S.T.A.R.S @ Glance

Student Teacher Accountability Reporting System (STARS)
Last Updated: 3/13/2006

Background

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) represents the most significant federal education policy initiative of the last 40 years. NCLB builds on the accountability and assessment requirements of its predecessor, the 1994 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), and mirrors, in many ways, the general direction of state education policy initiatives over the past decade.

The New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED), like most other state education agencies in the nation, is leading a major initiative to improve the quality and timeliness of data, analysis, and information. The current data collection, analysis and reporting systems do not provide PED and the New Mexico school districts with the tools necessary to meet these increasing reporting and analysis requirements.

NMPED has decided to implement a new system and process for collecting and analyzing data. The goals of the project include:

- Meet the current PED and federal reporting requirements
- Improve education decision-making through the use of high quality data and decision support tools
- Provide longitudinal tracking of education progress over time for particular individuals and subgroups
- Provide a data model focused on the US Department of Education's data standards and compliant with the SIF standards.
- Report timely and accurate education data through standardized and ad hoc reporting capabilities.
- Provide industrial strength Extraction-Transformation-Loading technology which enables the processing of large numbers of records in a relatively short amount of time, while putting the data through a rigorous set of quality control processes.
- Provide a web browser interface which allows districts to send files, process them easily and get timely feedback which all leads to faster and higher quality results.

When STARS is fully implemented, NMPED will be able to provide more comprehensive and up-to-date information to decision-makers, streamline the data collection process and reduce the data submission burden on schools, districts, and NMPED staff. Taken together, these changes should position the agency to be able to engage in more extensive research and evaluation efforts in order to enhance school improvement as well as agency accountability.

What is STARS?

The Student Teacher Accountability Reporting System (STARS) is an upgrade to the Accountability Data System (ADS) which provides greater functionality to schools, districts, and NMPED. STARS is designed as an educational data collection and reporting model that builds upon the strengths of respective public education partners represented across state, district, and local levels.   It is thus a highly flexible model

that incorporates a two-way flow of information: aggregating necessary data upward from respective schools and districts to the state to comply with state and federal reporting requirements and general systems management, while providing disaggregated state data back down from the state to districts and schools.

What are the expected benefits of STARS?

New Mexico's STARS initiative will provide many benefits for education management by using data to:

- Provide appropriate personnel secure access to student information to:
    - Improve educational experience for the highly mobile student and their parents
    - Improve student and school achievement performance through the use of student level data analytics
- Provide decision makers with better data to base decisions on educational initiatives.
- Provide standard reports for use by teachers, school and district administrators, and PED staff.

What are the major project activities?

In addition to the design and development of the STARS data warehouse, the project team will be training school district personnel on STARS data submission and decision support capabilities. The project will utilize a small group of school districts to complete a "pilot" for training and implementation.

The pilot districts have the following objectives:

- Finalize the data dictionary, metadata, training and support processes prior to statewide implementation
- Confirm that the data is available from the districts at the level of detail required
- Gather lessons learned and obtain candid feedback
- Submit data to the data warehouse in April 2006

After the pilot is completed, the project team will begin preparing for a statewide implementation. The statewide rollout will operate in much the same way as the pilot and will take into account any lessons learned during the pilot to produce a successful result. All New Mexico school districts will be required to submit data to STARS in the fall of 2006 for the 2006-2007 school year.

How will we be informed?

Communications about STARS will be available by two primary methods:

- The STARS website: A self-service tool designed to provide information regarding the STARS project. Please click on the URL to visit the site: www.ped.state.nm.us/stars.

- Email: All PED employees will receive periodic updates via email about the project status and updates to STARS.