

User Questions and Answers from the 8/29/2014 Iowa TIER Support Webinar

We had a wonderful turnout for our second Iowa TIER Support Webinar. Many thanks to all who attended! Apologies for the limited webinar connection. We hope to have this corrected for the next webinar session.

There were lots of great questions asked by our users. Here is a recap of some of those questions and answers –

Iowa TIER Support Webinar Questions

Q: “Is this open ended questions or do you have topics you will discuss?”

A: Our webinars are basically Q&A sessions designed to help you with any issues you might be encountering with Iowa TIER.

Single User Access Role Type Assignment and Staff Management

Q: “Can AEA staff members be modified? Also, if they are set up for one school, can they also be set up for multiple buildings, and how do I do this?”

A: We do not want to have AEA people set up in the SIS systems. The reason being is that as soon as the user is connected to more than one location, their profiles will get locked out. We have another process that we are currently using in the meantime.

Q: “Okay, so tell me about the internal coach role.”

A: The internal coach role in TIER has a number of support functions in addition to assessing students. With this role, you can act as a resource for support questions from users, submit support tickets and access user accounts, as well as manage interventions. Internal coaches are assigned by building, and cannot see other buildings in a district, unless you are granted access to those buildings. Ideally, internal coaches should have a little flexibility in their day with time to help out end users with their issues. Good communication skills and technical knowledge would be key skills needed for this role.

A&A (EdPortal) Account Setup

Q: “Does a teacher have to complete the profile section on the portal, including all the fields and finding the school name?”

A: This one is a very resounding NO. We are actually beginning to have some issues with some users manually requesting their roles in EdPortal. All info for your profile is imported from your local SIS. You shouldn't have to enter anything.

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Q: “We have one person who received this message; ‘An Iowa Education Portal account has been created for you, based upon your Enterprise A&A account information and your email address in the school’s SIS.’ Does it make sense that we still can’t get in?”

A: This is the email message that you should be receiving that indicates that you have been provisioned to the Iowa TIER portal from your A&A account. People who have gotten this message but are still unable to locate their TIER link need to log in to the portal and click on the location link in the upper right hand corner dropdown beneath their name, then select their building. The Iowa TIER link should then appear in the light blue bar. If this still doesn’t work, please contact an internal coach and submit a support ticket.

Q: “In the email from EdPortal that indicates I have been granted access to TIER, why is there no verify email link or mention of it? When I click on the TIER link in the portal, the verify email message comes up but doesn’t work. Are we talking about the same thing?”

A: You will actually get two emails. The first email is an @iowa.gov message from the EdPortal telling you that that you’ve gotten access. Nothing needs to be done with the first email. You will need to click on the Iowa TIER link in the portal after receiving it. You will then come on a page where you will see your email address and be prompted to click on a button that says “Verify Email.” Clicking on this button will actually generate the second email message that you will need to get access to. This message will come from @EdSpring.org. This will have the verify link. Be careful not to accidentally open the link in Internet Explorer or Safari. We advise copying and pasting into the URL of either Chrome or Firefox.

Accessing Iowa TIER via the Iowa EdPortal

Q: “I have TIER showing on the portal, but can’t verify the email address. I am sure that the PowerSchool and Portal emails do match. Any ideas?”

A: If you have confirmed that all information matches between your SIS and the EdPortal but you are still unable to access TIER, then you should locate an internal coach who can submit a support ticket. We have a team of programmers who are working to make sure that all information is updated and correct, and the support ticket is the only way we can properly escalate the issue to them.

Reporting

No questions at this time.

Testing and Measurement

Q: “Does Transitional Kindergarten use all the tests assigned to Kindergarten or do we wait until they attend kindergarten the following year?”

A: Any level of class that is receiving Kindergarten funding is officially regarded as Kindergarten, and as such, the K tests are expected to be used as per the expectation of Iowa Legislation Code 279.68. You can find more info concerning the legislation [here](#).

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Q: "Do you know if we are to test students who are being served at an outside setting (Heartland, Children's Square) versus at our elementary buildings? For example: We test these students for IA Assessments because they are our district students, but are being served in a therapeutic setting."

A: At this time we don't have specific guidance for this situation. The new guidelines outlined in the state legislation can be referred to [here](#) for reference.

Q: "What is the Fall benchmark criteria for K-1? Where do I find that info?"

A: The Fall benchmark criteria have been rolled over from the 2013-14 school year. If you would like to view this info, you may do so in the TIER Knowledge Base. Search using the keyword "Benchmark".

Staff Training and Certification

Q: "Once you have your A&A account, where do you go to get into TIER testing?"

A: If you have created your A&A account, please do NOT request the TIER role in the portal. Your local SIS will assign the role for you. After your role has been assigned successfully, you should see the "Iowa TIER" link show up just underneath the IDOE logo in the upper left hand corner. You may need to click on the district selector underneath your name and switch to the building for the Iowa TIER link to appear.

Q: "So, we DO have to certify before we test now? I have heard it both ways..."

A: For the fall window we have suspended the part of the system that would prevent a user from administering a test on which they were not yet certified. At this time, certification is not required but is strongly encouraged during the fall screening window. This was done to help alleviate the stress of both the user and the system as we start to get Iowa TIER up and running. Certification is the way that we make sure that the tests are being administered consistently and confidently in order to help ensure that the testing results are valid.

Q: "Where would we locate the TIER Knowledge Base?"

A: When you are in the Iowa TIER application click on the question mark symbol in the upper right hand corner of the page. This should take you directly to the TIER Knowledge Base. Here you can find training materials and documents written specifically to address common questions and problems. There are also two forums located here. One place is the Idea Forum where you can make suggestions and vote on existing ideas for new development in Iowa TIER. The other forum is a chat forum where we encourage open discussion with anything TIER related. (These forums are moderated, so play nice.☺)

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Q: "Can I access the Knowledge Base or submit a ticket if I can't get into TIER?"

A: No. You need to be logged into TIER in order to get access to the Knowledge Base or the Support Ticketing System. Only people who are designated as internal coaches may submit support tickets.

Q: "We are getting ready to give the test soon. Is there a place where we can see an example of what the test will look like for a student? For instance, we are thinking about having a "team" do the testing, with each member doing a different test. Is that doable, or will we not be able to all log on to a kid at the same time?"

A: There are a few concerns with this approach. First of all would be the testing strategy. We understand that early on teachers may feel a little uncomfortable with moving around from test to test. While it may seem more convenient for the teacher, this approach creates a lot of additional transitional time for the student, resulting in lost instructional time. It would be best if a single tester administers all tests in one session. Make sure the stimulus materials are appropriately organized to do so. The system is designed to move from one test to the next on the same student.

The best place to go look at and practice the tests would be the TIER Training site. Using this site, you could have the teachers practice on one another to get comfortable administering the entire battery at once. Here, you can go to each test and go through them on practice runs with no impact to any students.

Student Management

Q: "Should special education students appear on both the general education teacher's class list and the special education teacher's class list?"

A: It depends on how you set up your classes. A student can be in more than one class. A teacher with the teacher role must have students scheduled to classes for the teacher to view them. A teacher who needs access to all students might be set up with the site user role instead of the teacher role.

Q: "Any other ideas on the student issue? Our students do show up in the grade list on universal screening & under the student tab, but will not filter by a teacher."

A: This sounds like all of the students are in your system, but classes aren't scheduled. There might be some links missing, and this might be a course scheduling issue in your SIS system. Double check to make sure your teacher folder number is entered into the SIS system. Please check with your local SIS administrator for further follow up.

Q: "We discovered a couple of students who do not show up in Iowa TIER at all, and we have a number of students who show up as null. If students are in our SIS, shouldn't they be pulled by TIER? I submitted a list of null students through a help ticket."

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A: Submitting a list of students by way of a support ticket is the right way to let us know that there is a bug, and also most likely the quickest way to get this issue resolved. Screenshots are even better in order to help us troubleshoot and isolate root cause of an issue. Null students are most likely because that the student does not have their state student ID number set up. All students need to have their state ID's entered in order to be eligible for testing.

Q: "If student ID numbers have been entered since they were originally tagged as null, will they update automatically as information is pulled from the SIS?"

A: Yes. This is how it's supposed to work. If you encounter an issue where the ID doesn't update in the allotted time, please contact an internal coach to submit a support ticket. Don't forget to include the district, Student's name and grade.

Q: "So, if our student rosters are correct in Campus, and they have been since July, when will those synch up? We have close to 75 students on rosters that are either on the wrong roster or not even on teacher rosters. They are all up to date in campus and again have been since July."

A: The student info should update as changes are made. The only known item related to this would be that at this time we are not deleting former students. Their information will continue to show for a while until we have managed to further stabilize the system. If there still an issue with student info, please submit a support ticket for follow up.

Q: "How to delete data or reassess? We have teachers that have accidentally scored the wrong student or other issues like this. I researched and know that there is supposed to be a black 'X'? I can't see it anywhere. It isn't available to me. Thoughts?"

A: This is something that could be used for coaching moments with the screeners or teachers in identifying and confirming that the correct student is being tested. There should be a black 'X' for the screener to identify. If it doesn't show, please submit a support ticket for follow up. (Preferably with a screenshot included.) {NOTE - There is a known problem with this function as of 9/3/2014. Hopefully it will be fixed soon.}

SIS (Infinite Campus, JMC, and Power School) Functionality

Q: "Are we able to load up from JMC to TIER?"

A: Yes, you can use JMC to upload data to TIER through SIF. All three student information systems (SIS) move staff and student information to Iowa TIER via the SIF agent, which is a piece of software that keeps the systems in synch.

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Q: "When matching emails in Power School and the EdPortal, are the emails case sensitive between the two?"

A: We don't believe so, but the important thing here to remember that the email addresses must match exactly between your SIS and your A&A account. If you have an upper case letter in your address, it is a good practice to make sure it all matches. Be very attentive. Watch for spaces, transposed characters, etc.

Q: "Our students are not showing up in classes. We use JMC. Is there a simple fix we are missing?"

A: Have an internal coach check the student area to make sure that the students are showing up there. In JMC make sure that the students are actually scheduled to a class (similar to HS classes) and not just a homeroom.

Q: "Can I just make up a SIF number for Infinite Campus?"

A: No. There is a preset list of codes provided for IC users. You can find these codes and instructions [here](#).

Q: "PowerSchool: our K-4 kids are enrolled in a number of courses. Is there a particular course SIF will pull from?"

A: It should be pulling info from all courses. The filters for the courses are linked to the teachers. Courses can be used to further group students.

Q: "If we modify classes in our SIS, will the changes occur in Iowa Tier, or will those changes show up the next time information is pulled from the SIS? We use Power School."

A: The classes should be updated in Iowa TIER fairly quickly after you make the change in your local SIS system. The data transfer might be almost instantaneous, but under some situations could take almost as long as overnight depending on the amount of traffic.

Q: "Talk to me more about the SIF number on Infinite Campus. Right now, I need to make one for each person and I don't know if the numbers can start in any order like 0001, 0002, or if I have to follow something else?"

A: IC will state that each user has a local staff number. In order to follow through correctly, you would need to contact IC for information on the proper setup of local staff ID's.

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Q: "Would the bug with Power School be the reason that a user who was assigned more than one role only has one role showing up? There are others who have multiple roles and the roles show up for them, so it's not consistent."

A: The only time multiple roles should be assigned would be in a case of a teacher who is also a universal screener. Every other role should be limited to one role only per building.

Q: "Are there any updates regarding the issues with Infinite Campus working with Iowa TIER?"

A: Yes. Please refer to the PeopleWire update sent out by IC on 8/28/2014. This will bring you up to date on troubleshooting role issues with Iowa TIER.

Q: "Our district and another are having issues with both TIER and the State ID system. Both are SIF. Are they interfering with one another?"

A: They shouldn't be interfering as there are different SIF zones in the registry. It's possible that both SIF agents might be down, but we can check with your local SIS to see if there is an issue. Please submit a support ticket.

Q: "Our district uses Infinite Campus. We have some teachers whose email addresses changed over the summer. Their new email addresses are in Infinite Campus, but we continue to be told that the district needs to correct their email addresses in Campus. It seems like TIER is not getting the latest information from our Infinite Campus database. What would you recommend?"

A: The internal coaches should be able to look at the staff email fields to see if the addresses have updated correctly in TIER. If they have not and IC is showing the correct addresses, the SIF agent may not be transmitting the changes. Check with your student information system manager to verify if this is working. The next place to check would be in their EdPortal accounts. You would need to confirm that the email address in EdPortal matches as well. This is the key to getting all systems to synch up correctly for users, as we use the email address as the unique identifier. If all email addresses are matched up correctly in EdPortal and IC, you will need to have an internal coach submit a support ticket for further follow up.

Q: "All of our principals and site users are listed as teachers in TIER even though we have done the appropriate coding in Infinite Campus. So our principals and site users can't see students. Any ideas?"

A: Please refer to the PeopleWire update sent out by IC on 8/28/2014. This will bring you up to date on troubleshooting role issues with Iowa TIER. In this case, also check the multiple role assignments and make sure that the "teacher" box is not checked. (The teacher role is the default setting in TIER.) If you already have the principal role set up in your system, then you will need to enter the Iowa TIER principal code in IC and rename the current principal role to something like "School Principal" or another unique identifier. Remember that the teacher checkbox in IC trumps over all other roles.

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Technical Requirements

No questions at this time.

Iowa TIER Support Ticketing System

No questions at this time.

If you would like to get access to the latest Q&A documents, please go to the DE website at <https://www.educateiowa.gov/early-literacy-implementation>, click on "A to Z index", click on "E", and find "Early Literacy Implementation". Scroll down to find "Supporting Documents" and other documents that deal with setup.

If you are still unable to get into Iowa TIER, please contact us at TIERSupport@iowa.gov

For all other Iowa TIER issues, please contact an internal coach and have them submit a support ticket.