

# Goal Setting Policy

Effective July 1, 2010

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## Background

The Michigan Department of Energy, Labor and Economic Growth (DELEG) was monitored by the U.S. Department of Education in May of 2008. One finding was that DELEG did not have a standardized policy providing guidance on participant goal setting to local programs. In addition, over two-thirds of Michigan's participant population were either employed or unemployed but did not have a corresponding employment goal. Given this, DELEG was required to establish an employment goal policy memorandum (issued October 2009) and it is incorporated in this goal setting policy.

The intent of this policy is to provide local programs with guidance that leads to participants achieving long-term goals. This requires that educational services be designed and delivered to meet participant goals.

*“An effective goal-setting process that focuses on instruction and learning is central to good educational practice. Setting goals allows adult education students to specify what they want to accomplish and provides a benchmark for both individual and program performance.”*

– NRS Goal Setting Tips

## Terms

***Adult Learning Plan (ALP):*** The Adult Learning Plan, or ALP, is a tool that helps local program staff develop an educational service plan that will meet the participant's academic and economic goals. The ALP is considered a “living document” that is amended as a participant's circumstances and short-term or long-term goals change.

***Goal Counseling:*** This is the process of counseling participants about the selection of appropriate short-term goals necessary to achieve their long-term goals. Goal counseling is done by local program staff with participants during the creation of the participant's ALP and periodically during the program year.

***Long-Term Goals:*** This is the primary reason why the participant is attending an adult education program. Typically, after the participant achieves their long-term goals they will no longer need adult education services and subsequently have reached a termination point for participation. Long-term goals often require one or more short-term goals to help the participant along.

***Payment Point System:*** A system of funding whereby eligible entities receive a payment for achieving a defined payment point, which could include a participant goal attainment.

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**Short Term Goals:** A short term goal is any goal that is required for a participant to achieve their long term goal. An example of a short term goal is the attainment of a GED or high school diploma before a participant can enroll in postsecondary education.

## Goal Changes

### *Elimination of Goals*

#### Improve Basic Skills / Improve Basic English Speaking Skills:

These goals were established in 1999-2000 as payment points for local adult education programs after the Office of Adult Education was transferred from Michigan Department of Education (MDE) to MDCD (now Michigan Department of Energy, Labor and Economic Growth). These goals were established by the State to facilitate this payment point process. The transition of adult education funding to a payment point system did not occur and these goals were not needed. In addition, the USDOE stated during the May 2008 monitoring visit that these are the basic reasons why participants seek services and are not to be considered goals. Subsequently, these goals are being removed from MAERS and the ALP.

*“Within the NRS framework, all students are assumed to have at least one goal: development of literacy skills. That is, all students are assumed to be in the program to improve their literacy skills, and thus have the default goal of either improving literacy skills or improving English language skills. This assumed goal is the reason that all students are counted in the educational gain measure regardless of whether the student designates any of the additional goals.”*

– NRS 2008, page 45

### *New Short Term Goals*

The “Function At or Above 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Level” and “English Language Proficiency” goals have been created to provide short-term goals that are appropriate for lower level functioning ABE and ESL participants. They align with the education level of these participants. Further, they provide intermediate steps that help participants achieve their long-term goals. Finally, they meet NRS requirements.

*“Setting the timeline and evidence of achievement will help the learner realize whether the goal is short or long term and whether it is achievable. For example, when learners enter a program, many of them state very broad goals, such as attaining a GED or getting a job. Breaking the goal down into discrete steps—with short- and long-term milestones along the way—establishes a series of goals that help learners and teachers design instruction and identify the appropriate goals for NRS purposes.”*

– NRS 2008, page 46

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## Function At or Above 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Level:

This goal can be used as a replacement for the “Improve Basic Literacy Skills” goal that is being eliminated because its meaning is more specific. To achieve this goal, the participant must score at or above the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level in Language, Math, Reading, and/or Writing using a DELEG-approved assessment. The achievement of this goal indicates that the participant is ready to move into GED Preparation or High School Completion (HSC) courses. This goal applies only to participants in an ABE program of enrollment and is to be used as a short-term goal that will help participants achieve their long-term goals. This goal is not subject to follow-up and is not a performance measure.

**QUESTION: If a participant is in LOW ASE they would be in the level for which performance is negotiated, but if they are in HIGH ASE wouldn't they have a secondary credential goal?**

*REPLY: On the ABE/ASE Scale, once a participant achieved this goal, they would have to move into the GED or HSD program of enrollment and select one or more follow up goals.*

## English Language Proficiency:

This goal can be used as a replacement for the “Improve Basic English Speaking Skills” goal being eliminated because its meaning is more specific. To achieve this goal, the participant must score 236 or higher in Reading, 236 or higher in Listening, and 231 or higher in the Writing modules of the CASAS assessment test. Achievement of this goal indicates English language proficiency as defined by the USDOE. This goal only applies to participants in the ESL program of enrollment and is to be used as a short-term goal that will help the participant to attain their long-term goal. This goal is not subject to follow-up and it is not a performance measure.

**QUESTION: Wouldn't this goal be relevant to ESL levels 1-5?**

*REPLY: The listed scores for CASAS for this specific goal go through ESL EFL level 6 (Advanced ESL). Given this, it was believed that English Language Proficiency is achieved at the completion of Advanced ESL. The intention of this goal is so English language learners can master English and then move into ABE/ASE programs according to their TABE 9-10 assessment scores. ESL participants can also select employment goals while in ESL.*

The “Pass GED Tests” and “Attain HSD Credits” goals (described below) are being added to align with NRS policy.

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*“For this reason, not only is it important that the student attain the goal during the program year but also that the program’s instruction and services be oriented toward helping the student achieve the goal. For example, a student with a goal of GED attainment should be at a literacy level that makes passing the GED tests likely within the year. The student also should receive instruction that helps him or her acquire the additional skills needed for passing the tests.”*

– NRS 2008, page 46

This goal applies to participants who are in GED Preparation courses. It is used as a short-term goal to help participants achieve the long-term goal “Obtain a GED.” The participant’s assessment test must place them at or above the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level in all areas. During the goal counseling process with local program staff, the participant will be determined NOT likely to obtain their GED during the current program year to use this short-term goal. Factors contributing to their inability to obtain their GED during the current program year may include family issues, child care, transportation, work, scheduling conflicts, learning disabilities (must be acknowledged by participant and documented on ALP and in MAERS), program duration, program intensity and the point at which the participant enters a program.

A review of MAERS data has shown that participants functioning above the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level in all areas obtain their GED on average at 70 hours of instruction. Local programs should conduct goal planning and selection accordingly. If the participant is assessed above the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level in all areas but can NOT attend 70 or more hours of instruction, then the program and the participant should select the “Pass GED Tests” goal until they are likely to obtain their GED in a program year. If a participant is assessed above the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level in all areas and CAN attend 70 or more hours of instruction then the program and the participant should select the “Obtain a GED” goal. Goal counseling and selection must be documented on the ALP.

If the participant has already passed one or more GED tests, this must be considered during the goal setting process. To illustrate, if the participant is assessed above the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level in all areas, has already passed three of five GED tests, and can attend 20 hours of instruction, then it is reasonable to predict the participant can finish the curriculum for their two remaining GED tests and the “Obtain a GED” goal should be selected.

*Note: Seventy hours is an average for participants functioning at or above the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level in all instructional areas and who do not have documented learning disabilities. Please remember that participant goals can and do change based on their family, work, and other life factors and that goals can be changed on the*

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*ALP and in MAERS. Changes to participant goals must be documented on the ALP.*

## Attain HSD Credits:

This goal applies to participants who are in a local school board approved HSC course. It is used as a short-term goal to help participants achieve the long-term goal “Obtain a HSD.” The participant’s assessment test must place them at or above the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level in all areas. During the goal counseling process with local program staff, the participant will be determined NOT likely to obtain their HSD during the current program year to use this short-term goal. Factors contributing to their inability to obtain their HSD during the current program year may include family issues, child care, transportation, work, scheduling conflicts, learning disabilities (must be acknowledged by participant and documented on ALP and in MAERS), program duration, program intensity and the point at which the participant enters a program.

A review of MAERS data has shown that participants functioning above the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level in all areas obtain their HSD on average during the current program year IF they have previously attained 75% or more of their HSD credits. Local programs should conduct goal planning and selection accordingly. If the participant is assessed above the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level and has acquired less than 75% of their required credits for graduation, then the participant should select the “Attain HSD Credits” goal until they are likely to obtain their HSD in a program year. If a participant is assessed above the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level in all areas, has attained more than 75% of their required credits for graduation, and can attend at a sufficient duration and intensity to complete their credit requirements, then the program and participant should select the “Obtain a HSD” goal. Goal counseling and selection must be documented on the ALP.

*Note: Seventy-five percent is an average for participants functioning at or above the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level in all instructional areas. Please remember that participant goals can and do change based on their family, work, and other life factors and that goals can be changed on the ALP and in MAERS. Changes to participant goals must be documented on the ALP.*

If any participant wanting to obtain their GED or HSD is assessed below the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level in all instructional areas, then they must receive remediation (ABE instruction) prior to enrolling in the GED or HSD program of enrollments. If any participant wishing to obtain their GED or HSD is assessed below the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level in one or more instructional areas, they can be in the GED or HSD program of enrollment. However, they must be able to understand the curriculum and they must be concurrently enrolled in remediation (ABE instruction) in the areas of instruction that they tested below the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level.

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These policies are based on MAERS data for program year 2007-08 and earlier. Please remember that these policies are based on norms from the data and that not all participants will achieve their long term goals based on these criteria. Please keep in mind this is why the benchmark for all performance measures is not 100%.

## ***Follow-Up Goals***

The NRS follow-up measures/goals are outcomes that participants may achieve at some time following participation in adult learning services. If a participant has selected one or more of these goals, they are subject to post-program follow-up. (*Note: the post-program follow-up process is described in the DELEG Follow-Up Manual.*) Follow-up goals are typically one or more of the participant's long-term goals. These long-term goals fall into two categories—"Educational" and "Employment."

*NOTE: The program year is July 1 to June 30 (the following year). The participant has to have attended classes during the program year to be included in the educational goals follow-up process. Programs have through October 25 following the June 30 program year end to complete data entry.*

The Employment goal attainment data must be collected on a quarterly basis as described in the Follow-Up Manual. Goals are as follows:

### Educational Goals

- *Obtain a GED* – The participant obtains certification of attaining passing scores on all five GED tests.
- *Obtain a High School Diploma* – The participant obtains a local school board approved diploma documenting satisfactory completion of secondary studies.
- *Enroll in Postsecondary Education* – The participant enrolls in a postsecondary educational or occupational skills training program that does not duplicate other services or training received, regardless of prior training.

### Employment Goals

- *Enter Employment* – The participant enters employment by the end of the first quarter after the program exit quarter. Employment is working in a paid, unsubsidized job or working 15 hours or more per week in an unpaid job on a farm or business operated by a family member or the participant. A job obtained while the participant is enrolled can be counted for "entered employment" and is reported in the quarter after the exit quarter.
- *Retain Employment* – The participant remains employed in the third quarter after their exit quarter.

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- *Improve Employment* – The participant remains employed in the third quarter after their exit quarter and has improved their employment by receiving a wage/salary increase or receiving additional or better fringe benefits. The employment does not have to be with the same employer they had at program entry.

*Note: Make sure goal definitions align with what is in the follow up manual.*

*“Students often have other goals, but only four are directly relevant to NRS accountability requirements: obtaining employment, retaining employment, achieving a GED or high school credential, and entering postsecondary education. Note that the default goal of educational gain remains, regardless of whether the student designates any of the additional goals.”*

– NRS 2008, page 46

*Note: For NRS reporting purposes the follow up goals of “Improve Employment” and “Retain Employment” are combined and reported to USDOE as “Retain Employment.” The goals of “Obtain a GED” and “Obtain a HSD” are combined and reported to USDOE as “High School Completion.”*

All goals are self-selected by participants. However, local programs must work with participants to ensure that goals are achievable and that the educational services needed to achieve participant goals are provided.

If a participant selects a follow-up goal, then the local program serving the participant must complete the follow-up process using DELEG’s Follow-Up Manual. Local programs cannot discourage participants from selecting goals that require follow-up. Local programs must provide educational and other services including referrals and/or partnerships with local job training programs and higher education institutions to help participants achieve their goals.

*“When a student has one of the follow-up goals, the program is held accountable for helping the student attain the goal. The program or State must obtain information on whether the student achieved the goal after he or she leaves the program. For this reason, not only is it important that the student attain the goal during the program year but also that the program’s instruction and services be oriented toward helping the student achieve the goal.”*

– NRS 2008, Page 46

***New Secondary Measures/Goals***

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Reduction in Receipt of Public Assistance: Participant's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or equivalent public assistance is reduced or eliminated due to employment or increased income.

Achieved Citizenship Skills: Participant attains the skills needed to pass the U.S. citizenship exam.

Voting Behavior: Participant registers to vote or votes for the first time during the program year.

General Involvement in Community Activities: Participant increases involvement in the following community activities:

- Attending or organizing meetings of neighborhood, community, or political organizations.
- Volunteering to work for such organizations.
- Contributing to the support of such organizations.
- Volunteering to work on community improvement activities.

Involvement in Children's Education: Participant increases involvement in the education of dependent children under their care, including:

- Helping children more frequently with their school work.
- Increasing contact with children's teachers to discuss children's education.
- Having more involvement in children's school, such as attending school activities and parent meetings and volunteering to work on school projects.

Involvement in Children's Literacy Related Activities: Participant increases involvement in the literacy-related activities of dependent children under their care, including:

- Reading to children.
- Visiting a library.
- Purchasing books or magazines for children.

Completed Workplace Project Learner Activity: Participant acquires the skills taught in a short-term learning course designed to teach specific work-based skills. A short-term course is an instructional program of at least 12 hours but no more than 30 hours in duration.

***Existing Secondary Measures/Goals to Be Changed:***

- Achieved Citizenship Skills or Obtained US Citizenship
- Registered to Vote or Voted for the First Time
- Increased Involvement in Community Activities
- Achieved Work-Based Project Learner Goal
- Helped More Frequently With School

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- Increased Contact with Children's Teachers
- Became More Involved in Children's School Activities
- Read to Children
- Visited Library
- Purchased Books or Magazines
- Achieved Other Personal Goal
- Left Public Assistance
- Achieve Citizenship Skills
- Registered to Vote

Goal Changes need to be changed in MAERS on-line, batch and on all reports.

## Goal Selection

Goal selection is a collaborative process between the participant and local program staff. Participants need to select their own goals but they also need the expertise, guidance, and counseling of local program staff.

*“Programs should have a goal-setting process whereby students meet with teachers or an intake counselor to help identify and set goals for instruction. The best time for this process to occur is when the learner first enters the program. The goal-setting process should help learners set both a realistic timeline for attaining each goal and a means for determining whether the goal is achieved. Since learners often change their goals after they begin instruction, it is often advisable to extend goal setting over additional orientation sessions during the first few weeks of class.”*

– NRS 2008, Page 46

Participants need to understand that to attain their long-term goals they frequently need one or more short-term goals. Goal setting will be an incremental process for most participants. This process can best be illustrated with a few examples:

Example #1: A participant enters a local program and their pre-test shows that they read at a 4<sup>th</sup> grade level and have math skills at a 5<sup>th</sup> grade level. The participant dropped out of high school in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade and their goal is to obtain a high school diploma. In order for the participant to obtain their high school diploma, they first need to have reading and math remediation so they can understand the high school curriculum. In this example, the participant's first short-term goal becomes “Function At or Above the 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Level” so they have the literacy skills to understand the high school diploma curriculum. Their next short-term goal becomes “Attain HSD Credits” so they can reach their long-term goal of “Obtaining a HSD” within a program year.

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Example #2: A participant enters a local program and they do not speak English. Their pre-test places them in the High Beginning ESL (EFL #3) for reading and Low Beginning ESL (EFL #2) for listening. They want to enroll in postsecondary education. This participant must first learn English so they can understand an English language curriculum. Then they will need the reading, writing, and math components of ABE so they can comprehend either the GED or HSD curriculum. Finally, they need to receive GED or HSD instruction and obtain a GED or HSD before they can enroll in postsecondary education. In this example, the participant is going to have a short-term goal of “English Language Proficiency” for their ESL instruction. They will then have a “Function At or Above 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Level” goal for any ABE instruction they receive. They will then have either a “Pass GED Tests” (for GED instruction) or “Attain HSD Credits” (for HSD courses). Lastly, they will have an “Obtain a GED” or “Obtain a HSD” goal prior to reaching their long-term goal of “Enrolling in Postsecondary Education.”

**QUESTION: Would all these goals be established for one year?**

*REPLY: Most likely not. These goals are planned in a sequential order, one building on the other. The participant should progress from one goal to the next. This may take one or more program years to complete all goals. This policy is not intended to preclude a participant from working on one or more goals simultaneously if the participant and local program agree that it is feasible and possible for the participant to achieve multiple goals at the same time.*

Example #3: A participant enters a local program in September 2009 and they do not have a GED or HSD. They attended high school, but dropped out in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Their assessment test shows they read at a 10<sup>th</sup> grade level and have math skills at the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level. Their employer, ABC Heating and Cooling, has told them they need to get a GED to retain their job by the end of the school year. The employer also told the participant that they need to get a high school diploma to be able to enter the employer’s HVAC apprenticeship program that will get them a skills certificate and a promotion. The participant states they want to earn the employer’s skills certificate as their goal. In this example, the participant needs to get a GED to retain their job. They then need to obtain their high school diploma so they can enroll in the employer’s apprenticeship program and improve their employment. The short-term goals are “Pass GED Tests” and “Obtain a GED” so they can retain their job. Once these goals are completed, the participant then enrolls in high school completion and their short-term goals become “Attain HSD Credits,” “Obtain a HSD,” and “Enroll in Postsecondary Education” so they can achieve their long-term goal of “Improving Employment.”

**QUESTION: If the student comes in employed, wouldn’t they also have the goal to retain their job?**

*REPLY: The participant could have a goal of retaining employment as well.*

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As stated earlier, participants will have one or more long-term goals. This is their purpose for attending adult education. These long-term goals can often be thought of as a “terminal goal.” Once the goal is attained, the participant no longer needs adult education services. Subsequently, it can take some participants several years before they achieve their long-term goal. As illustrated above and dependent upon the participant’s educational level at entry, it is necessary to break down the participant’s long-term goals into one or more short-term goals that can be accomplished within a program year. When the participant’s first short-term goal is attained, the participant will start work on their next short-term goal. This process must be detailed in the goal planning section of the ALP. After all the short-term goals have been attained to reach the participant’s long-term goal, then their long-term goal will become their last short-term goal. As goals are attained, they need to be documented on the ALP and the next short-term goal assigned to the participant.

## ***Participant Expectations & Goal Counseling:***

Participants wanting to obtain a HSD or GED have, in most cases, attended high school and dropped out for some reason. Very often, the participant believes they can resume their education at the same educational level as when they left school. Typically, this is not the situation.

If the participant has not been actively reading or using their math skills, these skills regress—they forget some of what they have learned. Subsequently, they may have left high school in the 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> grade, but their reading and math scores of their pre-test show they are functioning at a 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> grade level. This can be very unsettling for many participants. Local programs need to give careful consideration to this matter and provide appropriate counseling that helps the participant understand why they are functioning at the level they are. Local programs next need to work with the participant to develop an ALP that will address their real (not perceived) educational needs so they can achieve their goals.

*“Students often do not know their goals when asked about them, or respond with very broad or unrealistic goals. Programs need to work collaboratively with students to help them develop goals that guide learning and participation. Collaborative goal setting allows program staff members to contribute knowledge of what the program has to offer and to share experiences working with other students in similar situations. Students share their needs and aspirations—the sources of their goals.”*

– NRS Goal Setting Tips

A similar situation occurs with ESL participants. The participant may have dropped out of school at some point or even have a high school diploma from

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their native country. However, if they are not actively using these skills they regress and subsequently are not fully literate in their native language. Even if they have a high school diploma from their home country it, in most cases, will not be comparable to a US-issued high school diploma. To illustrate: A high school graduate from Eastern Europe may not know US weights and measures, US History, Civics, Government, or Free Market Economics. This can make it very challenging for the ESL participant to obtain a US high school diploma or GED in the time frame that they expect. Appropriate counseling from local program staff is required to manage participant expectations and develop an ALP that will lead to the achievement of the participant's goals.

## Appropriateness of Goals

Local programs must select goals that are appropriate to the educational level of the participant at program entry. This policy aligns goal selection with DELEG's Assessment Policy that requires local programs to provide education services the participant needs as determined by their assessment test at program entry. Further, local programs must select short-term goals as required for the participant to achieve their long-term goals.

*“While setting a realistic goal is important for accountability, students’ long-term goals should not be ignored simply because they are not obtainable during the NRS reporting period. States should ensure that local programs set goals appropriately and do not avoid setting goals because they do not want to follow up with learners. Poor goal-setting procedures do a disservice to the learner, and good instructional practice requires assisting learners to achieve their goals. In addition, ignoring long-term goals denies the State the opportunity to demonstrate that it can help learners achieve such goals. ”*

– NRS 2008, page 46

### ***Specific Goal Requirements:***

**ABE / ASE Enrollment Requirement:** Any participant that is assessed below the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level in one or more areas of instruction must have “Function At or Above the 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Level” as a goal. This should be one of their short-term goals. *NOTE: The Assessment Policy is designed so that participants testing below the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level (EFLs 1 through 4) have to be enrolled in ABE, receive instruction and test above the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level before they can enroll in GED or HSD (ASE Level) programs.*

**ESL Enrollment Requirement:** Any participant that tests below 236 in Reading, 236 in Writing, or 231 in Math on the CASAS assessment must have “English Language Proficiency” as a goal. This should be one of their short-term goals.

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Employment Goal Requirement: As required by USDOE, all participants should have an employment or postsecondary education goal. It is currently recorded as either a primary or secondary goal. *(The nature of it being a primary or secondary goal will change as described in the “Multiple Goals” section below.)*

Participants that enter the local program with a labor force status of both “Employed” and “Unemployed” are subject to this policy. Participants that enter the local program with a labor force status of “Not in the Labor Force” are exempt from this requirement. The requirement is triggered by determining labor force status at program entry and assigning an employment or postsecondary education goal as follows:

**Employed at Entry:** Any participant that enters a local program and indicates their labor force status as “Employed” must have an “Improve or Retain Employment” goal selected. If the participant enters the local program and their EFL at Entry is EFL #5 or EFL #6 on the ABE/ASE scale, they can select “Enroll in Postsecondary Education” instead of the “Improve Employment” or “Retain Employment” goals. The requirement of EFL #5 or EFL #6 is necessary to ensure that the participant has the literacy skills needed to enroll in postsecondary education. Any participant that enters a local program and indicates their labor force status as “Not in the Labor Force” is exempt from this requirement of the “Improve Employment” or “Retain Employment” goals.

**Unemployed at Entry:** Any participant that enters a local program and indicates their labor force status as “Unemployed” must have an “Obtain Employment” goal selected. If the participant enters the local program and their EFL at Entry is EFL #5 or EFL #6 on the ABE/ASE scale, they can select “Enroll in Postsecondary Education” instead of the “Obtain Employment” goal. The requirement of EFL #5 or EFL #6 is necessary to ensure that they have the literacy skills needed to enroll in postsecondary education.

**Not in the Labor Force:** Any participant that enters a local program and indicates their labor force status as “Not in the Labor Force” is exempt from this requirement of the goal setting policy.

**Determination of Labor force Status:** Labor force status is selected by the participant; however, it is part of the ALP completion process. The participant and local program staff are required to complete the ALP jointly.

Goals should align with the participant’s program of enrollment. The selection of goals at the beginning of an enrollment should match the participant’s program of

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enrollment. For example, if a participant is receiving GED instruction, then one of their short-term goals should be either “Pass GED Tests” or “Obtain a GED.” Likewise, if a participant is receiving HSC instruction, one of their short-term goals should be either “Attain HSD Credits” or “Obtain a HSD.”

Participant’s educational and life situations change frequently during the course of their enrollment and can cause their goals to change; however, their outcomes *must* be documented. For example, a participant receiving HSC instruction with an HSD goal may pass the GED test during the semester break because they need to finish their instruction sooner than previously planned. In this case the goal is not aligned with the course of instruction. The passage of the GED test needs to be documented on the ALP and recorded in MAERS as a goal attainment or an unintended outcome.

Transitions Requirement: Participants with Employment goals need to be referred to MWAs or other employment agencies or service. Participants with the goal of Enrolling in Postsecondary Education need to be referred to either a college or a skills certification training program (For example, Ross Medical, M-TECs, HVAC programs, etc.)

## Multiple Goals

This section is to be determined by goal setting intake processes.

## Documenting Goals

Short-term goals accomplishable within the program year should be recorded in MAERS. However, short- and long-term goals *not* achievable within the program year will not be recorded in MAERS. All goals need to be tracked in the ALP to help the participant work toward their final goal. For example, a participant functioning at the 5<sup>th</sup> grade level with a terminal goal of obtaining a GED would have the following goals listed in the following order: 1.) Function above the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level, 2.) Pass GED Tests, 3.) Obtain a GED.

Up to six goals can be tracked in MAERS. The sixth goal would be the terminal goal.

**QUESTION: Is the terminal goal meant to be met during the intake program year or in the future?**

*REPLY: The terminal goal is the ultimate goal that the participant has stated at program entry that they would like to achieve. Once the terminal goal is achieved, the participant has reached a termination point where they will no longer need adult education services. The terminal goal could be met in the first program year or most likely a subsequent program year/enrollment cycle. For example, if the participant enrolls in an HSC program and only needs two or three credits to*

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*finish they can conceivably earn these credits in one program year and complete. On the other hand, if they need 15 credits to complete they will most likely need two or more program year cycles to complete. The completion of the terminal goal can occur in one program year cycle or more. It depends on what the participant wants to accomplish, where they are education wise, there family/work obligations, the program they have enrolled in intensity, etc.*

All other goals would either be a program year or planned goal.

Short term goals accomplishable within the program year should be entered into MAERS. They will be detailed in a “Goal Planning” section of the ALP.

## **Additional Resources\***

1. *NRS Implementation Guidelines, 2007*
2. *Guidelines for Conducting the Follow Up Survey, 2001*
3. *NRS Tips: NRS Goal Setting*

\* These resources are available at [www.nrsweb.org](http://www.nrsweb.org)