



NASDAE
National Association of State
Directors of Adult Education

To: SWIS@dol.gov
Employment and Training Administration
US Department of Labor

From: National Association of State Directors of Adult Education

Date: October 22, 2024

Re: Amending the State Wage Interchange System (SWIS) Agreement

The National Association of State Directors of Adult Education (NASDAE) appreciates the opportunity to submit stakeholder comments to the U.S. Department of Labor regarding the State Wage Interchange System (SWIS) round two amendments.

NASDAE represents adult education programs in all states and territories, which are authorized under Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Investment in adult education is an investment in the future. Adult education advances social, racial, educational, and economic equity by federal, state, and municipal governments and for adult learners engaging in services to enhance their academic and workforce skills, improve their English proficiency, and attain secondary school and industry-recognized credentials. Adult education programs and students are overcoming barriers that have created gaps in educational attainment and earnings and are reducing the historic burden of the intergenerational impact of low educational attainment.

Proposed Amendments to SWIS

- Permit the state agency that administers the Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs authorized under the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) to be a Performance Accountability and Customer Information Agency (PACIA) so that it can access individual wage records through the SWIS Clearinghouse;

NASDAE Comment: NASDAE appreciates the allowability of PACIA status for state agencies that administer the CTE program under Perkins V. This amendment is especially impactful for states where the Perkins CTE program and at least one of the WIOA core programs are not administered by the same state agency. Permitting PACIA status would extend data access so state agencies can more accurately document CTE concentrator employment outcomes under Perkins V including indicators 3S1 Post-Program Placement and 1P1 Postsecondary Placement ([PCRN Indicators of Performance](#)).

- Permit the U.S. territories of American Samoa, Guam, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, or the Republic of Palau (hereinafter territories) that receive Workforce Innovation and

Opportunity Act (WIOA) title I funds the ability to obtain aggregate information to assist with WIOA required performance reporting for the WIOA Title I core programs; and,

NASDAE Comment: NASDAE appreciates the increase in access to data through the SWIS Clearinghouse for all WIOA core programs. One of the purposes of WIOA is to promote improvement in the delivery of workforce development system services to better address the employment and skill needs of workers, jobseekers, and employers ([Public Law 113-128, Section 2](#)). The WIOA primary indicators of performance are vital to assessing the U.S. workforce development system under WIOA and its improvement of services. Permitting SWIS Clearinghouse data access among U.S. territory WIOA core programs will support the generation of more accurate employment outcomes under the WIOA performance accountability system.

- Enable using Wage Data obtained from the SWIS Clearinghouse for the purposes of carrying out Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) and Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services (WPRS) program evaluations required under section 306 of the Social Security Act (SSA) or other related Federal law or regulation.

NASDAE Comment: NASDAE appreciates enabling the use of Wage Data obtained from the SWIS Clearinghouse for the purposes of carrying out RESEA and WPRS program evaluations required under section 306 of the SSA or other related Federal law or regulation. Enabling RESEA and WPRS use of SWIS Clearinghouse data promotes more valid and reliable program evaluation which seeks to uncover strategies that increase employment outcomes and reduce the average number of weeks participants receive unemployment benefits.

Additional Critical Issues Related to SWIS

In addition to the above comments, NASDAE wishes to comment on critical, related issues.

SWIS Data Match Procedures

One requirement of the SWIS Data Sharing Agreement is that each students' education record will consist of Social Security Numbers, which are used to obtain the students' wage data ([SWIS Data Sharing Agreement](#)). Students who do not disclose a Social Security Number are not eligible to obtain the students' wage data through the SWIS. To more comprehensively document employment outcomes among WIOA Title II students, NASDAE requests that the Departments of Labor and Education identify alternative ways to match student data through the SWIS. Alternative approaches to data matching that do not use a Social Security Number are especially relevant as 2023 saw a 72% increase in data breaches since 2021 and the reluctance to disclose a Social Security Number grows among the U.S. population ([Federal Trade Commission Consumer Sentinel Network](#)). Further, the WIOA Title II program now serves more students in English language learning programs compared to Adult basic/secondary programs, 56 to 44 percent in program year 2022-23 (NRS Table 4). NASDAE members project the English language learning population seeking Title II services will increase into the future and report that this population has a lower Social Security Number disclosure rate compared with their Adult basic/secondary program peers. The projected increase in serving more English language learners, a decline in the Social Security Number disclosure rate among the English language learning population, and the SWIS's reliance on Social Security Numbers to match data poses limitations to the use of the SWIS to accurately document employment outcomes as necessary within the WIOA performance accountability system.

Third Party Vendors & SWIS

A total of 35 states and territories under the WIOA Title II program (66%) reported the use of a commercially available management information system product to support the tracking and reporting of data required under the WIOA performance accountability system (NRS Data System Type Report, PY 2023-24). NASDAE requests that the Departments of Labor and Education develop common language that states and territories under the WIOA Title II program can adopt in data sharing agreements so SWIS data can be seamlessly integrated into commercially available management information systems.

NASDAE is grateful for the opportunity to share the insights of state directors of adult education. For questions or additional information contact ptyler@nasdae.org.