



## Assign accountability in SD-STARS by June 1

Just like last year, only users who have the accountability role in SD-STARS can access the private accountability report cards. It is up to each district, specifically STARS Account Managers, to determine which SD-STARS users should be given this role. Therefore, the department is asking SAMs to review which users in their district currently have access to the accountability report card and determine if new users need to be added or old users need to be dropped. This needs to be done by June 1.

There are three resources to help SAMs complete this task:

- A STARS Report called "OT.001.00-S – School District Users" gives SAMs a list of users who currently have approved accounts and are assigned the accountability role.
- Written directions and a video tutorial on giving accountability access can be found in the SD-STARS Training Center.
- SAMs can contact their ESAs for further assistance.

If you have any questions, please contact STARS Support at STARSHelp@state.sd.us.

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## 2014 Accountability sees changes

As the school year ends, the South Dakota Department of Education is gearing up for 2014 Accountability Report Cards. Due to the Smarter Balanced Field Test, there will be no reading or math scores for most students. Jan Martin, Administrator of Assessment, explains: "Data from the field test will be used to determine question validity and scale scores for future tests. In other words, 2014 was really a 'test of the test.'"

Because test scores are not being reported, there will be no School Performance Index scores. SPI is used to determine classifications like Focus and Priority schools, so current classifications remain in place.

The department is also exploring the best method for calculating participation rates. "We know which students should have taken the test, as these are the students enrolled at the end of the testing window," says Martin. "However, we are not receiving any student results, so we need a new method to determine which students took the test."

With these changes, districts may wonder what data will be in the 2014 Accountability Report Cards. For elementary and middle schools, attendance rates and Dakota-STEP science results will be available. For high schools, the four-year cohort graduation rate, high school completer rate, college and career readiness calculation, and D-STEP science results will be available. Schools will also receive highly qualified teacher calculations, while the district and state report cards will also have updated NAEP results.

For the few schools that administered the paper-pencil D-STEP in reading and math this spring, the 2014 Accountability Report Card will contain

student achievement and participation rates; however, no new SPI scores will be calculated.

There have also been a few other changes to the private report card that districts access in SD-STARS. First, navigating to the school, district or state report cards is easier. Click on the appropriate box on the Accountability main page to move between the different levels.

Second, there is a new Annual Measurable Objectives report. This AMO report explains how AMOs for each subgroup were calculated. The report also provides the six-year targets and how the subgroup has performed so far.

Third, districts can now customize the reports for each indicator. Judy Merriman, administrator of the Office of Data Management, explains: "In the past, the indicator charts looked like a bar code, showing a bar for each of the 16 subgroups and for school current, school prior, district and state rates. This year in SD-STARS, districts can select the subgroup and the comparison group. Users can now see a simpler bar graph." Data matrices now accompany the bar graphs as well.

It is important for districts to inform local stakeholders of these various changes. Contact the Department of Education with any questions.

### IMPORTANT ACCOUNTABILITY DATES

- June 1 STARS Account Managers assign the Accountability Role to the District's Accountability Team
- June 13 Deadline to update data in Infinite Campus
- June 20 Districts return Accountability Sign-Off Sheet
- July 14-18\* Data available in SD-STARS and pre-appeal window for Districts\*
- Aug. 15 Embargoed district release of 2014 Accountability Reports
- Aug. 19\* 2014 Accountability Reports available to public

\*Tentative Dates



## About Us:

South Dakota STARS Connections is a bi-monthly publication for South Dakota administrators and teachers, produced by the South Dakota Department of Education. This publication is intended to communicate news and events regarding the South Dakota Student Teacher Accountability and Reporting System (SD-STARS), our Statewide Longitudinal Data System.

To view an online edition of this newsletter, go to [doe.sd.gov/publications.aspx](http://doe.sd.gov/publications.aspx).

Email story ideas or questions to [marcus.bevier@state.sd.us](mailto:marcus.bevier@state.sd.us) or [sara.kock@state.sd.us](mailto:sara.kock@state.sd.us).

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# Thinking ahead with SD-STARS: JENNIFER TSCHETTER, ESA 6

It's hard to believe that it has already been one and a half years since the formal work began to get information and training out to school districts concerning SD-STARS. Over that time, countless trainings, webinars, face-to-face meetings, and other strategies have been used to help districts engage in the use of SD-STARS as a mechanism to help access and utilize student and district data.

However, it's important to note that the SD-STARS grant is slated to be a three-year grant only. In essence, school districts have only the 2014-15 school year to access free services, like training for SD-STARS through the ESAs, as it is currently structured. While SD-STARS is not "going away," the free trainings and some services may be greatly lessened, due to the grant's conclusion.

What does this mean for school districts? Districts are strongly encouraged to contact their

local ESA representatives to visit about what resources and opportunities are available to help their staff members learn about how to access and utilize SD-STARS. Many ESAs have online resources, such as recorded webinars or short training videos, to assist districts in this work. In addition, the SD-STARS website contains a wealth of resources for district personnel.

In conclusion, take advantage of these resources in the coming school year! Think ahead to upcoming data retreats, the trainings being done to help your teachers write their SLOs, and to the hiring of new staff members. SD-STARS is a fantastic resource for any of these purposes. Don't forget that the SDDOE team, as well as your local ESA are excited to work with you this school year and to help you make the most out of a great (and getting greater!) resource.

## Proposed changes to future accountability years

After implementing the new accountability system for several years, South Dakota learned a lot about what works and what could be improved. The Department of Education is applying for an extension of its ESEA Flexibility Waiver and the accountability system and plans to include some small updates to the system at that time. Below is a list of proposed changes:

1. Take School Climate and Teacher and Principal Effectiveness out of the School Performance Index. These are still activities that will be supported by SDDOE, and the evaluation work under principle three of the waiver will not stop, but schools will not earn points for these more subjective measures.
2. Make the Focus school designation a two-year process to allow schools better time to plan and budget for needed changes and interventions.
3. Update the Student Achievement indicator to include three years of data.

4. Use the percentage of students meeting the state attendance goal instead of the average daily attendance rate to better capture the reality of attendance concerns in our elementary and middle schools.

5. Allow multiple options for a student to show College Readiness: meeting ACT benchmarks, meeting Smarter Balanced benchmarks or completing remediation before high school graduation as evidenced by passing the Accuplacer exam.

6. Allow schools choosing to use the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) exam to earn points for Career Readiness as well as for College Readiness. Schools not using this exam for their juniors or seniors would earn all their points for this indicator based on College Readiness Scores.

To find out more, check out [doe.sd.gov/Accountability/spifuture.aspx](http://doe.sd.gov/Accountability/spifuture.aspx).



# Ask the Experts

## **Will my school's assessment results appear in SD-STARS this year?**

If your school administered the Smarter Balanced Field Test, you will not receive assessment results for reading and mathematics. Science results will be available for all students who took the Dakota-STEP in science. For the few schools (primarily Hutterite Colony schools) who took the paper-pencil D-STEP, reading and mathematics results will be available in SD-STARS.

## **When does the pre-appeal period begin this year?**

The pre-appeal timeframe for accountability has been tentatively set for July 14-18. At that time, districts will have the opportunity to review their data and make any appropriate pre-appeal recommendations to the department. It is important that each district's Accountability Team be available during this timeframe to review Report Card data.

## **Who has access to the report card in SD-STARS?**

Report card access is decided by your district. People who have access will vary from district to district. Likely, your superintendent decides who needs access and works with the STARS Account Manager to assign the proper security.

## **Can principals access the report card?**

This depends on your district. Some districts allow principals to access the report card if they are reviewing accountability results. However, this is not the case in all districts. Check with your district leadership to learn who has access

to the report card. Your district STARS Account Manager will also have this information.

## **Do I have to use SD-STARS to see accountability information?**

This depends. If you are reviewing the private version of the report card for your district, you will analyze the reports and data in SD-STARS. Public accountability results are found on the department's website at [doe.sd.gov/reportcard/](http://doe.sd.gov/reportcard/)

## **Without student achievement, school performance index, or revised school classifications, why should I care about accountability?**

Although many schools will not have these indicators scored as part of accountability, the data are still important. The data can be used to make decisions, implement programs and create policies to help students. In short, even though the data does not count for accountability determinations, the data can still be used in a variety of valuable ways.

## **I have accountability questions. Who should I contact?**

Accountability is a department-wide initiative that involves DOE staff from different teams and divisions. Here is a list of who to contact with questions or concerns:

**Data:** Each district is assigned a contact in the office of data management to help them with accountability data. If you have questions about data, please consult your data management contact.

**STARS:** ESA Data STARS are your first point of contact. If the issue persists or cannot be remedied by your ESA, you can contact STARS Support ([STARSHelp@state.sd.us](mailto:STARSHelp@state.sd.us))

**Accountability:** Contact Abby Javurek-Humig ([abby.javurek-humig@state.sd.us](mailto:abby.javurek-humig@state.sd.us)) in the Division of Accountability and Assessment.

**Assessment:** Contact Jan Martin ([jan.martin@state.sd.us](mailto:jan.martin@state.sd.us)) with questions related to student assessments.

## **U.S. Dept. of Ed. publishes two new resources on protecting student data**

The U.S. Department of Education's Privacy Technical Assistance Center recently released two new resources: Best Practices for Data Destruction and a brief summary of FERPA exceptions.

Destroying data that are no longer needed is a vital part of protecting student privacy, but in this electronic age, districts need more than a sturdy shredder. The PTAC's guide explains "various methods for disposing of electronic data, and will discuss how these methods relate to legal requirements and established best practices for protecting student information."

Find these and other useful guides at [ptac.ed.gov](http://ptac.ed.gov).



# National STARS: Idaho

## FERPA webinar recordings

Over the past six months, the Department of Education, in partnership with the Privacy Technical Assistance Center, delivered a series of in-person and virtual trainings addressing student privacy. Webinars addressed security best practices, staff policies, parent policies, annual notifications and more. PTAC designed these webinars around district and department feedback from the in-person sessions.

All webinars were recorded and are available at [doe.sd.gov/ofm/sims\\_ferpa.aspx](http://doe.sd.gov/ofm/sims_ferpa.aspx). You can also find these resources, as well as others, in SD-STARS.

No additional FERPA trainings are currently scheduled. However, districts can request additional trainings by contacting STARS Support at [STARSHelp@state.sd.us](mailto:STARSHelp@state.sd.us).

Like many other states, Idaho began work on their Statewide Longitudinal Data System in 2010. They determined that the SLDS would give them the ability to follow students throughout their K-12 career.

This new ability to understand progress over time and through different sources would benefit teachers with immediate student records, historical information, prior class lists, student conduct information and more. The goal of the SLDS was to provide educators a tool for making informed decisions to drive their instruction. As the SLDS grant program says, "Better decisions require better information."

In 2011, Idaho achieved its goal of designing and populating a fully functional SLDS and named it Idaho Systems of Education Excellence. Since the development of ISEE, Idaho continued to develop and improve data collections. Currently, ISEE contains student course enrollment information, test results, special education information, staff assignments and attendance records.

But Idaho isn't done yet. The state continues to integrate key data components, continuously improving the efficiency and effectiveness of Idaho's education system. With student data at their fingertips, educators can improve instruction and meet students' needs.

## Summer 2014 data use courses

There is still room available in our summer data use courses for teachers and administrators. These promise to be fun, informative professional development opportunities.

The courses will cover some foundational elements of using data in the classroom and at the building level. Also, the courses were designed to help build skills for inexperienced and experienced data users. Additionally, if you are taking the course for credit, a project is required to successfully complete the course.

Register at [southdakota.gosignmeup.com](http://southdakota.gosignmeup.com). Participation is free, and mileage/lunch will be reimbursed by the Department of Education. One graduate credit is available through USD at a reduced cost of \$40.

### ADMINISTRATOR TRAINING - Using Data to Guide School Improvement

- June 16 – Rapid City
- June 17 – Mitchell
- June 20 – Brookings

### TEACHER TRAINING Using Data to Improve Instruction

- August 4 – Rapid City
- August 5 – Pierre
- August 6 – Sioux Falls

## ESA DATA STARS

Every ESA has representatives who have been trained in SD-STARS. They are ready and willing to answer your questions. If you don't know your ESA assignment, see <http://doe.sd.gov/octe/sdesa.aspx>.

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