

## RDS Data Element Management

RDS Data Element Management is a tool for maintaining an encyclopedia of data elements that exist in the databases used by RDS applications. The tool provides the means to organize logically related data elements into groups, maintain the relationships between physical tables, and maintain each data element.

A data element is a set of instructions detailing how to handle the information that the data element represents. These instructions include things such as the physical location of the data (database, table, field) and the type of data (date, text, money). Applications use these instructions to determine how to retrieve, format, edit, sort, filter, or otherwise deal with the data. For example, the Absence Date data element tells applications that it represents a date field in the RDS K12 database in a table called AttendanceHistory in a field called dtmDate. Applications that consume this data element will see that it's a date and will be able to provide date formatting or drop down calendars.

A Group is a set of logically related data elements. Figure 1 is displaying a group called Attendance, which exists in the RDS K12 system. Because there are thousands of data elements throughout the different RDS Systems, most of which only interact with a very small set of data elements, applications use the groups to ensure that only related information is retrieved.

The screenshot shows the RDS Data Elements Management interface. The main window is titled "RDS Data Elements Management" and has tabs for "Applications", "Data Element Groups", "Data Elements", and "Data Relations". The "Data Element Groups" tab is active.

On the left sidebar, there are buttons for "new", "save", "delete", and "cancel changes". Below these are fields for "Select Group:" (Attendance (RDS K12)), "Group Name:" (Attendance), "Application:" (RDS K12), "Class Name:" (K12Report), and "Group Notes:".

The main area is divided into two sections. The top section is titled "These values are specific to the selected data element for the current group." and contains fields for "Logical Field Name:" (Grade), "Column Header:" (Grade), and "Default Width:" (50). There are also checkboxes for "Used in Reports" and "Can be updated".

The bottom section is titled "Elements currently in group. Use the up and down arrows to the left to change the sort order. Use the up and down arrows between the grids to add and remove data elements of the group." and contains a table with the following data:

Database	Logical Field Name	Column Header	Physical Table	Physical Field	Width
RDSSpecialEd	Student ID	Student ID	Students	strStudentID	80
RDSSpecialEd	Student Name	Student Name	Students	strName	0
RDSGradebook	Grade	Grade	Students	strGrade	50
RDSGradebook	School Name	School Name	SchoolSettings	strSchoolName	200
RDSGradebook	School Code	School	AttendanceHist	strSchool	0
RDSGradebook	Absence Date	Absence Date	AttendanceHist	dtmDate	0
RDSGradebook	Sequence	Sequence	AttendanceHist	iSequence	0
RDSGradebook	Time In	Time In	AttendanceHist	iTimeIn	0
RDSGradebook	Time Out	Time Out	AttendanceHist	iTimeOut	0

Below this table is a section titled "Available Elements" with a table of data elements:

Database	Logical Field Name	Physical Table	Physical Field	Data Type	Size	Scale	ID
RDSGradebook	cInternetAccess	Students	cInternetAccess	1	1	0	1685
RDSGradebook	cMediaAccess	Students	cMediaAccess	1	1	0	1690
RDSGradebook	cMilitary	Students	cMilitary	1	1	0	1720
RDSGradebook	dtmBirthDate	Students	dtmBirthDate	5	23	3	1670
RDSGradebook	dtmReentry	Students	dtmReentry	5	23	3	1680
RDSGradebook	dtmWithdraw	Students	dtmWithdraw	5	23	3	1685
RDSGradebook	iStudentID	Students	iStudentID	2	10	0	1670
RDSGradebook	strActiveYear	Students	strActiveYear	1	6	0	1690
RDSGradebook	strAthlete1	Students	strAthlete1	1	1	0	1700

At the bottom right of the interface, there is a copyright notice: "copyright 1985 to 2011 Regional Data Services" and the RDS logo.

figure 1