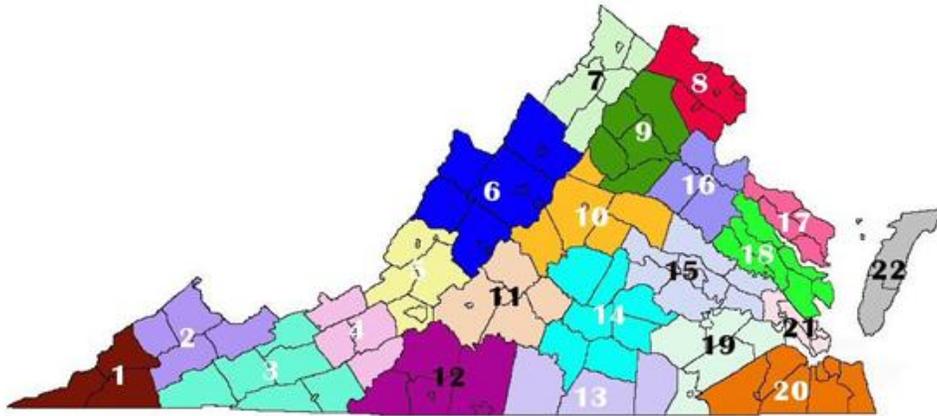


**Virginia Department of Education
Office of Adult Education and Literacy**



**End-of-year Data Entry Guidance
2012-2013**

Richmond, Virginia



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I. INTRODUCTION

Fiscal year 2012-2013 was a year of change for adult education in Virginia, especially with respect to data collection and reporting. The Office of Adult Education and Literacy (OAEL) was responsible not only for making adjustments to the state's management information system (MIS) to accommodate approved federal changes to adult education reporting, but also for incorporating system changes to accommodate the state's move to a comprehensive, regionalized system of adult education service delivery while at the same time preserving adult education reporting for individual providers receiving grant funding outside the scope of regional funding.

In 2011-2012, the National Reporting System (NRS), which is charged by the federal Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) with overseeing performance accountability reporting for adult education, announced new reporting requirements that became effective July 1, 2012. While demonstration of student educational gain, measured by evaluating each student's pre- and post-test scores, was left alone, the procedure for tracking student follow-up goal attainment was not. In fact, the new requirements governing the process of tracking follow-up goals (now referred to as follow-up outcomes) are now more complicated.

Prior to 2012-2013, OAEL-funded adult education providers only had to select the follow-up goal or goals that a student wished to achieve that year and assign a valid program exit date for that student. Because OVAE felt that using student goal-setting to determine follow-up goal attainment eligibility leads to significant underreporting, OVAE charged NRS with developing criteria that would provide a broader, more accurate estimate of the number of core follow-up outcome achievers. The NRS developed criteria that required states to evaluate students that have the characteristics that would place them in a position to achieve follow-up outcomes for determining follow-up outcome attainment eligibility. No longer would outcome attainment be based on whether a student desired (or set the goal) to achieve a particular outcome; states are now expected to evaluate follow-up outcome achievement based on the number of students that achieved a follow-up outcome with respect to the number of students that have the characteristics to achieve that particular follow-up outcome, identified as cohorts¹.

To address this mandate, OAEL updated its MIS to enable programs to enter information required for determining cohort eligibility, which the system would be able to use to automatically determine whether the student is cohort eligible. Based on feedback from a number of data specialists across the state, while this approach requires more time to enter data, it also provides more information about the student that local adult education providers can access through SSWS. In addition to implementing changes for evaluating follow-up outcome attainment, OAEL also incorporated new reporting features for identifying each student's highest educational level or degree attained as well as each teacher's level of experience and adult education certification.

Incorporating updates to accommodate the needs of the state was no less challenging. With the state moving to a statewide regional system for providing adult education services, OAEL was faced with the task of allowing for regional reporting while at the same time permitting programs that received funding apart from the regional Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA),

¹ The cohorts are: obtaining a secondary credential or GED®, gaining employment, retaining employment, and entering a postsecondary education or training program or occupational skills training.

allocations to report their data individually. OAEL also had to take into consideration the possibility that the regional system may not endure or that regional membership could change dramatically over the next few years. As a precaution, the system had to be flexible enough to accommodate possible changes to the regional structure.

In addition, OAEL wanted the system to be sensitive enough to result in a decrease in the number of duplicate student records reported by local providers as well as being able to accommodate valid staff, class, and student data from 2011-2012 to be assigned to local programs in the new system while at the same time, being reportable according to the previous structure. The latter item was especially tricky for programs that were part of a region in 2011-2012 and then assigned to a different region in 2012-2013.

The result was the establishment of new regional accounts in SSWS that were based on the geographic regions that make up the 22 AEFLA adult education regions. For data collection and reporting purposes, the regions are geographic, not political entities. Dividing the state into geographic regions, but matched to the adult education grant regions, allows OAEL to broaden the exposure of duplicate student reporting from the local level to the regional level and reduce the number of duplicate student records reported each year. Organizing data entry by geographic region also allows data to be reported as a region regardless of the regional make up or who the fiscal agent is. If next year, for example, fiscal agency in Region 8 is transferred from Fairfax County to Loudoun County, then the following year, it is transferred to Arlington County before returning to Fairfax County the year after that, and during this time, Alexandria City and Falls Church City decide to leave Region 8 and join Region 16, while Fredericksburg City (of Region 16), BEACON Adult Literacy and the Literacy Council (both of which are non-regional CBLOs in Region 8) are invited to join Region 8, all of this can be easily managed by Region 8 (and Region 16) without having to create new regional accounts representing the Region 8 flavor of the month. In the previous system, regional programs were built around the fiscal agent, and any changes to the fiscal agent or to the region's membership could only be effected by submitting formal system requests to our IT department.

Since reporting is governed by geographic location, non-regional programs are required to use the SSWS account of their geographic regional program to report their data. Although non-regional programs still retain the obligation of program accountability, they must now report their data through a shared portal. Under the new reporting system, reporting accurate and reliable data will require that regional and non-regional programs communicate with each other. In a number of regions, adults will register for classes in different locations, either at different times or at the same time. There have been instances in the past, for example, of the programs in Albemarle County, Charlottesville City, and at the Literacy Volunteers of Charlottesville-Albemarle being able to claim "credit" for the same student at the same time. This meant that the student registered in three different locations, took three pre-tests, set goals three times, and had accumulated 12 hours of instruction in all three locations.

Under the new system, when a local program or non-regional program registers a student that is already in the regional database because he or she had already received or is currently receiving adult literacy services in a neighboring program, the registering program is encouraged to contact the neighboring program to discuss how to handle the student. In many cases, a second pre-test will be unnecessary and the registering program can enroll the student immediately. If the student makes a

gain, both programs would receive “credit” for the student within the same region even though only one program administered the pre- and post-tests and set goals. But for this to happen – for data to be accurately and reliably reported – programs will need to communicate with each other.

The accounts are managed by an SSWS administrator for each region. To reduce the number of duplicate Recipients of non-regional funding are required to manage their data within these regional accounts. Regions that consisted of programs that never worked collaboratively with other programs were faced with having to make adjustments and work together. The sense of “my program’s data” cut deep into the attitudes and mindset of many of these programs that still resonate in discussions today. Many programs are still making adjustments. Perhaps the ones with the most complicated adjustments to make are the non-regional programs that are now required to enter their data through these regional accounts. Unlike the individual local programs that relinquished ultimate responsibility for their data to their regional fiscal agent, the non-regional programs are still responsible for their data, but must manage their data without the autonomy they once enjoyed.

While it is not clear that regionalization will deliver on the benefits promised when the system was implemented, what is clear is that regionalization from the standpoint of data collection and reporting can only be successful if programs work together.

II. GENERAL CLOSE-OUT INFORMATION

This section contains information that provides OAEL-funded adult education programs with general expectations for closing out their adult education data for fiscal year 2012-2013. Specific information is provided in the sections following the general information section.

Every effort was made to include all information relevant to closing out fiscal year 2012-2013 data, including responses to questions about the data system or about data entry that continue to be asked. However, if there are topics that have not been addressed, please do not hesitate to contact Thomas Suh or George Bailey of the Office of Adult Education and Literacy with questions. Contact information for both is listed below:

Thomas Suh	(804) 786-8367	thomas.suh@doe.virginia.gov
George Bailey	(804) 786-9937	george.bailey@doe.virginia.gov

2012-2013 Close-out Deadline – DEADLINE HAS BEEN EXTENDED

The deadline for finalizing all 2012-2013 adult education data is midnight, September 13, 2013. However, the deadline can be extended; simply submit an e-mail request indicating the name of the program and how long the 2012-2013 database should be opened for. Since the system can only be open for one fiscal year at a time, OAEL cannot keep the system open for 2012-2013 and for 2013-2014 at the same time. If the system is open for 2012-2013, the system for 2013-2014 must remain closed.

If a program requires an extension, but also would like the flexibility to begin entering 2013-2014 staff and class information to avoid falling behind, OAEL can work with the program to have the system for one fiscal year open certain days of the week and the system for another fiscal year open other days of the week. For example, if Region 15 needs more time to finalize its 2012-2013 data, but would like to begin setting up its 2013-2014 classes, it could request having SSWS for 2012-2013 open Monday through Thursday and SSWS for 2013-2014 open Friday until its 2012-2013 data have been completely entered.

Important – A major issue with the system this year is that there are a large number of duplicate student records. While it's not clear why there are so many duplicate records this year, the duplicate student records will have to be resolved as part of the 2012-2013 close-out and before 2013-2014 students can be added to 2013-2014 classes. If programs opt to have the system for 2012-2013 open for certain days of the week and the system for 2013-2014 open for the other days of the week, they should not add students to any of their classes if they still have duplicate student records. For more information about duplicate student records and resolving them, refer to the section, "Duplicate Records (Students and Staff)," on page 8.

If you are a non-regional EL/Civics grant recipient, SSWS for 2013-2014 cannot be open for your program while SSWS for 2012-2013 is open for the regional AEFLA program, or vice versa. If non-regional programs complete their close-out before their regional counterparts, I ask that they be

patient and wait until the regional program has completed its data entry.

Applying Changes to Fiscal Year

Beginning July 1, 2013, programs entering or editing 2012-2013 student data, will begin seeing a query that pops up at the bottom of the screen, “Apply changes to the Previous Fiscal Year?” Here is what you need to do:

1. Select YES before exiting the student record.
2. Do not hit ENTER because the default answer is NO.
3. If you accidentally hit ENTER or select NO, you will lose the data that you have entered and must re-enter the data.

The query begins to appear July 1 since the system’s internal clock recognizes the rollover to the new fiscal year (2013-2014), even though the reporting period for 2012-2013 data has been extended.

Diagnostic (or Error) Reports

Programs are required to be able to generate the following diagnostic (or error) reports without errors when closing out the system for 2012-2013:

1. Students Non-Enrolled Error Report
2. Staff and Instructor Error Report (currently, none of the regions, including non-regional EL/Civics programs, is showing staff and instructor errors)
3. Active Students with Exit Dates
4. Active Students with Invalid Entry Levels

Programs may generate the following diagnostic reports with errors when closing out the system for 2012-2013. The types of errors that may show up on an error report are identified for each report type below. Errors other than those identified for each report type below are not considered permissible and must be removed by programs before closing out the system for 2012-2013.

1. Students Incomplete Error Report – Permitted errors:
 - a. Not Enough Hours
 - b. No Tests
 - c. Not Enough Hours AND No Tests
2. Potential Duplicate Report – Permitted potential duplicates:
 - a. Any set of duplicate records that represent more than one person. This is the only permitted duplicate record. **Duplicate records that represent the same student must be resolved.** Since the algorithm used to determine potential duplicates is based on matching certain elements of an individual’s identifiable information, programs may have students that appear as potential duplicates, who are not actual duplicates. For example, the algorithm that relies on matching both First Name and Last Name, or First Name, Last Name, and Gender may yield student records that

appear to be potential duplicates but which are not actually duplicates (see below).

<u>First</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Last</u>	<u>SSN</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Birth date</u>
Miguel	C.	Perez	***-**-0001	M	1967-04-12
Miguel	T.	Perez	***-**-1000	M	1985-02-25

Given that the middle initial, birth dates, and social security numbers are different, the two records identified above most likely represent two different individuals. Therefore, programs are not required to remove this potential duplicate.

In the examples below, the duplicates appear to represent the same person.

<u>First</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Last</u>	<u>SSN</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Birth date</u>
Miguel	C.	Perez	***-**-0001	M	1967-04-12
Miguel		Perez		M	1967-04-12
Mina	Maya	Tamang		F	1982-08-15
Mina	Tamang	Maya	***-**-9999	F	1982-08-15

If it is determined that a set of potential duplicate records represent the same person, the program is required to correct the error (see the following section for removing duplicate student records).

Duplicate Student Records

Moving to a statewide system of regional adult education programs was supposed to result in a decrease of the anticipated number of reported actual duplicate student records. A recent review of the potential duplicates on the Potential Duplicate Report for the state suggests that the number of actual duplicate student records appears to be unchanged from years past.

Before the system is closed out for 2012-2013, programs are required to resolve all actual duplicate student records. Based on discussions with the VDOE IT department, IT cannot offer a quick or easy solution that would resolve all actual duplicate records. Therefore, programs are being asked to take care of resolving them. Instructions for resolving three types of actual duplicate student records are provided below. If a program runs across a situation representing a type not accounted for here, please contact me or George Bailey (contact information provided on page 5).

For Duplicates Consisting of an FY13 Student Record and a pre-FY13 Student Record

1. Generate a list of monthly student attendance by student for 2012-2013. Programs can accomplish this by completing the following steps in SSWS:
 - a. Click on “Export” from the menu along the left side of the regional program’s SSWS adult education home page
 - b. Select “2012-2013” in the “Fiscal Year” field at the top
 - c. In the data range fields for the “Student Attendance” export (11th on the list), enter “2012-07-01” and “2013-06-30”
 - d. Click the MS Excel icon and when prompted, click “Open” (which may take a

- minute or two to appear)
- e. When the Excel document opens, scan the alphabet headers and double-click the line separating the P and Q cells. This will instantly expand the “Attendance Date” column (column P)
 - f. Highlight column P (click once inside the cell containing P), click on the “Sort and Filter” button in the menu ribbon above, and then click “Sort Oldest to Newest”
 - g. Highlight column G (Student First Name), click on “Sort and Filter,” then select “Sort A to Z”
 - h. Highlight column F (Student Last Name), click on “Sort and Filter,” then select “Sort A to Z”
 - i. Now you have a list of student attendance by month in chronological order for each student, who is now listed in alphabetical order. **SAVE THIS LIST.**
2. Document the FY13 student record information and transfer the information to the pre-FY13 student record:
 - a. SSN (if available)
 - b. Birth date (if available)
 - c. Applicable Funding (if available)
 - d. Contact information (if available, but not required)
 - e. Highest Degree/Level of School Completed (**required**)
 - f. Origin of Schooling (**required**)
 - g. Separated before Completed (if available)
 - h. Exit Date (if available)
 - i. All Assessment information (if available)
 - j. All GED® Subject Test information (if available)
 - k. All Diploma Course Enrollment information (if available)
 - l. All Goals information (if available)
 3. Once all of the above information has been transferred to the pre-FY13 student record, go back into the FY13 student record and delete the following:
 - a. Each assessment (on the Tests List page, click on the assessment, then click “Delete” at the bottom of the assessment information page)
 - b. Each goal (on the Goals List page, click on the goal, then click “Delete” at the bottom of the goal information page)
 4. Click on “Classes” from the menu on the left and enter the student’s student number
 5. Go to the “Add Students” tab, find the student on the “Students Enrolled” table, then click “Delete”
 6. At this point, you can add the older student record (the record to be retained) by selecting the record (student name and number) from the “Student to Add” dropdown at the top.
 7. To add the student’s attendance, click on the “Add Hours” tab and enter the attendance based on the information you downloaded in step 1.

Note: Although programs are encouraged to re-enter the student’s attendance on a month-by-month basis (according to the Student Attendance export), programs may enter the total number of hours in a single month, especially if pressed for time. Understand, however, that doing so may disrupt the student’s compliance with post-test time-frame requirements and possibly invalidate the student’s pre test or post test (due to a 90-day gap in instruction).
 8. Return to the student’s Demographics page and click “Delete” in the lower right hand corner

For Duplicates Consisting of Two FY13 Student Records

1. Select which student record will be retained
2. Follow steps 1-8 above.

For Duplicates Consisting of Two pre-FY13 Student Records

1. Generate a list of monthly student attendance by student for 2011-2012. Refer to step 1 under “For Duplicates Consisting of an FY13 Student Record and a pre-FY13 Student Record” above, except select “2011-2012” instead of “2012-2013” in the “Fiscal Year” dropdown
2. Determine which record should be deleted. (Programs should consider deleting the less current record. If record A has only 2011-2012 information, but record B has 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 information, programs should consider getting rid of record A. If both records contain 2012-2013 information in addition to 2011-2012 information, programs should consider deleting the record with less information.)
3. Document the information to be transferred to the record to be retained. This information includes everything in step 2 under “For Duplicates Consisting of an FY13 Student Record and a pre-FY13 Student Record” (located at the top of page 10) and any class information, including attendance (which you already downloaded in step 1 above).
4. Contact OAEL. Since programs cannot delete 2011-2012 student records while the system for 2012-2013 is open, we will open the system for 2011-2012 to allow programs to resolve older duplicate student records once they have completed everything for 2012-2013.

Duplicate Staff Records

Because the SSWS adult education application does not permit deletion of staff records, duplicate staff records cannot be removed as part of the data entry process. OAEL can work with programs to have the duplicate records removed. However, this will require that programs consolidate as much staff information (e.g., test certifications and dates, policy certifications and dates, employment histories, etc.) and student linkage (i.e., links to student assessment, student goal, and class information) under one staff record as possible. To accomplish this, programs should develop a system for distinguishing duplicate staff records and apply it. Once the system is in place, the region will be in a better position to resolve duplicate staff records at a later time since all information linked to student assessment, goal, and class information will be easily discernible. Here is an example of such a system (which I borrowed from Region 6).

Betsy Ross taught in Harrisonburg City in 2012-2013. She also taught at JMU in 2011-2012 and in 2012-2013. Both programs report under Region 6. In SSWS, Betsy comes up in the Staff search as “Betsy Ross” twice, one entry representing her Harrisonburg staff record and the other entry representing her JMU staff record. In a drop down list, this is confusing since one cannot tell which of the two Betsy Ross records is connected with Harrisonburg or with JMU. To distinguish between the two, Region 6 identifies one Betsy Ross as HAR Betsy Ross (by changing the first name to HAR Betsy) and the other as JMU Betsy Ross (by changing the first name to JMU Betsy). Now in a drop down, data entry specialists will be able to distinguish between HAR Betsy and JMU Betsy.

If at some later point, Region 6 wanted to consolidate HAR Betsy Ross with JMU Betsy Ross and just have one Betsy Ross, they could do this by unlinking one of the two staff records, say HAR Betsy Ross, from each student for whom she administered an assessment, set a goal, or taught and then re-linking JMU Betsy with each of these items. Once completed, OAEL would be able to request the VDOE IT department to delete HAR Betsy's record. Then Region 6 could rename JMU Betsy Ross as simply Betsy Ross.

As part of the close-out process, programs are required to distinguish duplicate staff records so that there is no confusion when the staff names appear in a drop down or on a Search staff page.

Please note: Where a teacher is assigned does not affect a program's NRS report. If JMU Betsy Ross becomes the staff record to be used throughout Region 6 from this point forward, it does not matter that she is also teaching for Harrisonburg City and/or Rockbridge County since NRS reporting by program (i.e., Harrisonburg City, Rockbridge County, JMU, etc) is aligned with class location, not staff assignment.

Post-test Waiver Issue

Currently, there is a glitch with the post-test waiver feature of the SSWS adult education application. As a number of programs have pointed out, the feature seems to work for some students, but not for others.

A fix has been requested of our IT department. At this time, it is not clear when the glitch will be fixed, but the expectation is that it will be resolved by the August 30 deadline. Please set aside those student records for which a waiver was applied in the system, without success. Once I receive word that the fix has been implemented, I will notify programs so that they may enter the post-test waiver information at that time.

In the meantime, data specialists should make sure that the information required to trigger the waiver feature in the system has been entered.

Applicable Funding

The Applicable Funding item is a new, but important feature of SSWS, especially if programs are interested in tracking student achievement by funding type. When closing out the system, programs (both regional and non-regional) should select the funding stream(s) used to support the instructional activities of each student. Since student enrollment information for NRS tables 1-6 is tied to student records, programs should make sure to select any and all applicable funding streams on each student's demographics page in order to get credit for the student by grant type.

For example, Charlottesville City Public Schools is a member of AEFLA Region 10. It also receives EL/Civics funding. If Charlottesville City does not select EL/Civics as the applicable funding source for its EL/Civics students, it will not be able to generate NRS Tables 1-6 demonstrating how well its EL/Civics program performed in 2012-2013. Region 10 will still get

credit for the gains made by Charlottesville's EL/Civics students and for their enrollment, but Charlottesville City would not be able to generate an NRS Table 4, for example, demonstrating how well its EL/Civics students performed. In order for Charlottesville City to generate a Table 4 for its EL/Civics students, it would have to select EL/Civics as the funding stream for its EL/Civics students.

What if a student's activities are supported by more than one funding stream? Not a problem. Check all that apply. However, Trade Act Assistance support and AEFLA/AEFLA-related match support (i.e., GAE and PluggedIn VA) are mutually exclusive. This may change for 2013-2014, but for 2012-2013, the two are mutually exclusive.

What if a student participates in the EL/Civics program sponsored by the Literacy Volunteers of Charlottesville-Albemarle and also in Charlottesville City's EL/Civics program? Not a problem. Both agencies should make sure that first of all, there is only one student record and that EL/Civics is selected as the applicable funding stream. Then the student should be added to both EL/Civics classes – one class that identifies Literacy Volunteers as the sponsoring agency and another class that identifies Charlottesville City PS as the sponsoring agency. By doing so, the student will show up on the Literacy Volunteers NRS Table 4 for EL/Civics as well as Charlottesville City's NRS Table 4 for EL/Civics. However, the system counts the student only once on Region 10's NRS 4 report.

Let's complicate things a bit. Let's say that Charlottesville's AEFLA and GAE funding was also used to provide the student with instructional support. As long as both are checked in addition to EL/Civics, Charlottesville will see the student appear on its AEFLA Table 4, GAE Table 4, and EL/Civics Table 4, and Literacy Volunteers will see the student captured on its EL/Civics Table 4. And as in the previous example, the system counts the student only once on Region 10's NRS 4 report, which is the official report that will be used for federal reporting purposes.

As part of the system close-out, programs should make sure that all applicable funding streams are selected for each student reported in SSWS. The system will allow programs to save student data without selecting a funding stream. However, if programs want to be able to generate NRS Tables that accurately depict student enrollment and academic achievement, they should select the appropriate funding stream(s) that were used to support each student's instruction.

OAEL Program Data Review

This year, I will be checking each region's data to make sure that the data appears to be valid and reliable before locking the data for 2012-2013 and opening the system for 2013-2014. Checking each region's data will include the following:

1. There are NO duplicate student records that represent a single student.
2. All staff linked to a class in 2012-2013 have an employment history that reflects teaching in 2012-2013.
3. Each 2012-2013 staff member has something other than "None" selected under "Years of Experience" located on the Staff Details screen (since I can only evaluate staff linked to a 2012-2013 class, programs should make sure that non-teaching staff employed in 2012-2013 have something other than "None" selected under "Years of Experience").
4. All diagnostic reports expected to be error-free are free of errors.

5. All waiver justifications are aligned with the assessment used. For example, a student that post-tested using CASAS has a CASAS waiver – not a WorkKeys waiver.
6. The extent to which a program fell short of meeting its enrollment target².
7. The extent to which a program fell short of meeting its post-test target³.
8. Any other item that may require a review, not covered above.

² OAEL's SSWS close-out review will not include a formal evaluation of whether the program met the target. The purpose for including this in the review is to make sure that the program entered all of its students if there is a perceived shortfall. If a program, for example, met 60 percent of its enrollment, OAEL staff may contact the program to make sure that all NRS-reportable students were entered into SSWS.

³ The purpose of including this item in the review is to make sure that the program entered all of its post tests.