



APPENDIX 000-11-2
May 20, 2013

DATE: May 6, 2013

TO: Board of Education

FROM: Andrew Statz, Chief Information Officer

RE: Data issues regarding READ 180 and System 44

I. Introduction

- A. Introduction: Research & Program Evaluation staff has identified discrepancies with the data needed to accurately identify the students that have participated in the READ 180 and System 44 reading interventions. These discrepancies are complicating attempts to conduct accurate longitudinal analyses of results that may be the impact of these interventions.
- B. Presenters: Andrew Statz, CIO
- C. Background Information: READ 180 is a technology-based reading program in which students with basic skills in decoding, but functioning at least two grade levels below their peers in reading, move through a series of instructional stations in order to develop their skills. The session begins and ends with whole-group teacher-directed instruction. This is followed by students breaking into three small groups that rotate among three stations. Students participate in READ 180 Stage B (middle school) or Stage C (high school) one class period per day.

System 44 is a technology-based phonics curriculum designed to support older students who are still struggling with basic decoding skills. System 44 helps middle and high school students learn how to “crack the code” on the 44 sounds and 26 letters in the English language. A knowledgeable instructor, adaptive software and leveled text are used to develop skills of phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. It is intended to be a short term intervention, with students only remaining in the program until they have mastered the 44 sounds of the English language. When they do, they may advance to READ 180 or another intervention if appropriate.

For any accurate program evaluations or data updates for READ 180 and System 44 to be conducted by Research & Program Evaluation staff, centralized student information systems must accurately identify participating students. The use of a vendor software package as part of these two interventions has resulted in conflicting

information as to which students are actually participating in READ 180 and System 44.

The vendor responsible for READ 180 and System 44, Scholastic Inc., prepares regular reports regarding the performance of these interventions on students' reading levels. Currently, they are the most accurate representation of the impact of these interventions.

Steps are being taken to resolve and prevent this conflicting information.

- D. Action Requested: Review and acceptance of this report and the identification of next steps

II. Summary of Current Information

A. Synthesis of Topic:

There are two places where a student should be identified as a participant in READ 180 or System 44:

1. Each READ 180 or System 44 student should be enrolled in a course in Infinite Campus (IC) that indicates their participation in the program. These codes differ by grade and level but should be consistent between schools. READ 180 and System 44 courses appear on students' transcripts.
2. Each READ 180 or System 44 student should have a record in the Scholastic Achievement Manager (SAM) online management system. This system is an integral part of the READ 180 and System 44 curriculum.

For the 2012-13 school year, we discovered significant disparities between the list of READ 180 and System 44 participants generated by looking at IC and by looking at records in SAM.

For READ 180, the net difference is around 60 students out of about 1,000 students. However, comparing the data in IC versus SAM results in the following counts:

- 674 students are in both IC and SAM
- 112 students are identified only in SAM
- 321 students are identified only in IC

For System 44, comparing the data in IC versus SAM results in the following counts:

- 56 students are in both IC and SAM
- 312 students are identified only in SAM
- 9 students are identified only in IC

There are several possible explanations for these disparities. The first is that individual schools' scheduling practices are not consistent, leading to errors in record keeping. For example, a student may begin doing READ 180 work without being officially scheduled as a READ 180 participant, or a student may leave the program

but remain enrolled in a READ 180 course, appearing to be a program participant when they are not.

The second possible explanation is that students are placed into READ 180 classes for a variety of reasons, including proximity to a case manager or support staff but given no access to the portion of the READ 180 curriculum hosted through SAM because each participating student uses an available license that can then not be assigned to another student.

A third possible explanation is that students move between System 44 and READ 180, which are related systems, with no official IC record that they did so.

Because of these discrepancies and uncertainty over which students actually received the READ 180 or System 44 curriculum, any data staff of READ 180 and System 44 updates generated by MMSD would be misleading and could lead to improper estimates of the results these programs produce, which could in turn lead to misinformed decisions about the direction and effectiveness of these programs. As a result, the Research & Program Evaluation Office cannot report on these programs until data discrepancies are resolved in the future.

Next Steps. District staff are working with teachers and school staff to correct the errors in READ 180 and System 44 participant lists for the 2012-13 school year.

This process includes identifying specific students whose records are inconsistent and attempting to standardize their records, as well as meeting with middle and high school schedulers to emphasize the importance of consistent record keeping for these programs and discuss plans to make sure accurate records are maintained in the future. In, addition, district staff will conduct quarterly audits of READ 180 and System 44 participation to compare transcript and SAM records and correct disparities as quickly as possible.

Unfortunately, because SAM only stores a current list of READ 180 and System 44 participants, it is not known if there is a way to repair errors in historical MMSD data on these two programs. More exploration with the vendor is needed to determine what history, if any, can be recovered.

Unless the vendor has recoverable historic snapshots, staff can only repair errors from the current year. Therefore, the only data available to Research & Program Evaluation staff to conduct analysis on READ 180 and System 44 may pertain to the 2012-13 school year and any subsequent years.

Because the 2012-13 school year must be complete to report on READ 180 and System 44 progress during the year, Research & Program Evaluation staff plan to have a report on these programs available for Board of Education review in July, assuming that current efforts to rectify errors in program data are successful and proceed as planned. This July update will also include 2012-13 data for the Reading Recovery program.

In the meantime, vendor-generated reports on these programs will be provided to the Student Achievement Committee meeting on May 6.

- B. Recommendations: It is recommended that the Board review and accept this report and the identification of next steps to more accurately identify students in the READ 180 and System 44 reading interventions.

III. Implications

- A. Budget: None
- B. District Plan: None
- C. Implications for the Organization: Clarification of systems used to identify students in READ 180 and System 44, establishing protocols for identifying students in other interventions, and ensuring accurate data updates and program evaluations

IV. Supporting Documentation

- A. None