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TO: Superintendents
Personnel Directors
NC WISE Coordinators
Program Directors and Principals

FROM: Philip W. Price
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UNIQUE IDENTIFIER – STUDENT AND STAFF/TIMELY SUBMISSION OF DATA

The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is not always receiving quality and timely information related to local education agency (LEA) and charter school submission of Unique Identifier (student and staff).. North Carolina's ability to report accurate and timely data for analysis and mandated legislative requirements is compromised when the following issues occur:

Issue 1: Invalid or Inaccurate UID – It should be noted that all students and staff (both Certified and Non-Certified) have been assigned a Unique Identifier (UID). The UID was implemented during school year 2009-10, and provided UIDs for all students, beginning in 2008-09. However, the assignment of UIDs requires some process changes.

1. All data systems and data submissions should contain a valid and accurate UID. This does not require that the UID in third-party systems become the key but does require that the third-party systems contain the UID within each record.
2. When assigning a UID to a student, there are three possible responses from the system:

   a. Match: If a Match is encountered, the UID Matching Engine will automatically assign the NC WISE ID of the matching student to the record being submitted.

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       b. Near Match: If the UID Matching Engine encounters a Near Match, multiple matches, it will mark the record as 'Resolve Near Matches'. These records need to be reviewed and resolved by LEAs and charter schools on a daily basis. The user will select either Match or No Match.

       c. No Match: If the UID Matching Engine finds no matching student(s) records this is considered to be a No Match. The UID Matching Engine will then automatically assign a new NC WISE ID to the record being submitted.

It appears that in some cases, the response to situation (b) has been to immediately select "No Match," which causes a new UID to be assigned. The result is that a duplicate UID is issued for some students and staff members. Selecting "No Match" is easier in the short term, but creating duplicates ultimately requires weeks of work to combine the two records once the duplication is detected. In addition, until the duplication is detected, all data associated with the incorrect UID is reported erroneously, or not at all. Please ensure that all possible verification is completed before selecting the "No Match" option.

Issue 2: Inclusion of non-school students in UID and NC WISE – Some program areas contain students who are not necessarily within the school system at a given time but are receiving services. These students fall into the categories of Out-of-School Student, Private School Student, and Pre-Kindergarteners. They need to be given UIDs and program staff will require the assistance of the NC WISE coordinator to help resolve the near match situations. NC WISE coordinators should be working with their program staff to identify these students. Typically, the program staff does not have access to NC WISE in order to do the research to resolve the "near match" condition of these students. These students are critical to the school's program data and in most cases will eventually become K-12 students.

The current plan is to eliminate non-authoritative data collections from each submission, which will result in a reduction of redundant data collections within the LEAs and schools. The validity and accuracy of the UID is imperative to moving to this next step. This reduction of effort, coupled with the potential loss of funding and negative impact to NCDPI, LEA, and school staff is well worth the effort of ensuring that the UIDs are handled with the utmost care.

Issue 3: Late Submission of Data – Each program area within NCDPI has required deadlines for data submission of its respective data. In nearly every case, these requirements are mandated by the Federal government, the NC General Assembly, or the NC State Board of Education. Depending on the severity of the delinquent submission, the following scenarios can result:

1. The verification or data quality process is compromised or suspended. This can result in errors entering the state database and inaccurate reporting.
2. Other data submission deadlines can be jeopardized or submitted in error. Again, this can result in errors entering the state database or inaccurate reporting.
3. State submission of programmatic data is reported late, potentially resulting in loss of funds to the state and the specific program area.

Pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 115C-276 (e)

To Report Certain Information to the Superintendent of Public Instruction. - It shall be the duty of every superintendent to furnish as promptly as possible to the State Superintendent when requested by him, information and statistics on any phase of the school work in his administrative unit.

and N.C.G.S. § 115C-276 (k)

To Submit Organization Reports and Other Information to the State Board. – Each year the superintendent of each local school administrative unit shall submit to the State Board of Education statistical reports, certified by the chairman of the board of education, showing the organization of the schools in his unit and any additional information the State Board may require. At the end of the second month of school each year, local boards of education, through the superintendent, shall report school organization, employees' duties, class sizes, and teaching loads to the State Board of Education as provided in G.S. 115C 47(10).

All data required should be provided via state systems or per authoritative source system specifications per state mandate. If data are not provided accurately and timely, it may not be included in state submissions per program requirements. If the correct student or teacher is not identified, the inability to connect the source systems will result in data being omitted from submissions. Please take all actions required to help ensure that the aforementioned issues are minimized or eliminated.

Please address any questions to Karl Pond, Enterprise Data Manager at 919-807-3241 or karl.pond@dpi.nc.gov.

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