OKLAHOMA

SSIS Questions for Phone Testimonies from other States
Rhode Island Department of Education
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- Been here 3 years – system in place for 6 or 7
- LEGISLATION:
  - It was legislated that a system be developed that would track student mobility, provide information for funding, calculate state aid
  - One unique thing about the legislation is that they required all of the districts to comply with the SIF – every district had to set up a system that was SIF compliant so that they could communicate with the state – the state began working on the back end
- IMPLEMENTATION:
  - Initial vendor didn't work out – terminated after two years and started over again
  - One of the sub-contractors (Computer Power Solutions of Illinois - CPSI) was good so we stayed with them
  - Every district got a certified vendor and we began to install at every district our own agent and our own integration server to get info. for SIF
- QUESTION: Who paid for that?
  - ANSWER: The cost of the SIS was all district responsibility, the state paid for integration model (allocated $2.5 million/year) – was not licensed to be a horizontal integration because we don't have the money for that – we are supporting vertical integration – districts have to set up their own if they want horizontal
- QUESTION: Who pays to make sure SIF is working?
  - ANSWER: Initially maintaining the server at the district was a bad idea because we couldn't access them (532 districts) – nightmare to get into their system – their expense came back to being only their SIS – at the state level, we created 5 servers for integration and we manage all of the zone integration servers
- QUESTION: Did you do a cost-analysis between SIF and one SSIS?
  - ANSWER: SIF was mandated legislatively 7 or more years ago which created The Wave
- SIF was young back then – our initial success with 2.x version two years ago for Oklahoma specifically – the 08-09 year was very successful – started pre-coding testing levels this year – next year we will be piloting membership, attendance, connecting students to teachers, class schedules.
- QUESTION: You have 532 plus 3 charters (some consolidation every year) – how many SISs?
  - ANSWER: 14 – the big one is Municipal Accounting – local to Oklahoma – handle smaller districts – 132 between Power School, Infinite Campus and Software Technology
- QUESTION: Is the pricing on each system done locally, consortium purchasing, proximity?
  - ANSWER: It's up to the district. Probably not any group purchasing to leverage costs
- QUESTION: Besides that it complies with 2.x version of SIF – are there state-certified or blessed systems that you would recommend?
  - ANSWER: We try to avoid recommending because there is more than just reporting to us – it has to work for them at the district – some work really well, some not as much

    - When we went through 1.5 SIF, certification was all we had which wasn't enough
    - Three things are required now - SIF certified; pass a profile test that meets all of our mandatory requirements of data they have to send; have to pilot so we can see how they're functioning each year
    - We post on our website how the vendors are doing
- Before the districts didn't have a lot of buy-in because they didn't see the problems – now they see the problems and the need to get it right to get the data to the state right for free/reduced lunch, etc.
- Motto: "If it's gonna be, it's up to me" – we knew we had to learn everything we needed to know about SIF so we were the knowledge base
- $3.73 per kid just for SIF (642,065)
- There are 11 FTEs – one position isn't filled – 1 project mgr. – 1 integration team mgr. (brings together the three groups); 3 system support/customer service – 3 system/hardware people; and 3 developers creating programs
- We've talked to Wyoming as we're trying to develop better vendor relationships – it wasn't working so well in the beginning – Wyoming has only three now
- REAL-TIME DATA:
    - We are live 100% of the time - within 2 or 3 minutes after information on a kid is entered - unique identifier takes about 5 minutes to generate – we immediately display on our web portal what is wrong with the data after we validate it – we didn't expect the data quality improvement (one of the main benefits) that would come with this – the data can only be corrected at the SIF local
- Eliminates duplicate IDs – ownership conflict has to be resolved for that kid to be on any report
- OK didn't get an LDS money (RI got $4.7 million)
- VENDORS:
    - The hardest thing is we don't have a contract with the vendor – they say we can't tell them what to do, can't make requirements – we pay the money to the district who pays you, so really you do get the money from us – normal state funding
    - We want to say to the vendor that we want to work together; that our success is your success – Wyoming has good relationships with the vendors – a lot of times the districts don't know what's broken or how to fix it – it helps that we have relationships with the vendors when there are issues
- Sometimes there is not local IT staff – but where there is, that's who we're working with on the SIF/SIS issues
- QUESTION: Who trumps who?
    - ANSWER: The state does – the SIF requirement is law
- QUESTION: Have there been times you've told districts they have to change?
    - ANSWER: No and yes – we push hard to get them correct; we are going to begin putting on the website who is compliant and who isn't soon – districts are learning quickly which vendors work and which don't - we have not yet forced anybody out, it may come to that but we would just shame them
- QUESTION: What would you do if there was no legislation?
    - ANSWER: I would still utilize SIF because it allows for the competition - not sure if I would make a SSIS but I would probably reduce the number of vendors out there
- QUESTION: Would you still use SIF if you were as small as us?

    - ANSWER: Yes – because of the standards (like number of ethnicities) – SIF has a standard already in place; it helps to have multiple vendors to create the competition so they improve their products - haven't seen anything that works this fast
- We don't know if we're going to create standards on how they have to run their schedules (trimesters, etc.) – the goal is to provide back to them the ability to track kids
- This fall we have a whole reporting system coming out – e.g. to help them be able to flag potential drop-outs
- QUESTION: Going back to the $2.5 million with 11 FTEs – does your department include in this budget the data warehouse and what has to happen re: SIF?
    - ANSWER: We have a data warehouse that is in-house – we worked with the vendor to build it
    - Local programs/assessments/grade levels are not in the data warehouse but it's coming
    - SIF does have a grade book application but not sure if anyone has fought with the vendors to get this – vendors are not ready at this point to vertically report