoring: Improving Program Performance (2007)*
- *Demonstrating Results: Developing State and Local Report Cards for Adult Education (2007)*
- *Guide to Learning to Be an NRS Data Detective: The Five Sides of the NRS (2006)*

Webinars

- Why Map Your Data Flow—We'll Count the Ways and Show You How (2018)
- Introduction to *NRSONline* Courses (2018)
- Post-Exit Indicators: Tracking Students Over Time (2018)
- NRS Reporting Tables (2018)
- Rolling Out LEAP II to Local Providers (2016)
- Data Dashboards (2016)
- Infographics (2014)
- Promising Practices in Program Management and Data Use Series
- Report Cards (2015)
- Distance Learning (2015)
- Longitudinal Data Systems (2014)
- Data Use in the Classroom: A Teacher's Perspective (2014)
- Policies for Program Improvement (2014)
- Data Use in the Classroom (2013)
- Transition Planning: College and Career Readiness (2013)
- Managed Enrollment (2013)
- Evaluation Learning Community (ELC) (2013)

Online Courses

- Using NRS Data
- Myth Busters: The Truth About Adult Education
- Developing Report Cards for Adult Education
- NRS Data Systems
- NRS Data Dashboards
- Learning to Be an NRS Data Detective
- Data Use Guide Training Course
- NRS Data Flow
- NRS Basics: WIOA Edition (coming soon)



NRSTips

- Collecting Data for Post-Exit Indicators in Practice
- Tracking Students Over Time
- Reporting Race and Ethnicity
- Desk Monitoring
- Planning an NRS Data System
- Creating a Longitudinal Data System

Other Resources

- *NRS Technical Assistance Guide*
- NRS and WIOA Resources
- NRS Policy on Reporting Distance Education Students
- State Assessment Policy Guidance
- NRS Test Benchmarks for Educational Functioning Levels
- NRS Assessment Database
- *Report to Congress on State Performance*
- NRS Resource Guide to Data Systems
- State Snapshots

For more information, please write to nrs@air.org.





About the American Institutes for Research

Established in 1946, the American Institutes for Research (AIR) is an independent, nonpartisan, not-for-profit organization that conducts behavioral and social science research on important social issues and delivers technical assistance, both domestically and internationally, in the areas of education, health and workforce productivity.



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U.S. Department of Education
Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education
Division of Adult Education and Literacy

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/AdultEd/index.html>