

# Wisconsin AEFLA Reporting and Performance Accountability Manual

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## Wisconsin AEFLA Data Collection and Management

Each Wisconsin Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) program must collect and report AEFLA student participation and accountability data to the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) Office via the available WTCS reporting systems. The WTCS reporting systems allow AEFLA programs to submit student-level data through a comprehensive and secure system. A list of the required AEFLA data elements that must be reported can be found in the “Data Element Reporting Matrix” section of the [WTCS Client Reporting Manual](#). Data element definitions can also be found in the [WTCS Client Reporting Manual](#). Examples of data elements that must be reported include name, date of birth, race or ethnicity, sex, barriers to employment, exit date, test name, test topic, test date, test scale score, grant participation, exclusions as appropriate, and Social Security Number<sup>1</sup> if provided.

It is important for AEFLA programs to map out their data collection processes to ensure all of the required data elements are appropriately collected during the AEFLA student life cycle. For example, AEFLA programs should establish an intake form at program entry that prompts for the collection of AEFLA student characteristics and demographics. To support data collection at intake the WTCS Office has established the *Wisconsin AEFLA Program Intake Form Sample* which can be found within the *Wisconsin AEFLA Reporting and Performance Accountability Resources* section of this document.

All funded programs will be required to participate in an AEFLA grant management training, which includes data management and reporting, at the beginning of each AEFLA competition cycle. This required training opportunity will be coordinated by the WTCS Office.

## Wisconsin AEFLA Data Reporting Schedule & Monitoring

Wisconsin AEFLA programs can submit data to WTCS reporting systems beginning in October of the program year through the following August 15. On August 15, WTCS reporting system submissions will be frozen and the data will be reviewed for reasonableness and accuracy. Required final corrections, if necessary, will be communicated to the AEFLA program and must be made by September 1.

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<sup>1</sup> Reporting a Social Security Number is not required for eligible individuals to participate in AEFLA services but should be included in the program’s intake form. Social Security Numbers are used to support Wisconsin AEFLA data match procedures outlined in the *Wisconsin AEFLA Supplemental Data Collection: Data Match Procedures* section of this document.

Each AEFLA program must report the required AEFLA data for each student served on at least a quarterly basis. Specifically, AEFLA programs must report program year data by the 14<sup>th</sup> of the month in October, January, April, and July. The WTCS Office will monitor AEFLA program data submissions and contact programs that are not in compliance with the Wisconsin AEFLA data reporting schedule to develop a plan for successful submission of required AEFLA data.

## Wisconsin AEFLA Data Quality Standards

To verify the validity of data and ensure Wisconsin AEFLA program compliance with AEFLA data collection and reporting requirements, the WTCS Office has integrated a series of data quality safeguards into WTCS reporting systems and WTCS Office processes.

The first safeguard includes the generation of data quality reports to support data quality standards. AEFLA programs are able to access a series of reports through the WTCS Portal to audit reported data

and ensure accuracy of data submissions. One example report includes the identification of out-of-range values for assessment scale scores. Another example includes the identification of participants reported in AEFLA who are missing required demographic elements such as sex, race or ethnicity, and date of birth or who are not reported with a pre-test.

The second data quality safeguard relates to data entry. Specifically, AEFLA programs are only able to enter valid data into WTCS reporting systems. For example, only those assessments approved by the WTCS Office can be entered into WTCS reporting systems.

The third data quality safeguard includes ongoing monitoring of AEFLA program data submissions. The WTCS Office monitors data submissions to ensure compliance with the Wisconsin AEFLA data reporting schedule and to identify deviations in reported data. A description of data monitoring procedures can be found in the *Monitoring AEFLA Program Reporting and Performance Accountability* section of this document.

The fourth data quality safeguard relates to a series of AEFLA data validation procedures coordinated by the WTCS Office. Each year the WTCS Office conducts data matches with external entities to support the generation of federally required accountability data. A description of the data match process can be found in the *Wisconsin AEFLA Supplemental Data Collection: Data Match Procedures* section of this document. Coordinating data matches through the WTCS Office reduces the burden of data collection for AEFLA programs, promotes data consistency across all Wisconsin AEFLA programs, and enhances overall AEFLA data quality.

## WIOA Primary Indicators of Performance

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), all AEFLA programs will be measured by the same primary indicators of performance. These indicators will only include data for AEFLA **participants**. The following data elements must be reported through the WTCS reporting systems for individuals to qualify as participants:

- Reported in an AEFLA grant;
- Reported with at least 12 hours of service;
- Reported with a name, sex, race or ethnicity, and date of birth; and
- Reported with at least one WTCS approved pre-test.

See the WTCS Assessment Policy on myWTCS for more information related to distance education, WTCS approved tests, and testing guidelines.

There are six primary indicators of performance under WIOA. Each of the indicators are reported by the WTCS Office through the National Reporting System (NRS) in support of AEFLA federal accountability efforts. Wisconsin AEFLA programs are able to access state-wide NRS reports and individual AEFLA program reports throughout each program year to monitor their local performance across the federally required indicators of performance. For more information related to accessing and understanding the NRS reports, view the *Wisconsin AEFLA National Reporting System Report Guide* located on myWTCS.

**Measurable Skill Gains** (MSG) is a WIOA indicator used to demonstrate participants' progress toward achieving a credential. Wisconsin AEFLA programs can achieve MSG in any of three ways:

- Advancing an Educational Functioning Level by comparing a participant's pre-test with the participant's post-test (using an approved test identified in the WTCS Assessment Policy);
- Attaining a secondary diploma or recognized equivalent;
- Enrollment in postsecondary education within the program year; and
- Passing a high school equivalency subtest.

Additionally, AEFLA participants reported during 2021-22 and beyond in Integrated Education and Training or Workplace Literacy are assessed for three additional types of gains to include:

- Completed progress towards training milestones – the participant demonstrated satisfactory or better progress report towards established milestones, such as completion of on-the-job training or completion of one year of an apprenticeship program or similar milestones from an employer or training provider who is providing training;
- Passed technical/occupational skills exam or received industry certification – the participant successfully passed an exam that is required for a particular occupation or attained progress in technical or occupational skills as evidenced by trade-related benchmarks such as knowledge-based exams; and
- Postsecondary transcript – complete a minimum of 12 credit hours per semester, or at least 12 credit hours over the course of two consecutive semesters in the year; credit hours are for a D grade or better or a passing grade in a pass/fail course.

MSG indicator outcomes are presented on National Reporting System Table 4. Please see the *FAQs – Integrated Education & Training and Workplace Literacy MSG* section of this document for more information. Also, view the National Reporting System Table 4 documentation within the *Wisconsin AEFLA National Reporting System Report Guide* located on myWTCS for more information.

There are a series of primary indicators of performance that are assessed among AEFLA participants after they have exited the AEFLA program. Exit information is collected in WTCS reporting systems via the **Exit Date** data element. If an AEFLA participant reports to staff they are exiting the program, the participant should be reported with an exit date equal to their last date of service in the program. If the participant reenrolls in program services within 90 days of their last date of service, the program should remove the exit date, and maintain services for the student. Additionally, if a participant becomes disconnected from services and does not notify staff, the provider should report an exit date equal to their last date of service if 90 days or more have elapsed and they have not received additional services. If 90 days or more have elapsed, the program can begin a new **Period of Participation** if the student meets the requirements of an AEFLA participant.

There are three WIOA indicators used to evaluate AEFLA participant employment after exit. Each of these employment indicators are evaluated separately.

- The **Employment Rate Second Quarter After Exit** indicator is the percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.

- The **Median Earnings Second Quarter After Exit** indicator is the median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.
- The **Employment Rate Fourth Quarter After Exit** indicator is the percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program.

AEFLA participant employment indicator outcomes are presented on National Reporting System Table 5. View the National Reporting System Table 5 documentation within the *Wisconsin AEFLA National Reporting System Report Guide* located on myWTCS for more information.

The **Credential Attainment** indicator measures participant outcomes across two types of credentials.

- The first way applies only to participants enrolled in a secondary education program who exited the program and who did not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent at program entry. To achieve credential attainment, this population must attain a secondary school diploma or recognized equivalent during participation or within one year after exit of the program. Further, the participant must also enter postsecondary education or employment within one year of exit.
- The second way applies only to participants enrolled in Integrated Education and Training who exit the program. To achieve credential attainment, this population must attain a recognized postsecondary credential during participation or within one year after exit from the program.

AEFLA participant **Credential Attainment** indicator outcomes are presented on National Reporting System Table 5. View the National Reporting System Table 5 documentation within the *Wisconsin AEFLA National Reporting System Report Guide* located on myWTCS for more information.

The **Effectiveness in Serving Employers, Employer Retention Rate** indicator is reported in aggregate across Wisconsin WIOA partners. The **Employer Retention Rate** indicator captures the percentage of participants who exit the program and are employed by the same employer in the second and fourth quarters after exit. This approach addresses program efforts to provide employers with skilled workers.

There are a series of circumstances in which AEFLA participants are excluded from the WIOA primary indicators of performance. Participants in correctional education programs who remain incarcerated at program exit are excluded from all performance indicators

except the MSG indicator. Participants who exit the program due to the following circumstances are also excluded from the WIOA indicators of performance.

- The participant exits the program because they have become incarcerated in a correctional institution or has become a resident of an institution or facility providing 24-hour support such as a hospital or treatment center during the course of receiving services as a participant.
- The participant exits the program because of medical treatment and that treatment is expected to last longer than 90 days and precludes entry into unsubsidized employment or continued participation in the program.
- The participant exits the program because the participant is a member of the National Guard or other reserve military unit of the armed forces and is called to active duty for at least 90 days.
- The participant is deceased.

Exclusions are collected in WTCS reporting systems via the Exclusions data element.

## Wisconsin AEFLA Supplemental Data Collection: Data Match Procedures

With the exception of MSG, the WTCS Office collects data to support the calculation of the WIOA primary indicators of performance *after* participants exit the program. To collect the necessary data to support the calculation of the federally required indicators, the WTCS Office will match participant data with external data sources. This process is called data matching. The data matching process consists of linking AEFLA participant data to data in an external data source to better understand AEFLA participant outcomes such as employment second quarter after exit. Coordinating data matches through the WTCS Office reduces the burden of data collection for AEFLA programs, promotes data consistency across all Wisconsin AEFLA programs, and enhances overall AEFLA data quality.

The WTCS Office has established a series of agreements with external entities to support data matching. These external entities include the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development Unemployment Insurance Division to support employment indicator outcomes, the Wisconsin K-12 Department of Public Instruction to support MSG secondary diploma or recognized equivalent attainment and Credential Attainment Rate outcomes, and the National Student Clearinghouse to support Credential Attainment Rate outcomes.

The WTCS Office initiates the data matching process once the WTCS reporting systems have closed for the program year. It is important that AEFLA programs exercise due diligence in collecting and reporting the required AEFLA data as these data elements will also be used to support the data matching process.

## Monitoring AEFLA Program Reporting and Performance Accountability

The WTCS Office has also developed a series of activities to monitor AEFLA program reporting and performance accountability. For example, programs receive a monthly report beginning in November of each year to monitor their data reporting and performance within the program year. The indicators within the monthly report align with the indicators included in the program risk assessment model to prioritize AEFLA program review activities. Monthly monitoring of program outcomes by System Office staff is also conducted to inform program virtual monitoring within the program year. WTCS AEFLA programs will be contacted by WTCS Office staff as necessary to understand deviations in AEFLA performance accountability and reporting on an ongoing basis during the program year, and to develop a plan to rectify any challenges in data reporting.

Additionally, all Wisconsin AEFLA programs are required to engage in the Wisconsin AEFLA Program Review Process when requested. One of the core components of the review process is for WTCS Office staff to monitor the program's data reporting and performance accountability efforts in AEFLA. To better understand the Wisconsin AEFLA Program Review Process, please reference the *Wisconsin AEFLA Program Review Process Guide*.

## AEFLA Program Reporting and Performance Accountability Technical Assistance

There are multiple ways in which AEFLA reporting and performance accountability technical assistance is identified for and delivered to Wisconsin AEFLA programs. As previously noted, the AEFLA program risk assessment model is reviewed at the end of each program year to develop a targeted AEFLA reporting and performance accountability technical assistance timeline for the subsequent program year. Also as previously noted, monthly monitoring of program outcomes via the *Wisconsin AEFLA Program Reporting and Performance Accountability Monthly Report* is coordinated by WTCS Office staff to inform AEFLA program virtual monitoring and technical assistance within the program year.

Technical assistance will also be integrated into and identified as a result of the Wisconsin AEFLA Program Review Process, as previously noted.

Wisconsin AEFLA programs also have the opportunity to engage in AEFLA reporting and performance accountability technical assistance during in-person WTCS Office coordinated meetings. Further, AEFLA programs can request targeted technical assistance by emailing [aepla@wtcsystem.edu](mailto:aepla@wtcsystem.edu).

# FAQs – Integrated Education & Training and Workplace Literacy MSG

## What is the definition of a Workplace Literacy program?

The term ‘workplace adult education and literacy activities’ means adult education and literacy activities offered by an eligible provider in collaboration with an employer or employee organization at a workplace or an off-site location that is designed to improve the productivity of the workforce. Wisconsin AEFLA providers should report learner participation in Workplace Literacy through the Service Provided Through Grant Activity Code field in WTCS reporting systems.

## Is there a limit to how many milestones one participant can have?

Eligible AEFLA participants can have multiple milestones in a Period of Participation. The eligible AEFLA participant can receive one Measurable Skill Gain per Period of Participation.

## How much progress needs to be made to achieve a milestone?

A progress report documenting sufficient or better progress toward an established milestone is typically well suited for workplace education programs. Workplace education and literacy services are provided in collaboration with an employer or employee organization at a workplace or an off-site location designed to improve the productivity of the workforce. Services tend to be customized to the needs of the employer. Progress milestones for employees should be set in collaboration with an employer when establishing the workplace literacy program. The completion of established milestones can be documented through progress reports from the employer. Progress reports must document development of substantive skills that the participant has gained. Federal guidance also allows documentation of a participant’s increase in pay resulting from newly acquired skills or increased performance.

## What validation is needed for achievement of milestones?

Progress milestones for employees should be set in collaboration with an employer when establishing the workplace literacy program. Validation of milestones should be documented through On the Job Training (OJT) or registered apprenticeship, or a contract and/or evaluation from the employer or training provider. This documentation should be available for review during the Wisconsin AEFLA Program Review Process.

## How do Wisconsin AEFLA providers report milestones?

Achievement of milestones for Measurable Skill Gains should be reported through the Training Outcome Code field in WTCS reporting systems.

## What are some examples of technical/occupational skills exams?

Because this type of Measurable Skill Gains measures demonstrated occupational progress, it is appropriate only for participants in IET programs. Participants may demonstrate this type of gain in one of two ways: passing an exam or demonstrating progress in gaining technical or occupational skills, as evidenced by trade-related benchmarks. The critical requirements for this type of MSG are that the exam must be required for a specific occupation and that the skills must reflect industry benchmarks. The exam can be an employer-required, knowledge-based exam or other test necessary to obtain a credential. Satisfactory attainment of an element on an industry or occupational competency-based assessment can be used to demonstrate progress.

Exams and technical or occupational skills must be directly tied to trade-related benchmarks and specific occupations. Exams must measure skills for a specific industry or occupation that are necessary to obtain employment or to advance within the industry or occupation, and that have been developed or endorsed by employers or industry associations. Examples may include the Metal Inert Gas (MIG) certification for welders or the Commercial Driver's License (CDL) certification. General skills are not allowable in achieving the technical/occupational skills exam Measurable Skill Gain. Examples of general skills exams include work readiness exams or certificates such as the WorkKeys certification.

## What validation is needed for achievement in technical/occupational skills exams?

Validation of achievement of technical/occupational skills exams should be documented through one of the following ways.

- Results of knowledge-based exams or certificate of completion;
- Documentation demonstrating progress in attaining technical or occupational skills from the training provider or employer; or
- Proof of a credential that is required for a particular occupation and is only earned after the passage of an exam.

This documentation should be available for review during the Wisconsin AEFLA Program Review Process.

## How do Wisconsin AEFLA providers report achievement in technical/occupational skills exams?

Achievement in technical/occupational skills exams for Measurable Skill Gains should be reported through the Training Outcome Code field in WTCS reporting systems.

## What data is being used to assess the postsecondary transcript Measurable Skill Gains option?

Data from the WTCS Client Reporting System will be analyzed to determine if a gain through the postsecondary transcript option has been achieved.

## Federal Barriers to Employment Definitions:

WIOA requires funded AEFLA providers to collect and report the following 11 barriers to employment. Barriers to employment are self-identified by each AEFLA participant at entry. All funded providers should report all categories to which the participant identifies. Funded providers may find value in using the collected data to inform holistic student supports and to inform referrals to partner agencies.

*Displaced homemaker*—The participant has been providing unpaid services to family members in the home and (a) has been dependent on the income of another family member but is no longer supported by that income; (b) is the dependent spouse of a member of the armed forces on active duty whose family income is significantly reduced because of (i) a deployment or a call or order to active duty pursuant to a provision of law, (ii) a permanent change of station, or (iii) the service-connected death or disability of the member; and (c) is unemployed or underemployed and is experiencing difficulty in obtaining or upgrading employment.

*English language learner, low literacy level, cultural barriers*—The participant has either (a) limited ability in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language; (b) an inability to compute and solve problems, or read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job in the participant's family or in society; or (c) a perception of him- or herself as possessing attitudes, beliefs, customs, or practices that influence a way of thinking, acting, or working that may serve as a hindrance to employment. Per guidance from U.S. Department of Education OCTAE, all individuals served in AEFLA should be reported with this barrier to employment.

*Exhausting Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) within 2 years*—The participant is within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.), regardless of whether he or she is receiving these benefits at program entry.

*Ex-offender*—The participant is a person who either (a) has been subject to any stage of the criminal justice process for committing a status offense or delinquent act, or (b) requires assistance in overcoming barriers to employment resulting from a record of arrest or conviction.

*Homeless or runaway youth*—The participant lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings; is a migratory child who in the preceding 36 months was required to move from one school district to another due to changes in the parent's or parent's spouse's seasonal

employment in agriculture, dairy, or fishing work; or is under 18 years of age and absents himself or herself from home or place of legal residence without the permission of his or her family (i.e., runaway youth). However, a participant who may be sleeping in a temporary accommodation while away from home should not, as a result of that fact alone, be recorded as homeless.

*Long-term unemployed*—The participant has been unemployed for 27 or more consecutive weeks.

*Low-income*—The participant (a) receives, or in the 6 months prior to application to the program has received, or is a member of a family that is receiving in the past 6 months assistance through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the TANF program, the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program, or State or local income based public assistance; (b) is in a family with total family income that does not exceed the higher of the poverty line or 70% of the lower living standard income level; (c) is a youth who receives, or is eligible to receive, a free or reduced-price lunch; (d) is a foster child on behalf of whom State or local government payments are made; (e) is a participant with a disability whose own income is the poverty line but who is a member of a family whose income does not meet this requirement; (f) is a homeless participant or homeless child or youth or runaway youth; or (g) is a youth living in a high-poverty area.

*Migrant and seasonal farmworker*—The participant is a low-income individual who for 12 consecutive months out of the 24 months prior to application for the program involved has been primarily employed in agriculture or fish farming labor that is characterized by chronic unemployment or underemployment, and faces multiple barriers to economic self-sufficiency.

*Individual with disabilities*—The participant indicates that he or she has any disability, defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the person's major life activities, as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

*Single parent*—The participant is a single, separated, divorced, or widowed individual who has primary responsibility for one or more dependent children under age 18 (including single pregnant women).

*Youth in foster care or who has aged out of system*—The participant is a person who is currently in foster care or has aged out of the foster care system.