

Archived Information

Objective 3.4: All educationally disadvantaged adults can strengthen their literacy skills and improve their earning power over their lifetime through lifelong learning.

Our Role. The Education Department supports lifelong educational opportunities to improve the literacy, academic, and technical skills of educationally disadvantaged adults across the country. The objectives are to be achieved through a number of programs authorized by the Workforce Investment Act Titles II and IV (the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act and the Rehabilitation Act Amendments, respectively), Higher Education Act Title IV, and Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act, among others. These programs:

- Assist states and local providers with the delivery of adult basic education, English as a Second Language (ESL), and adult secondary education services to adults without a high school diploma or equivalent to help them improve their basic literacy skills;
- Assist states and community rehabilitation providers in providing training and other services leading to quality employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities;
- Provide tax credits and student grants to individuals enrolling in an institution of higher education (see Objective 3.2);
- Fund vocational and technical education programs at the postsecondary level (see Objective 1.2);
- Conduct research and evaluation on effective methods for improving the educational and employment outcomes of individuals participating in these programs.

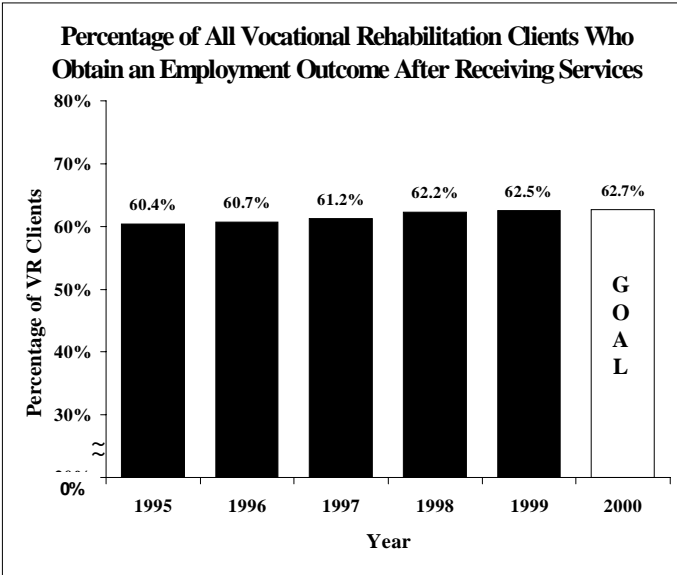
Our Performance

How We Measure. Indicators of lifelong learning include measures of the effects of Federally funded programs on encouraging adult literacy and employment. They include the percentage of persons with disabilities who receive vocational rehabilitation services and then obtain and maintain employment, the percentage of adults at the lowest levels of literacy being served in adult basic education, and the percentage of those adults who acquire a basic level of literacy.

Indicator 3.4.a. In vocational rehabilitation, the percentage of all persons who obtain employment after receiving vocational rehabilitation services will be maintained at 61 percent.

Assessment of Progress. Progress toward the 2000 goal is likely. The 1999 goal of 62.5 percent was met. Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) state grants provide services to help persons with disabilities prepare for and engage in employment to the extent of their capabilities. The program includes services such as vocational evaluation, counseling, mental and physical restoration, education, vocational training, work adjustment, job placement, and post-employment services. Priority is given to serving individuals with the most significant disabilities. In recent years, the percentage of individuals with significant disabilities as a proportion of all individuals achieving an employment outcome has risen; the cost of rehabilitating individuals with significant disabilities has been consistently higher than for other individuals with disabilities. As a group, persons who achieve employment as a result of VR services show gains in their ability to function in economic terms. Figure 3.4.a.1 shows that the percentage of VR clients who achieve an employment outcome is continuing to increase. The data for 2000 are not available.

Figure 3.4.a.1

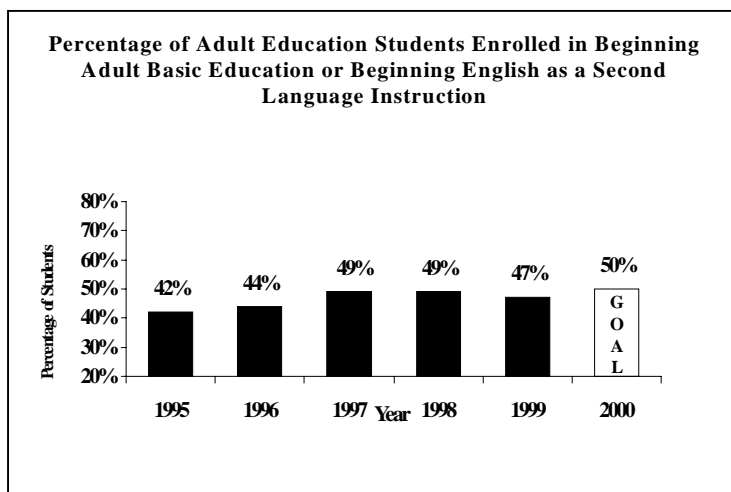


Source: Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) state data. *Frequency:* Annual. *Next Update:* 2001 for data collected in late 2000. **Validation procedure:** Future routine monitoring and onsite reviews of Vocational Rehabilitation programs will specifically address procedures to verify grantee reports. **Limitation of data and planned improvement:** Data are reported by the states and are not independently verified.

Indicator 3.4.b. By fall 2000, adults at the lowest levels of literacy (those in beginning Adult Basic Education and beginning English as a Second Language) will make up comprise 50 percent of the total National enrollment.

Assessment of Progress. Data show a positive trend toward goal in general, although in 1999 there was a slight decrease. Consistent with its predecessor law, the new Adult Education and Family Literacy Act emphasizes serving the most educationally disadvantaged adults. For example, a state’s needs assessment must include individuals most in need or hardest to serve. In making sub-grants, states are to consider the applicant’s past effectiveness in improving the literacy skills of those adults with the lowest levels of literacy. The data for 2000 are not available.

Figure 3.4.b.1

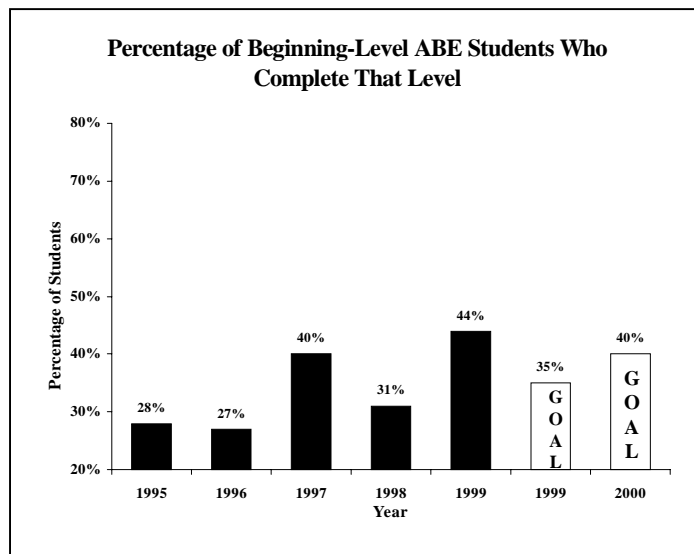


Source: Adult Education Management Information System. *Frequency:* Annual. *Next Update:* 2001 for data collected in late 2000. **Validation procedure:** The data provided prior to 1998 were verified by onsite monitoring and review and internal review procedures. The 1998 data were verified by the U.S. Department of Education data quality attestation process and the Education Department *Standards for Evaluating Program Performance Indicators*. **Limitations of data and planned improvements:** As a secondary recipient of this data, the Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) must rely on states and local service providers to collect and report data within published guidelines. Starting with the July 1, 2000 reporting period, new data collection and reporting protocols will be implemented. These protocols include standardized data collection methodologies and standards for automated data reporting. Additionally, OVAE is developing a data quality validation process for states based on the Education Department's *Standards for Evaluating Program Performance Data*.

Indicator 3.4.c. By 2000, 40 percent of adults in beginning-level Adult Basic Education programs will complete that level and achieve basic skills proficiency.

Assessment of Progress. Progress toward the goal is likely. In 1999, the goal was surpassed by nine percentage points, with 44 percent of beginning level Adult Basic Education students completing that level. Figure 3.4.c.1 shows that although the trend line has fluctuated over the past four years, the overall trend has been a positive movement toward the goal. Adults who enroll in Adult Basic Education (ABE) at the beginning level tend to be the most educationally disadvantaged, with literacy skills roughly below the sixth-grade level. The performance data reflect the percentage of low-literate adults who demonstrated a level of educational progress needed to advance to the next educational functioning level. Educational functioning levels are arranged in a hierarchy from beginning literacy through high school completion. Currently, less than one-third of adults who enroll in beginning-level ABE in a given year complete that level within the year. Building on the previous indicator, this indicator stresses that it is not sufficient to ensure that educationally disadvantaged adults simply have access to appropriate adult education programs. The programs must be of sufficient quality to ensure that these learners succeed in them. The data for 2000 are not available.

Figure 3.4.c.1

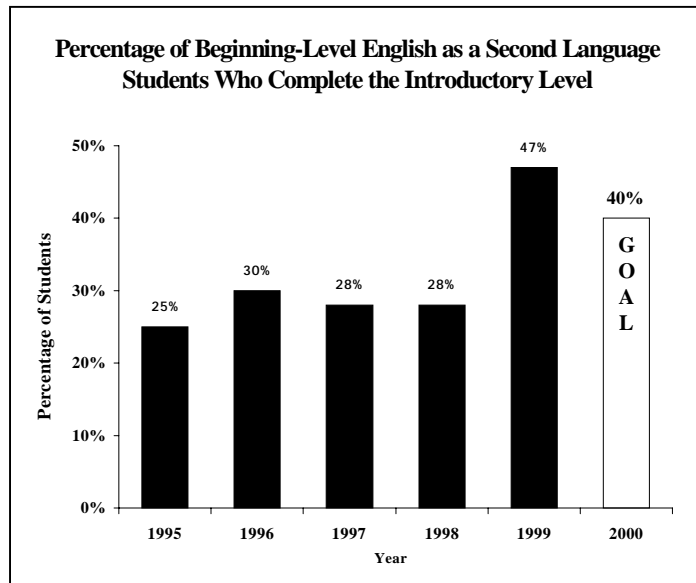


Source: Adult Education Management Information System. **Frequency:** Annual. **Next Update:** 2000 data to be available in 2001. **Validation procedure:** The data provided prior to 1998 were verified by onsite monitoring and review and internal review procedures. The 1998 data were verified by the Education Department's data quality attestation process and the Education Department's *Standards for Evaluating Program Performance Indicators*. **Limitations of data and planned improvements:** As a secondary recipient of this data, the Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) must rely on states and local service providers to collect and report data within published guidelines. Starting with the July 1, 2000 reporting period, new data collection and reporting protocols will be implemented. These protocols include developing standardized data collection methodologies and standards for automated data reporting. Additionally, OVAE is developing a data quality validation process for states based on the Education Department's *Standards for Evaluating Program Performance Data*.

Indicator 3.4.d. By 2000, 40 percent of adults in beginning English as a Second Language will complete the introductory level and achieve basic English literacy.

Assessment of Progress. Progress towards target is likely. The 1999 goal of 35 percent was exceeded. Forty-nine percent of beginning-level ESL students completed the introductory level, which is 14 percentage points above the 1999 goal. Educational functioning levels are arranged in a hierarchy from beginning ESL through advanced ESL. Well over half of all ESL learners enroll at the beginning level, but less than one-third of these students complete that level each year. This indicator highlights the importance the Education Department places on ensuring that English language and literacy instruction provided through Federally funded Adult Education programs is of high quality and leads to significant learner outcomes. The data for 2000 are not available.

Figure 3.4.d.1



Source: Adult Education Management Information System. *Frequency:* Annual. *Next Update:* 2000 data available in 2001. **Validation procedure:** The data provided prior to 1998 were verified by onsite monitoring and review and internal review procedures. The 1998 data were verified by the U.S. Department of Education data quality attestation process and the Education Department's *Standards for Evaluating Program Performance Indicators*.

Limitations of data and planned improvements: As a secondary recipient of this data, the Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) must rely on states and local service providers to collect and report data within published guidelines. Starting with the July 1, 2000 reporting period, new data collection and reporting protocols will be implemented. These protocols include standardized data collection methodologies and standards for automated data reporting. Additionally, OVAE is developing a data quality validation process for states based on the Education Department's *Standards for Evaluating Program Performance Data*.