



Prior-to-Secondary School Course Classification System: School Codes for the Exchange of Data

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The *Prior-to-Secondary School Course Classification System: School Codes for the Exchange of Data (SCED)* provides a taxonomy for assigning standard codes to elementary and middle school courses. The taxonomy is intended to help schools and education agencies maintain longitudinal information about students' coursework in an efficient, standardized format that facilitates the exchange of records as students transfer from one school, district, or state to another, or from one level of education to another.

This taxonomy complements the *Secondary School Course Classification System: SCED*, which covers the secondary school level. By design, the prior-to-secondary course framework mirrors, in large part, the secondary course framework in that it consists of four basic elements: course description, course level, available credit (for secondary) or grade span (for prior-to-secondary), and sequence. Taken together, these elements create a unique identification code for any course from pre-K through grade 12.

SCED course titles and descriptions are not expected to replace those used by states or school districts. Rather, the system is written in a general way to allow users to map each of their specific courses to a common code.

In addition to being available in PDF, HTML, and print formats, the prior-to-secondary course codes and descriptions will be included in the NCES *Handbooks Online*, where they will be easily searchable along with the existing secondary codes and descriptions.

The *Prior-to-Secondary School Course Classification System: School Codes for the Exchange of Data* is a product of the National Forum on Education Statistics. The project is sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), U.S. Department of Education, under the auspices of the National Cooperative Education Statistics System. For more information about the National Forum on Education Statistics, visit <http://nces.ed.gov/forum>.