



## Nevada AEFLA Program Data Quality Standards *Local Program Certification Guide*

The purpose of this document along with the *Data Quality Standards Checklist* is to provide local programs with a guide to the policies, processes, and materials that need to be in place to verify the level of implementation of the NRS data quality standards. The standards are organized into four content areas that define high quality data collection systems.

1. **Data Foundation and Structure** - This content area addresses whether the local program has in place the foundation and structures for collecting quality data that meet National Reporting System (NRS) guidelines. Standards measure whether the program implements policies for assessment, follow-up and goal setting; whether the local program staff knows the policies; and whether local programs are working to collect accurate and reliable student data.
2. **Data Collection and Verification** - This area measures whether the program collects measures according to NRS guidelines, using procedures that are likely to result in high reliability and validity. Standards also address whether data are collected in a timely manner, are systematically checked for errors, and whether the local program has processes for verifying the validity of the data.
3. **Data Analysis and Reporting** - The quality standards in this content area include whether the program has systems for analyzing and reporting data, including appropriate databases and software. The standards also address whether analyses and reports are produced regularly, whether reports are used to check for errors and missing data, meet NRS and state needs, and whether reports are useful to state and local staff for program management and improvement.
4. **Staff Development** - The standards under this area address whether the program has systems for professional development of local staff on NRS. This includes ensuring that the program has provided training on data collection, measures, assessment, goal setting and follow-up procedures. Standards also focus on whether training is ongoing and continuous (for all new staff), meets the needs of local staff, and is designed to improve data quality.

Many of these standards are included in the *Nevada ABE Administrators Handbook*, the *Nevada Assessment Policy*, the Nevada Indicators of Program Quality and the procedures for NRS. Some of the standards are interrelated and may have been completed by the local programs as a matter of operating. Some of the processes will need to take place over time. The full implementation of all the standards and processes will lead to a stronger and more effective system for the students served by Nevada ABE programs.

If the local program fails to meet acceptable standards in any area, the program's performance will be considered unacceptable and the program must include a brief data quality improvement plan with the checklist. This plan should describe how the program will move toward acceptable quality within the next

fiscal year. The plans must address all standards that the program did not meet, describe what new policies or procedures it will put in place to meet the standards, identify barriers to moving to a higher quality level and the technical assistance needed to implement the plan. For areas at acceptable quality, the program may optionally submit a data quality improvement plan to describe how the program will move toward superior quality.

### **Levels of Quality and Quality Improvement**

Within each area there are three levels of quality that reflect whether the program has policies and procedures likely to improve the reliability and validity of data.

- **Acceptable Quality.** Program policies and procedures for implementing NRS meet the essential requirements for NRS implementation, as described in the *NRS Implementation Guidelines*, the *Nevada ABE Administrators Handbook* and the Nevada Indicators of Program Quality. This level reflects the minimum acceptable requirements for Fiscal Year 2009-2010.
- **Superior Quality.** Program procedures go beyond the minimum to promote higher levels of data validity and reliability through more rigorous definitions, regular oversight of data collection methods, ongoing assistance to staff members on NRS data issues and procedures for verifying the accuracy of data. Programs will be required to have NRS policies and procedures conforming to this level for Fiscal Year 2010-2011.
- **Exemplary Quality.** The program has procedures and systems that promote the highest levels of data validity and reliability, including systems for verifying data accuracy from local program staff, systems for monitoring data collection and analyses, and has corrective systems to improve data on an ongoing basis. Program procedures indicate a focus on continuous improvement of the quality and accuracy of data Programs will be required to have NRS policies and procedures conforming to this level for Fiscal Year 2011-2012 and beyond.

Programs are to use the checklist to rate their implementation of the data quality standards in their NRS data collection procedures. Programs are also to describe details of their data collection policies and procedures for some standards. Programs must also include with the checklist a plan for data quality improvement if required. The director of the program must certify the checklist and it must be made available at the time of the annual program evaluation.

The checklist presents the standards for each content area and quality level. Programs are to report whether they have the policy, process or procedure described by the standards by indicating “Yes” if the standard has been met or “No” if it has not been met or “N/A” if it does not apply.

### **Narrative Detail**

Some standards require the programs to provide additional information, such as the name of assessments used or the follow-up methods, or a narrative description with more detail. All narrative descriptions should be brief – but sufficient enough to convey the information requested. No more than a few sentences are necessary.

### **Data Quality Improvement Plan**

If the program fails to meet the minimum required standards in any area, the program's performance will be considered unacceptable and the program must include a brief data quality improvement plan that describes how it will meet the required quality standard and move toward the next level of quality within the next year. The plan must address all standards that the program did not meet, describe what new policies or procedures it will put in place to meet the standards, identify barriers to moving to a higher quality level, and describe the technical assistance needed to implement the plan. For programs meeting the minimum required level in all areas during a fiscal year, the director may submit an optional data quality improvement plan that describes how the program will move toward the next level for the following reporting period. All programs will be expected to certify at the Exemplary Level for Fiscal Year 2011-2012 and beyond.

The state will offer technical assistance to programs that fail to meet any required level.

### **Certification**

The last page of the checklist is a certification page, where the program director or head of the administrative program agency where the local adult education and literacy program resides must certify to the accuracy of the information in the checklist. The director or agency head must sign this page. A copy of the original page with signature must be submitted with the checklist.

### **Submitting the Checklist**

- DQS Checklist with any required improvement plans:
  - Required – Submit electronically by email to [kzutter@doe.nv.gov](mailto:kzutter@doe.nv.gov) .
  - Optional – Additional hard copy enclosed with monitoring report.
  
- Certification Page
  - Required – Original signed copy enclosed with monitoring report or mailed separately to:  
Nevada Dept. of Education  
Office of Adult Education  
755 N. Roop St. #201  
Carson City, NV 89701  
Attn: Ken Zutter