

south dakota

STARS

Student Teacher Accountability and Reporting System

connections

Regional trainings for districts

Building on the trainings offered across the state last fall, the Department of Education is organizing more workshops this March in four locations. The trainings are aimed at STARS Account Managers (SAMs) and Data STARS. Training for SAMs will occur in the morning from 9 a.m. – noon local time with training for Data STARS in the afternoon from 1 – 4 p.m. local time. Since this is a hands-on experience, attendees are strongly encouraged to bring laptops to participate in activities.

The training for SAMs will be similar to past trainings, so it will be most useful for SAMs who have not attended a training before. Participants will first learn of the basic responsibilities of serving as a SAM, from learning how accounts are created and maintained to how accounts are ended. This will transition into SD-STARS security and types of access. Jameson Berreth, the SD-STARS Support Lead, will facilitate the training, help ‘clean-up’ outdated accounts and ensure that security is set up correctly in each district.

Those attending the Data STARS training should have at least some familiarity and experience in SD-STARS. Whereas the Data STARS trainings last fall were aimed at beginners, these trainings will be for intermediate users and will build upon the material and skills delivered in the prior training. Using data from SD-STARS, participants will begin to apply their knowledge to improve and evaluate their instruction. Attending the beginner training is helpful, but not required.

Register on GoSignMeUp: <https://southdakota.gosignmeup.com/>. Search for “SD-STARS.”

CITY	LOCATION	DATE
Chamberlain	Cedar Shores Resort	March 8
Rapid City	Western Dakota Technical Institute	March 9
Aberdeen	AmericInn	March 16
Sioux Falls	Southeast Technical Institute	March 17

How SD-STARS is helping districts through state programs

This newsletter often highlights how SD-STARS impacts districts directly, but SD-STARS also helps South Dakota Department of Education staff, which in turn helps districts. Here are three examples.

Birth to Three

One year ago, SD-STARS began connecting participants in the Birth to Three program to students in K-12 education. Commonly called IDEA Part C, this voluntary program provides early intervention services to eligible children from birth to age three.

Changes to federal rules meant state program staff needed to evaluate the long-term outcomes for participants. Sarah Carter, administrator for the program explained, “We knew anecdotally children who receive Birth to Three services experience positive outcomes, but we didn’t have a tool to prove the impact on children long-term.” The goal was to answer questions like, *Do children who receive Birth to Three services avoid needing special education services once they start attending school? or After receiving Birth to Three services, do they qualify for special education services at all?*

SD-STARS is able to match data of a child from the Birth to Three program with his or her K-12 education data. This helps Birth to Three staff answer important questions about the program’s long-term effectiveness. “Without SD-STARS, we aren’t sure what we would have done, but it likely would have required new reporting requirements for districts. We’re glad we saved the districts this additional work,” Carter explains.

Migrant Education Program

The Migrant Education Program, also known as Title I Part C, works with K-12 students who move from one school district to another because their parents obtain temporary or seasonal employment as a migrant agricultural worker. The program works to support these students and reduce the educational disruptions and other challenges that result from repeated moves. This requires coordination between districts and states.

Program staff at the state level need to report course enrollments and state assessment results for these students. Jenifer Palmer, the

department’s Migrant Education Program coordinator, says, “Because students frequently move across state lines, they often start school without transcripts or assessment results from their prior school in a different state. As a result, their new schools were placing them in the same courses or in the same grade again and again, hurting their chances of graduating.”

Using SD-STARS, the Migrant Education Program is now able to share course enrollment information with the district in the new state, giving the district the information they need to enroll the student in the correct courses. “If we didn’t have this information in SD-STARS, we would not have been able to do this, or we would have needed new reporting from districts. With SD-STARS, we save time for districts and our program staff.”

South Dakota Assessment Portal

The South Dakota Assessment Portal (SDAP), also known as eMetric, is an online resource to help educators create, deliver and track classroom and summative assessments for students. In addition, educators use the SDAP to interact with state assessment results, including printing individual student reports.

Previously, which students were assigned to a school or district was based on a roster from the start of the school year. This is problematic when students move from one district to another. “In the past, districts would contact the department saying, ‘Johnny is now in our school, but we can’t see him in our roster,’” explains Jan Martin, assessment administrator for the department. “We would have to manually make this change in the SDAP. This required time from department staff, and it required districts to contact us.”

Now, SD-STARS provides a roster to the SDAP nightly. When a student moves, his or her most current enrollment is automatically updated in the SDAP.

In addition to these examples, other projects planned or in the works include using SD-STARS to help districts with reporting in the Perkins Data Collection System; creating dual credit reports on program outcomes; and providing special education reports that help with federal reporting.



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.

Email story ideas or questions to STARSHelp@state.sd.us.

Contact Us:



South Dakota
Department of Education
800 Governors Drive
Pierre, SD 57501

Project Manager:
Sara Kock
Sara.Kock@state.sd.us
(605) 773-6158

Project Manager:
Kim Carlson
Kim.Carlson@state.sd.us
(605) 773-8062

Support Lead:
Jameson Berreth
Jameson.Berreth@state.sd.us
(605) 773-4463

doe.sd.gov/ofm/lds.aspx

SAM corner: Mapping security permissions

SD-STARS uses information from Infinite Campus – District Edition (IC-DE) to assign and maintain security permissions. The integral piece is the job title found in the district assignment. SD-STARS uses these job titles to determine what features a user sees and what data a user can access.

How? The STARS Security – Org Role Updater report shows the mappings between job titles and organization roles. Through the Org Role Updater, each district can map their job titles in order to personalize security in SD-STARS. This report is available only to STARS Account Managers (SAMs), who can request changes by emailing STARSHelp@state.sd.us.

Although districts determine which role to map to each job title, the differences can be confusing, especially to new SAMs. Below are some suggestions on what mappings typically work best.

The first thing to consider when mapping a job title is what level of data users with that title should see. Mapping to a district level allows a user to see data for all students in a district while a school level shows student data throughout a school. There is one exception: the “School: Teacher” role only allows a user to see students he or she is currently teaching.

There are several different roles within each organization level. Four commonly used roles are Management, Superintendent, Principal and Teacher. The Management role is available at both the district and school levels, which makes it best for users who need access to all students throughout that level. This role is common for counselors, reading specialists and secretaries. The Superintendent role provides access to all students throughout a district and is best mapped to superintendent and assistant

superintendent job titles. Similarly, the Principal role is for principals and provides access to every student in a school. Principal and assistant principal job titles should be mapped to this role.

As mentioned earlier, the Teacher role allows a user to see only students in his or her classroom. Therefore, this role should only be used when a person has students assigned to him/her through a course in IC-DE. It is common for districts to mistakenly use this role for instructional staff who do not have courses, such as Title I teachers. If a user is not connected to students in courses, then the user will not see any data in SD-STARS. Additionally, users with the Teacher role cannot see the Dashboard menu, since dashboards are only available for school and district levels.

The South Dakota Department of Education is working to expand security for the Teacher role to allow teachers to see additional students who are assigned to them using caseloads. This particularly affects special education teachers. Until then, special education teachers need to be assigned Management role or no role at all.

A common role is “NotDefined.” This role does not provide access to SD-STARS. There are many job titles which should not have access to SD-STARS, such as custodian, cook or school bus driver. These individuals serve essential functions in the operation of a school district, but NotDefined is appropriate because they do not have a “legitimate educational interest” to see student data.

If a SAM is unsure about what mappings to assign in the Org Role Updater, contact STARSHelp@state.sd.us. SD-STARS staff can answer any questions and help find the appropriate mapping.

SD-STARS Manual – Helpful resource for every user

This winter the SD-STARS staff updated the SD-STARS Manual. The manual was last released in December 2013 and several components had become outdated. This resource contains information on every aspect of SD-STARS from a walkthrough of each component of the website to creating and maintaining accounts to basic troubleshooting. It can be useful for any SD-STARS user.

The document is extensive, but hyperlinks within the Table of Contents link readers directly to sections of interest. Additionally, there are many hyperlinks throughout the document to take a user to related pages that may be of help.

The SD-STARS Manual can be found in SD-STARS via the Content Library or Training Center.



Ask the experts

When will new local assessment data be loaded?

Local assessment data from DIBELS and AIMSweb are loaded three times each year. Fall data were pulled Sept. 20 and became available Sept. 27. Winter data were pulled Jan. 20 and became available Jan. 27. Spring data will be pulled May 20 and become available May 27.

How do I return to the 'parent' report I was just looking at?

In several reports in SD-STARS, clicking on a student name takes the user to the Student Profile report of that student. In this report are demographic, enrollment, attendance, assessment and special education data for that student. To return to the previous report, the user can click on the blue arrow in the navigation bar. Hovering over the blue arrow shows that this button returns the user to the 'parent' report.

What changes have been made to the assessment reports in SD-STARS?

Many users in SD-STARS found the assessment reports difficult to interpret because of the changes in student grades and school years, so Department of Education staff recently reworked the reports to make them easier to understand. In addition to grade filters labeled Current Grade or Tested Grade, there are now columns for each of these categories that clearly show what grade students were in when the assessment was taken and what grade they are in currently. Additionally, the assessment reports now include data for students who took the NCSC or DSTEP Alt. There will also be a column indicating whether a student took one of these alternative assessments.

Report spotlight: McKinney-Vento Student Count

A new report was recently released to users in SD-STARS. The McKinney-Vento Student Count Report (EN.008.02-A) provides a list of currently enrolled students who have been flagged as homeless at any point during the year. Basic demographics and state assessment scores appear. All columns in the report are sortable. Developed in response to district requests and with input from the Department of Education's homeless coordinator, the intended audience for this report is superintendents and district administrative staff.

The report first looks at students flagged as homeless in the district's student information system. It begins with basic information such as name, enrollment status and current grade. It also displays demographic information including gender, race, and whether the student is migrant, receiving special education services or flagged as an English Language Learner. The most recent district and school enrollment are then displayed along with

the district and school where the student was first identified as homeless. The living arrangement (ex: doubled up/sharing housing, hotels/motels) is displayed as well. Assessment data finishes the report. To see English language arts and math scores, select "Smarter Balanced/NCSC" in the "Test Name" parameter. Select "DSTEP/DSTEP Alt" to see Science scores. The "Alternative" column identifies students who took the alternative assessment.

Using this report, districts can be aware of students who are currently homeless or were flagged as homeless in another district before transferring into their current district. Districts are then able to see how the homeless student performed on state assessments. This report also has the capability to help districts with state reporting on homeless students.

To see a more in-depth explanation of the report, check out the Report DIG in the Content Library or Training Center within SD-STARS.

Districts surveyed about data entry practices

In October, the South Dakota Education Data Governance Group surveyed districts to better understand district practices in entering data into Infinite Campus.

The results of this survey are being compiled and will be used by the data governance group and the Department of Education to further refine and define data entry rules. A majority of respondents indicated they have been entering data into Infinite Campus for more than five years, and many respondents also expressed a need for further training to ensure they are correctly entering data.

Once the final set of data standards are ready, districts can expect further communication and training. The goal is to improve the accuracy and quality of data being entered into Infinite Campus.

Information submitted by districts via the survey is useful for understanding a variety of data entry issues. For instance, one question asked districts how often they enter first or last names that differ from a student's birth certificate and why this may be the case. Two-thirds of districts indicated the names they enter match the birth certificate, while one-third of districts indicated a birth certificate is not available or parents use a different name for their child than what is on the birth certificate.

Another question asked if districts are using the enrollment exit code "18: Discontinued education" to indicate if a student is 18 or older and he/she dropped out of school. Many respondents said they enter this data as described, but some do not. One respondent wrote that he/she had not been aware of this exit code, but would now use it.

SD-STARS uses data found in Infinite Campus and other sources to help with state and federal reporting as well as to provide data back to districts. High quality data are essential to ensure everyone has accuracy and reliability data for reporting and decision making.



National STARS: New Hampshire releases video on the importance of data

The New Hampshire Department of Education recently released a video called *Why Data?* featuring teachers and data coaches discussing eight reasons data use is important for teachers (<https://vimeo.com/145661565>):

- Reason #1: Assessment is part of teaching
- Reason #2: You can understand data
- Reason #3: Data empowers
- Reason #4: Students and teachers can reflect

- Reason #5: The past informs the future
- Reason #6: Builds community and collaboration
- Reason #7: It makes a difference
- Reason #8: We can help



Michael Schwartz, with the New Hampshire Department of Education, says, "We recognize that for most educators, using data is not a core competency — it can be intimidating, the value may not be immediately apparent, they may not know where to start. We developed the video so that teachers and administrators could talk to their colleagues, so that educators could hear from their fellow educators and the data coaches."

Aggregate Local Assessments Reports released

Users will notice four new reports in the Local Assessments category under the Reports tab:

- Aggregate Proficiency (LA.004.00-X)
- Aggregate Proficiency School List (LA.005.00-X)
- Aggregate Growth (LA.006.00-X)
- Cohort Progress (LA.007.00-X)

To see these reports, a district must use either AIMSweb, DIBELS.net or DIBELS University of Oregon. The district must also have returned a release form to the Department of Education allowing the department to load these assessments into STARS. The department loaded local assessments for the first time in school year 2014-15; therefore, no prior years will appear.

Aggregate Proficiency provides aggregate counts and percentages of students who met each proficiency level for DIBELS/ AIMSweb. Users can select all grades or a certain grade level, which assessment their district uses, subject and subtest. The report displays results in a data table and graph. The report also displays historical results.

Aggregate Proficiency School List shows a list of schools and a school's aggregate counts and percentages by proficiency level for each DIBELS/ AIMSweb benchmark period. Users can select all grades or a certain grade level, which

assessment their district uses, subject and subtest. The report displays a graph and table separated by assessment periods and further drills down to benchmark under those assessment periods. Within the table, users will see a column labeled "% P. T." This column displays percentage point change from the winter to fall and spring to fall, allowing users to see if a cohort of students is making progress.

Aggregate Growth shows how students who started at the same level moved in a single year throughout the benchmark periods for DIBELS/ AIMSweb. Users can select all grades or a certain grade level, which assessment their district uses, subject and subtest. The report displays a data table. The data table shows the results for students who started in one performance level and ended in another.

This report will help answer the question, *Of the kids who were classified as benchmark (or intensive or strategic) in the fall, at what level are they now?*

Cohort Progress shows changes in proficiency for a select cohort of students over benchmark periods and years. Users can select all grades or a certain grade level, which assessment their district uses, subject and subtest. This report displays a data table and graph. The data table shows test period and result by grade level. This report is designed to look at current students and their historical results.

Report DIGs are being developed for each of these reports and will be released as they are finished. They will be located in the Content Library and Training Center within SD-STARS.

Certified STARS trainers available to districts

STARS Certified Trainers are available to provide trainings to districts. Trainers have been trained by DOE staff on the SD-STARS system and are kept up-to-date on system developments and new reports. Districts can contact the trainer directly to request a training either at a cost to the district or as a part of their state-supported professional development.

Sara Fridley	sara.fridley@k12.sd.us
Crystal Mengershausen	cmengershausen@gmail.com
Janeen Outka	joutka@edec.org
Lisa Reinhiller	lisa.reinhiller@k12.sd.us
Holly Schumacher	holly.schumacher@k12.sd.us
Jennifer Tschetter	jtschetter@tie.net