

AmeriCorps National Measures Pilot Year 1: 2010-2011 Outcome Instrument Packet

INCREASED SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND SUSPENSION PREVENTION

*The information in this National Performance Measure packet pertains to **Pilot Year 1 (program year 2010-2011)**. See *National Performance Measures, Pilot Year 2 (program year 2011-2012)*, at the Resource Center for updated information.*

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 are two of the national outcome performance measures programs can choose; or they can choose one or more of five other education national outcome performance measures. See other education outcome instrument packets for information on the other five measures.

Education Focus Area

National Performance Measures: *You can choose one or both outcomes for your national outcome performance measures.*

Outcome: Number of unduplicated youth who have improved their school attendance over the course of the AmeriCorps program's involvement with the student (ED6).

Outcome: Number of unduplicated students who have not been suspended over the course of the AmeriCorps program's involvement (ED7).

Definition of Key Terms¹

- **Students** and **Youth** are the unduplicated students and youth reported in ED2 and/or ED4: students enrolled in grades K-12 that completed participation in an AmeriCorps education program (ED2); and youth that were mentored through the AmeriCorps program for at least the required time period (ED4).
- **AmeriCorps Program Involvement:** starts on the date AmeriCorps members begin working with students and ends with the date their involvement ends or the end of the contract year, whichever comes first.
- **Attended (ED6):** NCLB approved definition. The NCLB legislation can be found at: <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/107-110.pdf> or <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/index.html>.
- **Suspension (ED7):** all disciplinary actions that result in the student being excluded from class.

¹ 2010 National Performance Measures: Background Information References and Authorities, Definitions, Suggestions Regarding Data Collection, and Additional Notes, CNCS:
http://www.americorps.gov/pdf/09_0918_nofa_ac_background.pdf.

Considerations for these National Performance Measures²

- Are you measuring educational national output performance measures ED2 or ED4; number of students completing an education program, or number of students completing a youth mentoring program?
- If measuring increased attendance of youth (ED6), are you providing services for youth who have an attendance problem? Do you have access to attendance data prior to the youth's participation in the AmeriCorps program? Will you be able to show improvement?
- Remember that you are trying to improve attendance to impact the likelihood that the youth will graduate from high school. Will your program be able to show a marked difference in the attendance rate of the children/youth?
- What benchmark will you establish for improved attendance? You should indicate how much increase (i.e., percent) in attendance you expect students to make in order to count students as having improved.
- If measuring reduced suspensions of students (ED7), do you have documentation about prior suspensions of the students you plan to serve prior to the AmeriCorps program's involvement? Can you obtain this data? Since you are reporting on students who have not been suspended over the course of your program, it is expected that your program would target students who have previously had this problem.
- Is your education program or mentoring program designed to assist students increase their school attendance, and/or keep from being suspended? You should only choose these outcomes if your program model is designed to address them.

Data Collection Challenges

ED6: Increase School Attendance

- Will you be able to access attendance data for individual students for the following two time periods: (1) attendance data for each student involved in your program for the school year prior to the AmeriCorps program school year, and; (2) attendance data for each student involved in your program at the end of the AmeriCorps program year?
- Will you be able to compare this attendance data for each student to determine if each student increased his/her school attendance?
- Will the school provide this information to you?
- Do you have a definition of how many days students need to improve their attendance before they are identified as meeting the target (e.g., 20% increase in attendance)?

ED7: Reduce Suspensions

- Will you be able to collect suspension data from schools for each student (1) for the previous school year, and (2) at the end of the AmeriCorps program year?
- Does the school track all disciplinary actions, including in-school suspension, that result in the student being excluded from class?
- Will you be able to compare the suspension data for each student from the prior school year with the student's suspension data after completing the AmeriCorps services?
- Will the school provide this information to you?

² For more on alignment of performance measures, see the AmeriCorps Toolkit: <http://nationalserviceresources.org/star/ac-program-toolkit>.

- Can you follow the national outcome performance measure that states students who have **not been suspended** over the course of the AmeriCorps program's involvement can be counted towards meeting the target?

General

- Have you resolved any confidentiality issues to the school's satisfaction so that you can request data on individual students?
- Will you be able to obtain the data in a timely fashion so that you can aggregate and report results by your deadline?
- 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

- Determine in advance whether you can or cannot get attendance data or suspension data from the schools, including in the format (e.g. individual students vs. aggregated numbers) needed, and how much time the schools will need to put together the information you request.
- If your program has not done so, work out a system with the schools to address confidentiality issues around student data. For example, requesting data using student identification numbers rather than names may be acceptable.
- Collect prior school year attendance data or suspension data at the beginning of your program year; then collect post attendance data or suspension data at the end of the AmeriCorps program school year.
- For measuring increased school attendance, you will need to determine the total possible school days between the start and end date of a school year. Determine the total number of days the student participant attended school to compute the percent of school days attended: (actual number of days attended divided by the total possible school days) x 100.
- Find out whether schools in your service area have different total numbers of school days over the school year. This number needs to be factored into students' prior attendance rate.
- To avoid counting students 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. Consider using an Excel spreadsheet to document both output and outcome data; this spreadsheet will help you sort names and identify duplicate entries.

Sample Instrument in this Packet***Student Tracking Log***

This instrument can be used to track the number of students that improved school attendance (ED6) and/or if students were not suspended during their time with the AmeriCorps program (ED7). If you are only using one of these measures, you can disregard the section of the instrument (e.g., do not need to add information for the other measure) in the “Student Tracking Log”.

This log collects outcome data on students that completed an AmeriCorps education or mentoring program tracked under the national output performance measure ED2 or ED4. The “Student Tracking Log” provides columns for you to calculate the percent attendance of individual students during the school year prior to the AmeriCorps program and then again during the school year when students participate in your AmeriCorps education program or mentoring program (ED6). This “Student Tracking Log” will also document how much of an increase occurred in the students’ rates of attendance. You will need to establish a benchmark percentage for increased attendance and enter this information in the column heading marked “Enter “1” if % attendance is ___% or greater.” This percentage will indicate how much of an increase you are looking for in order to count the students as having increased their attendance.

The log tracks number of days suspended and whether or not the student was suspended during their time with the AmeriCorps program (ED7). The log does not collect details on the type of suspension (in-school or out of school, reasons for suspension) or suspensions prior to participation in the program for comparison. Consider tracking this information for your program records.

**Education Services:
Increased School Attendance and Suspension
Prevention**

**Sample Instrument:
Student Tracking Log**

Student Tracking Log

Instructions

What is the purpose?	To determine how many students improved their school attendance (ED6) and/or were not suspended (ED7) during their participation in the AmeriCorps program.
Who should complete this instrument?	Project director, designee, or other trained staff should complete the instrument.
When should we complete this instrument?	Enter data as students complete the education or mentoring program (see national performance measures ED2 and ED4). You will need both the start and completion dates for individual students to determine the time period for when they were involved with the program; data should be collected for that time period.
What should we do to prepare?	<p>Add columns for additional student identifiers if necessary. 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 "Student Tracking Logs." This allows you to compare results for each program more easily and make decisions about where improvement could occur.</p> <p>Consider tracking additional details on suspension (e.g. reason for suspension, prior year suspensions for comparison), if available, to help your program better understand your participants' situations and make decisions on where to allocate resources.</p>
What should we do afterwards?	<p>Keep a copy of the "Student Tracking Logs" in a safe place; this is your data. You will aggregate this data later to determine if you met your outcome targets.</p> <p>Optional: Calculate the percent increase or decrease in attendance for each student to gauge how much improvement has occurred.</p>
Can I use an alternative instrument?	Different forms can be developed/used to document unduplicated students that improved attendance or were not suspended. For example, if you are not tracking both of these outcomes, you may want to omit the "Attendance (ED6)" columns or the "Suspension (ED7)" column. Or you may want to add columns to track additional information, such as the student's school, activities the student was involved in at your program, and suspension details. 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.

Student Tracking Log

Education Program: _____ School Year: _____

Students listed here received this service (check one): Tutoring/Academic Support (ED2) Mentoring Support (ED4)

Person completing this Log: _____

Instructions: List the students that completed your program (i.e. those counted under ED2 or ED4), including the dates they entered and completed the program. For ED6, calculate the percent of days of school attended in the prior school year (pre), then again during the time the student was with the program (post). Enter a "1" if the percent attendance is _____% or greater. For ED7, enter a "1" if the student was NOT suspended during the time period he/she was participating in your program.

STUDENT (1)		ATTENDANCE (ED6)									SUSPENSION (SP) (ED7)		
		A. Calculate Percent Attendance (3)						B. Attendance Increase			From date of entry and completion date.(4)		
Last Name	First Name	Date of entry into AC program (1)	Date of AC program completion (2)	(PRE) Over the last school year			(POST) Between date of entry and date of completion in the AmeriCorps program.			Percent increase or decrease	Enter "1" if % increase is _____% or greater.	Days of SP	Enter "1" if student did NOT have SP
				# Days attended school	# Total possible days	Percent days attended	# Days attended school	# Total possible days	Percent days attended				
<i>Example: Smith</i>	<i>Jim</i>	<i>10/5/09</i>	<i>5/7/10</i>	<i>141</i>	<i>180</i>	<i>78%</i>	<i>122</i>	<i>130</i>	<i>94%</i>	<i>+16%</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>
1.													
2.													
3.													
4.													

ED6: Unduplicated students that increased school attendance during their time in AmeriCorps program:

ED7: Unduplicated students that have not been suspended during their time in AmeriCorps program:



Notes

- (1) Enter the date the student began participating in your AmeriCorps education and/or mentoring program.
- (2) Enter the date the student completed your AmeriCorps education or mentoring program, or the end date of the contract year, whichever came first.
- (3) Calculate the percent attendance by dividing the actual number of days the student attended into the total possible school days for the time period. Multiply by 100. (Example: (PRE) Jim Smith attended school 141 of 180 possible school days last school year. $141/180 = .78 \times 100 = 78\%$ attendance. (POST) Jim attended the program from 10/5/09 – 5/7/10. Of the 130 school days during that time, Jim attended school 110 days. $122/130 = .94 \times 100 = 94\%$ attendance).
- (4) Suspension includes all disciplinary actions that result in the student being excluded from class.