

KCCD 2022 IEPI Treatment of Areas of Focus Document

Key Substantive Data Areas

Key Questions

- How do we efficiently and effectively manage business processes that result in financial aid data that is accurate, well understood among college and district personnel, and can be used regularly to inform outreach efforts to support students?
- How do we efficiently and effectively manage business processes that result in human resources data that that is accurate, well understood among college and district personnel?
- How do we efficiently and effectively manage business processes that result in enrollment management that district and college staff have confidence in?

Status of Current Efforts: MIS has served as “official” data for California Community Colleges for years now, but with its importance to the Student Centered Funding Formula, there has been a renewed focus the processes by which data gets submitted to the Chancellor’s Office. In improving the data quality, we have uncovered issues in data oversight and how decisions are made about the MIS data. These issues have been most apparent in preparing the data submissions for Financial Aid and Human Resources. The data that the Ellucian MIS financial aid process produces has been disputed by college staff as inaccurate. While we have made much progress in involving Financial Aid directors in validating the data, there is still no official process. As a result, the amount of effort it takes to get the final submission provides a substantial burden for all involved.

Much work has been done to improve the MIS HR data as well. Until two years ago, the data that was generated via manual processes by one IT analyst. Since then, KCCD has been attempting to run the Ellucian processes and have had much difficulty in getting the process to run cleanly. KCCD has directed resources towards engaging with Ellucian consultants to help with the process but running MIS HR still a significant amount of human resources to submit.

Data Quality

Key Questions

- What district-wide processes can we develop that will assure that the most accurate data is submitted for the MIS reporting process and the 320 apportionment reporting process?
- What resources and skills do subject matter experts (College A&R directors, College Financial Aid directors, Schedulers, District Human Resources director) to provide sufficient oversight in reporting?
- How should the district processes be organized to ensure sufficient participation and oversight by subject matter experts?

Status of Current Efforts: There seems to be a gap between what shows up in local reports and what ends up getting reported in MIS. Most of the efforts to improve data quality have been ad hoc efforts between the District Institutional Research Office, District Information Technology, and college offices (primarily Admissions & Records Office and Financial Aid office). In most cases, we have been attempting to reverse engineer the Banner Processes that produce the MIS data. The

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Banner Processes themselves have required a lot of resources to decode, including paying Ellucian for consulting engagements to help align the data that is produced by the processes with what the area experts believe to be true. More recently, college vice presidents have been charged with assisting with the process and have formed a SCFF Supplemental workgroup to help shore up the accuracy of the SCFF supplemental categories.

One area that seems unclear is who “owns” data and is responsible for creating definitions and what responsibilities those subject matter experts have in creating data definitions and validating data. This ambiguity slows the process down and often results in confusion over the data that is reported.

Data Reporting and Access

Key Questions

- How do we leverage both Cognos and Tableau platforms to maximize usage and accessibility?
- How do we consolidate major reports so that all colleges and district staff are using the same data sources in the creation of reports?
- How do we set up data access accounts in a way that allows for quicker onboarding?
- How do we integrate external data sources such as Canvas data, National Clearinghouse Data, Navigate and Starfish data into our existing data structures in a way that makes it easy to do analysis?

Status of Current Efforts: KCCD’s integrated reporting solution is IBM Cognos which is attached to several data frameworks. The designer of many of the frameworks no longer work at KCCD and as a result it is unclear the logic that was used to build some of them. Additionally, there are over 5000 active reports in Cognos that technically are overseen by each content area, but in experience, it is unclear to all staff who “owns” what report and is responsible for updating reports when there are changes in definitions or reporting requirements. As such, it can take more time to get new staff members set up with the proper access to the data that they will need to use data in planning. Furthermore, within the reports, the method of extracting the data can vary from report to report. Some reports use the baseline reporting views that came with the Ellucian Data warehouse product. Some reports use the various frameworks – all of which both overlap each other for some fields and contradict each other for other fields. Some reports query the production tables directly using custom SQL that does not have a formal validation process other than the author performing their own validation. Lastly, some of reports use a combination of frameworks, custom SQL, and baseline views to extract the data for the reports. The result is data in different reports that don’t match up the way that they should.

In the last three years, the IR staff has added a Tableau Online installation as another method of distributing data and data reports. While positively received by KCCD and College staff as a reporting platform, the IR office has not been able to find more funding to expand the use of Tableau at KCCD. The tableau reports and dashboards also suffer from the same problem as the

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Cognos reports in that the data sourcing is inconsistent between report authors which can result in conflicting data.

The district office has attempted to create a central set of data products to serve the district needs, but it is unclear how well these reports are meeting those needs. As part of an enrollment management initiative with Cambridge West, a list of recommended reports needs to be created, but moving forward with those reports and data products is difficult when people have different ideas of where the data is coming from.

Lastly, we have contracted with a third-party vendor to build a data warehouse that is supposed to provide a single source for most data. While the overall warehouse shows promise as one possible method to unify all data systems, we have had issues in getting the data warehouse to produce accurate data. Much data validation and design logic still need to be completed. It has been difficult for the IR office to do this validation work while on top of its regular workload.