

Many educators are uncomfortable with the term "Business Intelligence". To some it seems too; well, businesslike and therefore inappropriate in an educational setting.

On closer examination, however, there is really no reason for educators to resist the idea of Business Intelligence. While the business community uses the term in different ways, the common underlying perception is that Business Intelligence implies exploring and understanding all aspects of a business. If intelligence means "The capacity to acquire and apply knowledge" it becomes clear that Business Intelligence can just as easily be called Education Intelligence. The goals are the same, the tools are the same, but the data elements are very different.

To gain "Education Intelligence" similar to the way businesses gain "Business Intelligence", the administrator must compile data from sources throughout a district and then explore that data looking for trends, patterns and predictors of performance. In an article titled Business Intelligence: Insights From The Data Pile in the New York Times (Education Life Section, January 13, 2002), Leslie Berger describes one possible scenario: "A school could, for example, cross-reference attendance with disciplinary action and sudden drops in grades to identify students who might drop out".

This scenario looks at 4 different types of data: student demographics, attendance, discipline and grades. While some districts are lucky enough to have this data in the same system, most districts have to pull this data from 2 or 3 different sources that use different formats and have different levels of accuracy. While the data exists in these districts, using it in an integrated way to make decisions is at best extremely difficult and time consuming.

The data warehouse process assembles a separate database holding copies of data from different sources throughout a district. The student information system is the core data source. Additional sources include standardized assessment results, transportation systems, spreadsheets kept by individual departments such as Special Ed, free and reduced lunch information from the cafeteria system and a number of others. This data is extracted, cleansed, standardized and deposited into the data warehouse on a routine basis. This process places the data at your fingertips for general reporting as well as ad hoc querying.

Ad hoc querying means you can pose questions in real time to the data warehouse and get immediate results. This lets the educator explore the data in creative ways, looking for relationships that might not otherwise be apparent. Exploring district data using your

knowledge, experience and intuition leads to understanding that might otherwise be beyond reach.

Education Intelligence is something educators and administrators apply every day. A data warehouse is a powerful tool for extending that intelligence.

Why eScholar?

- The leader in education data management, providing successful statewide solutions for 11 SEAs, supporting over 3,500 school districts and over 12 million students across the country.
- Focused exclusively on the education data management industry since 1997.
- Comprehensive services, training and support programs to ensure customer success.
- An established, active user community allowing access to best practices, experience, and support from peers nationwide

Today, our products have become the recognized standards in the student and staff identification and educational data warehousing markets. The eScholar Complete Data Warehouse® solution has become an indispensable solution to local and state education agencies for integrating and managing the vast quantity of information they collect on students, programs, teachers and much more. For more information, contact Sales at sales@escholar.com or (877) 328-2969

Confidential and Proprietary Property of eScholar LLC ©2009-2010 All Rights Reserved.

eScholar, eScholar Complete Data Warehouse® for PK-12, eScholar Complete Data Warehouse® for Postsecondary, eScholar Reporting™, eScholar EDEN Solution™, eScholar Framework™ for Cognos®, eScholar Uniq-ID® for Students, eScholar Uniq-ID® for Staff, eScholar Uniq-ID® for Postsecondary Students, eScholar Uniq-ID® for Postsecondary Staff, eScholar Readiness Workshop™ and eScholar Hosting™ are trademarks or registered trademarks of eScholar LLC in the United States. Specification subject to change without notice.

Does BI Have A Place in Education mb20090722

