

# FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



## STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Commissioner of Education



January 15, 2010

Commissioner Eric J. Smith  
Florida Department of Education  
325 West Gaines Street, Suite 1514  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400

Dear Commissioner Smith:

In accordance with Section 20.055(5)(h), Florida Statutes, I am submitting the six month follow-up response concerning the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) report number 09-31 *Education Data Warehouse Serves Important Function; Project Planning and Management Need Strengthening* for your information.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 245-9418.

Sincerely,

Ed W. Jordan

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Attachment

c: OPPAGA

Florida Joint Legislative Auditing Committee

ED W. JORDAN, CIG, CFE, CIA  
INSPECTOR GENERAL

## Florida Department of Education

Office of Policy Program Analysis and Government Accountability Report No. 09-31  
*Education Data Warehouse Serves Important Function;  
Project Planning and Management Need Strengthening  
Six Month Follow-up Response January 15, 2010*

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### **OPPAGA Recommendation 1:**

***Develop an integrated technology plan for its major education database systems.*** The plan should detail the department's long-term vision for the roles and responsibilities of the Education Data Warehouse and the source database systems with regard to data collection, quality assurance, and reporting. In developing the plan, the department should examine and identify opportunities to streamline overlapping or similar functions and responsibilities across systems.

### **Management Response**

FLDOE has begun development of its Information Governance Program which consists of three components: (1) program governance; (2) data governance; and (3) technology governance.

With respect to program and technology governance, FLDOE has developed a technology plan for Florida's schools titled, *Charting a Course for Information and Communication Technology in Florida's Schools*. The State Board of Education approved the plan at its November 11, 2009, meeting. The school technology plan is one piece of the Information Governance Program for FLDOE. FLDOE's Race to the Top application includes language and funding related to designing and implementing the program and technology governance components for internal purposes.

With respect to data governance, FLDOE has begun designing and planning for a formal data governance program. The lessons learned from designing and implementing the data governance program will be used to facilitate the design and implementation of the program and technology governance programs. See the "Management Response" to OPPAGA Recommendation 2 below for details on the progress of this initiative.

During the design phases for each of the three governance components, FLDOE is examining and identifying opportunities to streamline overlapping or similar functions and responsibilities across systems.

### **OPPAGA Recommendation 2:**

***Establish a data governance structure or process.*** The department should regularly convene a group of key program stakeholders to identify and develop common definitions across education sectors.

### **Management Response**

FLDOE has hired COMSYS IT Partners, Inc. to provide consulting services related to designing and implementing a formal data governance structure and process. The consultant began on January 4, 2010, and services will be completed by March 1, 2010. The deliverables from the consultant include a best practices analysis, Data Governance Action Plan, Data Governance Framework and Roles & Responsibilities, and Data Governance Communication Plan. Implementation of the Action Plan (and the resultant data governance process) is scheduled to begin by July 1, 2010.

### **OPPAGA Recommendation 3**

***Develop formal planning documentation for each project.*** At a minimum, this documentation should identify the project's scope, objectives, expected outcomes, assumptions, risks, estimated costs and duration, and specific tasks or work to be completed and the responsible parties for each task.

#### **Management Response**

As mentioned in the response to the OPPAGA report, the Division of Accountability, Research, and Measurement employs two full-time project managers who have been systematically identifying projects and enforcing a typical project management system. However, not all tasks performed by the data systems are projects. While the tasks may be large and time-consuming, they are often standard operating procedures rather than projects that require project management.

Project management methodologies have been used since the beginning of both Statewide Longitudinal Data System Round 1 and Round 3 grants awarded to FLDOE by the Institute for Education Sciences. One component written into each of FLDOE's applications for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act's Statewide Longitudinal Data System grant ("Round 4") and the Race to the Top grant is the implementation of proper project management methodologies to appropriately document and track each project.

### **OPPAGA Recommendation 4**

***Establish project steering committees for major technology projects.*** The committee's responsibilities should include assisting in project planning, monitoring project activities, and facilitating communication with project stakeholders. To be most effective, the committee should be composed of representatives from senior management, internal and external users, and technical representatives.

#### **Management Response**

As mentioned in the response to the OPPAGA report and in the "Management Response" to the prior recommendation, we agree with the recommendation of establishing project steering committees for technology projects as part of project management. However, not all projects warrant a project steering committee. The decision to develop/use a project steering committee should be on a case by case basis and implemented when necessary.

An example of FLDOE utilizing steering committees during project management is with the implementation of the Statewide Longitudinal Data System Round 3 grant. During the implementation of Round 3, a Technical Committee and Research Advisory Council were established to serve as steering committees. The Technical Committee, which is comprised of technical representatives from FLDOE, steers the grant through the technology components of the project and ensures an enterprise view on any technological advances realized through the grant. The Research Advisory Council, which is comprised of internal and external users, provides the technical committee with feedback from an external viewpoint and from a user standpoint to ensure that any technology implemented will not adversely affect stakeholders.