

U. S. Department of Education
Office of Postsecondary Education/Federal TRIO Programs
Policies and Procedures for Prior Experience (PE) Assessments
Talent Search (TS) Program
2021-2026 Grant Cycle

Brief summary of policies and procedures for assessing prior experience points

- The PE assessment years are 2022-13, 2023-24 and 2024-25.
- 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 the 2021-26 grant cycle, a project that was previously funded in the 2016-21 cycles can earn up to a total of 15 PE points for each year assessed. Projects first funded in the 2021-26 cycle will not be able to report on postsecondary attainment during this period; therefore, these projects can only earn up to a total of 13.5 PE points for each year assessed. 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 students 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. Except for the one situation noted above, no rounding is applied to the Number Served rates. For example, if the calculated rate is 99.6 percent, the rate will be 99 percent, not 100 percent.

Any TS project funded in the current grant cycle (2021-26) that submits its APR for the assessment year is eligible to earn PE points for the following standard objectives: **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 is greater than or equal to the approved rate, a score will be calculated. 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); Postsecondary Education Enrollment; and Postsecondary Attainment objectives.
- The point of measurement for the **Postsecondary Attainment** objective is six years after a participant has enrolled in an institution of higher education. To receive PE points for the Attainment criterion, a TS project must have been operating a project and must have submitted an APR for the year in which the cohort is established.
- A project that does not submit an APR in this reporting period will not receive PE points.

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- After a project's final submission of its APR, the Department will not accept any changes to the project's APR data.

The formulae for calculating the standard objectives are provided below.

How is the Funded Number Criterion Calculated?

PE points are assessed based on the project having served the approved number of participants for the project 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 the time of first service in the reporting period, who were middle school students or non-senior high school students (including fourth-year students in a five-year dual enrollment program) (sum of Section III, A₁, A₂, A₃, A₄ and A₇), minus participants who are deceased (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 project 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 the time of first service in the reporting period, who were seniors (Section III, A₅) plus students in the fifth year of high school in a dual enrollment program (Section III, A₈), minus participants who are deceased (Section IV, B₆).
- The **numerator** is the sum of number of participants who graduated high school with a regular secondary school diploma within the standard number of years; plus those who received a regular secondary school diploma and completed a rigorous program of study within the standard number of years (Section IV, B₁ and B₂). Note: The "standard number of years" includes five years of high school if the student is enrolled in a dual enrollment program that entails a fifth year of high school.

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 seniors served during the project 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 the time of first service in the reporting period, who were seniors (Section III, A5) or students in the fifth year of high school in a dual enrollment program (Section III, A8), minus participants who are deceased (Section IV, B6).
- The **numerator** is the number of participants who graduated high school with a 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 who have graduated with a regular secondary school diploma during the project year who enroll in an institution of higher education by the fall term immediately following high school graduation, or who receive notification, by the fall term immediately following high school, from an institution of higher education of acceptance but deferred enrollment until the next academic term (e.g., spring term).

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 (including both those who completed, and those who did not complete, a rigorous 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))].

How is the Postsecondary Attainment Rate Calculated?

Postsecondary attainment is defined as the percentage of prior participants in the postsecondary enrollment cohort established six years prior to the current project year who attained at least one postsecondary credential by August 31 of the project year. (Note: For example, for reporting period 2023-24, the corresponding postsecondary attainment cohort is comprised of participants served in project year 2017-18 who enrolled in an institution of higher education by the fall term of FY 2018-19, immediately following high school graduation, or who enrolled by the next academic term [e.g., spring term] as a result of acceptance but deferred enrollment. Therefore, in order to be eligible to earn points for the postsecondary attainment objective, the project must have been funded in 2017-18 and thereafter.

The calculation rules for the postsecondary attainment are as follows:

- The **denominator** is the total number of participants in the cohort (Section IV, E9), minus participants who are deceased (Section IV.E8). Note: For projects using random sampling for this objective, the denominator is the number of cohort members in the random sample established using the methodology stated in the APR instructions.

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- The **numerator** is the number of participants in the denominator who earned a postsecondary credential by August 31 of the assessment year (Section IV.E6).