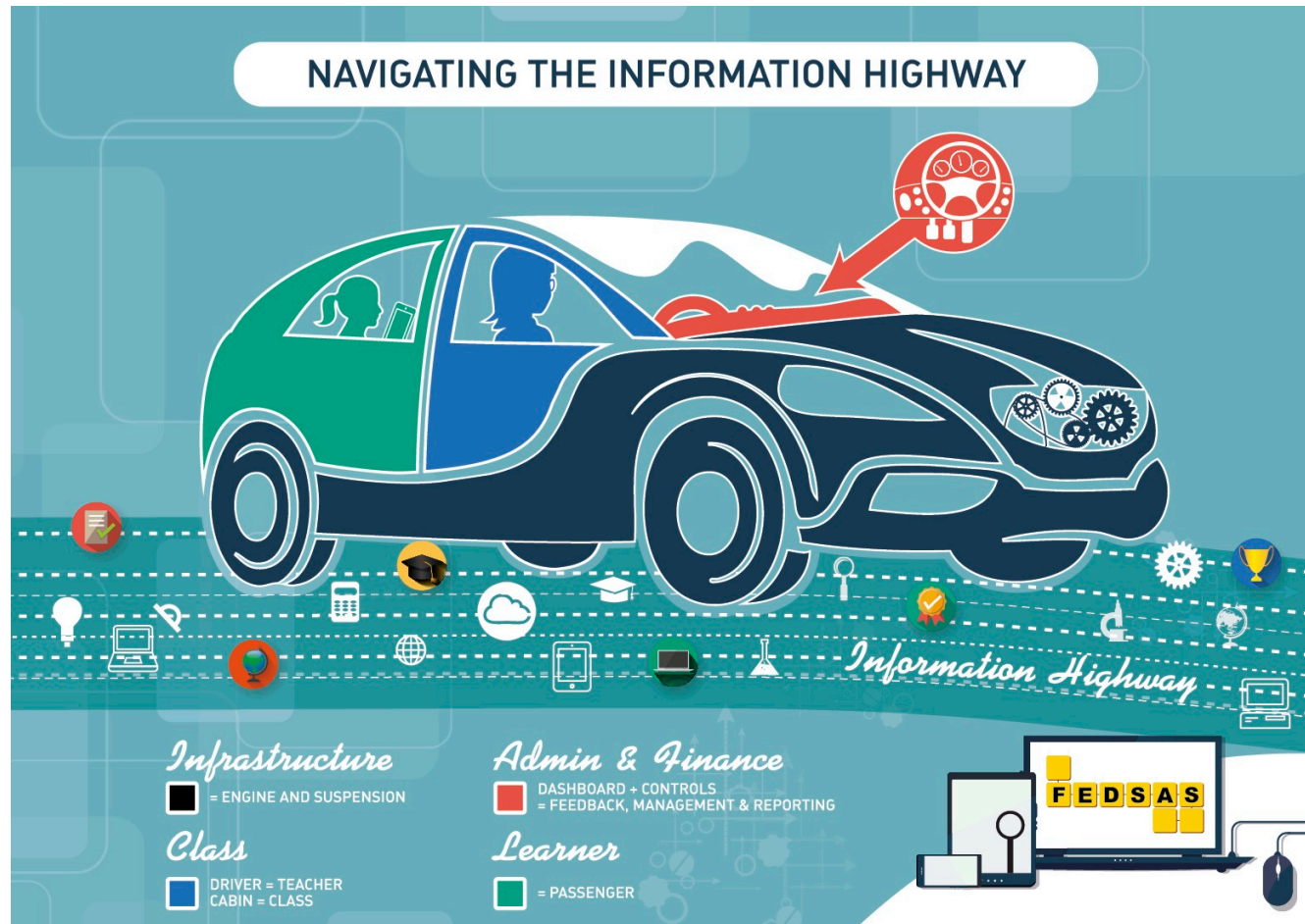# Is SA-SAMS our only option?

SA-SAMS continues to be a point of discussion. Critical issues are:

Proper decision making and planning is dependant on accurate and complete information. Data collections is thus a critical function for the department of education for this purpose. The relationship between the school and Department requires ongoing reporting. Operational and functional efficiency in management and governance are important functions of the SGB. The choice of software for this purpose is thus key in the interest of this process.

1. All schools are obliged to use an electronic system - School Administration Management System (SAMS) which includes third party systems (Principal Plus, Pencil Box, Smart, Edupac, Microscope etc) and SA-SAMS to supply data to the provincial department.

2. LURITS used to be the only central database and school's were required to submit data to LURITS in the specified format. This was regulated by legislation and taken up in policy documents.

3. Provincial departments now have their own central databases and schools are now also required to supply data to the provincial department - in SA-SAMS *forma*t. This is not as a result of change in legislation or policy but is in line with the policy that stipulates that the department may prescribe the content and ***format*** for data to be submitted. GDE installed a link at schools to export data from other systems in SA-SAMS format.

4. The content and format of data may be prescribed but NOT the system that generates the data.

5. The concept of SA-SAMS format is referred to in many recent forms of communication. Notably, some of these communication refer to the '*SA-SAMS use*'. Our position is that it refers to the format and structure of the data and not the use of the system per se.

What now?

In Circular 3 -2016 the GDE confirmed the use of third party systems and re-iterated the SA-SAMS format for reporting. Please refer to the circular. It was also mentioned that SA-SAMS is a free product to school and that using a third party system may be construed as a waste of

scarce resources. The department has no mandate to prescribe the planned, budgeted and approved expenditure of the school (as legal persona). We do however, advocate good financial control over the procurement process in a school.

One needs to distinguish between three critical realtionships while navigating this possible mine field in an attemt to prevent difficulties.

Relationship between:	Scenario	Legal Framework	Contact
1. School (represented by the SGB) and provincial department of education	School is pressured to use a specific system whilst the department may ONLY prescribe the contents and format of data. Access to information. Information should be reported, but also protected, as prescribed	NEIP - National Education Information Policy: School should use a SAMS (not only SA-SAMS) Department prescribe contents and format for data to be reported Privacy and confidentiality of information needs to be understaood clearly. There is a difference between private / confindential and secret.	FEDSAS
2. School (SGB) and Service provider (Client and service provider)	Third party system do not comply with data requirements as prescribed. Most systems have an export function to SA-SAMS format. DDD dashboard and Valistractor processes also need to be complied with.	The department may prescribe the content and format of the data that is required for planning and decision making.	Service provider
3. Principal and Department (Employer and Employee)	Principal or other officials are threatened with disciplinary action for failing to comply with and instruction to use a specific system rather than reporting in a specific format.		Union

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