

South Carolina

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION LONGITUDINAL DATA SYSTEM

Project Start Date: 01/09/2006

Project End Date: 1/8/2010

Amount awarded: \$ 5,795,603

South Carolina has been awarded a grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Institute for Education Sciences that will help fund the development of the State's Longitudinal Data System (SC LDS). The South Carolina Department of Education (SDE) Office of Technology, will oversee the design, development, implementation, and integration of data that currently rests in multiple systems, expand the data that are included, and meet federal and state reporting requirements. Most importantly, the SC LDS will enable the educational system to have the data needed to make changes in instruction and address the needs of all students. Using the data from SC LDS, South Carolina will endeavor to close achievement gaps and address the needs of all types of learners. To design, implement, and sustain the SC LDS, the SDE will work with key stakeholders, including schools and districts, parents, business partners, and the U.S. Department of Education. By understanding the needs of various users and the uses of the data, a system will be designed that offers current, valid, timely, and user-friendly reporting mechanisms. The SC LDS will enable South Carolina's educators and policymakers to improve the dissemination of information. With the SC LDS, South Carolina will have an additional tool to use in its efforts to improve the educational system and continue its advances in teacher reform and academic achievement for all students.

South Carolina is currently implementing an essential component of the longitudinal data system. The Student Unique Numbering System (SUNS) is a single, non-duplicated number that is assigned to and remains with a student throughout his or her PreK-12 career. The identifier provides a way to follow students as they move from grade to grade, from school to school or even district to district.

The major goals to be attained by the end of the three-year grant include:

- Building and implementing a vertical reporting system (school to district to state) that will be based on a statewide implementation of the School Interoperability Framework (SIF)

- Extending SIF to transfer student data horizontally between South Carolina’s public school districts, between state-level systems, and to other states and higher education entities
- Designing and developing an enterprise-wide data architecture to include a data dictionary and a data model
- Expanding the state-level data repository to include Education Data Exchange Network (EDEN) data elements and expedite federal reporting
- Implementing a user-friendly reporting framework that provides researchers and stakeholders with access to the state-level data repository
- Establishing a plan to integrate data systems so that administrators and educators have the information they need to increase efficiency and improve student learning
- Using data from both administrative and instructional systems to understand relationships between decisions, allocation of resources, and student achievement
- Ensuring interoperability by using the (SIF) Compliance Certification as a requirement in all purchasing decisions
- Using assessment results to inform and differentiate instruction for every child

The statewide longitudinal data system will help educators track the academic effectiveness of a school or program, assess the impact of teacher preparation and training programs on student achievement, recognize consistently high performing schools, and prepare the state’s students for success in rigorous high school courses.

“This is exciting news,” according to State Superintendent of Education Inez Tenenbaum. “No Child Left Behind Act and state accountability measures require increasingly detailed data and analyses for education decision-making. Our new data system will enable us to conduct research and identify solutions that improve classroom instruction. It will help us close the achievement gap, and the ultimate winners will be our students.”