




STATE OF CONNECTICUT

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION



TO: Superintendents of Schools

FROM: Mark K. McQuillan 
Commissioner of Education

DATE: June 18, 2010

SUBJECT: New Data Requirements Under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) Program

In January 2010, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) submitted its application for funding for Phase II of the Education Fund under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) Program. You will recall that Phase I funds under SFSF in the amount of \$269,519,897.00 were awarded to districts in November 2009. In April 2010, the CSDE was asked to resubmit its Phase II application and provide corrections where needed. The purpose of this letter is to make you aware of new data requirements under SFSF that must be implemented no later than September 30, 2011.

As part of its application for SFSF funding, the CSDE had to indicate which of the 12 elements described in the America COMPETES Act were included in its statewide longitudinal data system (SLDS). For every element that the CSDE does not have in the SLDS, there needed to be a plan submitted that "provides the process and timeline for developing and implementing as soon as possible, but no later than September 30, 2011, a statewide longitudinal data system that includes all 12 elements." Three data elements that the CSDE does not currently have in the SLDS are: 1) a unique student identifier from pre-K through postsecondary education; 2) the ability to match teachers to students; and 3) student-level transcript information, including courses completed and grades earned. In its original SFSF application, the CSDE indicated that it did not have these data elements and provided a plan to incorporate them by the 2012-13 school year. The Federal reviewers required the CSDE to revise this section of the application and provide a plan that meets the SFSF required timeline, September 30, 2011.

Unique student identifier from pre-K through postsecondary education

While the CSDE does provide the state assigned student identifier (SASID) for all public school students in grades pre-K through 12, the SASID does not follow the student into Connecticut's public institutions of higher education (IHEs). The Connecticut public IHEs recently agreed to carry the SASID in their student information systems, provided that the SASID appears on a student's high school transcript. Therefore, we need to require the SASID to be included on your high school transcript. The IHEs will use the transcript to find the SASID for all new enrollees in the fall of 2011.

Matching teachers to students and collecting student transcript information

In order to comply with the SFSF data requirement to link teachers to students as well as collect student courses completed and grades earned, the CSDE has started developing a data collection system, similar to the Public School Information System (PSIS), for districts to use in order to upload these data.

One of the first tasks the CSDE will be asking of you will be to perform a crosswalk between courses offered in your schools and the standardized courses put forth by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). This crosswalk will ensure consistency in reporting across all districts. The following tentative timeline is offered for the course crosswalk and subsequent activities:

- August 2010 – February 2011:** The NCES course crosswalk application is open; data submitted to the CSDE no later than February 2011.
- March 2011 – April 2011:** Training is provided for the teacher, course and student collection.
- May 2011 – August 2011:** Collection is open; data submitted by August 2011.

Please be aware that we realize the challenge this presents to your districts. We recognized this challenge from the beginning and attempted to delay the implementation date of September 2011 to no avail. In spite of these challenges, there will be value-added benefits in the long term as a result of collecting these data, including:

1. *The elimination of the federally required ED-400 Career and Technical Education Report.* Each summer, the ED-400 collected aggregate data about student enrollment in career and technical education courses. This collection will no longer be needed once we have student-level, course enrollment data.
2. *The reduction in data collected on the ED-540 Graduating Class Report.* Specifically, the need to collect aggregate student enrollments in college-level and Advanced Placement (AP) courses will be eliminated, as will the requirement to collect the number of graduates earning credit for certain courses such as chemistry and algebra.
3. *Enhancements to student profile data available through CEDaR.* You recently received a memo from the CSDE regarding the new CEDaR Web site. The CSDE is planning the addition of secure student profiles, accessible to district and building administrators, and as a result of the teacher-student link, accessible to teachers as well. The student profiles will provide administrators and teachers with longitudinal data about students they are currently educating. Examples of available student profile data include past attendance, disciplinary offenses, and Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) and Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) results. With the new collection of course enrollment and grades earned, these data can be added to the student profile to provide a more complete picture of a student's educational experience. By using the NCES course taxonomy as a means to standardize across districts, described earlier in this letter, districts will have a better understanding of a student's past course history, should the student be new to the district. These student profiles will follow a student; therefore, you will have access to these data as soon as a student is registered in your district.

We will distribute additional information about this process as soon as it becomes available. Should you have any questions in the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact Sarah Ellsworth, Bureau Chief of Data Collection, Research and Evaluation, at 860-713-6888 or via email at sarah.ellsworth@ct.gov.