

SMARTT Update, January 2011

1) Late Data Entry Policy ---takes effect on January 31st

The new late data entry policy will take effect on January 31. Please make sure that the following information is entered into the system by January 31st.

- All student intakes/enrollments at the site between July 1 and November 30
- All rate and non rate based class attendance between July 1 and November 30
- All volunteer match attendance between July 1 and November 30
- All Distance Learning curricula attendance between July 1 and November 30

Note that the delete class enrollment and attendance feature will not be available after January 31st since programs will not be able to go back and enter previous class enrollments and attendance for prior months.

Please note that the temporary unavailability of a primary data entry person due to illness or staff turnover will not excuse the requirement to keep data current. Programs must have two trained staff to enter data in SMARTT on a regular and ongoing basis, and/or have more than two people trained. If an extreme situation occurs, the programs director must contact Anne Serino in writing to explain why the data could not be entered and give specifics regarding data that was not entered. Anne Serino will then determine if and when SMARTT team staff have the resources to enter the data. Please do not contact the SABES regional field technologists or the Program Specialist regarding these situations.

The following chart indicates the timeframes when student intakes and attendance data for rate and non rate based classes, volunteer matches, and Distance Learning curricula must be entered for the remainder of the fiscal year:

<u>Intakes and Monthly Attendance in</u>	<u>Month/Day Data Entry Closed</u>
December	February 28th
January	March 31st
February	April 30th
March	May 31st
April	June 30th
May	July 31st
June	August 31st

2) New Features in SMARTT

a) TABE Clas-e (ESOL)

The new business rules have been implemented for TABE Clas-E tests;

- (1) When a student post-tests in Clas-E, the Form A or B (Test Name) can remain the same as the Pre-test if the level of the test changes.

Example: Pre-Test is Form A, Level 2; Post-test could be Form A, but has to be either Level 1, 3 or 4.

Users will see this message requiring that different test levels are entered if the form is the same.

“Please ensure that the test levels are different when the test form is the same as the previous test.”

- (2) When a student post-tests in Clas-E in the same level as the pre-test, then the Form (Test Name) must change. The dropdown for the level will ensure that the same level cannot be entered.

Example: Pre-test is Form A, Level 4; Post-test is Level 4, then the user must use Form B if post-testing in Level 4.

- (3) The "Assessment Report (Primary Set)" and "Clas-E Report" have been modified to include the Clas-E(A) and Clas-E (B) students.

b) TABE 9/10 (ABE)

The same business rules will be implemented soon for TABE 9/10..

c) College Course Screen Changes for Transition Sites

The number of credits and type of credits was added to the college course screen. The types of credits are:

- Non credit
- Non degree / institutional credit
- Degree credit

d) Change Password -- Disabled Strikes

The staff with "Agency Coordinator" access at the project can reset the password if the user has disabled the account due to too many attempts to log in. If a user forgets/mistypes the password, after five attempts the account is disabled. Staff at the project can now manage the accounts more effectively.

e) Convert Staff to Volunteer

We released the feature that allows volunteer funded programs to convert a staff member to also be listed as a volunteer while preserving the same person ID. Therefore, we can track unique individuals who are staff members and also volunteer their own time to work with 1-4 students in a volunteer match or as an in-class assistant in a volunteer funded component.

Here are the steps to convert the staff person to also be a volunteer:

1. Click on the "Add Volunteer" link.
2. Then click on the lookup button -- the magnifier button next to "Last Name".
3. Check off exited staff, current staff or both. If the staff member is at your project, select your project name in the "Project" dropdown list.
4. Scroll through the list and click on the staff name to select the staff member to intake
5. The Volunteer Intake screen will appear with various data pre-populated. Proceed as usual with the intake and hit save when completed. The person is now both a staff member and volunteer with the same person id.

3) GED Data Matching – Match Completed on 1/6/11

The last GED data match with Oklahoma Scoring Service was completed on 1/6/2011. One hundred and thirteen (113) records were matched for students who attended classes in either FY10 or FY11. Out of this, one hundred and one (101) students set the goal which is ninety four percent (89%). Twelve (12) students or eleven percent (11%) did not set the goal and will not be included in the Federal Report.

Remember that we cannot include in the Federal Report the achievement of any goal if that goal was not set. It is important to meet with students on a regular basis to make sure goals are set, new goals are identified, and the dates set are entered into the system.

Please note that if a student receives the GED certificate from another state and if you have documentation, please e-mail, Donna Cornellier (dcornellier@doe.mass.edu) so that we can manually update the student record. The data matching with Oklahoma Scoring Services only provides us with information on students who test in Massachusetts test centers. Please provide the student name, SMARTT ID, and credential date so that the record can be updated.

4) ABE Program Design Trainings

a) ABE Program Design For New Directors

Please read the previous correspondence regarding the four day training for new directors that will be held at the MWCC/Devens Learning Center at One Jackson Place, Devens, MA. The trainings will be held from 9:30 - 3:30 pm these four days:

- Friday, January 28
- Friday, February 11
- Friday, March 11
- Friday, March 25

Please e-mail Beverly Rosario (brosario@doe.mass.edu) immediately to sign up for this four-day training. Participants will receive a confirmation e-mail after registering. Pre-reading materials will be sent out prior to the training.

b) ABE Program Design Refreshers

The regional ABE Program Design refreshers will be held the week of April 11th. . The refresher trainings will be held from 10:00 - 12:00, and will be followed by open labs scheduled from 1:00 - 3:00 for those who want individualized assistance in preparing program plans for FY2011.

- The two hour ABE Program Design Refresher is designed for both new and experienced directors. Components of the system to be discussed include a review of the ACLS Guidelines that pertain to class design, the SMARTT program plan module, re-funding documents, and all relevant changes for FY2012 will also be detailed during this presentation.
- The two hour SMARTT Update is designed for Directors and other staff who are attending the morning ABE Program Design Refresher training and are interested in working in an open lab format. Donna Cornellier, Program Specialists, and the SABES regional field technologists will be on hand to offer tips and comments on the individual program designs. This time is meant for hands on work and help for creating the program plan in SMARTT. Ideally, participants will arrive having already reviewed their upcoming program design and will be ready to get tips and answers for obstacles they may have encountered.
- SABES has agreed to handle the registrations for both sessions. Registration information along with regional dates will be sent out by SABES staff and will be listed in the February update.

5) Cognos Updates

a) New Feature in Cognos

1. Analysis Studio, commonly called cubes, has been modified to allow users to drill down to view data in different ways. The measures under "All Agencies" in the "Insertable Object" pane (source tree) now allows users to view the data by all agencies (default), by site specialty, by site type, by SABES regions, and by LWIB.
2. The SSN and Confidentiality Report has been revised to list data that is used for various data matching, and formulas are provided that explain the calculations. Footers have been added that explain the data, and how it is used.

b) Cognos Upgrade to Version 8.4

We will be upgrading to a newer version of Cognos the week of January 24th. Cognos will not be available to users on Monday, January 24th and Tuesday, January 25th. Since this is a minor upgrade, users will see little differences in this newer version. All saved reports that are currently working in "My Folders" will automatically be moved over. Please check any reports that you have saved in "My Folders" by January 21st to ensure that the report is working and will be moved over with valid data. If you notice a problem, contact one of the SABES regional file techs who can help you fix or recreate the report. The new Cognos manual will be available in early February and can be accessed in the new version of Cognos.

Most changes and enhancements in the new version appear in the cubes. Here are some of the changes in the newer version:

- supports both Internet Explorer and Firefox browsers
- has a new welcome page
- suppression can be done in multiple ways in analysis studio (cubes)
- maintains column width when you open the cube if the column width is changed
- displays when the cube was last updated so users can know whether they are looking at updated nightly data.
- supports exports to Excel 2007
- various report options are combined and easier to find in the report page

c) Additional Cognos Licenses

Under the statewide blanket contract with IBM, we now have unlimited Cognos licenses. We want to provide additional Cognos accounts to our users so that they may log on to view reports that are available in Cognos. Programs have the option of requesting an account for each interested staff member or an account that would be shared among several staff. We think it might be more useful for teachers/other staff to have their own account so they can save any reports in their own folders for easy access at a later time. After users have attended Cognos trainings, we hope they will use the data to improve the instruction or services provided to our students.

After discussing the process for requesting additional accounts with the Directors' Council, it was determined that the Program Director will submit the request for new accounts. These steps must be followed:

1. The Program Director e-mails the Cognos administrator, Sriram Rajan (srajan@doe.mass.edu) and supplies the following information:
 - Name
 - Email address (If they don't have one, give us one that can be used to get them the information)
 - Official project name: (no acronyms or abbreviations, please!)
 - Role at the program: (e.g., teacher, counselor, site coordinator, or other--(please specify)
 - Request for Cognos User ID (e.g., 1st initial and last name, or some other personally meaningful identifier)
2. The Cognos administrator will set up new User ID's once a week. We request that Program Directors to give us a two week window before staff attend Cognos trainings. A new Cognos account can be set up in one day, but we need time to setup the security for each project so that individual student names are only seen for specific projects, and we need to test every logon to ensure that it works.
3. We will email the staff person and/or the project coordinator with the Cognos login, and provide the generic password. At the first logon, the user must create his/her own password, and keep the password in a safe place!
4. ACLS keeps a list of staff requesting logins and the User IDs. logons. We strongly encourage programs to manage their own passwords and User IDs. ACLS never receives the passwords so would not have them to give out if a reminder is needed. ACLS will, if requested, reset the password so that the user can create a new password. This process is not automatic as in many large computer companies so it would represent a sizeable addition of work to ACLS if many requests are made. Since we don't have the staff to respond to a large number of requests if users forget their User ID login or password, we suggest that the Program Director or data entry staff person keep a record of Cognos User Ids and passwords. Of course, we ask users to write it down and keep in a handy place.

6) New Listserv – Data Use Learning Community

SABES has established a new facilitated listserv that will focus on strategies for improvement in the six performance standard areas. You will receive information from SABES this month on the steps for joining this new on-line Learning Community. The on-line discussions will be moderated by Jim Ayres, a program director in western Massachusetts. The listserv will be similar to the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) listserv where individuals can post comments as well as documents on certain rotating topics. The performance standards areas will be open for discussion for a three week period and the areas for discussion will rotate in this order:

- Attendance
- Average Attended Hours
- Pre - Post Testing Percentage
- Learner Gains
- Setting & Meeting Student Goals

7) SMARTT and Cognos Trainings

Be sure is to contact any of the SABES field technologists to sign-up for a training that meets your needs. Many of the trainings are listed on the SABES calendar so you can register for the trainings at <http://calendar.sabes.org> by clicking on a region; or, you may contact the regional office directly. The list of upcoming trainings for January are listed below. Also, please check the SMARTT section of the SABES website at <http://sabes.org/smartt/index.htm> which that has been re-designed to better meet your needs. Many new video clips have been added.

SMARTT New User --- Ongoing via distance learning

SMARTT Updates ---January

Focus: Reviewing Mid-Year Data

Boston	January 12, 2011	11am-12pm	DL
Boston	January 12, 2011	2pm-4pm	Face to Face
Northeast	January 13, 2011	1pm-3pm	DL
West	January 14, 2011	10am-11am	DL
Southeast	January 21, 2011	10am-11am	DL

Cognos Updates --- January

Focus: Mid-Year Performance Review

Questions? Please contact Donna Cornellier at dcornellier@doe.mass.edu