

Skyward Interfaces Audit

Policies and Procedures

Internal Audit Report

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BACKGROUND:

This audit report is part of an overall review of the Skyward system interfaces. Skyward is the district's student information system. This Software-as-a-Service product provides the district with various functionalities such as student management, state reporting and gradebook among many others.

This interface audit will be conducted in three phases: Policies and Procedures; Access & Security (Logical and Physical) and Types, Completeness, Accuracy & Control of Interfaces. This report is for the Policies and Procedures phase. Two additional separate reports will be issued for the other phases once they are completed.

As of December 8th, 2021, the Skyward system had a total of 103 interfaces (12 with internally-hosted systems and 91 with externally-hosted systems, 60 of which are for class courses). The majority of these interfaces are exports from the Skyward system, but the list includes imports, exports and imports/exports.

[Webopedia](#) defines interface as a boundary across which two independent systems meet and act on or communicate with each other. In computer technology, there are several types of interfaces. They mention three types of interfaces: user, software and hardware:

- User interface - the keyboard, mouse, menus of a computer system. The user interface allows the user to communicate with the operating system.
- Software interface - the languages and codes that the applications use to communicate with each other and with the hardware.
- Hardware interface - the wires, plugs and sockets that hardware devices use to communicate with each other.

So, an interface can occur at the logical (software), physical (hardware) and user levels. Our audit will focus on the software interface.

When referring to software, an interface is a program that allows a user to interact computers in person or over a network.

An interface can also be defined as a tool and concept that refers to a point of interaction between components, and is applicable at the level of both hardware and software.

Another definition for interface is a boundary across which two independent systems meet and act on or communicate with each other. In computer technology, there are several types of interfaces.

OBJECTIVES, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY:

Objectives

The overall objective is to evaluate the effectiveness of the District’s security for Skyward interfaces. We have divided the audit into three parts. In this part, the objective is to determine whether policies and procedures for interfaces were in place and accessible and available to appropriate personnel.

Scope

The scope of the audit will address interfaces based on criticality and importance to the Skyward system and to district operations. In this part, we will focus on policies and procedures applicable to the interfaces performed by the Student Information Systems & Projects department¹.

Methodology

We conducted this audit in accordance with the *International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing* of the Institute of Internal Auditors and included such procedures as deemed necessary to provide reasonable assurance regarding the audit objective. Internal Auditing is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve an organization’s operations. It helps an organization accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control, and governance processes.

We are required to note any material deficiencies in accordance with Florida Statutes, School Board Policy and sound business practices. No material deficiencies were noted in this audit. We also offer suggestions to improve controls or operational efficiency and effectiveness.

For this audit, we assessed interface policies and procedures by evaluating:

¹ This department provides configuration, maintenance, support, and training for the administrative student information system – Skyward. It also provides student source data to approximately 100 other systems.

We evaluated whether the policies and procedures applicable to the SIS & Projects department were in place and accessible to personnel.

We conducted this audit in accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.

We noted no material deficiencies in this audit.

Policies and Procedures for the Interfaces

- District policies regarding interfaces - what District policies are in place that establish how data transmissions or interfaces are to be performed.
- SIS & Projects Department procedures for interfaces – what specific department procedures are in place to perform interfaces for the Skyward system.

RESULTS & RECOMMENDATIONS:

Overall Conclusion: Our overall conclusion is that the district has policies in place that establish how interfaces or data transmissions are to be performed and they have specific procedures in place to perform interfaces for the Skyward system.

Both policies and specific procedures are available to the personnel through the SIS & Projects Department’s network folder.

No recommendations were noted during this part.

Our overall conclusion is that the district has policies and specific procedures or steps in place to perform the interfaces for the Skyward system.



Department / School Name	Student Information Systems & Projects
Administrator / Department Head	John A Davis – Executive Director
Cabinet Official / Area Superintendent	Robert Curran, Chief Information Officer

Audit Result / Recommendation	Management Response Acknowledgement/ Agreement of Condition	Responsible Person (Name & Title) And Target Completion Date (MM/YYYY)	Management’s Action Plan
<p>Our overall conclusion is that the district has policies in place that establish how interfaces or data transmissions are to be performed and they have specific procedures in place to perform interfaces for the Skyward system.</p> <p>Both policies and specific procedures are available to the personnel through the SIS & Projects Department’s network folder.</p>	I agree with the result.	John A Davis Executive Director	Continue utilizing established procedures to ensure Skyward interfaces are secure and accurate.