

ARRA Support for State Longitudinal Data Systems

June 24, 2009

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides federal support to states to further build and promote the use of statewide longitudinal data systems to improve student achievement and success across the knowledge supply chain. Language in the law and in related federal agency guidance on implementing and using the funds to clarify the intent of Congress that states build systems that establish “pre-K-to college and career data systems that

- Track progress and foster continuous improvement”;
- Help identify if Congress intends states to gather and use information about the extent to which “students transition successfully from secondary school to postsecondary education, including whether students enroll in remedial coursework”; and
- “Use the data in the system to otherwise inform education policy and practice in order to better align state academic content standards, and curricula, with the demands of postsecondary education, the 21st century workforce, and the Armed Forces.”

This document offers a synthesis of the statutory language and subsequent guidance around data and the ARRA. As the Requests for Proposal are released (in draft format and in final format), they will be posted here as well as synthesis of these RFPs.

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American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Overview and Data Systems

(Public Law 111-5)

On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed into law the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) providing billions of dollars in new education funding to states and localities, including funds to implement statewide longitudinal data systems to improve student achievement.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

H.R. 1 (Sec. 14005. State Applications), 2009

[Excerpts from ARRA related to statewide longitudinal data systems]

(a) In General- The Governor of a State desiring to receive an allocation under section 14001 shall submit an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may reasonably require.

(b) Application- In such application, the Governor shall—

- (1) include the assurances described in subsection (d);
- (2) provide baseline data that demonstrates the State's current status in each of the areas described in such assurances; and
- (3) describe how the State intends to use its allocation, including whether the State will use such allocation to meet maintenance of effort requirements under the ESEA and IDEA and, in such cases, what amount will be used to meet such requirements.

(d) **Assurances-** An application under subsection (b) shall include the following assurances:

(1) MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT-

(A) ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION- The State will, in each of fiscal years 2009, 2010, and 2011, maintain State support for elementary and secondary education at least at the level of such support in fiscal year 2006.

(B) HIGHER EDUCATION- The State will, in each of fiscal years 2009, 2010, and 2011, maintain State support for public institutions of higher education (not including support for capital projects or for research and development or tuition and fees paid by students) at least at the level of such support in fiscal year 2006.

(2) ACHIEVING EQUITY IN TEACHER DISTRIBUTION- The State will take actions to improve teacher effectiveness and comply with section 1111(b)(8)(C) of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(8)(C)) in order to address inequities in the distribution of highly qualified teachers between high- and low-poverty schools, and to ensure that low-income and minority children are not taught at higher rates than other children by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers.

(3) IMPROVING COLLECTION AND USE OF DATA- The State will establish a longitudinal data system that includes the elements described in section

6401(e)(2)(D) of the America COMPETES Act (20 U.S.C. 9871). *(emphasis added)*

(4) STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS- The State—

(A) will enhance the quality of the academic assessments it administers pursuant to section 1111(b)(3) of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(3)) through activities such as those described in section 6112(a) of such Act (20 U.S.C. 7301a(a));

(B) will comply with the requirements of paragraphs (3)(C)(ix) and (6) of section 1111(b) of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)) and section 612(a)(16) of the IDEA (20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(16)) related to the inclusion of children with disabilities and limited English proficient students in State assessments, the development of valid and reliable assessments for those students, and the provision of accommodations that enable their participation in State assessments; and

(C) will take steps to improve State academic content standards and student academic achievement standards consistent with section 6401(e)(1)(9)(A)(ii) of the America COMPETES Act.

(5) SUPPORTING STRUGGLING SCHOOLS- The State will ensure compliance with the requirements of section 1116(a)(7)(C)(iv) and section 1116(a)(8)(B) of the ESEA with respect to schools identified under such sections.

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America COMPETES Act

Public Law 110-69, August 2007

The America COMPETES Act focuses on three primary areas of importance to maintaining and improving innovation: (1) increasing research investment, (2) strengthening educational opportunities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics from elementary through graduate school, and (3) developing an innovation infrastructure.

[Excerpts related to statewide longitudinal data systems]

Section 6401(e)(2)(D)

“(D) REQUIRED ELEMENTS OF A STATEWIDE P–16 EDUCATION DATA SYSTEM.—The State shall ensure that the statewide P–16 education data system includes the following elements:

(i) **PRESCHOOL THROUGH GRADE 12 EDUCATION AND POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION.**—With respect to preschool through grade 12 education and postsecondary education—

- (I) a unique statewide student identifier that does not permit a student to be individually identified by users of the system;
- (II) student-level enrollment, demographic, and program participation information;
- (III) student-level information about the points at which students exit, transfer in, transfer out, drop out, or complete P–16 education programs;
- (IV) the capacity to communicate with higher education data systems; and
- (V) a State data audit system assessing data quality, validity, and reliability.

(ii) **PRESCHOOL THROUGH GRADE 12 EDUCATION.**—

With respect to preschool through grade 12 education—

- (I) yearly test records of individual students with respect to assessments under section 1111(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6311(b));
- (II) information on students not tested by grade and subject;
- (III) a teacher identifier system with the ability to match teachers to students;
- (IV) student-level transcript information, including information on courses completed and grades earned; and
- (V) student-level college readiness test scores.

(iii) **POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION.**—With respect to postsecondary education, data that provide—

- (I) information regarding the extent to which students transition successfully from secondary school to postsecondary education, including whether students enroll in remedial coursework; and
- (II) other information determined necessary to address alignment and adequate preparation for success in postsecondary education.

(E) FUNCTIONS OF THE STATEWIDE P–16 EDUCATION DATA SYSTEM.—In implementing the statewide P–16 education data system, the State shall—

- (i) identify factors that correlate to students’ ability to successfully engage in and complete postsecondary level general education coursework without the need for prior developmental coursework;
- (ii) identify factors to increase the percentage of low-income and minority students who are academically prepared to enter and successfully complete postsecondary-level general education coursework; and
- (iii) **use the data in the system to otherwise inform education policy and practice in order to better align State academic content standards, and curricula, with the demands of postsecondary education, the 21st century workforce, and the Armed Forces.”** *(Emphasis added)*

[Click here](#) for the PDF version starting on page 121 STAT. 672.

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Clarification: DQC Compared to COMPETES Elements

Data Quality Campaign, May 2009

The America COMPETES Act of 2007 (Public Law 110–69) further subdivides into two additional data points the DQC essential element 9 – the ability to match student records between the P-12 and postsecondary systems. The 12 data elements that are part of the assurances states must honor under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) in order to be eligible for the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund grants are from the COMPETES Act, but the COMPETES Act embeds in statute the 10 essential elements of the DQC and was intended to do so. Congress decided to be more specific about data items they thought useful under DQC element 9.

America COMPETES Act Element, 2007		Comparable DQC Element	
1.	A unique statewide student identifier that does not permit a student to be individually identified by users of the system	1.	Statewide student identifier
2.	Student-level enrollment, demographic, and program participation information	2.	Student-level enrollment data
3.	Student-level information about the points at which students exit, transfer in, transfer out, drop out, or complete P-16 education programs	8.	Student-level graduation and dropout data
4.	The capacity to communicate with higher education data systems	9.	Ability to match student-level P-12 and higher education data
5.	A State data audit system assessing data quality, validity, and reliability	10.	A state data audit system
6.	Yearly test records of individual students with respect to assessments under section 1111(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6311(b))	3.	Student-level test data
7.	Information on students not tested by grade and subject	4.	Information on untested students
8.	A teacher identifier system with the ability to match teachers to students	5.	Statewide teacher identifier with a teacher-student match
9.	Student-level transcript information, including information on courses completed and grades earned	6.	Student-level course completion (transcript) data
10.	Student-level college readiness test scores	7.	Student-level SAT, ACT, and Advanced Placement exam data
11.	Information regarding the extent to which students transition successfully from secondary school to postsecondary education, including whether students enroll in remedial coursework	9(a).	Ability to match student-level P-12 and higher education data
12.	Other information determined necessary to address alignment and adequate preparation for success in postsecondary education	9(b).	Ability to match student-level P-12 and higher education data

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State Fiscal Stabilization Fund

The ARRA provides states an opportunity to enhance their efforts around improving the collection, analysis, and use of longitudinal data by including data systems in the assurances for State Fiscal Stabilization Funds. In return for increased funding through ARRA, governors are asked to *“collect, publish, analyze, and act on basic information about how our schools educate our children, evaluate our teachers, and measure our success – information that will reveal both strengths and underlying challenges.”*

Guidance on the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund Program

U.S. Department of Education, *April 2009*

The guidance provides the U.S. Department of Education’s interpretation of various statutory provisions and does not impose any requirements beyond those included in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and other applicable laws and regulations.

[Excerpts]

II-1. What is the Department’s process for awarding Stabilization funds to Governors?

The Department will award Stabilization funds to Governors in two phases. To receive its initial Stabilization fund allocation, a State must submit to the Department an application that provides:

1. Assurances that the State is committed to advancing education reform in four specific areas (see Illustration 2);
2. Baseline data that demonstrate the State's current status in each of the four education reform areas;
3. Maintenance-of-effort (MOE) information; and
4. A description of how the State intends to use its Stabilization allocation.

Illustration 2: Commitment to Advancing Education Reform

Commitment to Advancing Education Reform
<p>As part of its application for Stabilization Funding, a State must assure that it will implement strategies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Increase teacher effectiveness and address inequities in the distribution of highly qualified teachers;➤ Establish and use a pre-K-through-college-and-career data system to track progress and foster continuous improvement;➤ Make progress towards rigorous college- and career-ready standards and high-quality assessments that are valid and reliable for all students, including limited English proficient students and students with disabilities; and➤ Provide targeted, intensive support and effective interventions to turn around schools identified for corrective action and restructuring.

[Click here](#) for the document in its entirety. See pages 3 and 4.

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Application for Initial Funding under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund

U.S. Department of Education, April 2009

To receive the initial 67 percent of the State's allocation under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (Stabilization) program, a Governor must submit to the Department an application as outlined in this document.

[Excerpts]

Appendix B – Instructions for Part 3: Initial Baseline Data for Education Reform Assurances

Background

Section 14005(b)(2) of the ARRA requires States to submit baseline data demonstrating their current status in the following areas:

1. Achieving equity in teacher distribution;
2. Improving the collection and use of data;
3. Regarding standards and assessments –
 - 3.1 Enhancing the quality of academic assessments
 - 3.2 Including children with disabilities and limited English proficient students; and
 - 3.3 Improving State academic content and student achievement standards; and
4. Supporting struggling schools.

2. Improving Collection and Use of Data

A State must provide baseline data that demonstrate its current status regarding "establish[ing] a longitudinal data system that includes the elements described in section 6401(e)(2)(D) of the America COMPETES Act (20 U.S.C. 9871)."

Available Data for the Initial Baseline

In September 2008, the Data Quality Campaign and the National Center for Education Achievement conducted a survey that assessed the status of State educational data systems. (See <http://www.dataqualitycampaign.org>.) The survey identified ten essential elements of a longitudinal data system. Five of the elements are aligned with the five statutory elements in the America COMPETES Act for "Preschool through grade 12 and postsecondary education" (20 U.S.C. 9871(e)(2)(D)(i)), and the remaining five elements are aligned with the five statutory elements for "Preschool through grade 12 education." (20 U.S.C. 9871(e)(2)(D)(ii)) The Department will use the results of the survey to establish a State's initial baseline for improving the collection and use of data.

[Click here](#) for the document in its entirety. See pages B-1, B-2.

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Institute of Education Sciences State Longitudinal Data Systems Grants

[Emphasis added]

The Institute of Education Sciences, the main research branch of the U.S. Department of Education, awarded \$150 million in multiyear data grants to [27 state agencies](#) in 2009 for use in building data systems. In total, [41 states and the District of Columbia](#) have received funding as part of that [Statewide Longitudinal Data System Grant Program](#), which has been giving states money since 2005. These competitive, cooperative agreement grants extend for three years and range from one and a half to six million dollars per state. Grantees are obligated to submit annual reports and a final report on the development and implementation of their systems. All 50 States, five territories, and the District of Columbia are eligible to apply.

The National Center for Special Education Research (NCSER) and the National Center for Education Research (NCER) within the IES will host a series of [webinars related to research funding opportunities](#) during the summer. IES anticipates that the next round of webinars will begin in August, 2009.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act – IES Funding

H.R. 1, 2009

[Excerpts from ARRA related to IES funding]

For an additional amount for 'Institute of Education Sciences' to carry out section 208 of the Educational Technical Assistance Act, \$250,000,000, which may be used for Statewide data systems that include postsecondary and workforce information, of which up to \$5,000,000 may be used for State data coordinators and for awards to public or private organizations or agencies to improve data coordination.

[Click here](#) for the PDF version beginning on the bottom of page H.R.1--69

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U.S. Department of Education Guidance on Implementation of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

[Excerpts from published federal guidance to States and Localities on effective use of stimulus funds for data systems]

Fact sheet: The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009: Saving and Creating Jobs and Reforming Education

U.S. Department of Education, *March 7, 2009*

This document describes the principles and strategy that will guide the distribution and implementation of the *ARRA* funds appropriated to the U.S. Department of Education.

Overview of ARRA

“Principles:”

- b. **Improve student achievement through school improvement and reform.** *ARRA* funds should be used to improve student achievement. In addition, the SFSF provides funds to close the achievement gap, help students from all backgrounds achieve high standards, and address four specific areas that are authorized under bipartisan education legislation – including the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and the America Competes Act of 2007:
 - 1. Making progress toward rigorous college- and career-ready standards and high-quality assessments that are valid and reliable for all students, including English language learners and students with disabilities;
 - 2. **Establishing pre-K-to college and career data systems that track progress and foster continuous improvement;** *(emphasis added)*
 - 3. Making improvements in teacher effectiveness and in the equitable distribution of qualified teachers for all students, particularly students who are most in need;
 - 4. Providing intensive support and effective interventions for the lowest-performing schools.

[Click here](#) for the fact sheet in its entirety.

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Letter to Governors from Secretary of Education Arne Duncan

U.S. Department of Education, *April 1, 2009*

[Excerpts]

“This letter...focuses only on the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (Stabilization Fund or SFSF), which provides approximately \$48.6 billion directly to governors...” The State Fiscal Stabilization Fund, “is also intended to boost student achievement, so to access this money, we seek your commitment to the following four essential areas of reform:

- Making improvements in teacher effectiveness and ensuring that all schools have highly qualified teachers;
- Making progress toward college and career-ready standards and rigorous assessments that will improve both teaching and learning;
- Improving achievement in low-performing schools, by providing intensive support and effective interventions in schools that need them the most;
- **Gathering information to improve student learning, teacher performance, and college and career-readiness through enhanced data systems that track progress.”**

Program Components/Distribution Formula

Recognizing that the notice will provide further detail and an opportunity to comment, we are providing an overview below of the specific metrics that have been developed and are in process of being published for comment in the *Federal Register*:

- **Better information to educators and the public, to address the individual needs of students and improve teacher performance** – A state would report on the extent to which it has implemented a system to provide greater clarity to parents about the quality of their child’s education. This system will enable educators to use real time information about the individual needs of students, move away from a one-size-fits-all approach to education, and improve their performance. In particular, a state would report:
 - *Progress towards implementing a statewide data system which includes each of the 12 elements described in the America COMPETES Act, to track progress of individual students, from preschool through postsecondary education, and match students to individual teachers; and*
 - *Whether all teachers in mathematics and ELA in tested grades receive timely data on the performance of their students and estimates of individual teacher impact on student achievement, in a manner that informs instruction and includes appropriate benchmarks.*

[Click here](#) for the document in its entirety.

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Implementing the American Recovery Act – Letter from Secretary of Education Arne Duncan

U.S. Department of Education, April 24, 2009

“Establishing data systems and using data for improvement

At the heart of improving schools and school districts are systems to gather and analyze data and provide feedback to educators, students, families, and the community in order to improve student and teacher performance continuously. Examples of investments in data systems and effective use of data include efforts to:

- Develop or enhance existing data systems to provide teachers access to (1) student data in such areas as attendance, grades, course schedules, and disability or English language learner status, and (2) data that show academic performance and growth, how those compare to statewide averages for similar students and schools, and whether students are on track to meet standards and graduate from high school.
- Train principals, teachers, guidance counselors, and other staff to use data to identify the specific help students need to succeed, to adjust classroom instruction to better address student strengths and weaknesses, and to target professional development and other resources on student and teacher needs.
- Track the number and percentage of students by school who graduate high school and go on to complete at least one year’s worth of college credit. Use the information to strengthen high school programs and increase the percentage of students going on to college.
- Link districts’ multiple data systems (including student, financial, and personnel) and use resulting information for analyses and reports that enable community, district, and school leaders to better understand the educational and cost effectiveness of district programs and strategies and allocate resources accordingly.
- Launch an easy-to-use online Individualized Education Program (IEP) system for students with disabilities that is aligned with state academic standards and can be used by educators to create content-rich IEPs that are aligned with the general education curriculum.”

[Click here](#) for the document in its entirety. See pages 3, 4)

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For further questions about the stimulus package, contact: Tom Lindsley, DQC, Director Federal Relations, ACT Washington DC Office, 202-223-2318, Tom.Lindsley@ACT.org.