



Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Members, Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education
THROUGH: Diane Barrans, Executive Director
FROM: Kenneth Dodson, Director of Information Support Services (ISS)
DATE: October 8, 2014
SUBJECT: ISS Report

ISS Activities

- The HELMS.Net project is the migration of the Higher Education Loan Management System (HELMS) from the State of Alaska mainframe to a Windows Server 2012 environment. This platform change requires all mainframe-specific programming and run parameters to be translated into the new Windows environment. The foundation application business rule-based programs are portable but everything else requires transformation. Programmers and 5280 Solutions (the vendor facilitating the migration) are concentrating on those changes. The majority of the work right now is focused on adding on ACPE-specific imbedded HELMS (and integrated peripheral) enhancements. For items not part of the standard HELMS install there are no out-of-the-box Windows solutions. Each must be recreated using existing mainframe code as a model to build the new Windows-based solution. The ISS Business Analysts (BAs) are concentrating on the user interface set-up to take advantage of flexibility not currently available on the mainframe. Modular testing is ongoing for the BAs as new pieces are migrated to Windows server. Business Analysts are preparing for User Acceptance Testing (UAT)—a full system test of all processes. UAT will begin when the critical pieces are migrated and have passed module testing.
- ISS support for ANSWERS continues. As the project progresses, ISS support emphasis has shifted from design support to first phase testing control and execution. Prototypes are being expanded into final deliverables which are ready for test and ISS is leading the test team in this effort. Other sub-parts are progressing through design, prototype and construction.
- The State of Alaska IRIS (Integrated Resources Information Systems) project is ongoing. This is the transition from the State of Alaska's current accounting system (AKSAS) to a new system. ACPE's two IRIS test import files interfaced successfully into the IRIS test system and our Finance department is reviewing the results. A next

step, once the IRIS team is ready, is to perform a full circle test. This will test system compatibility starting with the file creation on HELMS, import into IRIS, processing on IRIS, extraction from IRIS, import into HELMS and the final end of the loop will be HELMS processing. This will require a comprehensive review of each step to ensure outcomes are correct. The project is projected to go live June of 2015 and will require on-going resource allocation until that time.

- The annual 2014 PFD Garnishment project was finalized this month. The garnishment of the PFD payments was set-up, executed and the payments have been posted. On-going PFD payments will trickle in throughout the year as eligible accounts are processed by PFD. This project is essentially complete from an ISS perspective.