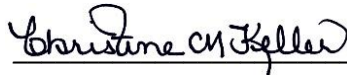


I. Ends Monitoring Report – Policy A

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I certify that the information contained in this report is true.



Christine Keller, Executive Director & CEO

April 30, 2026

Submitted (date)

This report provides updates on the success indicators for Policy A for the period from April 2025 to March 2026. Ends reports are provided quarterly for specific policies (see BRE III).

Operational Vision of Success (contextual information)

AIR's operational vision is to work at the intersection of people and data, building the individual and institutional capacity to use data, information, and analytics in ways that support effective decision-making and meaningful impact in higher education.

In pursuing the Ends, AIR designs programs, services, and resources to serve three primary constituencies:

1. *Higher education professionals, especially AIR members, who produce, analyze, and use data.*
2. *Higher education institutions, which require sustained capacity for data use, improvement, and accountability*
3. *The broader higher education community, including systems, postsecondary-related organizations, and policymakers, through advocacy and partnerships that promote informed data use.*

While AIR's historical focus emphasized individual professional development, recent years have expanded this scope to include institutional capacity-building and engagement. This broader orientation reflects both evolving needs within higher education and AIR's responsibility to steward its resources toward the greatest collective value.

During 2025, significant external pressures—including the loss of a long-standing federal training subcontract, political and regulatory volatility, and increasing financial and capacity constraints across higher education—shaped AIR's operating environment. These conditions affected participation, revenue, and engagement patterns. They also reinforced the need for AIR to respond with practical resources, shared expertise, and professional education that support effective data use and decision-making across AIR's constituent groups.

A. Policy Language

AIR educates higher education professionals and organizations on the value of institutional research and institutional effectiveness.

2025-26 Interpretation – vision of success

The disciplines of institutional research and institutional effectiveness will be recognized for their contributions to advancing institutional success, enhancing student outcomes, and promoting continuous improvement within higher education through the effective, ethical, and impactful use of data.

IR and IE are distinct and specialized disciplines focused on addressing the challenges and opportunities faced by higher education institutions. IR and IE professionals contribute value to their institutions by leveraging their domain expertise, contextual knowledge, data integration capabilities, student-centric approach, and strategic decision support.

Educating higher education professionals and organizations on the value of the disciplines of IR and IE and the contributions of the professionals who work within these disciplines are long-term, multi-layered, and complex endeavors. Yet the resources and reach of AIR are not unlimited, so priority will be given to achieving the following:

- Development and distribution of programming, tools, services, and/or resources that leverage and augment IR and IE in effective, ethical, and impactful data-informed decision making within higher education institutions.
- Establishing and strengthening partnerships, outreach, and programming that incentivize higher education institutions, government agencies, and organizations to engage AIR and its stakeholders as key allies in increasing IR/IE expertise and capacity; institution-wide data literacy; expanded use of data/analytics in decision-making; and the development and implementation of appropriate governmental policy and regulations that optimize data access and use.

2025-26 Success Indicators & Results

1. Deliver the Data Literacy Institute (DLI) to a cross-functional cohort of higher education professionals during 2025 and 2026, with 75% of the participants reporting improvement in their understanding of their institution.

AIR delivered the Data Literacy Institute to 80 professionals in cross-functional cohorts of higher education professionals at three institutions. In each of the three cohorts, more than 80% of participants responding to course evaluations reported that the program improved their understanding of their institution.

2. Continue AIR's contributions within the Gates ecosystem as a national data capacity partner. AIR will provide professional development, technical assistance, and/or consulting services through at least three engagements with partner organizations and/or institutions within the network – at least through the end of the current grant period (12/31/2025).

With the grant period extended through May 2026, AIR continued to serve as a national data capacity partner within the Gates ecosystem during the reporting period (April 2025–March 2026). AIR exceeded the three-engagement goal through multiple initiatives delivered in partnership with network organizations and their member institutions. Examples include:

- *American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC): Foundations of IR workshops; data visualization assistance.*
- *United Negro College Fund (UNCF): technical assistance for National Student Clearinghouse Degree and Enroll Verify submissions and PDP submission, ACTS data submission support.*
- *Growing Inland Achievement (GIA): PDP submission course and technical assistance; data governance webinar; documentation, mapping, and assessment of data ecosystems; Foundations of IR workshops; Holistic Approach to IR course; Power BI training.*

These activities advanced institutional and organizational data capacity through practical training, technical assistance, and applied consulting.

3. Leverage opportunities to contribute the perspectives and expertise of IR and IE to the development and implementation of federal and/or state policy/regulations and offer training and support for their implementation as appropriate.

AIR played a visible national role in helping institutions respond to significant policy, regulatory, and reporting changes during the reporting period. AIR gathered practitioner feedback through surveys, engaged federal officials through comment letters, sign-on letters, and direct outreach, and also incorporated field perspectives through AIR's new [Data Policy Advisory Panel](#).

AIR's policy work included support for institutions implementing the ACTS IPEDS collection through guidance, training resources, and advocacy communicated through the [ACTS Resource Center](#). AIR also provided education and implementation support related to Financial Value Transparency/Gainful Employment (FVT/GE) reporting through webinars and resources available in the [Program Accountability Reporting Resource Center](#).

AIR further contributed practitioner perspectives on broader higher education issues through coalition advocacy available on AIR's [Policy and Advocacy](#) page. AIR's [survey](#) on the impact of changes to the U.S. Department of Education elevated practitioner concerns about federal data systems, student aid operations, and institutional capacity in national discussions, including an external policy report released by Senator Elizabeth Warren's office.

Collectively, these activities elevated the expertise of IR/IE professionals while helping institutions respond to a complex and evolving policy environment.

4. Deliver at least three services to institutions through AIR's Data and Decisions Consulting.

AIR continued to grow its Data & Decisions Consulting practice through engagements that strengthened institutional capacity, improved processes, and supported high-quality reporting. These activities diversified AIR's revenue base while extending its educational mission through applied institutional problem-solving. Illustrative examples include:

- **South Carolina Technical College System:** *Delivered the Foundations workshop series to a cross-system cohort in Summer 2025. Strong participant feedback led to a second contracted cohort in Fall 2025.*
- **Alabama Commission on Higher Education:** *Provided ACTS file preparation training to Alabama public and private institutions, with optional advisory support for individual campuses.*
- **Saint Michael's College:** *Strengthened institutional IPEDS reporting capacity through staff shadowing, process documentation, preparation for Fall, Winter, and Spring IPEDS collection cycles, and recommendations for long-term process improvement and sustainability.*

2026-27 Interpretation – vision of success

AIR will advance recognition of institutional research and institutional effectiveness as essential contributors to institutional success, student outcomes, organizational learning, and sound decision-making across higher education.

IR and IE are complementary professional disciplines that help institutions translate data into insight, action, accountability, and continuous improvement. These professionals create value through contextual expertise, analytical capability, cross-functional collaboration, ethical stewardship of data, and strategic support for leaders and decision-makers.

Educating higher education professionals and organizations on the value of IR and IE is a long-term and multi-faceted endeavor. Because AIR's resources are finite, priority will be given to activities most likely to expand institutional capacity and understanding through:

- Programming, tools, services, and resources that strengthen effective, ethical, and practical use of data for decision-making and improvement.
- Partnerships, outreach, research, and convenings that elevate the visibility and value of IR/IE expertise across institutions, associations, and public agencies.
- Guidance and support that help institutions respond to emerging policy, regulatory, and operational data challenges.
- Activities that strengthen data literacy, organizational capacity, and resilient data-informed practice across higher education.

2026-27 Success Indicators

1. AIR will deliver the Data Literacy Institute or comparable cross-functional programming designed to strengthen institution-wide data literacy and decision-making, with at least 75% of participants reporting increased confidence or ability to use institutional data.

2. AIR will expand institutional capacity through services, partnerships, and consulting that help organizations apply IR/IE expertise to planning, effectiveness, student success, compliance, and/or data-informed decision-making.
3. AIR will contribute practitioner expertise to relevant policy discussions and provide timely guidance when significant regulatory or reporting changes occur.
4. AIR will increase visibility and recognition of the IR/IE profession through national partnerships, presentations, publications, convenings, and/or thought leadership.