

south dakota



STARS

Student Teacher Accountability and Reporting System

connections

Educators register for data use courses

The SD Department of Education conducts two summer data use courses that offer insight into effectively analyzing and implementing data use in schools.

The first course, Advanced Data Use Skills for Educators, began June 1. Participants in the advanced course must have previously completed the fundamentals course. Twenty-five educators are registered for this online class, and most will receive two graduate credits from The University of South Dakota.

The second course is the Fundamentals of Using Data for Educators. This course requires one face-to-face meeting in one of three locations:

- Aug. 3 - Aberdeen
- Aug. 4 - Chamberlain
- Aug. 5 - Brookings

There is still time to register by going to <https://southdakota.gosignmeup.com>.

Participation is free, and one graduate credit is available for \$40. This graduate credit will be through Northern State University instead of The University of South Dakota.

2015 Accountability is around the corner

When districts view their Report Card this year, they will notice some differences.

Student achievement and all-assessed will look different, reflecting the data coming from the new state assessment, Smarter Balanced. For example, proficiency levels will be displayed as Level 1-4, with Level 3 and 4 noted as proficient. Districts will still see Dakota STEP data for science since Smarter Balanced is only for English language arts and math.

With the first full year of Smarter Balanced testing, the Annual Measure Objectives for English language arts and math will be reset. South Dakota's overarching goal for student achievement is to reduce the percentage of students who are not proficient by half within six years. AMOs are the annual targets based on this six-year goal. AMOs are set for each subgroup at each school. This gives the schools a unique trajectory that recognizes where each school started in terms of student proficiency, while allowing support for continuous improvement.

Because assessment data will be available this year, School Performance Index scores will be calculated, and new classifications will be available. The SPI consists of key indicators of performance – student achievement and attendance at the elementary and middle school levels; student achievement, high school completion, and college and career readiness at the high school level. A numeric value is assigned to each of the indicators. These values are added to create a total SPI score out of 100 points. Almost all public schools in the state receive a SPI score, which is then used to classify schools as exemplary, status, progressing, focus, or priority.

In previous years, the attendance SPI was based on the average daily attendance rate of all students through the academic year. For the 2015 Report Card, attendance SPI is based on the percentage of students who attended at least 94 percent of their enrolled days in a school. Students must be enrolled for 15 consecutive school days to be included in the calculation. The new calculation for attendance SPI also considers the percentage of time a school has dually enrolled students.

The Report Card timeline is later than other years. In the past, districts would see their public report card before the new school year started; that will not be the case this year. "With the change to the new Smarter Balanced assessment and a new vendor, we have had to shift our Report Card timeline from the release date we had been able to hit in the past," says Laura Scheibe, the Accreditation and Accountability Administrator. "We are pleased that student reports are available much earlier than ever before, but our state Report Card will be published about a month later," says Scheibe.

Districts need not worry about how these changes will affect reports in SD-STARS. "The reports are being updated to reflect the changes to accountability," says Kim Carlson, one of the project managers for SD-STARS. "The same functionality users had with accountability reports in the past will remain," says Carlson.

Timeline for 2015 Report Card (Tentative):

- June 12 – Update data in Infinite Campus and Personal Record Form
- June 19 – Districts to return Accountability Sign-Off Sheet
- Aug. 10-14 – Districts review and validate data in SD-STARS
- Sept. 18 – Districts receive final data prior to the public release
- Sept. 18-21 – Districts share local data with key stakeholders
- Sept. 22 – Public release of statewide data in the Report Card
- Oct. 5 – Deadline for formal appeals to be submitted to department
- Oct. 20 – Deadline for the department to make decisions on appeals



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.

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State assessments and SD-STARS

With the new Smarter Balanced assessment, SD-STARS' reports and dashboards are being updated to accommodate the new assessment. Here are some important changes users will see in SD-STARS.

Student proficiency for Smarter Balanced will fall within one of four levels: minimal understanding (Level 1), partial understanding (Level 2), adequate understanding (Level 3) and thorough understanding (Level 4).

Another difference is the scores. Raw score is a score without any sort of adjustment, such as a simple number of questions answered correctly. Smarter Balanced does not have raw scores. Therefore, SD-STARS users will not find raw scores on any reports that look at Smarter Balanced results. Scale score is the result of some adjustment made to the raw score so that all students are on a consistent scale. Smarter Balanced scale scores will range from 2000-3000.

Student reports will also indicate how a student scored on claims, which are groups of test questions that measure similar or related knowledge or skills. Students' performance on claims will be rated Below Standard, At/Near Standard or Above Standard.

On the math assessment, students will receive scores on three claims:

- Concepts & Procedures

- Problem Solving and Modeling & Data Analysis
- Communicating Reasoning

On the English language arts assessment, students will receive scores on four claims:

- Reading
- Writing
- Listening
- Research & Inquiry

It's important to remember Smarter Balanced results cannot be compared to Dakota STEP results. The Smarter Balanced assessment measures student mastery of new, more rigorous standards, and there will be a period of adjustment as students become more familiar with the concepts being assessed.

The department is in the process of updating SD-STARS reports to display Smarter Balanced data. The timeline for doing so will likely last into the next school year.

Results on other state assessment can also be found in SD-STARS. DSTEP Science and Science Alt will continue to appear in the reports. The National Center and State Collaborative is the project to build an alternative assessment for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. SD-STARS will eventually have the student results for NCSC, but the timeline is yet to be determined.

SD-STARS federal grant comes to a close

Although the SD-STARS grant will be concluding at the end of June, SD-STARS will continue in its efforts. SD-STARS provides reports and resources for teachers and administrators that are helpful for making data-informed decisions. Even without the grant, SD-STARS has many new updates and improvements underway for the future and will remain committed to making data easily accessible and usable.

One major change districts will notice is that the free services provided through ESAs including webinars, in-person training, and one-on-one support will end. As of June 30, ESAs will likely charge districts for these types of services. The Department of Education will continue the work supporting districts. For example, plans are already being made to offer regional training for districts' Data STARS and STARS Account Managers next fall/winter.



Ask the experts

Where else can I access state assessment results?

SD-STARS is not the only place educators can access state assessments. DSTEP Science and Science Alt results are available in the science portal: <https://sddstep.questarai.com/Admin/>. Smarter Balanced are available in the Smarter Balanced portal: <http://sd.portal.airast.org>. In addition, Smarter Balanced and DSTEP Science results will be available in Infinite Campus and South Dakota Assessment Portal.

The most comprehensive source of Smarter Balanced data will be in the Smarter Balanced portal. For example, there will no longer be parent reports in Infinite Campus.

If districts have any questions on assessment results please contact: Jan Martin, State Assessment Director at (605) 773-3246 or jan.martin@state.sd.us.

When will Smarter Balanced results be in SD-STARS? How can I access the results?

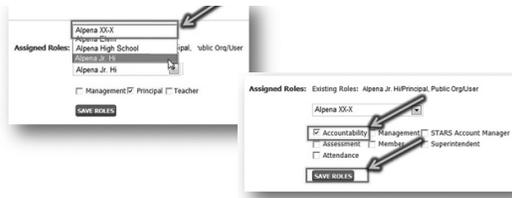
August will be the earliest Smarter Balanced results will be in SD-STARS.

Users can access the data through STARS Reports. In order to accommodate the new test, the department will be updating the current reports. This work will continue through the summer into the next school year.

Users with the accountability permission will be able to see Smarter Balanced data in the 2015 Report Card. The report card contains official calculations for student achievement, graduation, completer, attendance rates and college and career readiness. The private report card also contains student rosters with individual student results. Tentatively, preliminary results will be available Aug. 10 and official results Sept. 18.

I am a STARS Account Manager and trying to assign a user the accountability permission, however I don't see this option. What I am doing wrong?

For users to access the Report Card, STARS Account Managers will need to assign the accountability permission. Accountability permission is available at the district level only. Once you select the district level from the assigned roles dropdown, the accountability permission will appear.



The accountability permission allows the user to see the results for the entire district in the report card. This includes the ability to access student level results for all students in the district.

Assign accountability role by June 1

As districts prepare for the release of the 2015 Report Card, it is important that STARS Account Managers assign the accountability permission to the correct users. This permission allows selected users to see accountability results for the entire school district, down to the student level. SAMs should review which users have this role and make any updates as staff members leave and new ones begin this summer.

Each district determines who should see the Report Card, and the SAMs assign the permission to these users. The department strongly recommends that permissions be assigned by June 1; however, SAMs are encouraged to double check permissions again August 1 in order to accommodate any new staff.

Detailed instructions are located in the SD-STARS Content Library and Training Center. Both a video and a PDF are available under Stars Account Manager Resources. Contact your ESA or STARS Support at STARSHelp@state.sd.us with questions.

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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Educators participate in book study by: Holly Schumacher, ESA 5

A combination of teachers and administrators from ESA Region 5 took part in a book study to help improve their knowledge of data use. The book title used was *School Improvement for the Next Generation*, which focused on expanding and enhancing the three step process of planning, implementing, and monitoring. The authors work to engage readers in a more focused school improvement cycle that combines collaboration, accountability, planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. The book included valuable examples from schools across North America, along with specific strategies school leaders and teachers can use regardless of the school's stage of improvement process and the school's makeup.

Class participants joined the book study to improve their knowledge of

data and how to use data to improve their classrooms and schools. One participant stated, "I look forward to quality discussions regarding school improvement and how we can make a difference for our students, our schools, and our communities."

While completing reading assignments, class participants used the online platform Edmodo to respond to specific questions regarding the content in each chapter. They responded with viewpoints of a teacher, an administrator, and a data team member. This allowed for participants to see different viewpoints and gain valuable ideas from one another on approaching and achieving school improvement.

Book study participants worked hard to find personal and realistic relationships with the suggestions and examples

laid out in the book. For example, participants connected the chapter that covered monitoring and midcourse corrections and various state paid PD options. One participant connected how effective teachers frequently monitor their classrooms to how school leaders should handle school improvement with the same urgency. She mentioned, "teachers use higher order thinking skills and Webb leveled questions to continually assess their students. Likewise, quality feedback regarding teacher evaluations should be targeted and timely ensuring the best benefit for educators and their students."

Participants who enrolled in this book study and completed the accompanying coursework earned one graduate credit, while also achieving a greater understanding of more effective school improvement efforts for the "next generation."

FERPA resources to help schools understand requirements

Even as summer begins, it is a good time to review your school's student handbook. These handbooks often contain two FERPA required notifications. Here is some helpful information provided by the U.S. Department of Education.

ANNUAL NOTIFICATION

Under FERPA, a school must annually notify parents of their rights under FERPA. The annual notification must include information to parents about the following rights: review their child's education records, seek and amend records, consent disclosure of personally identifiable information from records (this is circumstantial), and file a complaint to the U.S. Department of Education with the Family Compliance Office for a school's noncompliance with FERPA. The school must also inform parents of its definitions of the terms "school official" and "legitimate educational interest."

Schools may provide the annual notification using any means likely to inform parents, but posting the notice on the school's website cannot be the only way.

A model FERPA annual notification can be found at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/lea-officials.html>.

DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Under FERPA, a school may not generally disclose personally identifiable information from a student's education records to a third party unless the student's parent has provided written consent. One exception to this is if the information has been appropriately designated as directory information.

"Directory information" is defined as information contained in the education records that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. Directory information could include

information such as the student's name, address, date of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, diplomas and awards received, and more. This information can then be used for school publications like the annual yearbook, honor role announcements, and sports programs.

A school may disclose directory information without consent if it has given public notice of the types of information it has designated as directory information, the parent's right to restrict the disclosure of such information, and the period of time parents have to notify the school that they do not want any or all of those types of information designated as directory information.

A model notice of directory information can be found at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/mndirectoryinfo.html>.