TO: School District Superintendents
            Technology Directors
            District Assessment Coordinators
            Curriculum Directors
            Special Education Directors

            High School Counselors

FROM: Chas Anderson
            Deputy Commissioner

SUBJECT: SERVS Data Collection

DATE: February 4, 2009

SERVS
The Department has been working over the past several years to modernize data collection systems, consolidate information requests and reduce the compliance burdens on districts with improved processes and technology. As part of that effort we have developed a new enterprise data collection system, the Student Educational Record View Submission (SERVS). SERVS is a web-based data collection tool that allows districts to submit individual student records, batch files and will ultimately be able to handle automated data transmissions from district student information systems. It is our intention to eventually transition all MDE data collections to the new SERVS platform which models data around students, staff and organizations. When fully implemented, SERVS will eliminate the duplication of data collection that currently exists across MDE systems.

Data Collection
This spring we will begin our first SERVS collection with four newly mandated student data elements: 1) a Science Course Taking Indicator to enable us to meet NCLB requirements for calculating AYP participation in science, 2) a Pass Graduation Indicator

to enable us to identify students who districts indicate have met graduation requirements through an alternate route such as meeting IEP requirements, 3) GPA and 4) Class rank for seniors as required by the P-16 Council. These are agency-wide data requirements and will be managed through the Information Technologies Division as an enterprise effort to ensure their availability for all MDE reports.

In many cases the current MARSS coordinator is the data manager who will be assigned to this new student data submission but coordination with other district staff may be needed to understand which information within local student information systems should be used. For example, District Assessment Coordinators or Curriculum Directors should coordinate with the SERVS data manager to clarify which science course a student was enrolled during the 2008-09 school year to qualify for the science course taking indicator, Special Education Directors should identify which special education students are eligible for the Pass Graduation Indicator as documented in their IEPs; and, school counselors should identify Pass Graduation Indicators for students who may have scores accepted from another state's graduation exam.

SIG WebEx
To facilitate this first step in the SERVS transition, MDE Information Technologies is hosting monthly Data Managers Special Interest Group (SIG) WebEx beginning February 4, from 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. This SIG WebEx is a continuation of the outreach to student information system vendors that began last spring and is open to all vendors and school districts to provide a forum for data submission and related data issues communications. The initial plan is to meet on the first Wednesday of every month from 1:00 until 3:00 p.m. here at MDE in the Conference Center A, ITV/12 conference room for those who wish to attend in person. The meeting will also be available via WebEx for those wishing to attend remotely. The WebEx format allows attendees to join the meeting through a conference call and have all materials presented in real time on their personal computers including sending text questions to the meeting organizer to be answered during the meeting. The agenda for the first meeting is below:

1. Purpose of the SIG and meeting times – 10 minutes
2. Membership (additions, corrections or deletions) – 10 minutes
3. SERVS submission file formats – 60 minutes
4. DIRS submission file formats – 30 minutes
5. Request for topics that people would like to see covered – 5 minutes
6. Review/Purpose next meeting agenda – 5 minutes
   a. Updates, issues and concerns
   b. SERVS and status of submissions
   c. District outreach progress and report
   d. General technology update
   e. MDE Enterprise Data Model (EDM) School Interoperability Framework (SIF) data model
   f. Other?

Please contact John Paulson by phone at 651-582-8451 or by e-mail at: john.l.paulson@state.mn.us if you have staff who wish to join with future WebEx conferences.

Cc: Technology Directors
        District Assessment Coordinators
        Special Education Directors
        Curriculum Directors,
        High School Counselors