

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

ED*Facts* Submission System

**FS033 – Free and Reduced Price Lunch File Specifications**

**SY 2018-19**

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Title:** | FS033 – Free and Reduced Price Lunch File Specifications |
| **Security Level:** | Unclassified – For Official Use Only |

DOCUMENT HISTORY

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Version Number** | **Date** | **Summary of Change** |
| 1.0 – 14.0 |  | Versions 1.0 through 14.0 are used to build files for school years prior to SY 2018-19. |
| 15.0 | June 2018 | Updated for SY 2018-19. |
| 15.1 | January 2020 | Section 2.6: Removed question “Why is the direct certification count being collected?”, because it was determined that the direct certification and free and reduced-price lunch counts are different and one is no longer considered more accurate than the other. |
| 15.2 | January 2020 | Table 1.0-1 – corrected definition for data group 813; modified “count” to “number”. |

PREFACE

This document provides technical instructions for building files that are submitted through the ED*Facts* Submission System (ESS). The ESS is an electronic system that facilitates the efficient and timely transmission of data from SEAs to the U.S. Department of Education.

This document is to be used in coordination with other documentation posted on the [ED*Facts* Initiative Home Page](http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/edfacts/index.html) under ED*Facts* System Documentation, including:

* ED*Facts* Workbook – a reference guide to using the ED*Facts*

Submission System (ESS); particularly useful to new users; contains multiple appendices, including one that explains how to use the file specifications

* ESS User Guide – provides assistance to new users of the ED*Facts* Submission System (ESS); it addresses the basic mechanics of system access and data submission
* ED*Facts* Business Rules Guide – describes each business rule; includes the error number, type, message, definition, edit logic, and the file specifications where the business rules are applied

Please contact the Partner Support Center (PSC) with questions about the documents. You will find contact information for PSC and each State ED*Facts* Coordinator on the [ED*Facts* Contact Page](http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/edfacts/eden/contacts.html).

Data submitted through the ESS are authorized by an Annual Mandatory Collection of Elementary and Secondary Education Data Through ED*Facts* (OMB 1850-0925, expires 6/30/2020). ED*Facts* is a U.S. Department of Education (ED) initiative to govern, acquire, validate, and use high-quality, kindergarten through grade 12 (K–12) performance data for education planning, policymaking, and management and budget decision-making to improve outcomes for students. ED*Facts* centralizes data provided by SEAs, LEAs and schools, and provides users with the ability to easily analyze and report data. This initiative has significantly reduced the reporting burden for state and local data producers, and has streamlined data collection, analysis and reporting functions at the federal, state and local levels.

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# PURPOSE

This document contains instructions for building files to submit the following ED*Facts* Data Groups:

**Table 1.0-1: ED*Facts* Data Groups**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Data Group Name | DG | Definition |
| Free and reduced-price lunch table | 565 | The unduplicated number of students who are eligible to participate in the Free Lunch and Reduced-Price Lunch Programs under the National School Lunch Act of 1946 |
| Direct certification | 813 | The unduplicated number of students in membership whose National School Lunch Program (NSLP) eligibility has been determined through direct certification  ***Revised!*** |

The data collected using this file specification are used primarily for the Non-Fiscal Survey of the Common Core of Data (CCD).  The data are also used by other offices of the U.S. Department of Education.

The ED data stewarding office/s for this file: NCES

# GUIDANCE FOR SUBMITTING THIS FILE

This section contains changes from the previous school year, core requirements for submitting this file, required categories and totals, and general guidance



## Changes from the SY 2017-18 File Specifications

Other than any editorial changes listed in the document history on page ii, there have been no other changes to this file specification.

## Core Requirements for Submitting this File

Sections 2.5 and 2.6 contain the core reporting requirements for each data group.

## Required Categories and Totals

Sections 2.5 and 2.6 contain the required categories and totals for each data group.

## Guidance

This section contains guidance for submitting this file in the format of questions and answers.

Report DG 813 if possible, otherwise report DG 565. You may report both data groups. Zero counts are required for both data groups. If both are reported, zero counts should be reported for both. See below for guidance on submitting each of these data groups.

## Free and Reduced-price Lunch Table (DG565)

The following table contains the reporting period, the education units included or excluded, the type of count, and zero/NA count reporting.

**Table 2.5-1: Free and Reduced-price Lunch Table (DG 565) Core Reporting Requirements**

|  | **SEA** | **LEA** | **School** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Reporting Period** |  |  | October 1 (or closest school day) – October 1 or the closest school day to October 1 |
| **Education units included** |  |  | Schools with membership (C052) |
| **Education units not reported** |  |  | Schools with no membership (C052) |
| **Type of count** |  |  | At only one school |
| **Zero counts** |  |  | Required |
| **Zero exceptions and Not applicable** |  |  | If no students are eligible, submit the total of the education unit as zero and leave out the detail records. |
| **Missing** |  |  | Use “-1” to report missing counts.  Use “MISSING” when a category is not available. |
| **Related metadata survey** |  |  |  |

The table below lists the combinations of the categories and totals that are expected to be submitted for each school that should be included in the file.

* An “X” in the column indicates that the category value must be submitted when reporting that aggregation.
* The total indicator must be either “Y” (Yes) or “N” (No).
  + If the record is for a category set, specify an “N” (No).
  + If the record is for a subtotal or education unit total, specify a “Y” (Yes).
* The abbreviations in the “Table Name” column represent the technical name of the data used in the file.

**Table 2.5-2: Free and Reduced-price Lunch Table (DG 565) Required Categories and Totals**

| **Category Set** | **Table Name** | **Lunch Program Status** | **Total Indicator** | **Comments** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Category Set A** | **LUNCHFREERED** | X | N | Student County by Lunch Program Status |
| **Total of the Education Unit** | **LUNCHFREERED** |  | Y | Total of the Educational Unit |

**Which students are reported?**

Include students who are **eligible** for free or reduced price lunch based on where they are reported in C052 Membership. This file does not collect the number of students who actually participate in the free and reduced price lunch program, only the number eligible for the program.

**What if the total of the education unit in C052 Membership is zero?**

If no students are reported in the Membership file for a school, then no records need to be reported in this file. When data are extracted and sent to CCD, the data will be reported as Not Applicable.

**What if students were reported in C052 Membership but none of those students are eligible for free and reduced price lunch?**

If there are no students eligible for free and reduced price lunch, but the school has students in membership, the total record should be reported as zero. The category set A records do not need to be submitted. When data are extracted and sent to CCD, both free and reduced will be reported as zero.

**What if I have schools that certify for the NSLP participation without collecting eligibility data or certifying students each year?**

Schools participating in the NSLP under Provisions 2 or 3 or the Community Eligibility Option (CEO) are not required to collect eligibility data and certify students each year.  Some education systems may collect these data anyway because of their usefulness in other reporting.  Report current headcounts of free and reduced price students, when possible.  If the data are not available due to schools implementing the NSLP provisions, estimate the count of students by multiplying current year membership by the percentage of eligible students in the most recent year for which the school collected that information.

ED recognizes that this guidance in reporting is distinct from the Department’s guidance on identifying the Economically Disadvantaged subgroup for Accountability determinations. However, ED believes this guidance is consistent with the reporting guidelines for Title I allocations (see the [Title I, Part A Laws, Regulations and Guidance page](http://www2.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/legislation.html) and the [Joint U.S. Department of Education and Department of Agriculture Letter Providing Guidance on Implementation of the New Requirements of Title I by Schools that Operate School Lunch Programs dear colleague letter](http://www2.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/22003.html)). If you have any questions or need further clarification on how to report the Free and Reduced Price Lunch counts, please contact the Partner Support Center.

**What if I cannot disaggregate students into those eligible for free lunches and those eligible for reduced priced lunches?**

Report the total record with the combined count.  Counts on the category set A records should be left out of the file.

**Are records required for both free and reduced price lunch?**

If detailed records are submitted for category set A, records must be submitted for each school for both free and reduced price lunch. Submission errors will be triggered if records are submitted for one but not the other.

**What if some data are not available?**

If you expect that an institution has students but you are unable to quantify the count then these data should be reported as missing (“-1”). Missing data can be both temporary (and updated at a later time when information becomes available) or permanent if you not able to ascertain the count and will not be able to in the future for this collection year. As ED*Facts* is a mandatory collection, you should take steps to expand your collection to report these data in subsequent years even if you are unable to do so in the current collection cycle.

If the total of the education unit is more than the total of a category set or subtotal, the difference will be interpreted as students that were missing information on their eligibility for free and reduced price lunch.

**Do other files collect related data?**

Yes. C129 collects a status of whether the schools are participating in the National School Lunch Program, as well as the type of NSLP provision implemented, if applicable. This information will provide researchers context to the numbers submitted in C033.

## Direct Certification (DG813)

The following table contains the reporting period, the education units included or excluded, the type of count, and zero/NA count reporting.

**Table 2.6-1: Direct Certification (DG 813) Core Reporting Requirements**

|  | **SEA** | **LEA** | **School** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Reporting Period** |  |  | October 1 (or USDA reporting period) – October 1 or the date that aligns with the reporting period for USDA |
| **Education units included** |  |  | Schools with membership (C052) |
| **Education units not reported** |  |  | Schools with no membership (C052) |
| **Type of count** |  |  | At only one school |
| **Zero counts** |  |  | Required |
| **Zero exceptions and Not applicable** |  |  |  |
| **Missing** |  |  | Use “-1” to report missing counts. |
| **Related metadata survey** |  |  |  |

The table below lists the combinations of the categories and totals that are expected to be submitted for each school that should be included in the file.

* An “X” in the column indicates that the category value must be submitted when reporting that aggregation.
* The total indicator must be “Y” (Yes).
* The abbreviations in the “Table Name” column represent the technical name of the data used in the file.

**Table 2.6-2: Required Categories and Totals for DG 813**

| **Category Set** | **Table Name** | **Lunch Program Status** | **Total Indicator** | **Comments** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Total of the Education Unit** | **DIRECTCERT** |  | Y | Total of the Educational Unit |

**What is Direct Certification?**

Direct certification is a process conducted by the States and by local educational agencies (LEAs) to certify eligible children for free meals under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) without the need for household applications. The 2004 Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act required LEAs to establish systems to directly certify children from households that receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits by school year (SY) 2008-2009. States may also directly certify children from households receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or Food Distribution Programs on Indian Reservations (FDPIR); foster children; participants in federally funded Head Start programs; and certain homeless, runaway, and migrant children. Report the same count of directly certified children that was reported to NSLP.

**Should the USDA’s multiplier be used when reporting directly certified students?**

No, report the raw count of directly certified students. To account for low-income families not reflected in the direct certification data, USDA sets meal reimbursement levels for Community Eligibility schools by multiplying the percentage of students identified through the direct certification data by a multiplier established in the Act. (Initially, the multiplier was 1.6). ED is not trying to estimate the number of students qualifying for NSLP; ED is interested in a consistent indicator of school-level poverty and the raw count of directly certified students serves this purpose.

## Definitions

The following definitions support this file:

**Free Lunch Qualified**

Students who are eligible to participate in the Free Lunch Program under the National School Lunch Act of 1946. This definition **EXCLUDES** students eligible only for reduced price lunch.

**Reduced Price Lunch Qualified**

Students who are eligible to participate in the Reduced Price Lunch Program under the National Schools Lunch Act of 1946.

See the [ED*Facts* Workbook](http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/edfacts/index.html) for the standard definitions.

# FILE NAMING CONVENTION

The following file naming convention is to help identify files to provide technical assistance.

A maximum of 25 characters (including the file extension) is allowed for the file name.

The following is the naming convention for file submissions:

sslev**filename**vvvvvvv.ext

**Table 3.0-1: File Naming Convention**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Where** | **Means** | **Limit in characters** |
| ss | USPS State Abbreviation | 2 |
| lev | Abbreviation for level:   * SCH for a school level | 3 |
| filename | **PRICELNCH** | 9 |
| vvvvvvv | Alphanumeric string designated by the SEA to uniquely identify the individual submission (*e.g.,* ver0001, v010803) | 7 |
| .ext | Extension identifying the file format:  .txt – fixed  .csv – comma delimited  .tab – tab delimited | 4 |

# FIXED OR DELIMITED FILES

This section describes the fixed file and delimited file specifications. The fixed file and delimited files contain a header record followed by data records. The file type is specified in the header record.

The “Pop” column in the header and data records is coded as follows:

M - Mandatory, this field must always be populated

A - This field is populated in accordance with table 2.3-1 “Required Categories and Totals”

O - Optional, data in this field are optional



## Header Record Definition

The header record is required and is the first record in every file submitted to the ESS. The purpose of the header record is to provide information as to the file type, number of data records in the file, file name, file identifier, and file reporting period.

**Table 4.1–1: Header Record**

| **Data Element Name** | **Start Position** | **Length** | **Type** | **Pop** | **Definition / Comments** | **Permitted Values**  **Abbreviations** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| File Type | 1 | 50 | String | M | Identifies the type of file being submitted. | **SCHOOL FREE AND REDUCED PRICE LUNCH** |
| Total Records In File | 51 | 10 | Number | M | The total number of data records contained in the file. The header record is NOT included in this count. |  |
| File Name | 61 | 25 | String | M | The file name including extension, the same as the external file name. | See section 3.0 |
| File Identifier | 86 | 32 | String | M | Any combination of standard characters to further identify the file as specified by the SEA (e.g., a date, person’s name, and version number). |  |
| File Reporting Period | 118 | 9 | String | M | The school year for which data are being reported. The required format is "CCYY–CCYY" or "CCYY CCYY", where either a hyphen or a space separates the beginning and ending years. | **2018-2019**  OR  **2018 2019** |
| Filler | 127 | 168 | String | M | Leave filler field blank. |  |
| Carriage Return / Line Feed (CRLF) | 295 | 1 |  | M |  |  |

Below is an example of a header record.

**Table 4.1–2: Header Record Example**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Format | File Type,Total Records in File,File Name,File Identifier,File Reporting Period,Filler,Carriage Return / Line Feed (CRLF) |
| Example | SCHOOL FREE AND REDUCED PRICE LUNCH,15,EUSCHPRICELNCHver0007.CSV,characters to identify file,2018-2019,¶ |

## Data Record Definition

Data records are required and immediately follow the header record in every file submitted to the ESS. Data records provide counts for the specified category sets, subtotals and education unit totals.

**Table 4.2–1: Data Records**

| **Data Element Name** | **Start Position** | **Length** | **Type** | **Pop** | **Definition / Comments** | **Permitted Values**  **Abbreviations** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| File Record Number | 1 | 10 | Number | M | A sequential number assigned by the State that is unique to each row entry within the file. |  |
| **DG559** State Code | 11 | 2 | String | M | The two–digit American National Standards Institute (ANSI) code for the state, District of Columbia, and the outlying areasand freely associated areas of the United States. | For a list of valid State Codes, refer to the ED*Facts* Workbook. |
| **DG570** State Agency Number | 13 | 2 | String | M | A number used to uniquely identify state agencies. This ID cannot be updated through this file. | **01** – State Education Agency |
| **DG4** LEA Identifier (state) | 15 | 14 | String | M | The identifier assigned to a local education agency (LEA) by the state education agency (SEA). Also known as State LEA Identification Number (ID). This data element cannot be updated through this file. |  |
| **DG5** School Identifier (state) | 29 | 20 | String | M | The identifier assigned to a school by the state education agency (SEA).  Also known as the State School Identification Number (ID).  This ID cannot be updated through this file. |  |
| Table Name | 49 | 20 | String | M | See table 2.5-2 | **LUNCHFREERED** |
| See table 2.6-2 | **DIRECTCERT** |
| Lunch Program Status | 69 | 15 | String | A | An indication of students' qualification for free or reduced-price lunch. | **FL –** Free lunch qualified **RPL –** Reduced-price lunch qualified **MISSING** |
| Total Indicator | 84 | 1 | String | M | An indicator that defines the count level – see tables 2.5-2 and 2.6-2 “Required Categories and Totals” | **N** – Specifies category set  **Y** – Specifies subtotal or total of the education unit |
| Explanation | 85 | 200 | String | O | Text field for state use. |  |
| Student Count | 285 | 10 | Number | M |  |  |
| Carriage Return / Line Feed (CRLF) | 295 | 1 |  | M |  |  |

Below is an example of a data record, this is the set of data that should be submitted for each education unit. See tables 2.5-1 and 2.6-1.

**Table 4.2–2: Data Record Example – School level**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Aggregation** | **Example** |
| Format | File Record Number,State Code,State Agency Number,LEA Identifier (state),School Identifier (state),Table Name,Lunch Program Status,Total Indicator,Explanation,Student Count,Carriage Return / Line Feed (CRLF) |
| Category Set A | 1,99,01,LEA001,SCH001,LUNCHFREERED,RPL,N,,200¶ |
| Total of education unit | 2,99,01,LEA001,SCH001,LUNCHFREERED,,Y,,400¶ |



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