



# KANSAS

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DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

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To Statewide Accounting and Reporting System (STARS) User Agencies:

The purpose of this communication is to inform all agencies that the State of Kansas is currently engaged in a study to assess agency and central needs for a statewide financial management system (FMS). The goal of the study is to identify and evaluate the cost-benefit of various alternatives for meeting those needs, including the possibility of acquiring a new statewide FMS. The study is being facilitated by Department of Administration staff, assisted by the consulting firm of Salvaggio, Teal, and Associates from Austin, Texas, a company that has performed similar efforts in six other states.

We feel it is very important to obtain your agency's input into the study, as well as into decisions about the future direction of financial systems at the State of Kansas. The following overview outlines the key dates and activities planned for the study, along with agency opportunities for participation in the process. Additional information and notifications will be distributed as the project progresses. Information will also be available on the project web site at <http://da.ks.gov/ar/fms/>.

- **State Agency Surveys.** In an effort to understand more about the costs and potential benefits of a new system, surveys will be distributed to all state agencies. The surveys will include questions about agency processes and systems, as well as challenges and opportunities for improvement with regard to the current system(s).
- **Online Posting of Baseline Requirements.** An initial set of financial management system requirements covering over a dozen functional areas will be made available online for review and comment by all agencies in early October. These requirements are the result of a previous FMS needs assessment study performed at the State of Kansas in 2001 and from the consultant's work with other states. Experience indicates that starting from a baseline set of requirements, rather than starting from scratch, will facilitate more productive meetings and stimulate discussion. Your input is critical, as these requirements will form the foundation of a future system acquisition, if deemed feasible.
- **Requirements Focus Group Sessions.** Meetings will be held throughout the month of October and into November with small representative sets of agency subject matter experts to conduct a review of the baseline requirements and prepare them for discussion by all agency accounting and procurement staff during the outreach process described below. In an effort to reduce the impact of the effort required for this study on agency workloads, as well as to make the process as efficient as possible, membership on the focus group teams has been limited to representative users, with the idea that all agencies will have opportunities for input and review in the outreach sessions, as well as to submit feedback and comments online related to the detailed requirements. Focus group participants will be contacted shortly with more information on the dates and locations for these sessions.

- **Agency Outreach Meetings.** These meetings will occur in early December and will be open to staff from all agencies who are involved in accounting or procurement functions. At this point in the process, a preliminary review of the requirements will have been completed by the Requirements Focus Group Teams. Input received via the online feedback mechanism will also be incorporated in the updated requirements. We will present this information to all interested state agency parties for your final review and input during these sessions.
- **Large Agency Stakeholder meetings.** These meetings will focus on an in-depth discussion of the financial operations and systems of selected agencies who have the largest budgets, complex accounting needs, and who may operate significant internal accounting systems in addition to STARS. The meetings will be scheduled shortly and be held throughout the month of October.
- **Chief Financial Officer Meetings.** These meetings will be held with financial officers from the large stakeholder agencies who constitute the most significant portion of the State's budget. The meetings will serve to gain their input into the process, as well as to assist them in the preparation of cost-benefit information related to their operations and systems. The first meeting will be in early October.
- **Steering Committee.** In order to assure that the overall direction of the study and its findings reflect the shared vision of small and large agencies, as well as the diversity of state business operations, a steering committee has been established to provide overall guidance to the project. The first meeting of the steering committee is scheduled for Thursday, September 28, 2006 at 2 p.m. More information about steering committee membership and activities will be posted on the project web site.
- **Informational presentations.** Throughout the project, we plan to present information about the project and its status, as well as solicit feedback, in a variety of agency forums such as the Agency Stars Rapport Association (ASTRA) and the State's Information Technology Advisory Board (ITAB). If your agency belongs to a user group or other special interest group that would be interested in a presentation or update on the project, please contact us using the information provided below.

This study is an important step in defining the future direction of financial systems at the State of Kansas. It is intended to provide an opportunity for state agencies to reflect upon their own needs in a variety of areas, including not only the basics like accounts payable and procurement, but also new areas not currently accommodated by STARS like fixed assets or grant and project accounting. With your participation in the study, we hope to succeed in building a common vision of the future together.

While the scope of the study is challenged by both available time and funding, we are working to provide as much opportunity for agency input as possible, while streamlining the process to limit the impact on already busy state agency staff and managers. We welcome your feedback and questions about the study and plan to make use of the project web site, as well as the types of informational presentations noted above, to keep you informed of its progress. If you have any questions about the project or would like additional information, please contact Duncan Friend, the project director for the needs assessment study, at 296-8134 or [duncan.friend@da.state.ks.us](mailto:duncan.friend@da.state.ks.us).

Sincerely,



Duane A. Goossen  
Secretary of Administration



Carol Foreman  
Deputy Secretary of Administration



Denise Moore  
Executive Branch Chief Information Technology Officer

cc: Robert Mackey, Director, Division of Accounts and Reports  
Chris Howe, Director, Division of Purchases  
Duncan Friend, Project Director, State FMS Needs Assessment Project