

APPENDIX C

Frequently Asked Questions

FAQs -- March 2004

- 1. What happens with duplicates, e.g. both districts insist student is theirs, what happens to student?**
Both students are counted as two different students.
- 2. We would like to sign off on our child count after duplicates are checked.**
It has always been the intention of BSE to have the sign-off after the duplicates are checked. Last year was an exception due to the weather closings, limitations related to the federal deadlines, and some IUs not adhering to the timelines.
- 3. We would like to know what edits are performed by Penn State on our data. An example would be the grade/age errors we were sent. What parameters are used for checking?**
See Appendix D for specific edit checks. In the "grade/age" example, a "red flag" is used to improve data accuracy.
- 4. What exactly is the Early Intervention edits used?**
Red flags to improve data accuracy.
- 5. We need more clarification in the LRE field for 19, 20, and 21 vs. the remaining codes.**
LRE percentages have nothing to do with Type of Service. One is how much special education the student is receiving (type of Service)... and the other is % of special education received OUTSIDE the regular classroom (percentages). IEP teams need to ask the following questions: Is the student going to be educated in a regular school with non-disabled students? If yes, use one of the three percentages options. If no, where is the student going to be educated? Use one of the other options.
- 6. More clarification on computations for Special Education Data Report. IUs receive many questions when these come out.**
A Glossary of Terms was created to improve data accuracy. You may review it by visiting our Penn Data Website.
- 7. More items on IEP should match what we need to report in Penn Data for consistency purposes.**
Every effort has been made for the past three years to be as consistent as possible. Recommendations are always welcome.
- 8. Requests that Resource Guide only be given to IUs because it may cause confusion if districts obtain it. Make sure resource guide states that IUs should be contacted for specific details of what they may require.**

Recommendation was forwarded to BSE.

9. **Can anyone tell us where e-grant numbers are obtained? They never match our Penn Data numbers.**
The files used are our Penn Data files. Keep in mind that some adjustments must be made to separate 5 and 6 years old still in PS programs from those in school-age programs.
10. **Would it be possible to collect the PSSA/PASA information in the July submission rather than January since many IEPs are done in the spring to determine what accommodations, if any, will be made?**
BSE needs the PSSA/PASA planned participation to be collected with the December 1 count. Last year we also did a pilot and collected actual accommodations. There are no plans to collect actual accommodations this year.
11. **In the PSSA page for Coding Student Data an extra ethnic choice is provided: Multi-Racial/Ethnic, which does not exist in Penn Data. How will this be mapped?**
There is no need to map ethnicity. Penn Data only collects ethnicity for federal reporting as part of our 12/1 count.
12. **There are many licensed private schools that have been added to the list of schools but no LRE category has been officially assigned so districts are choosing their own and therefore the information is, at best, faulty. Please advise what code to assign to these schools, such as ones operating on a day basis by PRRI and even APS. The district sends the student for the day and pays tuition to the PRRI or APS. Also some do enroll both regular education as well as special education students and the class then has both types of students.**
If a student is not being educated in a regular building with non-disabled students, then use the codes for PRRI and APSs.
13. **Since the new Annotated IEP asked for hours per week a student receives special education services, will this item be collected in Penn Data?**
Not planned at this point.
14. **Are there percents attached Type of Service to help districts choose the correct type? Ex: Itinerant is less than 21% or Full-time is greater than 85%**
LRE percentages have nothing to do with Type of Service. One is how much special education the student is receiving (type of Service)... and the other is % of special education received OUTSIDE the regular classroom (percentages). IEP teams need to ask the following questions: Is the student going to be educated in a regular school with non-disabled students? If yes, use one of the three percentages options. If no, where is the student going to be educated? Use one of the other options.
15. **Could we receive an Excel file with all the data items the state collects on the students?**
IUs may request files directly to Penn State.

General Questions

Student ID Number

- Can the student ID include letters?
Yes.

Ethnic Background

- How do you make the decision for students with mixed-heritages?
The family of the child makes this determination, not the district/IU.

Grade

- How do we determine grade level for UE and US?
The IEP team of each child is responsible for determining the grade level. The new IEP format has a space for this information. If grade level needs to be determined before the December 1 count, please refer this question to your special education supervisor.
- Can we code a student as grade 12 for several years?
Yes.

Disability Category

- How do you code speech?
In order for a student to receive speech and language services, the student must have a "speech" disability. The Evaluation Report will provide if speech is a primary or secondary disability.
- How do you code a student with more than 2 disabilities?
The field is limited to the identification of one secondary disability. The information is found on the ER where primary and secondary disabilities are identified by the Multidisciplinary Team.
- Is this item necessary for students not gifted?
Yes, if applicable.

Residency

- Is the Residency Item for EI and School Age?
Yes.

- Should the home district report 1306 Students?
Yes.
- How do we code students who are "emancipated"?
These students are coded according to the residency status as all students.
- How do we code students who are Wards of the State who are also 1306 students?
Code as 1306.

Home District

- In what cases do you report the home district of a Charter/Cyber School?
Charter Schools and Cyber Schools in PA are considered LEAs.
- Do we need a separate AUN for Charter/Cyber Schools?
Yes.

Building

- Where do you find the information for "building"?
ER format and NOREP.
- Do we identify the building name if the student is educated in a private school, APS, another public school district?
For students in APSs the name of the private school is sufficient. If you are able to be more precise, please do so.

Type of Service

- Where do we get definitions for Type of Services?
PA Chapter 14 (section 14.141)
- Do the Penn Data Categories (Type of Service) match the percent of time in Item 18?
No. Please refer to PA Chapter 14.141 for the definitions of the types of service.
- Will there be a form for teachers to fill-out to aid the data collector in meeting this Penn Data requirement?
See IEP format.

Type of Support

- If you have a student with two types of support how do we complete this item?
Select the support by the majority of time and/or consult your special education supervisor.

LRE Category

- What LRE field do we use for Cyber Charter Schools, as well as what building?
For LRE: Code 19, for Building: Home.
- How are charter schools coded in Item 18 (LRE category)?
Since Charter Schools are considered LEAs in PA, students are coded as determined by their placement.
- Please give example of public versus private.
Public facilities are operated under the aegis of a government agency. An example is Scranton State School for the Deaf. Private facilities have status as non-profit or for-profit entities. An example is Devereux.

Related Services

- Related Services: Does this item apply to both EI and School Age?
Yes.

Transition

- If we have transition information for students younger than 16, **must** we report it?
No.

Services Plans for Students in Non Public Schools

- Does a 504-plan count as a Services Plan?
*No. Services plans are for students who are placed unilaterally in a non-public school by their parents... **versus Protected Handicapped Students, under PA Chapter 15.***
- Please explain who are these students.
In some instances LEAs provide services to students placed by their parents in non-public schools. These students are included in our Federal Child Count and services are to be documented in a Services Plan.
- Are Services Plans valid for 1 year only (Like the IEPs)?
Services plans vary in length as IEPs do. We include children with Services Plans in effect on 12/1.

Planned Participation

- How do you indicate religious exemption on the IEP?
Even though there is not a specific section on the IEP to indicate these exemptions, most IEP Teams will document this information on "Section V. Participation in State and District-Wide Assessments."
- Are you collecting information related to writing or science?
No.

Preschool Program Status

- There still appears to be confusion about the Early Intervention status codes; these codes DO NOT have to be changed in any way for the July count, is that correct?
That is true; program status shouldn't change for the July count. Status for many children will change in the following year.
- If the child is 5 years old in August, and decides in September to stay in EI, what code do we use in September?
Code 03 in September submission file.

Preschool Location of Intervention

- In Early Intervention – a stand-alone code of combination home and classroom has been eliminated. Based on the definition in the Resource Guide of Item 27, it appears that the Early Childhood and Early Childhood Special Ed setting is preferred over HOME as a location of intervention...is this accurate?
"Preferred" is not a good choice of words since the home may be the least restrictive environment for many preschoolers, especially three year olds. The new format more closely approximates federal reporting requirements. When children receive services in both the classroom and the home, use the setting in which the child receives services the majority of the time.

Exiting

- Do all EI children need to be exited at the end of the school year?
No.
- If a student leaves a district after 12/1 and returns the same school year, should he/she be counted as "exited" that year?
No. Remember that Penn Data is a 12/1 "census" of the students, and where are they in July. Following are some guiding questions for data reporting: (1) Who did you have on 12/1? (2) Of that group, who don't you have in July? (3) When did they exit? (4) Why?

- Do you have any specific instructions for the Discipline Tables?

General Instructions

1. Counts should cover the entire school year.
2. Children should be reported by disability (Table 4) and by race/ethnicity (Table 5).
3. Include children ages 3-21.
4. Both Tables ask for an unduplicated count of children.
5. Columns 1 and 2 ask for number of children removed to an Interim Alternative Educational Setting only.
6. Column 3 asks for out-of-school suspensions only.

OSEP Definitions

Interim Alternative Educational Setting – An appropriate setting determined by the child’s IEP team in which the child is placed for no more than 45 days. This setting enables the child to continue to progress in the general curriculum; to continue to receive the services and modifications, including those described in the child’s current IEP; and to meet the goals set out in the IEP. Setting includes services and modifications to address the problem behavior and to prevent the behavior from recurring.

Unilateral Removal – Instances in which school personnel (not the IEP team) order the removal of children with disabilities from their current educational placement to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 days. The IEP team is responsible for determining the interim alternative educational setting. Unilateral removals do NOT include decisions by the IEP team to change a student’s placement.

Removal by a Hearing Officer – Those instances in which an impartial hearing officer orders the removal of children with disabilities from their current educational placement to an appropriate alternative educational setting for not more than 45 days based on the hearing officer’s determination that the public agency has demonstrated by substantial evidence that maintaining the child’s current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the child and youth, or others.

Specific Instructions, Table 4

In Table 4, information is reported by disability category. In columns 1, 2, and 3, IUs *must* report the number of children in each column by disability category.

In column 1A, provide an *unduplicated* count of children ages 3-21 who were unilaterally removed for drug or weapons offenses by school personnel (not the IEP team) from their current educational placement to an interim alternative educational setting (determined by the IEP team).

In column 1B, report the total number of times children ages 3-21 were unilaterally removed for drug offenses. In column 1C, report the total number of times children ages 3-21 were unilaterally removed for weapons offenses. A child may be counted more than once in columns 1B and 1C.

In column 2, report the total number of children ages 3-21, who were removed to an interim alternative educational setting based on a hearing officer determination of likely injury. Provide an unduplicated count of children removed by a hearing officer.

In column 3A, provide an *unduplicated* count of children ages 3-21 who were suspended or expelled for more than 10 days during the school year for any offense or combination of offenses. Include only out-of-school suspensions.

In column 3B, report the number of times children ages 3-21 were subject to a single suspension/expulsion of more than 10 days. A child may be counted more than once in column 3B. In column 3C, report the number of children ages 3-21 who were subject to multiple short-term suspensions summing to more than 10 days. A child may be counted only once in column 3C. Include only out-of-school suspensions.

The child counts for columns 1A and 3A are unduplicated within each of those columns. Each child counted in columns 1B and/or 1C should be counted once, and only once, in column 1A. Similarly, each child counted in columns 3B and/or 3C should be counted once, and only once, in column 3A.

Specific Instructions, Table 5: The columns found in Table 4 are repeated in Table 5. In Table 5, however, data are reported by race/ethnicity categories.

Specific Instructions, Table 4 and 5: In Tables 4 and 5, the number reported in each line of column 1A should be less than or equal to the sum of each line of columns 1B and 1C. The number reported in each line of column 3A should be less than or equal to the sum of each line of columns 3B or 3C. The number reported in each column in line 14 of Table 4 should equal the number reported in the corresponding column in line 6 of Table 5.

- What does keeping a “static” December 1 file mean?
Make a copy of the file you exported... put it aside...continue your day-to-day with your current system.
- Can items that were entered in error be corrected?
Errors can be corrected between December 1 and the January submission date.
- What is the difference between (1) updating December 1 student files in July to include items 28 and 29 versus (2) Tables 6 and 7?
Items 28 and 29: these two items must be updated in July for all students who were part of the December 1 count and exited. Tables 6 and 7: they are an aggregate count of all students who exited during the school year, July 1st to June 30th.
- Does the Federal government require the revised submission?
Yes.
- Should we include a confidentiality disclaimer when submitting data?
Most IUs: (1) include a disclaimer with their submission, or (2) send the data as a password-protected file, or (3) mail diskette.
- Which items are required for the December 1 count?
All items are required, except those that can be left “blank” as per the Resource Guide.
- Will the compliance-monitoring list be generated from Penn Data?
Yes, beginning with the 2002-03 school year.

- Are IUs responsible for collecting data from Charter Schools, including Cybers?
Yes.
- What is the difference between Type of Service and LRE categories?
Type of Service indicates the special education services the students will receive, as identified in the IEP. LRE Categories indicate the location in which the student will receive the Type of Service, as identified in the IEP.
- Which items are not required for gifted only?
You do not need to report those items that do not apply to gifted students, Item 23 (PSSA), Item 22 (Services Plan), Item 21 (Transition), Item 18 (LRE).
- Will LRE become a required field for Preschool?
It is already required, item 27 for Preschool students.
- Why are we unable to get a student list confirmation of data sent to the Data Center – it does not have to be the complete file; perhaps just, name, DOB, and district? Will the IUs ever receive this type of confirmation?
Penn State will email to the IU a file that contains by district a list of students with their date of birth and disability. The file will be in Excel format. For confirmation write to bsedata@psu.edu.
- When “other” reports are produced using data supplied, will the IUs be advised about what was distributed? What happens if reports don’t match?
PDE will inform IUs about "other" reports when necessary and appropriate.
- What use is made of the changes or corrections between the 12/1 and July counts, given that what is published on the web is the 12/1 count only?
PDE is able to "revise" the 12/1 count by adding students who were not included, but should have been. PDE will post the revised count on the web.
- Could we have all questions you respond to listed on a web site for us to check?
Yes.
- Are there specifications for Tables 1-7?
Yes, refer to Appendix D of this Resource Guide.

- Will the IUs receive this year a list of edits used for processing the export file?
Yes, refer to Appendix D of this Resource Guide.
- Will IUs receive confirmation that the export file was received?
Yes, we will make sure IUs are notified via email in future submissions.
- How can we make a template of the IEP and the ER?
www.pattan.k12.pa.us has all forms/formats in PDF, windows, and MAC versions.
- Where do you report a 5 year-old child in a School Age program?
As a School Age student.
- We operate our own large school district special education program--why can't we report directly vs. the IU?
Through the IDEA B Grant Application process IUs are assigned the responsibility to provide special education data as requested by the Bureau of Special Education.
- How is PDE going to edit/sort duplicates?
The IU is responsible for verification of data prior to submission including elimination of any duplicate records within member districts. Our contractor (Penn State) is responsible for identification of duplication at the State level.
- If a data item is blank, by mistake - i.e. data entry error, what are the consequences?
Required data items left blank will be returned to the IU for correction.