



Monday, November 4, 2024

Dear SSS Project Director,

Greetings from BLUMEN Support Team. It is time to prepare the Annual Performance Report (APR) for reporting year 2023-24. Your APR is due by December 6, 2024.

Department of Education has made NO major changes to the 2023-24 SSS APR.

You can prepare and submit your APR using your BOT application, at your convenience.

Contact us if you have any questions.

Regards,

BLUMEN Support Team

Guide to prepare Annual Performance Report (APR)

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES (SSS)

For Year 2023-2024

STEP 1: Download Last Year's Section II Excel file from Department of Education's APR Website

This step will show you how to retrieve your last year's APR excel file (Section II) from Department of Education's APR Website so you can use it to compare and verify your current year's data.

1. Open any Internet browser and go to <https://trio.ed.gov/>
2. Log in to the website with valid credentials
3. Click on 'Section II' on top menu, then click on 'Getting Started'
4. Click on 'Download' under 'Download Excel File With Last Year's APR Data - For Previously Funded Projects Only' to save last year APR excel file to your desktop or any other folder
5. Log out of Department of Education's APR Website.

Please print APR guidelines/instructions from Department of Education's APR website:
<https://www.ed.gov/grants-and-programs/grants-higher-education/trio/student-support-services-program#APR>; these documents will answer lot of your questions.

Department of Education APR Website Help Desk: If you encounter technical problems accessing the Web site or using the Web application, please contact the TRIO Help Desk by either telephone at (703) 885-8008 or e-mail: TRIO@helpdesk.thetactilegroup.com

STEP 2: Update Case Numbers with Last Year's APR Excel file

This step will guide you on how to update the case number for your participants as listed on last year's APR excel file.

1. Mouse over on the APR Icon
2. Click on APR Sections
3. Click on Annual Performance Report Section 2
4. Change fiscal year to '2023' if other, click on Ok to Continue
5. Click on 'Update Case Numbers' button at bottom.
6. Click on 'Select', then 'Choose File', go to desktop or the folder where you had saved last year's APR excel file in step 1.
7. Select last year's APR excel file and click on 'Open'.
8. A summary report will provide details like list of students whose case number will be updated and any other issues that may need to be resolved regarding case numbers
9. Print the report and resolve all issues if any, listed on the report.
10. Click on 'Yes' to update the case number for the students.
11. Click on 'Ok' on message – "Blumen has updated case numbers for x student(s) from last year's APR file.
12. Click on 'Save & Close'

STEP 3: Verify current APR data with Last Year's Excel file

This step will guide you how to check your current APR data against last year's APR excel file and check for data inconsistencies.

1. Mouse over on the APR Icon
2. Click on APR Sections
3. Click on Annual Performance Report Section 2
4. Change fiscal year to '2023' if other, click on Ok to Continue
5. Click on 'Verify with Excel' button at bottom.
6. Click on 'Select' then 'Choose File', go to 'Desktop' or the folder where you had saved last year's APR excel file in step 1.
7. Select last year's APR excel file and click on 'Open'.
8. If any issues are found then a report will list all the issues in detail.
9. Print the report and correct all errors listed on that report.
10. A custom list named 'RECORDS TO ADD FOR APR-2023' will be saved in your lists. This list may be used to add students to the current fiscal year.

STEP 4: Rectify errors based on 'Verify With Excel' process

This step will guide you how to correct the major issue that was indicated in the report on step 3.

Report that you printed in step 3, will identify the students that you need to add from previous years to fiscal year 2023-24. Please follow the steps below to add the missing students:

1. Mouse over on Utilities icon
2. Click on 'Add To'
3. Click on Fiscal Year
4. Change fiscal year to '0' and click on Submit
5. Click on Filters and click on Recall List
6. Click on 'RECORDS TO ADD FOR APR-2023'
7. Click on Select
8. Click on Ok
9. Click on Ok to continue
10. Click on Next
11. Type 2023 as fiscal year
12. Click on Finish
13. Click on Yes
14. Click on Ok

STEP 5: Verify current APR data with Last Year's Excel file, AGAIN

This step will confirm that you have added all the students that needed to be added to fiscal year 2023-24.

1. Mouse over on the APR Icon
2. Click on APR Sections
3. Click on Annual Performance Report Section 2
4. Change fiscal year to '2023' if other, click on Ok to Continue
5. Click on 'Verify with Excel' button at bottom.
6. Click on 'Select' then 'Choose File', go to 'Desktop' or the folder where you had saved last year's APR excel file in step 1.
7. Select last year's APR excel file and click on 'Open'.
8. This step should identify that no more students are required to be added to fiscal year 2023-24, confirming that you have successfully added the required students in step 4.
9. This step should also confirm that there are no more issues that need to be rectified as indicated in step 3.

STEP 6: Verify APR data

It is important and critical that you check for all possible data errors and inconsistencies and correct the same before submission of your APR data to the Department of Education's website.

1. Mouse over on the APR Icon
2. Click on APR Sections
3. Click on Annual Performance Report Section 2
4. Change fiscal year to '2023' if other, click on Ok to Continue
5. Click on 'Verify Data' button at top-right
6. This option will identify all issues with your data - missing data, invalid data, data not matching up from one field to another etc.
7. It will select the group of students with the suggested error and you will have following options:
 - Correct Data: To correct the errors on selected students, once you fix the data on a student then click on 'Next' button to move to next student.
 - Continue to Next field: To move to next error.
 - Print List: To print the list of students those have the suggested error.
 - Save List: To save the list of students those have the suggested error. This saved list can be recalled on 'Recall List' option in 'Global Filter Screen'.
8. Correct all errors as listed.

STEP 7: Check your Program Objectives

The Department of Education uses Annual Performance Report information to assess prior experience (PE) points for meeting your objectives. These points count in your favor when your grant is up for renewal. You can use the PE Points section to view your progress on your objectives once your APR information has been entered into Blumen.

1. Click on the PE Points icon at top-right
2. Change fiscal year to '2023' if other, click on Ok to Continue
3. Enter the objective requirements for your grant in the Objective column
4. Click on the Re-calculate button at the bottom to see your achievements in Outcome column.
5. If you are meeting an objective, 'Outcome' box will be 'Green', if you are not meeting an objective then box will be 'Red'.
6. Each objective has a small printer icon to the right. Clicking this printer will allow you to print a summary (percentages) or a detail (listing) report of the applicable student data for that objective

STEP 8: Create your APR Data File for submission

Once you have fixed your APR data of all errors in step 6, you can create the data file for APR submission on Department of Education's APR website.

1. Mouse over on the APR Icon
2. Click on APR Sections
3. Click on Annual Performance Report Section 2
4. Change fiscal year to '2023' if other, click on Ok to Continue
5. Click on 'Create Data File' button at the bottom
6. Select Excel
7. APR excel file will be saved to your 'Downloads' folder as per your browser settings

STEP 9: Submit your APR on Department of Education's APR Website

1. Open any Internet browser and go to <https://trio.ed.gov/>
2. Log in to the website with valid credentials
3. Complete Section I, Part 1, 2 and Part 3 then click on 'Save and go to next section' button.
4. Click on 'Getting Started' button.
5. Under 'Upload an Excel File to the Web Data Entry Form' section, click on 'Browse' button
6. Select APR excel data file created in Step 8 and click on Upload file
7. Follow the steps to complete the submission

If any data needs to be corrected then correct the data in Blumen, repeat steps 6 to 8, so data in Blumen is in sync with data on Department of Education's APR website.