

Dear Colleagues:

I write to remind you that verification reports for the 2008–09 school year, including the Accountability Verification Reports (AVRs), have been available on nySTART since June 2. Preview Accountability and Overview Reports (AORs) will be available on July 2. These reports are updated weekly. Most of these data can be verified now.

The federal government is requiring that New York make school and district accountability decisions fourteen days before the start of school. We greatly appreciate all the work you are doing to meet this federal deadline. Ensuring that New York State complies with the new federal rules may be important in continued receipt of federal funds. Would you please pass along this memo to everyone in your district who is involved with the collection and submission of data.

As described in my May 2009 memorandum, "July 31, 2009 Deadline for the Verification of 2008–09 Accountability and Other Data," all data for the 2008–09 school year must be reported, verified, and certified by **July 31, 2009** to meet federal requirements for releasing school and district accountability status determinations 14 days prior to the start of the 2009–10 school year (see <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/irts/accountability/timeline.html>). School districts will receive a deadline from their local data center that **will be prior to July 31, 2009**, in order to allow sufficient time for data processing. The 2008–09 Statement of Certification of Verification Reports form, which contains a list of all reports for which data must be verified, can be found at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/irts/nystart/certification.html>.

Additional Resources for Reviewing Data

We know that districts are continuing to experience delays using nySTART, in particular when attempting to retrieve a report with student-level information. To assist districts with this issue, the Department has worked collaboratively with the Regional Information Centers (RICs) and the Big 5 data centers to develop two additional resources to review accountability data:

- **Level 2 Reports** – These reports, which can be viewed by district personnel, include district-, school-, and student-level data used to determine elementary/middle- and secondary-level accountability. Performance on these reports is good, and the reports are updated weekly. The reports are available to most districts throughout the State. Please contact your RIC or Big 5 data center for instructions on how to access these reports.
- **IRS Portal** – The IRS portal provides a means to access data files in csv format (which can also be viewed as an Excel pivot table) that contain data used to determine elementary/middle- and secondary-level accountability. This portal is especially useful for districts in regions that do not yet have access to Level 2 Reports and for district personnel who prefer direct access to a data file. Performance on this application is good, and the reports are updated weekly. Instructions on how to access the portal and use the files can be found at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/irts/irs-portal/>.

nySTART remains the source system for certifying accountability data. nySTART's district- and building-level aggregate reports (Reports A and B) perform relatively well for certification purposes. If you experience difficulties accessing nySTART's student-level reports (Report C), please use the Level 2 Reports or the IRS Portal to review the data. However, all data corrections must be made in your local Student Management System (SMS). The corrected data must be loaded into Level 1 and then Level 2 of the Student Information Repository System (SIRS) for the corrections to be reflected in nySTART, accountability determinations, New York State Report Cards, and other State reports.

Further Guidance on Reporting and Verifying Select Data in Reports

Districts should begin reporting and verifying data immediately. Enrollment, demographic, and most assessment data have already been loaded into SIRS or can be loaded now. Once loaded, these data can be verified in the reports. Certain end-of-school-year data (such as assessments administered in June 2009 and June 2009 graduates, dropouts, and transfers) will need to be reported and verified immediately after the end of the 2008–09 school year.

- **2008–09 Elementary/Middle-Level Accountability Verification Reports:** Most data for 2008–09 Elementary/Middle-Level Accountability verification reports for ELA, mathematics, and science are available now. NYSESLAT scores will not be available on nySTART until July 14, 2009; however, a NYSESLAT Tested/Not Tested report will be available next week via the Level 2 Reports. Students coded as eligible to take the NYSESLAT in lieu of the Grades 3–8 ELA to fulfill the participation requirement for accountability (Program Service code 0242) will appear in the nySTART 2008–09 Elementary/Middle-Level Accountability verification student detail report (Report C) for participation enrollment but with NO valid score for their accountability assessment until July 14, 2009. Districts should review the student-level report in nySTART, the Level 2 Reports, or the IRS Portal data file NOW to ensure that all students eligible to take the NYSESLAT in lieu of the ELA have a “Yes” next to “NYSESLAT Eligible.” If they do not, districts must enter Program Service code 0242 for these students in their local SMS and resubmit data to the SIRS. After July 14, districts should review their student-level reports to ensure that valid scores for the NYSESLAT are appearing for these students.
- **2008–09 High School Accountability Verification Reports — Assessments:** ELA and mathematics performance for 2009–10 accountability will be based on the assessment results of the 2005 Accountability Cohort through June 2009. Since most of these assessments occurred prior to June 2009, these scores can be verified now.
- **2008–09 High School Accountability Verification Reports — Graduates:** Graduation-rate for 2009–10 accountability will be based on the 2004 Total Cohort through August 2008. These student outcomes should have already been reported and can be verified now.
- **2008–09 Total Cohort and Other Annual High School Verification Reports:** Since most members of the 2003 and 2004 total cohorts left school prior to the 2008–09 school year, data in these reports can be verified now. Data for August 2008 and January 2009 graduates; enrollment records for students who dropped out of school or transferred to an approved GED program after July 1, 2008; and results for August 2008 and January 2009 Regents examinations, RCTs, second language proficiency examinations, and May 2009 component retests should be reported and verified now.
- **Data That Must Be Reported and Verified Immediately After the Close of the School Year:** June 2009 graduates, dropouts, or transfers to approved GED programs; and results for June 2009 Regents examinations, RCT’s, and second language proficiency examinations must be reported and verified immediately after the close of the 2008–09 school year. Although most of these data are not used for 2009–10 accountability, they are a part of other nySTART reports (e.g., 2005 Total Cohort, 2008-09 Annual High School reports) that must be certified as of July 31, 2009.

Reporting and Verifying Special Education Data

Schools and school districts must certify special education report VR-10 (type of credential, post-graduate plans, and reasons for ending enrollment or disability) on the PD Data System by **August 5, 2009**. Schools and school districts must certify special education reports VR 11-15 (compliance with timelines for evaluation of preschool and school-age students for special education eligibility determination; preschool special education services and outcomes) by **November 4, 2009**. **All students who need to be included in special education**

Verification Reports 11-15 must have State (NYSSIS) ID's, enrollment, demographic, and disability program service records submitted to the repository by July 31, 2009. Further communication on this important requirement will follow from our colleagues in VESID.

Again thank you for all your effort and support as we work together to meet these challenging new federal requirements. I hope the additional resources we are providing will help you to complete this work.

Sincerely,

Alan Ray
Assistant Commissioner
Policy and Strategic Planning, P-16