Exceptional Student Services (ESS) / Data Management

Frequently Asked Questions – OCTOBER 1 SPECIAL EDUCATION (SPED) COUNT

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Q1: WHY DID THE CHILD COUNT CHANGE FROM DECEMBER 1 TO OCTOBER 1?

A: The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has changed its policy, and states are no longer allowed to submit a *preliminary* count but must submit a *final* count by **the first Wednesday in April**. Therefore, ADE/ESS must maintain the accuracy of the child count submitted to OSEP.

In an effort to improve the accuracy, reliability, and validity of the child count data, ADE/ESS elected to change the child count date to October 1st, effective FY 2009 (SY 2008-2009). It was anticipated that by moving the child count to earlier in the year, public education agencies (PEAs) would have more time to submit and clean up their special education data in SAIS by the aforementioned due date thus giving ADE/ESS more accurate date to submit to OSEP.

Q2: HOW DO I VERIFY MY OCTOBER 1 CHILD COUNT?

A: Verification of your October 1 child count is done electronically through the online ESS Census Verification application, available under the Common Logon. Instructions are provided on the home page of the application.

Q3: WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE A COMMON LOGON ACCOUNT OR IF I DON'T HAVE THE ESS CENSUS VERIFICATION APPLICATION AVAILABLE UNDER MY EXISTING COMMON LOGON ACCOUNT?

A: Contact the ADE Support Center for assistance at (602) 542.7378 inside Maricopa County; or at (866) 577-9636 outside Maricopa County; or via e-mail at adesupport@azed.gov.

Q4: IF THE DATA ON MY SPED07 REPORT FOR OCTOBER 1 IS INACCURATE, HOW DO I MAKE CORRECTIONS?

A: Verification letters for the October 1 special education census count are due to ADE/ESS by **December 20, 2013**. Special education participation data is due in SAIS by **January 31, 2014**. You must ensure that the counts are reconciled in SAIS by **5:00 p.m. on February 28, 2014**. The number of students served on October 1 that reside in SAIS must match the verified counts reported on your verification letter (counts verification section of the online application). If your SAIS data differs from the October 1 count on your verification letter, then it is your responsibility to ensure that all corrections are submitted to SAIS by **January 31** with all integrity failures (if any) resolved by the reconciliation due date of **February 28**. The SPED07 reports will be updated regularly to reflect any corrections made to SAIS data. *The final SPED07 report is expected to be available in March for use in PEA Determinations.* If you have not been able to reconcile your SAIS data to generate an accurate SPED07 report by the reconciliation due date, you will have until June 30 to make corrections **to data in SAIS**. *You will no longer be able to make corrections after SAIS closes for the current fiscal reporting year on June 30.*

For additional information related to the process of ensuring that the SPED07 and PEA verified counts match, please refer to the technical assistance document entitled "Recommended

Procedure: Verifying the October 1 Federal Special Education Census," available on the home page of the ESS Census Verification application and the ESS Data Management webpage.

Q5: DO CHARTER SCHOOLS HAVE TO VERIFY THE 3-5 COUNT?

A: Yes, effective FY 2011 charter schools must verify their 3-5 count as well as their **6-21** count. However, charter schools can only include 4- and 5-year-olds who are kindergarten eligible.

Q6: DO SECURE CARE FACILITIES HAVE TO VERIFY THE 3-5 COUNT?

A: No, only districts and charter schools are required to complete this task.

Q7: DO UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICTS HAVE TO VERIFY THE 3-5 COUNT?

A: No, union high school districts only serve high school grades and therefore do not serve 3-5 year olds.

Q8: WHAT IS THE CITATION FOR COLLECTING PRIVATE SCHOOL/HOME SCHOOL COUNTS?

A: 34 CFR § 300.705(b)(3)(i)

Q9: IS THE PRIVATE SCHOOL/HOME SCHOOL COUNT A COUNT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS ONLY OR ALL STUDENTS ENROLLED ON OCTOBER 1?

A: Districts should report all K-12 students enrolled on October 1, not only those receiving special education services.

Q10: DO PRIVATE/PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS INCLUDE APPROVED PRIVATE SPECIAL EDUCATION SCHOOLS?

A: No. Students who attend approved private special education schools are counted in the PEA that they reside in and are already accounted for.

For a complete list of approved private day schools, see http://www.azed.gov/special-education/files/2011/06/fy_2013_approved_day_9-12-12.pdf.

The list of approved residential treatment centers (RTC) can be found at http://www.azed.gov/special-education/files/2012/04/fy2012_approved_rtc_list.pdf.

Q11: WHERE CAN I FIND A LIST OF PRIVATE/PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS WITHIN MY DISTRICT BOUNDARIES?

A: The ADE does not maintain a list of all private/parochial schools in Arizona. The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) provides a private school search tool on their website

at http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pss/privateschoolsearch/. This tool is not endorsed by the ADE. You can also look up private/parochial schools in the yellow pages of the phone book.

Q12: WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE ANY PRIVATE/PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS WITHIN MY DISTRICT BOUNDARIES?

A: If you do not have any private/parochial schools within your district boundaries, then you will only report your home-schooled student count, if any. If you don't have any private school students or home-schooled students to report, then you will indicate such by entering zero (0) in the field of the ESS Census Verification application that asks for the total enrollment count for private school and home-schooled students.

Q13: SHOULD I INCLUDE PRESCHOOLERS IN THE PRIVATE SCHOOL/HOME SCHOOL COUNT?

A: No. This count should only include K-12 students enrolled in private schools or home schools.

Q14: WHICH PEAS ARE REQUIRED TO SUBMIT PRIVATE SCHOOL/HOME SCHOOL COUNTS?

A: This is only applicable to traditional school districts that have private schools within their district boundaries and home-schooled students that live within their district boundaries. If your district's boundary overlaps with another district, only report private school counts for the grades your district serves.

This does not apply to charter schools, secure care facilities, state institutions, accommodation districts, transporting districts, and county regional districts as these entities do not have any boundaries.

Q15: WHO CAN I CONTACT TO SEE IF THERE ARE ANY HOME-SCHOOLED STUDENTS WHO RESIDE WITHIN MY DISTRICT BOUNDARIES?

A: Parents of home-schooled children are required to register with the county superintendent's office. Contact information for these offices can be found at: http://www.azed.gov/county-educational-service-agencies/.

Q16: HOW DO I REPORT THE PRIVATE/HOME SCHOOL COUNT IF MY DISTRICT BOUNDARIES OVERLAP WITH ANOTHER DISTRICT'S BOUNDARIES?

A: If your district's boundaries overlap with another district's boundaries, then only report the private/parochial count for the grade range that your district serves. The home school count would only apply to home-schooled students who reside within your district boundaries.

Q17: WHAT IS A DB NEED?

A: The deaf-blind (DB) need is a federal disability category, not a state category. For purposes of the federal child count, a student is determined to be deaf-blind if the student has both an HI and a VI need reported concurrently in SAIS. This need will not be found on any other report except for the SPED07.

Q18: HOW ARE UNDUPLICATED COUNTS DETERMINED?

A: The SPED07 report extracts from SAIS the disability category for each student identified with the Federal Primary Need Indicator (FPNI) and reports that student once with that disability, regardless of how many disabilities a students has – with the exception of DB (see previous FAQ).

Q19: WHERE DO I SEND THE VERIFICATION LETTER?

A: Signed verification letters are due by **December 20, 2013**. In order to be eligible for federal allocations, you are required to submit this signed verification letter. To obtain your verification letter to sign, you must access the ESS Census Verification online application, available under the Common Logon. Once the letter is signed, you may mail it to:

Arizona Department of Education
Exceptional Student Services, Bin #24
1535 W. Jefferson Street
Phoenix, AZ 85007
Attn: ESS Data Management

Or you may fax it to (602) 364-1999.

You do not have to do both – one or the other will suffice.

Q20: HOW WILL I KNOW IF MY VERIFICATION LETTER WAS RECEIVED?

A: If you provide an accurate/valid e-mail address in the contact information section of the ESS Census Verification application, that e-mail user will be sent an automatic e-mail notification when ESS Data Management enters the date of the receipt into the application.

Q21: WHAT HAPPENS IF THE FINAL SPED07 REPORT FAILS TO MATCH THE VERIFICATION COUNT SUBMITTED BY THE PEA?

A: A count that is not reconciled in SAIS by the time the final SPED07 report is generated may have an impact on the PEA Determination, and the PEA may also be subject to an ADM audit. In addition, the non-reconciliation step must be completed within the ESS Census Verification application. PEAs that did not reconcile will be notified sometime after **April 1**.

Q22: WHAT HAPPENS IF THE VERIFICATION LETTER IS SUBMITTED PAST THE DUE DATE?

A: A past due verification letter may result in an interruption of your federal funds until such time it is received by ADE/ESS and may also impact the PEA Determination.

Q23: WHAT HAPPENS IF THE VERIFICATION LETTER IS NOT SUBMITTED?

A: Non-submission will result in ineligibility to apply for IDEA Basic allocations. Late submission may cause an interruption of federal funds and the PEA Determination may be impacted.

Q24: IS THE CENSUS COUNT DONE BY DISTRICT OF ATTENDANCE (DOA) OR DISTRICT OF RESIDENCE (DOR)?

A: The October 1 special education census is done by DOR; PEAs should only count students that reside within their PEA, regardless of where students attend to receive special education and related services.

Q25: HOW ARE CEC (CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATIONAL CONVENIENCE) STUDENTS REPORTED IN THE CENSUS COUNT? BY DISTRICT OF ATTENDANCE (DOA) OR BY DISTRICT OF RESIDENCE (DOR)?

A: For CEC-A students who cannot attend the PEA in which they reside because of distance or lack of transportation and attend another PEA in-state, they are included in the census for the DOR, as they claim enrollment.

For CEC-A students who cannot attend the PEA in which they reside and attend an out-of-state school, they are included in the census for the DOR, as they claim enrollment.

For CEC-A students who reside in unorganized territories and attend another district in-state, they are claimed by the DOA that is equivalent to the DOR. These students would be included in the census for the DOR.

For CEC-B students who reside in PEAs as a result of placement by a state agency or state/federal court and attend the PEAs where they reside in placement (not PEAs where parents reside), they are claimed by the DOA, which is equivalent to the DOR. These students would be included in the census for the DOR.

Q26: HOW DO I COUNT STUDENTS WHEN OCTOBER 1 FALLS ON A WEEKEND (SATURDAY OR SUNDAY) **OR ON FALL BREAK**?

A: Include students who were enrolled on the last day school was in session before October 1 as long as they are known to have continued in special education on the first day school was in session

following October 1 (whether it be your school in your PEA or another PEA). The PEA that should count the student is the PEA the student was enrolled in prior to October 1.

Q27: MY ELEMENTARY DISTRICT'S BOUNDARIES DO NOT OVERLAP WITH ANY OTHER DISTRICT'S BOUNDARIES. WE HAVE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS THAT RESIDE WITHIN MY DISTRICT'S BOUNDARIES? THAT ARE SERVICED AT ANOTHER PEA. HOW ARE THESE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS COUNTED?

A: Feeder elementary districts that have high school students that reside in their districts and receive education and special education services at another PEA that serves high school grades should be included in the October 1 count for the district in which they reside (DOR), as long as these high school students are NOT enrolled at the other PEA through *open enrollment*.