

Archived Information

Objective 4.7: All levels of the agency are fully performance-driven.

Our Role. A government agency must be accountable to the public it serves. The Education Department must have rigorous performance information and evaluation systems that allow it to assess how well its programs are administered and the degree to which the programs achieve the goals of the authorizing legislation. The Education Department's strategic planning and information systems increase accountability within the Education Department and to outside audiences for its results and its stewardship of Federal funds.

Our Performance

How We Measure. Performance indicators in Objective 4.7 identify the extent to which sound performance data are effectively used throughout the agency. These indicators address customer satisfaction, employee understanding of their contribution to the Education Department's goals and objectives, and the quality of performance data.

Indicator 4.7.a. External customers such as Congress, OMB, or national associations will rate the Education Department's Strategic and Annual Plans high on quality and usefulness.

Assessment of Progress. There is a positive trend toward the goal. In meetings with customers and stakeholders, the Education Department has received positive feedback about its strategic planning processes and products.

Figure 4.7.a.1

Ratings of Education Department Plans and Reports

- The Mercatus Foundation, an education, research, and outreach organization, researched and evaluated the reports produced by the 24 agencies covered under the Chief Financial Officer Act and provided each agency with a performance report scorecard, the 1999 Report and 2001 Plan. The Education Department was ranked fifth out of 24 agencies assessed and received high marks with regard to the reports in April 2000.
- House staff rated the Education Department's FY 1999 Annual Plan (submitted in 1998) as third-highest among Federal agencies.
- House staff rated the Education Department's Strategic Plan 1998-2002 as second-highest among Federal agencies in terms of overall quality and responsiveness to Results Act requirements.

Indicator 4.7.b. Employees will recognize the Strategic Plan as meaningful and understand how their work supports achieving the plan’s goals and objectives.

Assessment of Progress. The goal for 2000 was not met. In 2000, the Office of Management conducted a survey of the Education Department employees. Of the employees surveyed, 60 percent reported an understanding of the Education Department’s missions, visions, and values. This question was new to the survey, while a similar but slightly different question was asked in previous surveys. Thus, earlier data (1993 and 1996) are incomparable to the 2000 data.

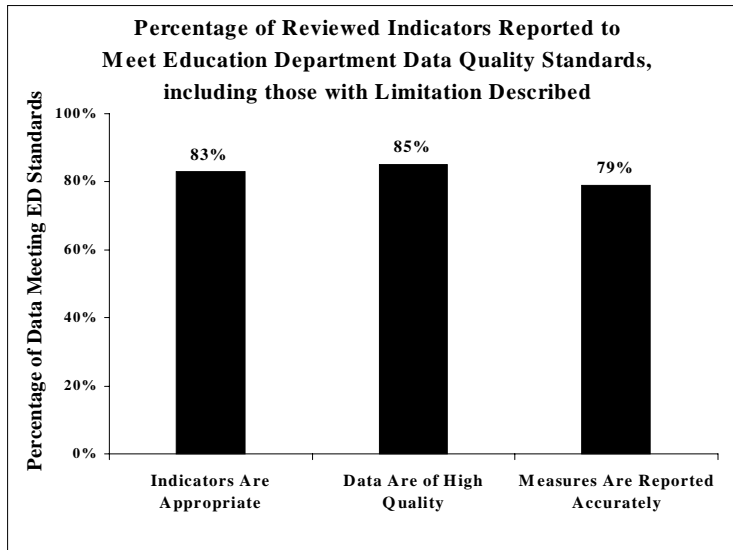
Critical to agency performance on this objective is the extent to which employees understand, support, and actively work toward achieving the agency’s goals and objectives. The 2000 survey revealed that 63 percent of the employees who responded to the survey indicated that managers communicate the missions, visions, and values of the organization.

Indicator 4.7.c. By 2000, all Education Department program managers will assert that the data used for their program’s performance measurement are reliable, valid, and timely, or will have plans for improvement.

Assessment of Progress. The 1999 data show progress toward the goal. In FY 1999, the Education Department pilot tested a data attestation process for the 122 indicators of the largest programs, which account for about 90 percent of the Education Department budget. In FY 2000, the Education Department prepared to enter the second phase of its attestation process for all measures used to report to Congress on program activities. Each of the programs reviewed its FY 2000 budget indicators to evaluate each indicator on whether or not it met the Education Department's data quality standards. Division directors and assistant secretaries discussed these reviews. The assistant secretaries then signed statements attesting that their indicators met the Education Department's data quality standards or that they had plans for their improvement. The final data for 2000 are not yet available.

Figure 4.7.c.1 shows programs’ ratings of their indicators, which resulted from the data attestation process in FY1999. Ratings are broken out in three areas of the standards for the 103 indicators for which the data attestation process was completed. A majority of the indicators met the standard or met it with limitations clearly identified. Where the indicator did not meet the standard, programs provided plans to improve the indicator, data, or reporting. Even where the indicators met the standard, many programs cited plans for further improvement. Overall, more than half of the indicators were submitted with some form of plans for the improvement of the data quality, and 40 percent included plans specifically for improving the verification and validation of data.

Figure 4.7.c.1



Source: Education Department Attestation forms for 122 indicators in FY1999. *Frequency:* Annual. *Next Update:* 2001 for 2000 data. **Validation procedure:** The Office of the Inspector General is planning a review. **Limitations of data and planned improvements.** Preliminary data subject to review. Percentages include attestations with limitations described. The attestation process was undertaken for 122 indicators, about 10 percent of the total number of Education Department indicators. The Education Department anticipates working with its new Assistant Secretaries once they are appointed.