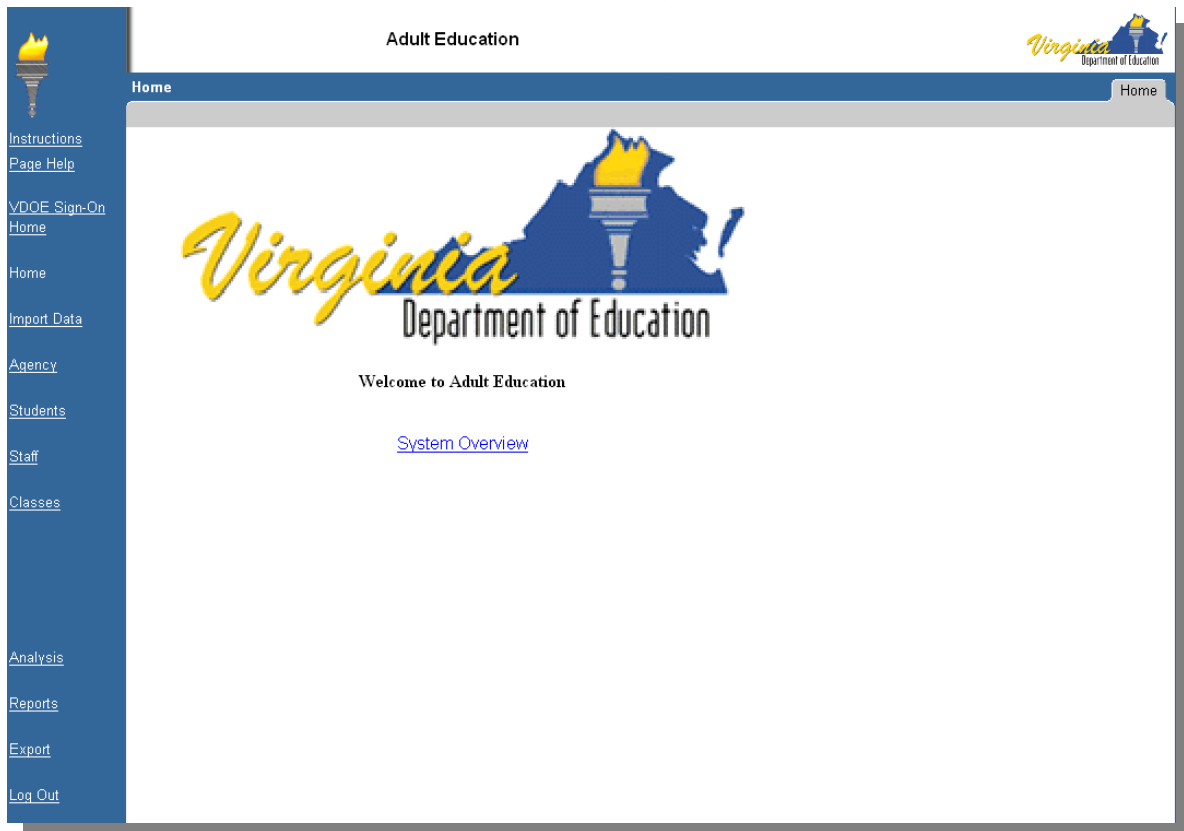
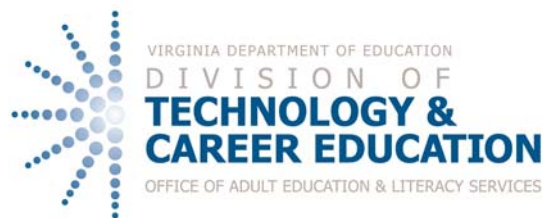


NRS Reporting and Data System Updates

January/February 2009



For questions or comments, please contact Shannon Beasley at (804) 371-7852 or by e-mail at Shannon.Beasley@doe.virginia.gov.



*Virginia Department of Education
Office of Adult Education and Literacy
P.O. Box 2120
Richmond, VA 23218-2120*

Additional accountability information is located on the OAEL Web site.
<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/adulted/literacy/accountability.shtml>

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KEY TO ICONS USED IN THIS UPDATE



Data System Update



New Document

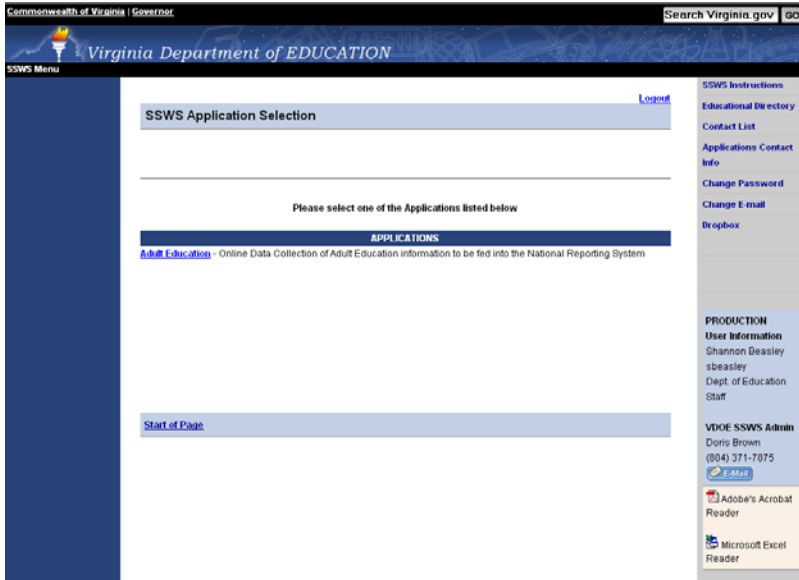
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PASSWORD REQUIREMENTS



Figure 1 – Application Screen



On January 1, 2009, a new standard became active governing information system security-*COV ITRM Standard SEC501-01 Information Technology Security Standard*. Part of this standard specifies the password requirements needed by all Commonwealth of Virginia information systems containing sensitive data.

In accordance with *SEC501-01*, the password handling modules of Single Sign-on for Web Systems (SSWS) have been modified to require the following.

- Passwords must be changed every 42 days
- Passwords cannot repeat for up to 24 cycles
- Passwords must contain at least 8 characters
- Passwords must contain a combination of letters and numbers
- Passwords must contain at least one special character (not a number or letter)
- Passwords must contain both upper and lower case letters

These changes are active in SSWS. Anyone having a password older than 42 days will be required to change his or her password to the new standard at the first logon. All current passwords will continue to function until they expire. Passwords may continue to be changed at any time by clicking the "Change Password" menu option on the gray right-hand menu at the main SSWS application selection page.

USER PERMISSION LEVELS



There are four primary user permission levels available to users of the Adult Education application (NRS Web-based Data System) in the SSWS system. Different local programs provide users of the Adult Education application with different permission levels. As you consider who should have access to the data and their ability to submit, review, download/print, or grant access rights, review the following levels to see what makes sense for your program. There are many examples around the state of users who have access to these various levels. **Local policy and the SSWS administrator may dictate which permission levels are available to the local program.**

When local programs are considering user permission levels, the following considerations should be remembered. The SSWS system presently does not have permission options sophisticated enough to limit staff to downloading/printing exports and reports specific to an individual staff, class, or locality (regional programs only).

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Full Access-Grant Rights

This permission level allows the user to submit data, review data, download/print exports and reports, and grant access rights to other users of the Adult Education application.

Full Access-Limited

This permission level provides the user the ability to submit data, review data, download/print exports and reports, but does not allow the user to grant access rights to other users of the Adult Education application. Most data technicians have this level of access.

Limited Access-Attendance

This permission level provides the user access to class information and to report student attendance only. Reviewing data, downloading/printing exports and reports, and granting rights are not available. If you would like teachers, instructors, or volunteers to directly report attendance, you might consider this level of access.

Limited Access-Read Only

This permission level provides the user the ability to download/print exports and reports. The user is not available to submit data, review data, or grant access rights. If you would like local program staff to have access to reports and exports, but do not want them to have the ability to change the data, you might consider this level of access.

DROPBOX FUNCTION



The dropbox function allows users of the SSWS system to send/receive files from one SSWS user to/from any other SSWS user. It provides a "secure File Transfer Protocol (FTP)" style function within the VDOE infrastructure for the transfer of sensitive information. The dropbox is for the communication of data for official DOE business only. The transfer of files containing non-sensitive may continue to be handled as an attachment to e-mail. There is no limitation on the type of file(s) that can be sent via the dropbox. There is no virus scan or content scan made of the content, so it is the responsibility of the sender and the receiver(s) to insure that computer viruses or other unauthorized content are not sent through the system.

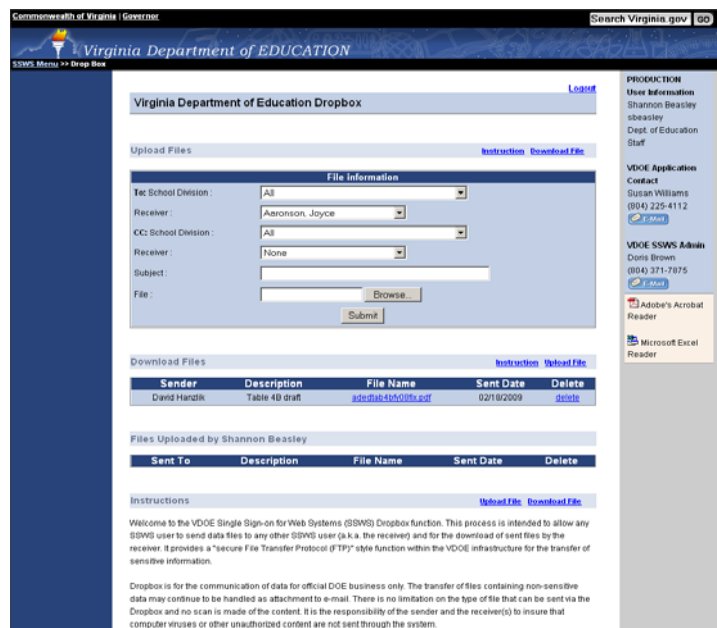


Figure 2 – Dropbox Screen: File Attachment

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LIMITATIONS

The limitations of the dropbox function include the following.

- Only staff with an active SSWS account may send/receive files
- A file may only be sent to a maximum of 2 other SSWS users at a time
- File size limit is 50 megabytes (mb)
- Files are only retained for a maximum of 6 calendar days [less if deleted by the receiver(s)]
- Files cannot be retrieved once deleted

CONTACT HOURS



Contact hours are a measure describing learner participation and are defined in the National Reporting System (NRS) Implementation Guidelines - June 2007, as *hours of instruction or instructional activity the learner receives from the program. Instructional activity includes any program-sponsored activity designed to promote student learning in the program curriculum, such as classroom instruction, assessment, tutoring, or participation in a learning lab.* Because of local program intake and instructional variations, there is potential for significant variation of reporting contact hours. It is critical that programs report contact hours accurately and consistently as required through OAEL's annual data quality checklist (DOC) certification to the United States Department of Education (USED).



REPORTABLE HOURS*

The following conditions describe when actual contact hours should be reported for learners. The reported hours must be accurate and reasonable. Hours may be reported in increments (ex. 25 or .50 hours) or full hours.

1. Completion of student registration form (USPD, p. 1)
2. Completion of student learning plan (USPD, p. 2)
3. Completion of locator assessment, if applicable**
4. Completion of a pre-test**
5. Completion of a post-test**
6. Completion of the Official GED® Practice Test (OPT), if results are used to inform and develop an instructional plan
7. Completion of direct instructional activities performed inside the classroom
8. Completion of direct instruction based on other activities performed outside the classroom
9. Completion of counseling with learners that provides feedback on the learner's performance and progress
10. Completion of goal-setting and follow-up including discussing, setting, maintaining, and updating/reviewing goals with learners

* Distance education contact hours reporting will be addressed in the forthcoming policy, but will be similar to the conditions identified in this document.

** Approved NRS assessments identified in Virginia's assessment policy

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NON-REPORTABLE HOURS

The following conditions describe when contact hours should not be reported for learners.

1. Completion of continuing education classes and programs
2. Completion of post-secondary education classes and programs
3. Completion of the Official GED Tests, including any re-tests on one or more tests
4. Completion of any other non-NRS tests that may lead to credentials or certifications (ex. Career Readiness Certificate, External Diploma Program, or Adult HS Diploma)
5. Completion of unsupervised instructional activities without direct teacher follow-up (ex. homework)

CONSIDERATIONS AND PITFALLS

Programs must report actual contact hours that are accurate and reasonable. Every effort should be made by local programs to **verify and report the actual** contact time to complete the activities described in the reportable hours section. For example, additional contact hours may be incorrectly reported when a learner arrives late to a class/session or when a learner leaves a class/session early. Local programs should audit the attendance reported for learners using the exports and reports described in the following section.

REVIEWING HOURS

Programs may use exports and various reports in the data system to review contact hours for learners. The exports (*Student Attendance, Students in Classes*) and reports (*NRS Table 4 and 4B; Student Incomplete Error Report, Student Report Card, Class Report*) may be used to assist with identifying learner contact hours as related to learners who have missing, incomplete, or over-reported contact hours.

DEMOGRAPHICS PAGE

When reporting student demographic data, the Adult Education application has been changed to consolidate the demographics and “optional” reporting pages. In the data system, there is only one tab now to report student demographic information (required and optional). Programs should notice that the order of demographic fields in the Adult Education application follows very closely with the order of demographic fields on the USPD registration form. Programs should refer to the registration form for complete identification of the required data elements.

Adult Education

Students | Select Student | Demographics | Test Scores | Goals | Archived Data | Educational Functioning Levels

Current Student: New Record

Student Number: Auto | Social Security Number: []

Intake Date (YYYY-MM-DD): [] | Birth Date (YYYY-MM-DD): []

Name (Last): [] | Release from compulsory attendance:

(First): []

(Middle): []

Gender: None | Ethnicity: None

Employment Status: None | Street Address: []

City: [] | State: [] | ZIP Code: []

Home Phone Number: [] | Work Phone Number: [] | Other Phone Number: []

Email Address: []

Last Grade Completed: None | Country of Origin: []

(4) How did you hear about us? None | Other Source: []

Separated Before Completion: None | Exit Date (YYYY-MM-DD): []

GED Testing Number: [] | Post-Secondary Number: []

Participant Status (Check All that Apply):

- Community Corr. Program
- Correctional Facility
- Disabled
- Dislocated Worker
- Displaced Homemaker
- EL/Civics
- EL/Civics - Distance Learner
- Family Literacy Program
- Fast Track GED
- General Adult Ed (GAE)
- Homeless
- Learning Disabled Adult
- Low Income Status
- On Public Assistance
- Other Institutional Setting
- Single-parent Status
- Workplace Literacy Program

Save Print

Figure 3 – Demographics Screen

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The purpose of removing the optional tab and consolidating the demographics and optional tab information was to streamline data entry and to place on one page all data elements that are required. Because the two tabs have been consolidated, it does not require you to enter information for all of the demographic fields, only those fields required on the USPD. Two elements that were on the optional tab that are required on the USPD for each student reported include the following (See Figure 3).

- Last grade completed (1)
- Zip code (2)

Programs should also notice that two additional demographic fields have been added to the page, but are not required. These fields include the following (See Figure 3).

- Other Phone Number (3)
- How did you hear about the program (4)

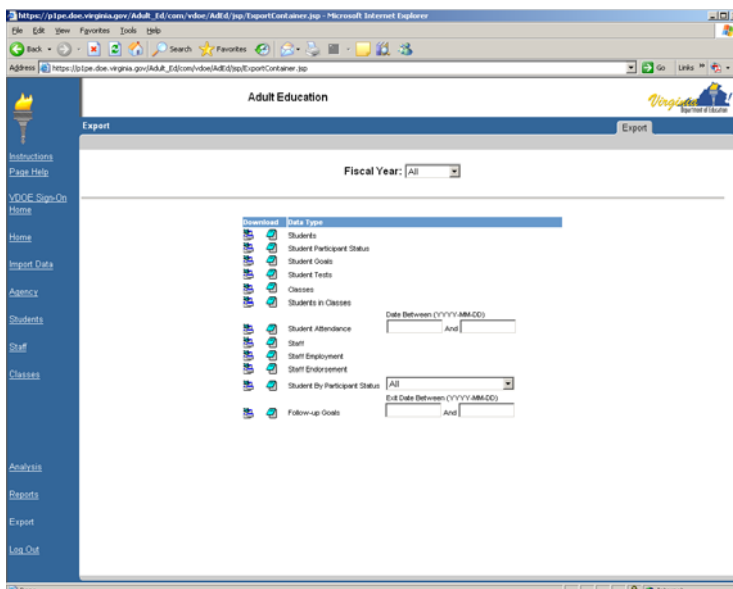
We have added the following drop-down options when identifying how a student heard about the program.

- Friend or Family
- Newspaper
- Magazine
- Radio
- Television
- Billboard
- E-mail
- Text Message
- Internet
- Service Agency - e.g. DSS, DRS, VEC
- Community College
- College or University
- Workforce Center - e.g. One-stop
- Pamphlet, Flyer, or Brochure
- Other - with explanation

EXPORTS - TESTS AND GOALS



Two exports have been updated in the data system. These exports include the [Student Goals](#) and [Student Tests](#). For both of these exports, we have added the new reporting fields required by the Assessment and Goal-Setting Policies.



STUDENT TESTS

The [Student Tests](#) export identifies each of the tests that local programs have reported for students during the current fiscal year. With the update to the [Student Tests](#) export, local programs will continue to be able to review the test type, test date, scale scores and educational functioning level for students. However, we have now added to the export the new fields related to the assessment policy. The new fields include the following.

Figure 4 – Exports Screen

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ERROR REPORTS

The *Error Report* has been split into two separate reports. The two new reports are the *Students Incomplete Error Report* and the *Students Non-Enrolled Error Report*. The incomplete students report identifies those students with less than 12 hours of attendance, missing or out-of-date assessments, incomplete demographic data, or missing

goals. The non-enrolled report identifies all students who have not been enrolled in a class. These two individual reports were originally in a combined error report.

STAFF AND INSTRUCTOR ERROR REPORT

The *Staff and Instructor Error Report* identifies staff reporting errors created by programs that import program data. Any required staff data such as job status or function that are missing will be reported as errors. This error report should be blank throughout the year.

POTENTIAL DUPLICATE REPORT

The *Potential Duplicate Report* has been adjusted so that the strongest potential duplicate matches are displayed. The matches of last name and gender have been removed; however, the system will still warn upon demographics entry that there is a potential match based on last name and gender.

STAFF REPORTING



Figure 6 – Staff Employment History Screen

As indicated in November 2008, we identified that there were some reporting issues related to staff. To correct the reporting errors, we needed to address employment histories. We have updated the data system for staff employment histories. Every staff member in the data system should now have complete employment histories. For FY 2008-2009, we have assigned the start date as 2008-07-01 and the end date as 2009-06-30.

While we have created or updated employment histories for every staff member, local programs need to review FY 2008-2009 employment histories for accuracy. The system will now allow you to enter an employment end date at any time during the fiscal year.

Begin Date	End Date	Save	Delete
2007-09-01	2008-06-30		
		Save	

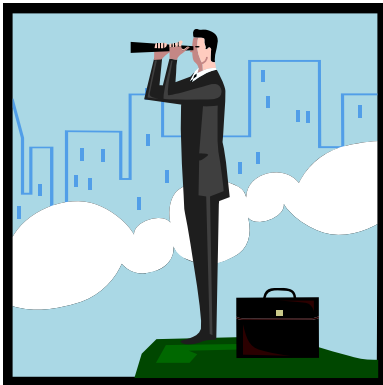
Every staff member must have a complete employment history with a start and end date each fiscal year. One row of employment history must be completed before the next row may begin.

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The system will require that you enter a start and end date for each staff member each fiscal year. You should conduct an export of [Staff Employment](#) to review records for missing, incomplete, or incorrect dates. You should also review [NRS Table 7](#) to ensure that it reflects the correct employment histories of total staff employed for FY 2008-2009.

FUTURE UPDATES



There are three significant changes that are scheduled to appear later in 2009.

1. Analysis Function: OAEL has been developing new analysis queries in the data system that will allow greater flexibility to review individual records for students, staff, and classes. Demographic data will be combined with tests, goals, or participant statuses, for example, to look more closely at performance and trends. Additionally, programs will be able to look at the data in terms of who is reported to the NRS versus non-NRS qualifying data.
2. Report Card: OAEL is in the process of discussing with the IT department the ability to generate report cards within the data system. By doing this, programs will be able to review on a quarterly and annual basis how they are performing and where improvements are needed. Look for this report to eventually appear in the program improvement section of reports.
3. Distance Education: OAEL is in process of finalizing the distance education policy. To report distance education activities in the data system, all activities will be reported through the class information tab. Distance education hours will be reported separate from traditional classroom hours. Two new NRS tables will be created for the reporting of distance education performance, [NRS Table 4C](#) and [5A](#).