



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

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JULY 23, 2020

I. 2020-2021 Performance Issues

II. 2020-2021 Attendance & Enrollment Questions

AGENDA

Q: Please address long batch processing times and length of time waiting for reports to download that was experienced in June:

A: TEA recognizes the very long wait times LEAs had to endure during the month of June. The performance team has been reviewing the statistics to be sure they completely understand the user experience. The statistics regarding the ODS are outlined on the following slides.

ODS Analysis June 1st – June 19th

- Total Batches Loaded (Completed Successfully): 16,264
- Average Batch Process Time (Wait + Execution) per LEA: 110 minutes
- Average Batch Wait Time per district (Time between when they uploaded, and the batch started processing): 91.51 minutes
- Average Batch Process time per district (Time spent executing ETL): 19.04 minutes
 - 95 Districts waited an average of 3+ hours for their batches to start processing
 - 205 Districts waited an average of 2-3 hours for their batches to start processing
 - 538 Districts waited an average of 1-2 hours for their batches to start processing
 - 372 districts waited an average of < 1 hour for their batches to start processing

Conclusions:

82.5% of an LEA's time is spent waiting on average 91 minutes for the ODS to start processing their data while the other 17.5% of LEAs are processing their data.

Proposed Immediate Solution:

Currently the system can only load 32 batches due to limitations between the eDM software and TEA's database. TEA is working with eDM vendor (eScholar) to reduce the time LEAs are waiting to load their data into the ODS by increasing the number of threads the system can handle. The TEA performance team has proposed several options to increase these threads and is collaborating with eScholar to determine the best solution to implement. Some of the improvements should be in place by the 2020-2021 Summer submission.

Proposed Long-Term Solution:

In the 2022-2023 school year, LEAs will begin using the most current version of the ed-fi data model (3.x). With the implementation of 3.x, data will no longer be loaded in batches using xml. Data will be transmitted to TEA using Application Programming Interface (API) technology. Source vendors will be required to update their systems to send data to the ODS through API calls. The batch upload step will be eliminated.

Q: Given that the due date for PK ECDS was pushed back this year, why can't TEA decide now that Summer PEIMS and PK ECDS will not be due on the same date next year?

A: The TEA Business team is currently analyzing the timelines, due dates and data needs regarding PK ECDS. If necessary, the team will request ITF and PCPEI to reconsider the due date for the PK ECDS submission.

Q: What is being done about the time it takes to run PEIMS and ECDS reports?

A: For Reports, wait time is more than 95% (i.e. of the 764,000 hours of total report processing time, more than 726,000 hours is for system waiting on a resource to be available.) The TEA performance team is currently planning to convert all reports from Crystal to Jasper. This will allow for more capacity. Preliminary tests reveal 40 reports can run simultaneously vs. the 10 that run now on each sever. Additionally, tests reveal significant performance improvements using the Jasper tool:

- 2019 average (Crystal report): 87 minutes
- 2020 average (Jasper report): 3 minutes

The Report conversion project will begin in the Fall of 2020. The team will focus on the reports that run the longest. We will provide updates on the progress of this project during the year.

Q: What is being done about the time it takes to run PEIMS validations?

A: The TEA performance team is currently planning to convert all rules from Drools (Jboss tool) to Stored Procedures. This will optimize the queries. The rules conversion project will begin September 2020. The team will focus on the PEIMS Summer rules. We will provide updates on the progress of this project during the year.

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Information on the next slides provided by
David Marx, Director, Texas Education Agency Financial Compliance
Justin Jons, Manager, Texas Education Agency Financial Compliance

Information provided as of July 22, 2020

Additional questions can be directed to:
disasterinfo@tea.texas.gov

Q: If in-person students are absent from the classroom, are they allowed to participate in remote synchronous or remote asynchronous on that day to still be counted present for attendance purposes? In other words, the student is on campus, but absent for ADA, but later logs into the learning management system and is engaged, can the student be marked remote asynchronous present? Can the students move between in-person and remote on a daily basis?

A: Yes, this would count as remote asynchronous instruction therefore the student would be marked remote asynchronous present. It is difficult to see how a student who is absent being RS-Present due to the time requirements. They would more likely to be RA-Present.

OR: The student would be marked absent for the day if no engagement.

Q: Since students can move between different attendance methods on any given day, how would that work?

A: In the FAQ this has been addressed and LEAs can restrict students changing instruction methods at the end of a grading period.

2020-2021 Attendance and Enrollment FAQ

Attendance

Question: 28

Q: What documentation must a teacher/campus keep for remote asynchronous, remote synchronous and in person attendance changes in case of a future audit? Is the documentation different to support remote synchronous attendance? How long does a LEA have to change an absent to a present code with documentation? 1 day, 1 week?

A: In class attendance would be what has historically been kept and there is no change. For remote synchronous method, an LEA must submit a signed attestation to the TEA that they will offer remote synchronous instruction. Then at the teacher's daily scheduled documented official attendance time, the official daily attendance record will be taken. For remote asynchronous, the LEA must submit a Letter of Intent that is going to offer and submit an instructional plan to TEA. The TEA will review and approve every instructional plan. The instructional plan will document what is defined as daily engagement and student monitoring. Additionally, the LEA LMS can be integrated to reflect that daily engagement.

Q: If a district offers on-campus to all students, but attend half-day in the morning and half in the afternoon, if they meet the full four-hour rule to be eligible for full-day attendance, do the calendars need to meet the 75,600 minutes and should the morning students be on a separate instructional track from the afternoon students?

A: The campus must be open to all students in order to count the operating minutes toward the 75,600-minute requirement. In this scenario, the district would need to add additional days to meet the operational minute requirement.

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Q: For Remote Synchronous, are "official attendance-taking times" intended to be set by individual teacher? If so, are they also allowed to be set differently from one day to the next? On a given day, is the locally selected snapshot time the same for both On-Campus and Remote Synchronous Instructions?

A: Per the FAQ, the official attendance time should be documented on the teacher's daily schedule. How LEAs create these daily schedules is a local decision.

Q: Is there a hierarchy to "present" types - for example, if a student can be considered Remote Sync present, and they also complete an engagement criterion for Remote Async present, is one status better to report than another?

A: Both remote present codes fund at the same level. The code used should be supported by either proof of engagement (asynchronous) or proof that student was marked present by the teacher at the OAT (synchronous).

Q: Per the FAQ: “All students in grades kindergarten through 5th grade will be coded for full-day attendance.” But, per the Attendance Method Comparison chart, KG-5 can be half day if On Campus or Remote Synchronous. Does this mean that we should ignore the student’s half-day ADA Eligibility Code for KG-5 and report all Remote Asynchronous Present Days Eligible as full day?

A: The line referenced is in the REMOTE ASYNCHRONOUS section of the document and only applies to those students. On campus and synchronous students should be coded based on their scheduled daily instructional time, like always.

Q: Since we are remote instruction only until 9/28 in our county, is it best to code all of our students RA?

A: Students should be appropriately coded based on the method served.

Q: Do districts that are planning on remote synchronous attendance accounting have to file an Asynchronous Instructional Plan if they will sometimes code a student as asynchronous present.

A: Yes