

Department of Education
Office of Inspector General – Internal Audit
Six-Month Status Report on: Bureau of Educator Certification – Versa Certification Process
Report # A-1920DOE-028 / A-1920DOE-029 Issued: April 1, 2021
Status as of October 1, 2021

Finding	Recommendation(s)	Management Response as of April 1, 2021	Management Response as of October 1, 2021	Anticipated Completion Date & Contact
<p>Current queries and calculations return inconsistent data and reports; Versa Analytics is not operational; and the Versa system could be enhanced.</p>	<p>We recommend BEC and DTI determine the required calculations and subsequent queries based on the needs of the program office, validate the calculations, and maintain documentation of the calculations and queries for future use. We recommend BEC and DTI cross-train team members on the Versa system and the certification process in the event a team member departs from the agency and is no longer available to perform the needed functions. We recommend BEC partner with DTI to develop custom reports based on select original Logi reports, which then could be provided routinely to BEC to assist them in tracking production</p>	<p>Concur. The BEC will coordinate with our development team in DTI to cross train team members on required calculations and subsequent queries. The BEC will also partner with our development team in DTI to develop custom reports to assist in tracking production per the OIG recommendation. Additionally, the BEC will explore the functionality of the Versa Analytics program with our development team in DTI and Tyler Technologies. Finally, BEC and Educator Quality leadership will explore conducting a business process analysis with a third party to identify potential areas for enhancement.</p>	<p>The BEC Operations Team has been coordinating with DTI to develop configurable SQL queries that will allow the BEC to run custom reports. The PPM ticket was generated shortly after the conclusion of the audit, and this effort was approved by DTI leadership on 08/04/21. This work is currently in development, with an anticipated completion of late 2021, possible early 2022. The developer assigned to the BEC is currently working on this project, which has been assigned PPM number 2113564711. This project has been prioritized at number twenty on the BEC Priority Status Report managed by the BA</p>	<p>12/31/21</p> <p>Steven Marcus, DTI Daniel Moore, BEC Lorie Smith, BEC</p>

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	<p>on a daily, weekly, monthly, and quarterly basis. We additionally recommend BEC and DTI engage in discussions with the Versa vendor regarding the inability to use the Versa Analytics tool purchased as part of the contract. We recommend BEC conduct a cost analysis for enhancing the Versa system in order to make key dates visible to users. We additionally recommend BEC and DTI consider continuation of the previous request for quote to procure the services of an IT professional to assess the Versa system and BEC business processes and produce a gap analysis to identify areas where system enhancements could better</p>		<p>assigned to BEC by DTI. There are several other higher priority tickets in front of this effort, however as the certification busy season is coming to an end, this will be moved to a higher priority soon.</p> <p>The new DBA assigned to BEC, Steven Swenson, has been informed of the lack of functionality with Versa Analytics and will work with the vendor to explore options to vitalize this program. This project has not been assigned a high priority, as the data elements required are successfully being captured via custom SQL reports run outside of the VA system.</p>	<p>12/31/21 Steven Swenson, DTI Steven Marcus, DTI Daniel Moore, BEC Lorie Smith, BEC</p>

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	support the business processes and ensure competent, reliable data and reports.		The BEC engaged in a business process analysis with a consultant secured by DTI, Dr. Adam Briggs, a licensed PMP. This business process analysis was completed on 07/09/21, and a summary of the analysis has been included with this response. The business process analysis resulted in several recommendations for enhancement, many of which have already been initiated.	06/30/22 Adam Briggs, DTI Daniel Moore, BEC Lorie Smith, BEC

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<p>BEC did not process all applications within statutory timeframes.</p>	<p>We recommend BEC and DTI determine the required calculations and subsequent queries based on the needs of the program office, validate the calculations, and maintain documentation of the calculations and queries for future use. We recommend BEC ensure all applications are processed in the time frame allotted by the Florida Statutes and decrease the time between the date the applications are eligible for evaluation and the date assigned to a specialist. We recommend BEC conduct a cost analysis for enhancing the Versa system in order to assign applications more efficiently and timely. We recommend BEC cross-train</p>	<p>Concur. During the period of time audited, the BEC was in the process of clearing a backlog of educator certification applications, which resulted in evaluation times greater than 90 days. Since that time, process changes, and system enhancements have been implemented that reduce the BEC’s processing time. At this time, all evaluation queues are well within the 90 day statutory requirement. BEC will consult with DTI to produce a cost analysis for enhancing the Versa system to assign applications more efficiently to further reduce our processing time. Consistent with OIG recommendation, BEC has also started the process of cross training a backup unit of evaluators to process educator</p>	<p>Since the time period reviewed during the audit, the BEC has managed to process all applications for educator certification in 30 days or less, far below the statutory requirement of 90 days. The BEC also implemented and redundancy unit of fully trained backup evaluators to assist the BEC Evaluations Section when application numbers surge or the oldest files are approaching 30 days. This unit consists of BEC staff members from other sections (Contact Center, Special Projects, Operations, and District Support). This additional unit has been assisting with the evaluations workflow as</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Daniel Moore, BEC</p>

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	<p>team members on the certification process in the event additional staff is needed to process applications timely when application numbers surge. Finally, we recommend BEC consider moving District Issue Requests without associated background screening results to the release queue until the background screening results are appropriately provided and the application can be processed.</p>	<p>certification applications when application numbers surge. This backup unit is comprised of staff from the contact center, the operations section, and the district support section.</p>	<p>needed, and has been tremendously effective in managing the total number of files and the turnaround time for application processing.</p>	
<p>Security Controls – User Access</p>	<p>We recommend that BEC improve security controls related to user access to ensure the continued protection of confidential data.</p>	<p>Concur. Per OIG recommendation, the BEC will implement a new business process to ensure appropriate access privileges.</p>	<p>The BEC has implemented a 90 day real last login report that our Operations Unit is using to manage access to the Versa system. This report informs our team of the last time each user accessed the system,</p>	<p>Completed Daniel Moore, BEC Lorie Smith, BEC</p>

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			<p>and individuals who have not used the system in 90 days are evaluated to determine if continued access is warranted. Additionally, the BEC is conducting annual surveys of internal and external partners to clarify and revise system access based on the specific needs and roles of each user.</p>	