

U. S. Department of Education
Office of Postsecondary Education/Federal TRIO Programs
Policies and Procedures for Prior Experience (PE) Assessments
Talent Search (TS) Program
2011-2016 Grant Cycle

Brief summary of policies and procedures for assessing prior experience (PE) points

- The PE assessment years are 2012-13, 2013-14, and 2014-15.
- The calculation of PE points for the three assessment years is based on:
 - A project's approved number of participants to be served;
 - A project's approved objectives; and
 - The data a project submits in its annual performance report (APR) for each assessment year.
- For the 2011-16 grant cycle, a project may only earn up to a total of 13.5 points for each year assessed because the data required to award PE points for the postsecondary completion (attainment) objective will not be available until the 2017-18 APR is submitted. The final PE score is the average of the scores for the three years assessed (see 34 CFR 643.20(a)(2)).
- **A project that served less than 90 percent of the number of students the project was funded to serve in the assessment year is not eligible to earn points for any of the PE criteria in the assessment year (see 34 CFR 643.22(b)).**
 - To determine if a project has served at least 90 percent of the approved number of student to be served, standard rounding rules are applied; if the calculated Number Served rate is between 89.5 and 89.9 percent, it is rounded up to 90%.
 - To earn PE points for the Funded Number criterion, a project must serve at least the number funded to serve.
- A TS project funded in the current grant cycle (2011-16) that submits the APR for each of the assessment years is eligible to earn PE points for the following PE criteria: **Funded Number; Secondary School Persistence; Secondary School Graduation (regular diploma); Secondary School Graduation (rigorous program of study); and Postsecondary Education Enrollment.**
- PE points are awarded based on meeting or exceeding the approved objectives. No partial credit is given. If the calculated rate for the PE criterion (i.e., actual rate) is greater than or equal to the approved rate, PE points are awarded. Standard rounding rules are used (e.g., 79.6% rounds to 80%) for the Secondary School Persistence; Secondary School Graduation (regular diploma); Secondary School Graduation (rigorous program of study); and Postsecondary Education Enrollment objectives.
- The point of measurement for the **Postsecondary Attainment** objective is six years after a participant has enrolled in an institution of higher education. The data required to award PE points for this objective will not be available until the 2017-18 APR, or six years after the 2011-12 project year. Therefore, *the first year a TS grantee will be able to earn PE points for this objective will be 2017-18, the second year of the next grant cycle.*
- A project that does not submit an APR in the assessment year (i.e., 2012-13) is not eligible to earn any PE points for that assessment year. In addition, the project will not be eligible to earn PE points in a subsequent assessment year (i.e., 2018-19) for the Postsecondary Attainment objective because the project's

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prior year's APR data file (i.e., 2012-13) is used to verify that the data file being submitted in the assessment year (i.e., 2018-19) contains all the participant records required to calculate the project's attainment rate.

- **The Department will not accept any changes to the project's APR data (or re-calculate its PE points) once the APR has been submitted for the assessment year.** If other information such as audit reports, site visit reports, and project evaluation reports indicates that the APR data used to calculate PE points are incorrect, the Department may decide to adjust the PE scores or not to award PE points (see 34 CFR 643.22(a)(3)).

The formulae for calculating PE are provided below.

How is the Funded Number Criterion Calculated?

PE points are awarded based on the project having served the approved number of participants for the reporting year. The actual number of participants served must be equal to or greater than the number of participants the project was funded to serve.

The calculation rule for the Funded Number criterion is as follows:

- The total number of participants assisted (Section II, Field A3 of the APR) is compared to the number of participants the project was funded to serve (from the project's approved objectives; pre-populated at the beginning of Section II).

How is the Secondary School Persistence Rate Calculated?

Secondary school persistence is defined as the percentage of students in grades six through eleven who completed the current academic year and continued in school for the next academic year, at the next grade level.

The calculation rules for the persistence rate are as follows:

- The **denominator** is the number of participants, at time of first service in the reporting period, who were in middle school and high school but were not seniors (sum of Section III, A1 and A2) minus participants who died during the reporting year (Section IV, A4).
- The **numerator** is the number of participants in the denominator who persisted in school for the next academic year at the next grade level, or who graduated high school (Section IV, A1).

How is the Secondary School Graduation (Regular Diploma) Rate Calculated?

Secondary school graduation with a regular diploma in the standard number of years is defined as the percentage of seniors served during the reporting year who received a regular secondary school diploma within the standard number of years, with or without completing a rigorous secondary school program of study.

The calculation rules for the secondary school graduation (regular diploma) rate are as follows:

- The **denominator** is the number of participants, at time of first service in the reporting period, who were seniors (Section III, A3) minus participants who died during the reporting year (Section IV, B6).
- The **numerator** is the sum of number of participants in the denominator who graduated high school with regular secondary school diploma within the standard number of years, with or without completing a rigorous secondary school program of study (Section IV, B1 and B2).

How is the Secondary School Graduation (Rigorous Program of Study) Rate Calculated?

The objective on graduating from secondary school and completing a rigorous program of study is defined as the percentage of high school seniors served during the reporting year who received a regular secondary school diploma within the standard number of years and completed a rigorous secondary school program of study.

The calculation rules for the secondary school graduation (rigorous program of study) rate are as follows:

- The **denominator** is the number of participants, at time of first service in the reporting period, who were seniors (Section III, A3) minus participants who died during the reporting year (Section IV, B6).
- The **numerator** is the number of participants in the denominator who graduated high school with regular secondary school diploma and completed a rigorous program of study within the standard number of years (Section IV, B2).

How is the Postsecondary Education Enrollment Rate Calculated?

Postsecondary education enrollment is defined as the percentage of participants graduating with a regular secondary school diploma during the project year who enrolled in an institution of higher education by the fall term immediately following high school graduation or received notification from an institution of higher education of education by the fall term of acceptance but deferred enrollment until the next academic term (e.g., spring term). This includes both those who completed, and those who did not complete, a rigorous program of study.

The calculation rules for the postsecondary enrollment rate are as follows:

- The **denominator** is the number of participants that graduated high school with a regular secondary school diploma within the standard number of years, with or without completing a rigorous secondary school program of study [Section IV, B1 and B2]. (Note: Participants who died during the reporting year are included in IV.B6 and could not also be counted in IV, B1 or B2; thus the deceased participants are excluded from the denominator.)
- The **numerator** is those participants in the denominator who enrolled in postsecondary education or were notified of deferred enrollment [Section IV, C (cell 1(d))].