



## ■ Business impact

Many states have statewide data collection systems, but *not one* includes all 10 essential elements for addressing the goals of improving student achievement, as outlined in NCLB.\*

## ■ Challenges

- **Lack of scalability.** Current systems can't accommodate multiple school districts, let alone the entire state.
- **System incompatibility.** Individual districts typically store student information in transactional systems that cannot talk to each other.
- **Lack of data integrity.** Missing, incomplete and inaccurate data leads to reports that can't be trusted.
- **Insufficient decision support.** Districts lack the tools needed for effective analyses and efficient ways to communicate results.
- **Inefficient processes.** Manual data entry is time-consuming, error-prone, and often results in redundancies.
- **Wasted resources.** Analysts spend so much time tracking down data that there's no time left to apply their skills to analyzing that data.
- **Political considerations.** State and local offices often have an "us/them" mentality, making careful negotiations a must for any statewide initiatives.

\* Source: 2006 survey on statewide data systems by the National Council for Educational Accountability



**THE  
POWER  
TO KNOW®**

## How can we efficiently manage student information to support public school instruction on a statewide basis?

### YOUR GOAL: Manage education information and accountability statewide

Education quality is a top concern in today's global economy, and expectations run high for schools to adequately prepare students to meet rigorous requirements for postsecondary education and tomorrow's workplace. These rising expectations are the driving force behind legislation such as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).

To evaluate schools' efforts at improving student achievement, decision makers at federal, state and local levels need access to high-quality school and student performance data. But thus far, that has been a challenge. At a minimum, improving the collection, availability and use of high-quality education data is crucial for meeting NCLB's reporting requirements. Noncompliance puts state educational initiatives at risk of losing much-needed federal funding and hinders the ability of educators statewide to make sound, timely decisions that could positively impact and even transform the educational experience for students.

Outdated technology systems, inefficient processes and resource constraints are partly to blame for incomplete and inaccurate reports—but such excuses fall hard on taxpayer ears since they imply inefficient use of tax dollars. However, as local school officials become more interested in using data to make decisions that benefit the schools and communities they serve, they may be able to persuade reluctant legislators to underwrite projects aimed at improving the quality of their education data.

### OUR APPROACH

There's no shortage of data in today's education system. The challenge is to ensure that relevant, accurate data is collected and used effectively. SAS approaches the problem by delivering software and services that help you:

- **Create a single version of the truth** by pulling together data, regardless of source or format, cleaning it to ensure its integrity, and storing it in a central location.
- **Share information securely** among public education stakeholders—from teachers to central-office administrators—on a need-to-know basis.
- **Enable confident decisions** by combining the power of advanced analytics with easy-to-use, ad hoc reporting capabilities that let decision makers generate their own reports using reporting templates and best practices.
- **Partner with an industry expert** that can deliver the analytic expertise and data management services you need, without burdening your already limited resources.
- **Get all public education stakeholders up to speed** with customized training at the state and local levels.

SAS offers a proven methodology that gets you up and running quickly. In addition, SAS helps you implement a technology framework that integrates with existing IT infrastructures, smoothes the flow of information across departments and functions, and supports future technologies and business processes not yet defined.

## THE SAS® DIFFERENCE: A true partner in education

SAS has been a trusted partner in education for more than 30 years, with a successful track record, proven implementations and industry validation underscoring our commitment to enhancing education through technology. And we invest all that experience and expertise into becoming *your* true partner.

We work closely with you to fully analyze your current system and needs and then develop a solution designed to meet your specific goals. With SAS as a partner, you can:

- **Leverage existing hardware, software, data and human resources.**
- **Take an iterative approach to implementation** by starting with your most pressing needs and build on your successes over time
- **Adapt readily to platform changes, database additions and changing school system requirements**, so there's no worry over outgrowing the system over time.

Only SAS provides award-winning data warehousing that lets you integrate data sources in a flexible, easy-to-manage environment, so you can achieve your ultimate goal of improving student achievement through the effective use of data.

### CASE STUDY: A state department of education

#### ■ Situation

The department faced multiple challenges gathering and reporting student information. Many school districts captured student-related data manually, and there were no standards in place to ensure consistency and eliminate redundancy. Outdated legacy systems rendered early attempts to streamline information collection and reporting unsuccessful. The technology infrastructure couldn't support having all school districts statewide online, so the data had to be split among several incompatible systems. This hindered the state's ability to meet NCLB reporting requirements, which put badly needed funding in jeopardy.

#### ■ Solution

SAS partnered with the department to develop a system that includes:

- A single, integrated view of student data statewide, with imbedded data quality techniques to ensure clean, standardized data.
- Report templates that are easily accessible to local districts across the state, and the ability to share information statewide on a need-to-know basis.
- Customized training at the state and local levels.

#### ■ Results

- Compliance with NCLB data requirements in the districts currently on the system (two-thirds of the state), with full statewide compliance expected by Spring 2008.
- The system has opened up an ongoing dialog between the state education agency and local school districts and is fostering improved communications and a team-oriented approach both within and among local and state education agencies.



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#### ■ The vision

##### A single version of the truth

What if you could pull together student record data – enrollment, attendance, test scores, demographics, etc. – from multiple school districts across years and know with confidence that the information was accurate and consistent?

##### Secure information sharing

What if critical, timely data on student performance could be moved smoothly from schools to districts to states, and on to the US Department of Education with appropriate, secure access at each point?

##### Self-service reporting

What if teachers, school administrators, program managers, central office staff, etc., could generate customized reports based on current, accurate student information whenever they needed them?

##### Partner with an industry expert

What if you could focus on daily education issues and leave technology implementation issues to a partner with decades of proven experience in education and supporting technology infrastructures?

##### Customized training

What if users at all levels – teachers, administrators, front office personnel – had access to training that would enable them to get the maximum benefit from the technology systems at their disposal?

### SAS FACTS

- SAS® software and solutions are licensed and implemented at more than 2,000 educational institutions worldwide.
- The SAS Academic Program works with faculty, students, researchers and others to ask complex questions and deliver innovative answers.
- Since 1976, SAS has delivered the latest technology to educational institutions around the globe.

Learn more about SAS® software and services for education at: [www.sas.com/education](http://www.sas.com/education)