

**AmeriCorps National Measures
Pilot Year 2: 2011-2012
Outcome Instrument Packet
EARNING A POST-SECONDARY DEGREE**

Programs that choose to measure outputs Education ED1-ED2 or Education ED3-ED4 must choose and measure at least one of seven national outcome performance measures. Below is one of the national outcome performance measures programs can choose; or you can choose one or more of six other education national outcome performance measures. See other education outcome instrument packets for information on the other six measures.

Education Focus Area

National Performance Measure
Outcome: Number of unduplicated students earning a post-secondary degree (ED11).

Definition of Key Terms¹

- **Students and Youth:** those unduplicated students and youth that were reported in ED2 and/or ED4: students that completed participation in an AmeriCorps education program (ED2); and/or youth that were mentored through the AmeriCorps program for at least the required time period (ED4).
- **Post-secondary institutions** may include an occupational or vocational program, two-year, four-year college, or graduate program.
- **Degree:** may include an associate degree from an accredited academic program or an occupational or vocational program; a bachelor's degree (ex., BA, AB, BS); a master's degree (ex.: MA, MS, MEd, MEd, MSW); a professional school degree (ex.: MD, DDS, DVM); or a doctorate degree (ex.: PhD, EdD).

Considerations for this National Performance Measure²

- This measure is best suited for programs preparing high school students for college or programs that work with students in college to help them succeed. Will a primary focus of your education program and/or mentoring program be to encourage and prepare those students identified in the outputs ED2 and/or ED4 to continue their education and earn a post-secondary degree?
- Can you establish a reasonable baseline or identify an appropriate "comparison" group? For example, of the students you plan to serve, what proportion of those who graduate from high school typically complete a post-secondary degree? This would be your comparison group or the group who do not receive your service.

¹ 2011 National Performance Measures: Background Information References and Authorities, Definitions, Suggestions Regarding Data Collection, and Additional Notes, CNCS:

http://www.americorps.gov/pdf/11_1018_ameriCorps_nofa_background_document.pdf

² For more on alignment of performance measures, see the AmeriCorps Toolkit:

<http://nationalserviceresources.org/star/ac-program-toolkit>

- Will you be able to set a “reach” target, the minimum anticipated percent of students participating in your education or mentoring program who you hope will earn a post-secondary degree? Will the target percentage you set represent an ambitious but realistic challenge for your program? Remember that the target you set would need to be higher than what occurs already in the comparison group so that you can demonstrate the difference that your program is making.

Data Collection Challenges

- Will you be able to determine when students enroll in an institution that offers a post-secondary degree?
- Will you be able to track unduplicated students who pursue their post-secondary degree, especially if students participate in more than one post-secondary program?
- Will you be able to obtain graduation records or self report follow-up surveys from individual students to demonstrate that they earned a post-secondary degree, especially if students do not obtain their degree shortly after they complete the education program or mentoring program?
- Will you be able to maintain contact with students one-two years after they complete the education program or mentoring program to determine if they earn a post-secondary degree?
- Have you resolved any confidentiality issues with educational institutions so that you can obtain enrollment and/or graduation records for individual students?
- For students who are under 18, will you be able to obtain permission from a parent or guardian to collect graduation data and other relevant information?
- After using the data collection instruments to document outcomes, do you have a safe place to store these documents? This “raw data” will provide evidence that you collected the data in a systematic manner and will verify the results reported.

Data Collection Strategies

- When students begin participation in your education program or mentoring program, establish clear expectations and agreements with the students stating that if they do not earn a post-secondary degree before the end of their participation in the program, they agree to inform you:
 - When they enroll in a post-secondary institution,
 - When they earn a degree or certification, and
 - When they obtain a post-secondary certification or degree.

In this agreement, clarify how you will collect information and obtain students contact information for follow-up after they leave the program. You may need to obtain consent from a parent or guardian for students to enter into this agreement if the students are under 18.

- If you need to distribute surveys to former participants, give yourself one-two months to collect this data, including following up with students who do not respond to the first request.

- If your program will need information from an accredited academic program, or an occupational or vocational program, work out a system with the institutions to address confidentiality issues around student data.
- To avoid counting participants more than once, list the students in your instrument in alphabetical order. If they tend to have the same names, you may need to also use addresses, birth dates, or other identifiers that will differentiate these participants.

Sample Instruments in this Packet

Students in Post-Secondary Education Tracking Log

High School Students Tracking Log

- These instruments can be used to track the number of participants that graduate from a post-secondary institution (ED11). The first instrument is for students who are already enrolled in a post-secondary education program. The second instrument is for students who are still in high school but who are expected to go on to post-secondary education.
- These logs collect outcome data on individual students that completed an AmeriCorps education or mentoring program tracked under the output ED2 or ED4. You are encouraged to develop an Excel spreadsheet to combine output and outcome data, and use the spreadsheet to document unduplicated participants.
- The logs ask for the date the student completed the education program or mentoring program. “Date of completion” will help you determine how long you will track students to find out whether they met the expected outcomes. “Grade level” and “expected high school graduation date” tell you when the student will be able to graduate from high school and enroll in a post-secondary institution.
- In addition to tracking whether the student completed post-secondary education (ED11), the log also tracks information to verify enrollment: the first semester of the student’s enrollment, and the type and date of the documentation you plan to collect (self report or records).

**Education Services:
Post-Secondary Degree Attainment**

Sample Instruments:

**Students in Post-Secondary Education Tracking Log
High School Students Tracking Log**

Students in Post-Secondary Education Tracking Log

Instructions

What is the purpose?	To determine how many students in post-secondary education obtained a post-secondary degree (ED11).
Who should complete this instrument?	Project Director or designee should complete the instrument.
When should we complete this instrument?	Enter student information after they complete the education program or mentoring program (see ED2 and ED4).
What should we do to prepare?	<p>You may want to add a column for another student identifier, such as birth date or address, if you are tracking large numbers of students.</p> <p>Recommended: If you are tracking students for both ED2 (students that completed a tutoring/academic support program) and ED4 (students that completed a mentoring program), use separate logs. This allows you to compare results for each program more easily and make decisions about where improvement could occur.</p>
What should we do afterwards?	Keep a copy of the Tracking Logs in a safe place; this is your data . You will aggregate this data later to determine if you met your outcome targets.
Can I use an alternative instrument?	Different forms can be developed/used to document unduplicated students that obtain a post-secondary degree. For example, a spreadsheet format allows you to easily add columns and rows to track additional data (e.g. the type of degree that students are working toward), and track data over time such as student status at college (continuing full time, part time, graduating). However, whether your instrument is in paper format or electronic format, remember to save this "raw" data as proof that a systematic process was used to document the outcomes.

Students in Post-Secondary Education Tracking Log

Education/Mentoring Program: _____

Person completing this Log: _____ **AmeriCorps Program Year:** _____

Type of program students participated: Education Program (ED2) Mentoring Program (ED4)

Instructions: List the students that completed your program (i.e. those counted in ED2 or ED4), and the date they completed the program. Enter the dates when students enrolled in a post-secondary education program and their expected graduation date. Upon graduation, note the date when a post-secondary degree was awarded and whether this was determined through official records or student self-reports.

STUDENT			POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION*			
Last Name	First Name	Date Completed Ed/Mentor Program	Date Enrolled in post-secondary Ed Institution	Expected Graduation Date	Date Post-Secondary Degree Awarded	Degree Confirmed By (check one)
1.						<input type="checkbox"/> Official records <input type="checkbox"/> Self-report
2.						<input type="checkbox"/> Official records <input type="checkbox"/> Self-report
3.						<input type="checkbox"/> Official records <input type="checkbox"/> Self-report
4.						<input type="checkbox"/> Official records <input type="checkbox"/> Self-report
5.						<input type="checkbox"/> Official records <input type="checkbox"/> Self-report
6.						<input type="checkbox"/> Official records <input type="checkbox"/> Self-report
7.						<input type="checkbox"/> Official records <input type="checkbox"/> Self-report
8.						<input type="checkbox"/> Official records <input type="checkbox"/> Self-report
9.						<input type="checkbox"/> Official records <input type="checkbox"/> Self-report
10.						<input type="checkbox"/> Official records <input type="checkbox"/> Self-report
					Total:	

* See Definition of Key Terms on the first page of this packet for list of post-secondary certifications/degrees.

High School Students Tracking Log

Instructions

What is the purpose?	To determine how many students that completed education services graduated from high school, enrolled in post-secondary education, and ultimately obtained a post-secondary degree (ED11).
Who should complete this instrument?	Project director or designee should complete the instrument.
When should we complete this instrument?	<p>Enter student data after they complete the education program or mentoring program (see ED2 and ED4).</p> <p>As students graduate from high school, are accepted into a post-secondary institution, and as they complete their post-secondary education.</p>
What should we do to prepare?	<p>You may want to add a column for another student identifier, such as birth date or address, if you are tracking large numbers of students.</p> <p>Recommended: If you are tracking students for both ED2 (students that completed a tutoring/academic support program) and ED4 (students that completed a mentoring program), use separate logs. This allows you to compare results for each program more easily and make decisions about where improvement could occur. However, if students participate in both programs, you may want to combine the logs using one Excel spreadsheet so that you can sort the names to identify duplicate entries.</p>
What should we do afterwards?	Keep a copy of the Tracking Logs in a safe place; this is your data. You will aggregate this data later to determine if you met your outcome targets.
Can I use an alternative instrument?	Different forms can be developed/used to document unduplicated students that obtain a post-secondary degree. For example, a spreadsheet format allows you to easily add columns and rows to track additional data (e.g. the type of degree that students are working toward), and track data over time such as student status at college (continuing full time, part time, graduating). However, whether your instrument is in paper format or electronic format, remember to save this “raw” data as proof that a systematic process was used to document the outcomes.

High School Students Tracking Log

Education Program: _____

Person completing this Log: _____ **AmeriCorps Program Year:** _____

Type of program students participated: Education Program (ED2) Mentoring Program (ED4)

Instructions: List the students that completed your education program (i.e. those counted under ED2 or ED4), the date they completed the program, and their grade level at that time. Enter when the students are expected to graduate from high school and enter a “1” if they receive their high school diploma. For students that enroll in a post-secondary education program, enter the date of their first semester of enrollment. Upon graduation, note the date when a post-secondary degree was awarded and whether this was determined through official records or student self-reports. Students who participate in an education program and a mentoring program should only be counted once.

STUDENT (1)				HIGH SCHOOL		POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION (2)		
Last Name	First Name	Date Student Completed Ed/Mentor Program	Student's grade level at time of program completion	Expected date of high school graduation	Enter "1" if student received high school diploma	Date Enrolled in post-secondary Ed Institution	Date Post-Secondary Degree Awarded	Degree Confirmed By (check one)
1.								<input type="checkbox"/> Official records <input type="checkbox"/> Self-report
2.								<input type="checkbox"/> Official records <input type="checkbox"/> Self-report
3.								<input type="checkbox"/> Official records <input type="checkbox"/> Self-report
4.								<input type="checkbox"/> Official records <input type="checkbox"/> Self-report
Total:								

Notes:

- (1) List students that completed an education or mentoring program (students tracked in ED2 and ED4).
- (2) See Definition of Key Terms on the first page of this packet for list of post-secondary certifications/degrees.