

Student Tracking Protocol

Note: updated to include recommendation from *Report of Aboriginal Justice Commission* June 2004

Introduction

The K-12 education system in Saskatchewan is committed to the principle that all children should have the opportunity to learn. However, there is growing concern that many children and youth that should be, are not in school. The high mobility of families means that some children change schools during the school year, but there is no reliable way of finding out if a child who has withdrawn from one school has subsequently registered at another. School administrators, teachers, community organizations and other groups are expressing concern about the number of children who are not registered in school, or who are registered but not attending. Several recent reports have made reference to the need for a provincial student tracking system:

- *School^{plus}: Vision for Children and Youth: Toward a New School, Community and Human Service Partnership in Saskatchewan: Final Report* (the final report of the Role of the School Task Force) (February 2001);
- *Report of the Provincial Auditor* (vol. 3 Fall 2000);
- *Report of the Auditor General of Canada* (April 2000);
- *Directions for Diversity, Enhancing Supports to Children and Youth with Diverse Needs: Final Report of the Saskatchewan Special Education Review Committee* (January 2000);
- *Special Committee to Prevent the Abuse and Exploitation of Children Through the Sex Trade: Final Report* (June 2001); and,
- *Aboriginal Justice Commission* (June 2004).

In addition, the Children's Advocate continues to raise concerns with the province's inability to track students and intervene appropriately. Accurate student data is also required to help determine the effectiveness of the Métis and Off-reserve First Nations People Strategy (also referred to as the *Framework for Cooperation*).

To address these concerns, Saskatchewan Learning is undertaking a major expansion of its Student Records System. The new system is referred to as the Student Data System (SDS). Discussions have been held with local Directors of Education, the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN) and the First Nations Directors of Education to consider the inclusion of all students in the system.

A Memorandum of Understanding concerning Pre-kindergarten to Grade 12 education was signed February 27, 2003 between the FSIN and the Minister of Learning that establishes an authentic partnership between the Government of Saskatchewan and First Nations.

Purposes of Student Tracking

The overall purpose of a provincial Student Tracking Program is not only to determine how many students are not in school but also to help to understand why these students are not attending so that appropriate measures can be taken to ensure students are in school with access to quality education.

Meeting individual students' needs and taking appropriate measures to ensure students are in school is a shared responsibility between local education authorities, the Departments of Learning, Social Services, Health, Justice and other provincial organizations (e.g., FSIN, Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan Teachers Federation, Saskatchewan School Trustees Association, and the League of Education Administrators, Directors and Superintendents). A provincial student tracking system can provide information on how many students are not in school, who those students are, and factors that contribute to their non-attendance. This information can assist the education system and its partners in planning for the educational success of students and addressing their individual needs.

Statement of Intent

This protocol is intended to provide a mutual understanding of the ongoing relationship between Saskatchewan Learning, school divisions, First Nations schools, independent schools, custody schools, and care schools when accessing, entering and using this information.

This relationship is based on trust and respect for the privacy of the students. Information collected will be used solely for purposes outlined in this protocol.

In general, when personal information on students is requested, entered, or modified by the employees of these educational organizations, the employees shall agree to:

1. Providing information required for specified purposes related to student tracking;
2. Using best efforts to ensure the information provided is accurate, complete, and current;
3. Ensuring that the information accessed is for the purposes outlined and not for other interests, personal or otherwise;
4. Maintaining the confidentiality of the personal information;
5. Ensuring that those representatives within their school who have been assigned the privileges of using the student tracking system, do so responsibly; and,
6. Using this information to improve services to students and for effective reporting.

The department will also provide appropriate management control reports/audit trails to ensure personal student information remains confidential, is secure, and retains its integrity (i.e., current, complete, and accurate for intended purposes).

Collection and Use

Pursuant to clause 4(1)(l) of [The Education Act, 1995](#) the Minister may prescribe the form in which enrolment and attendance data are to be submitted to the department by school divisions. Under this authority Saskatchewan Learning is expanding the student registry to include all kindergarten to Grade 12 students.

Consultation with the FSIN and the First Nations Directors of Education has occurred to include all First Nations students in the registry. By signing the *Agreement to Participate in the Student Tracking Program*, First Nations enter into an agreement with the Minister to participate in the initiative and agree to the terms and conditions to take part in the Student Tracking Program.

In accordance with section 25 of [The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#), this information is collected by Saskatchewan Learning for the following purposes:

- Production of the official *Transcript of Secondary Level Achievement*;
- Administration of Department Examinations;
- Student Tracking Program;
- To enable research and analysis to support planning and decision-making at the local level and provincial level; and,
- To enable Saskatchewan Learning to meet its legal obligation to provide statistical information at the aggregate level on the Saskatchewan student population to the Government of Canada.