# ED*Facts* Discussion Points

*Updated December 2017*

This document is intended to be used by federal and state staff who need broad talking points about ED*Facts*. For further information, please contact [ED*Facts*@ed.gov](mailto:EDFacts@ed.gov).

# Introduction

ED*Facts* is a U.S. Department of Education (ED) initiative to collect, analyze, report on, and promote the use of high-quality, pre-kindergarten through grade 12 performance data. ED*Facts* supports the collection and submission of timely, complete, and accurate data to empower the use of robust performance data in education policy and decision-making at the federal, state, and local levels.

# Why does ED*Facts* exist?

* **ED had a Problem.** Prior to 2007, ED did not have a centralized data collection system and had no centralized data warehouse. Each grant program required data reporting, but grantees (generally State Education Agencies (SEAs)) told ED that the non-standardized approach to data collection was inefficient, duplicative, and reporting requirements were confusing (e.g., same terms, different definitions, different systems and submission methods, different timelines for the same data going to different programs). ED was unable to access and use data across program offices.
* **Burden Reduction.** States told ED that the current system created reporting burden. To reduce burden on SEAs, ED created ED*Facts* to centralize the submission system and standardize reporting requirements about data collected from SEAs.
* **Data Governance.** Centralized reporting needed formal data governance efforts in ED. ED manages the data collections using a data governance board that includes representatives from all offices with data in ED*Facts*. The ED*Facts* Data Governance Board (EDGB) was established in 2007 and is designed to promote communication across ED offices, ensure clear reporting requirements, address reporting conflicts, highlight major data use issues, track data use timelines and due dates, and communicate data releases to ensure appropriate use of the data in ED*Facts*.
* **How did ED transition to ED*Facts*? Regulations, Senior Leadership Champions, and Commitment from Stewards.** Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) were published on January 25, 2007 to amend 34 CFR Part 76. Part 76 included a section on state data reporting requirements. In that section, the regulations noted that the Secretary could require states to submit data in the manner prescribed by the Secretary, including submitting reports electronically and at the quality level specified in the data collection instrument (at that time, some grantees submitted paper data submissions). The Secretary determined that ED*Facts* would be the centralized, electronic data collection system for preK-12 data; senior leaders in ED ensured transition support from legacy data collections to ED*Facts*. Stewards working in grant program offices determined transition steps and timelines to move from legacy systems to ED*Facts*. There was no federal funding dedicated to the effort; states were awarded contract funds to hire an ED*Facts* Coordinator. See “Which Program Offices “Own” EDFacts Data” question below for more information on data stewards.

# What ED*Facts* Data are Collected?

* ED*Facts* collects aggregate data from SEAs at the SEA, local education agency (LEA) and school levels. No student-level or staff-level information is collected.
* For an overview of the type of data ED*Facts* collects, see page 2 and 3 in the [Meet ED Data handout](https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/edfacts/meet-ed-data.pdf) on the ED*Facts* Initiative website.
* For a full list of files ED*Facts* collects, see the [file specification pages](https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/edfacts/file-specifications.html) by year on the ED*Facts* Initiative website.

# Who Uses ED*Facts* Data?

* Grant programs across ED have states submit required data to ED*Facts* to monitor grant implementation requirements (e.g., are eligible students being identified, receiving services, showing gains across time). The program offices that are the data stewards are the biggest users of ED*Facts* data. See “Which Program Offices “Own” EDFacts Data” question below for more information on data stewards.
* ED offices use the data for research, policy, and decision-making. ED policy-makers request analyses for ED performance reports, to respond to press requests, and to prepare for site visits.
* Examples of how ED uses ED*Facts* data:
  + The **National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)** uses ED*Facts* to collect data for the non-fiscal [Common Core of Data](https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/ccddata.asp) (CCD). The CCD collection is used as a sampling framework for [National Assessment of Educational Progress](https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/about/) (NAEP).
  + The **Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE)** uses data in ED*Facts* to populate sections of the [Consolidated State Performance Report](https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/consolidated/index.html) (CSPR).
  + The **Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)** uses data in ED*Facts* to populate sections of state [IDEA Annual Performance Reports](https://www2.ed.gov/fund/data/report/idea/sppapr.html) (APR), inform [grant determinations](https://sites.ed.gov/idea/files/ideafactsheet-determinations-2017.pdf) in annual IDEA grant award letters, generate [public data tables](https://www2.ed.gov/programs/osepidea/618-data/static-tables/index.html), and to prepare their [Annual Report to Congress](https://www2.ed.gov/about/reports/annual/osep/index.html) on the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA).
  + The **Office of Safe and Healthy Schools (OSHS)** uses data in ED*Facts* to build their annual [Federal Data Summaries](https://nche.ed.gov/pr/data_comp.php) on Education for Homeless Children and Youth.

# When are ED*Facts* Data Submitted?

* ED*Facts* collects data and metadata on an annual basis. Timeliness of ED*Facts* submissions is critical because due dates are determined on ED data use dates. Due dates are published in the [EDFacts Data Submission Organizer](https://edfacts.grads360.org/#program/data-submission-organizer). Many other resources for ED*Facts* submissions are also available on the [ED*Facts* Community](https://edfacts.grads360.org/#program) site.

# How are ED*Facts* Data Submitted?

* Most data are submitted through the **ED*Facts* Submission System (ESS).** Files are submitted electronically by SEAs into ESS. Most metadata (e.g., information to inform interpretability of ESS data, such as state proficiency levels) are submitted through the web-based system, **ED*Facts* Metadata and Process System (EMAPS)**.
* SEAs use ED*Facts* file specifications for technical reporting requirements to build and transmit ED*Facts* data. These file specifications are available for all files on the [ED*Facts* Initiative](http://www.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/edfacts/file-specifications.html) website.
* [ED*Facts* Coordinators](https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/edfacts/eden/contacts.html) in the SEAs submits the data. ED*Facts* Coordinators and state program office contacts are encouraged to work together to support timely and accurate data collection and submissions.

# Which program offices “own” ED*Facts* data?

* ED*Facts* collects data on behalf of ED program offices that have statutory and regulatory requirement to collect data, these program offices are known as ED*Facts* data stewards. Data stewards are accountable for managing the definition, acquisition, validation, and improved usage of the data, including analysis, use in grant or program monitoring and the publication of their data. ED*Facts* staff support stewards to develop data documentation, acquire the data and produce data products. SEA staff may receive questions from the program offices and/or their contractors concerning the submitted data as data are being used. ED has coordinated data quality review procedures to improve timeliness and coordination of ED feedback to states about data quality.
* For a list of ED*Facts* stewarding offices, see page 3 of the [EDFacts Data Governance Board (EDGB) Overview](https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/edfacts/edfacts-edgb-data-governance.pdf) handout for a list of stewarding program offices and see [EDFacts Data Stewarding Overview](https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/edfacts/edfacts-data-stewarding-overview.pdf) handout for more information on data stewarding.

# What are consequences for late, incomplete, or non-submission of ED*Facts* data?

* States that do not submit complete and timely data may not be included in public reports.
* States that do not submit complete and timely data for programs for which their state is receiving grant funds may be subject to one or more of the following consequences:
  + The state may be omitted from programmatic reports prepared for Congress.
  + The state may be cited for failure to submit timely and/or accurate data.
  + The state may have conditions attached to grant funds.
  + The state may have grant funds withheld.

# Who do I contact with additional questions about ED*Facts* data?

* The ED*Facts* Partner Support Center is available to assist states in preparing and submitting the required data files. You can contact the PSC by emailing [EDEN\_SS@ed.gov](mailto:EDEN_SS@ed.gov).
* Helpful Links:
  + [ED*Facts* Initiative website](http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/edfacts/index.html)
  + [ED*Facts* Communities site](https://edfacts.grads360.org/#program)
    - List of ED*Facts* file due dates: [Data Submission Organizer](https://edfacts.grads360.org/#program/data-submission-organizer)
    - [Partner Support Center Updates](https://edfacts.grads360.org/#program/psc-support-updates)