

AmeriCorps National Measures Pilot Year 2: 2011-2012 Outcome Instrument Packet

INCREASED SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND DECREASED DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Programs that choose to measure outputs Education ED1-ED2 or Education ED3A-ED4A must choose and measure at least one of eight national outcome performance measures. Below are two of the national outcome performance measures programs can choose. These two measures are appropriate only for programs serving students with previously demonstrated attendance problems (ED6) or disciplinary or suspension problems (ED7). See other education outcome instrument packets for information on the other six measures.

Education Focus Area

National Performance Measures: <i>You can choose one or both outcomes for your national outcome performance measures.</i>
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 with no or decreased disciplinary referrals and suspensions 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 ED4A: 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 (ED4A).
- **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. "Working with the students" does not need to be in direct work with the students. However, the AmeriCorps member must provide direct support that makes the program possible.
- **Attended (ED6):** NCLB approved definition. While the target, "attended 90% of school days" is desirable, attendance changes will vary depending on the target population of students. 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>.
- **Disciplinary Referral (ED7):** Serious disciplinary actions may include referrals to the principal's office, referrals to alternative schools or programs, referrals to the juvenile justice system, in-school or out-of-school suspensions, or expulsions.
- **Suspension (ED7):** all disciplinary actions that result in the student being excluded from class.

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

Considerations for these National Performance Measures²

- Are you also measuring the required educational national output performance measures ED2 or ED4A; 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 decreased disciplinary referrals or suspensions of students (ED7), do you have documentation that disciplinary action was taken with the students you plan to serve prior to the AmeriCorps program's involvement? Can you obtain these baseline data? Since you are reporting on students who have no or reduced disciplinary referrals or suspensions 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 reduce disciplinary referrals or suspensions? 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 these 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: Decrease Disciplinary Referrals or Suspensions

- Will you be able to collect disciplinary referral and suspension data from schools for each student for the following two time periods: and; (1) **Post data** - total disciplinary actions over the course of the AmeriCorps program services (e.g. January-May 2011) and; (2) **Pre-data** - total disciplinary actions (referrals and suspensions) for the previous school year during the same timeframe as the post data (e.g. January-May 2010)?

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

- Will you be able to compare this disciplinary action data for each student to determine if the student decreased his/her disciplinary referrals and suspensions?
- Does the school track all disciplinary actions, including in-school suspension, that result in the student being excluded from class?
- Will the school provide this information to you?

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? These "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 disciplinary referral/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 disciplinary referral/suspension data at the beginning of your program year; then collect post attendance data or disciplinary referral/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: $(\text{actual number of days attended} \div \text{total possible school days}) \times 100$.
- 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 the number of students that decreased disciplinary referrals and suspensions 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 ED4A. 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.

For each student, the log tracks number of disciplinary referrals or suspensions, that is disciplinary actions, that occur for the student over the course of the AmeriCorps program (post data) and the number of disciplinary actions that occurred for that student during that same period during the prior year (pre data) (ED7). The log does not collect details on the type of disciplinary actions or the level of seriousness of the disciplinary referrals or suspensions. Consider tracking this information for your program records.

**Education Services:
Increased School Attendance and Decreased
Disciplinary Actions**

**Sample Instrument:
Student Tracking Log**

Student Tracking Log

Instructions

What is the purpose?	<p>To determine how many students improved their school attendance (ED6) during their participation in the AmeriCorps program.</p> <p>To determine how many students decreased their disciplinary actions (disciplinary referrals and suspensions) (ED7) during their participation in the AmeriCorps program.</p>
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 ED4A). 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.</p> <p>Recommended: If you are tracking students for both ED2 (students that completed a tutoring/academic support program) and ED4A (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 disciplinary actions (e.g. seriousness or reason for suspension, type of referrals), 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; these are 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 and/or disciplinary referrals and suspensions 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 "Disciplinary Actions (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 disciplinary action details. However, whether your instrument is in paper format or electronic format, remember to save these "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 (ED4A)

Person completing this Log: _____

Instructions: List the students that completed your program (i.e. those counted under ED2 or ED4A), including the dates they entered and exited 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, compare the pre (prior school year) and post (same time period during the current program year) disciplinary actions for each student (disciplinary referrals, suspensions). If the post number is smaller than the pre number, then there is a "decrease". Enter a "1" in the last column.

STUDENT		ATTENDANCE (ED6)										DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS (DA) (ED7)		
		A. Calculate Percent Attendance (3)						B. Attendance Increase				(4)		Decrease DAs (4)
Last Name	First Name	Date of entry into AC program (1)	Date of exit from AC program (2)	PRE*			POST**			Percent increase or decrease	Enter "1" if % increase is _____% or greater.	PRE*	POST**	Enter "1" if post # is smaller than pre #
				# Days attended school	# Total possible days	Percent days attended	# Days attended school	# Total possible days	Percent days attended			# of DAs	# of DAs	
<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>4</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>
1.														
2.	<i>add rows</i>													

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

ED7: Unduplicated students that have decreased disciplinary actions (disciplinary referrals, suspensions) during their time in AmeriCorps program:



Notes

*PRE: Over the last school year

**POST: ED6, between date of entry and date of exit in the AmeriCorps program. For ED7, Disciplinary actions tracked for the post data period (during the AmeriCorps program) should be compared to the previous year (pre-data) during the same time period (e.g. Oct. 2009-May 2010 pre-data will be compared to Oct. 2010-May 2011 post-data).

- (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) Disciplinary action includes all disciplinary referrals (Serious disciplinary actions may include referrals to the principal's office, referrals to alternative schools or programs, referrals to the juvenile justice system, in-school or out-of-school suspensions, or expulsions) and suspensions (all disciplinary actions that result in the student being excluded from class)