



Data Quality Assurance at the School District Level

As a means of improving the quality and consistency of data collections submitted to federal programs (e.g., No Child Left Behind, Common Core of Data, Performance-Based Data Management Initiative), state education agencies are enabling school districts to take an active role in validating their district-level data submissions.

This cooperation between school districts and state education agencies will result in:

- Improved communication and feedback;
- Better understanding of data validation rules;
- Reduced burden on both state and local agencies;
- Shortened cycle time for problem identification, correction and submission;
- Measurably higher levels of data quality at all levels.

Until recently, it has been impractical for school districts to effectively validate their own data before submitting it to state agencies. Ad-hoc, manual methods of data validation are time-consuming and lack the rigor needed to achieve substantial and lasting improvements in quality. Now state education agencies are able to automatically validate district-level data submissions, send email notifications and data quality reports to the districts, and allow districts to correct data errors online. These advances in data quality management have been introduced by Certica Solutions, a

Student Information Systems

Many school districts and schools share information using packaged student information systems (SIS). While these systems provide benefits by keeping information centralized and facilitating searching and online data collection, they do not prevent or track data errors.

Certica's validation solution checks the accuracy, completeness and consistency of data in SIS databases, to pinpoint errors and report them back to schools.

For the first time, district education leaders and data administrators can manage the integrity of student data in a pro-active, systematic manner.

subcontractor to the Council of Chief State School Officers, under the U.S. Department of Education's Data Quality and Standards project (part of the Performance-Based Data Management Initiative).

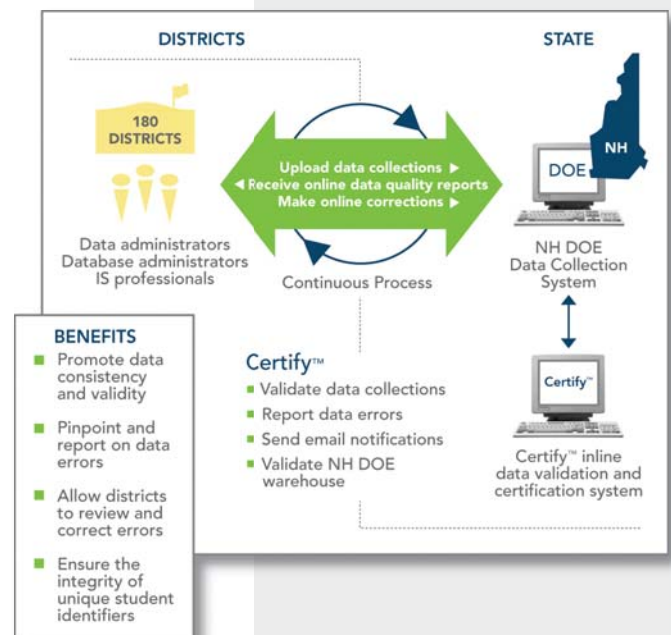
Whereas state agencies once faced a tradeoff between timeliness and accuracy in their data submissions, this new process of automated validation is enabling state agencies to submit better data—faster. The New Hampshire Department of Education (NH DOE) is in the forefront of the movement to automate, streamline and upgrade the education system's approach to data quality management. Using Certica's Certify™ data quality validation application, NH DOE has been able to:

- Leverage PBDMI validation rules that Certica had collected from the U.S. Department of Education and nine other states;
- Define business rules to ensure the consistency and integrity of data across 180 New Hampshire school districts;
- Pinpoint data errors so they can be reviewed and corrected by district-level administrators;
- Ensure the integrity of unique student identifiers by first validating student records before they are assigned an ID.

NH DOE integrated the Certify application into its education data collection system to perform validations and provide a seamless interface for district-level users. Users in the districts can now view validation results and modify their data submissions to correct errors. Further, NH DOE is able to validate data across multiple databases on multiple servers, further ensuring the consistency of data across the agency. For more information on district-level data quality assurance, contact:

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About Certica Solutions

Certica Solutions is a leading provider of data certification solutions. Certica helps corporate and government organizations address specific business challenges with a structured, systematic approach to identifying, reporting and monitoring data quality issues. Certica's business-specific solutions, based on the company's Certify software, enable organizations to identify costly data errors and omissions, comply confidently with regulatory requirements, improve data in a shortened time period, and certify their data suppliers' data.

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