

Forum Guide to Reporting Civil Rights Data

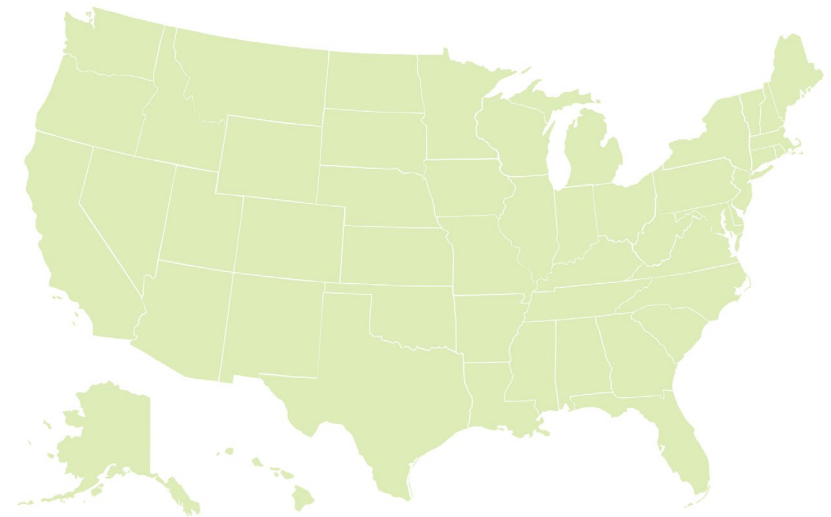


National Forum on Education Statistics

Mission: To plan, recommend, and develop education data resources that support local, state, and national efforts to improve prekindergarten through secondary education throughout the United States.

Members:

- Representatives of state and local education agencies (SEAs and LEAs)
- Representatives of offices of the U.S. Department of Education (ED) and other federal agencies
- Associate members from U.S. territories, Regional Educational Laboratories (RELs), and national education associations



Civil Rights Data Working Group Motivation

- All LEAs are required to participate in the biennial Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC). This collection provides the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) with data related to access and barriers to education opportunity.
- In recent years, some SEAs have voluntarily assisted their LEAs with data reporting.
- The Forum organized the Civil Rights Data Working Group to identify best practices that LEAs and participating SEAs use to collect and report civil rights data.



Resource Purpose and Audience

- The guide was produced as a resource for LEAs to use to develop strategies for reporting timely and accurate civil rights data.
- The guide also provides examples of how SEAs can voluntarily help their LEAs with CRDC reporting.
- The guide is not intended to replace any of the technical assistance documents available from OCR.

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Chapter 1: The Civil Rights Data Collection

- History of the CRDC
- What is included in the CRDC?
- How are the data used?

CRDC History

- The biennial collection was first mandated in 1968 to help ensure that federal funds and program support authorized under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act are equitably distributed and implemented in public schools.
- The CRDC was initially conducted as a sample survey of about 6,000 districts. All LEAs are now required to report.
- The number of laws OCR is charged with enforcing has grown over the decades, and the collection has grown as well.

What does the CRDC include?

The CRDC collects information at the school and LEA level on student enrollment and education programs and services, most of which is disaggregated by race and ethnicity, sex, limited English proficiency, and disability status. The CRDC includes data about

- enrollment demographics;
- math and science courses;
- Advanced Placement;
- SAT and ACT;
- school discipline;
- school expenditures;
- teacher experience;
- chronic student absenteeism;
- availability of free or partial-payment preschool;
- educational access in justice facilities;
- civil rights coordinators;
- sworn law enforcement/school resource officers; and
- access to distance education courses, credit recovery, and dual enrollment/dual credit programs.

How are the data used?

- To support OCR's efforts to administer and enforce the nation's civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities within public schools that receive federal financial assistance from ED:
 - Investigate complaints
 - Identify nationwide trends in civil rights compliance and detect emerging issues of concern
- Data are made available to the public
 - in published reports;
 - on the reporting website; and
 - in a data file.

Accessing Civil Rights Data Online

- OCR provides public access to data reported through the CRDC at <http://ocrdata.ed.gov/>.
- The website allows users to access reports on specific schools and districts.
 - Preformatted reports on specific topics, such as English learners, discipline, and educational equity
 - State and national estimations (or projections) can be used to compare state data with other states or the nation as a whole
- Users may also export data tables for custom analysis.
- A user guide is available on the website.

Chapter 2: Challenges and Opportunities in Reporting Civil Rights Data

- Time required for reporting
- Maintaining data quality
- Emerging role of the SEA

Challenges and Opportunities

- The basic process for CRDC reporting includes the following steps:
 - Map the required CRDC data elements to the locations where the corresponding data are stored in the LEA's various data systems.
 - Pull (extract) the necessary data from the data systems.
 - Aggregate data as needed (for example, an LEA may aggregate student-level data for school-level reporting).
 - Combine the data in the proper sequence.
 - Format the file (if submitting a flat file).
 - Submit the data using the CRDC Online Submission System, either loading flat files into the system or manually entering data into the online survey forms.
 - Review the data submission and correct any errors.
 - Certify the submission.

Challenges and Opportunities

- CRDC reporting can require a significant amount of time.
- Factors that can impact the amount of time include
 - staff expertise;
 - ability to automate the extracts;
 - changes to LEA data systems;
 - changes to the CRDC;
 - availability of vendor support; and
 - availability of SEA support.

Challenges and Opportunities

- Challenges in maintaining data quality
 - CRDC data definitions may vary from LEA data definitions. Using experienced staff for reporting and/or involving data stewards will help ensure data quality.
 - It is possible that data elements that are used solely for CRDC reporting may not be as high quality as data elements that are used for multiple purposes. This is true because each time data are used they are subjected to review and analysis.
- Common Data Standards
 - LEAs and SEAs are likely to be able to report better quality data when data collectors use standard data definitions, such as those used by *EDFacts* or the Common Education Data Standards (CEDS).

Emerging Role of the SEA

- Most SEAs collect and store at least some of the data required by the CRDC in their statewide data systems. Some SEAs have sufficient resources to leverage their data systems to assist LEAs with CRDC reporting.
- During the 2013-14 CRDC, OCR offered a pilot program for SEAs to voluntarily support their LEAs in CRDC reporting through prepopulation of the data. Eight states volunteered for the pilot. Eleven SEAs formally volunteered to assist their LEAs with the 2015-16 collection. These SEAs were generally able to provide anywhere from 40 to 99 percent of the data needed for the CRDC.
- OCR does not provide financial compensation to states participating in CRDC reporting, nor does OCR expect all states to participate. For states that wish to participate, OCR provides technical assistance as well as a forum in which it regularly communicates with SEAs.

Chapter 3: Reporting Civil Rights Data

- CRDC reporting process
- Case studies

Case Studies

- Six case studies are included in the guide:
 - Two LEAs with no support from a vendor or the SEA
 - Two LEAs with both vendor and SEA support
 - Two LEAs with SEA prepopulation support

Case Studies

- Each case study includes
 - An overview of the LEA for which the case study is written.
 - The CRDC collection year for which the case study is written.
 - An overview of the data sources the LEA used for CRDC reporting.
 - A description of the type of assistance received from the SEA or data system vendor.
 - The approximate percentage of data reported to the CRDC by the LEA and SEA.
 - A description of the LEA's overall reporting burden, including the LEA staff involved in CRDC reporting along with a total, approximate number of staff hours needed for CRDC reporting.
 - A description of the LEA's CRDC reporting process.
 - For LEAs that received voluntary assistance from the SEA, an overview of the SEA, including the number of LEAs in the state and the total number of students enrolled, and a description of the SEA's reporting process.
 - A description of the lessons learned for streamlining the reporting process and reporting accurate data.

Case Studies from States and Districts



Bossier Parish Schools (LA)

LEA with no support from a vendor or the SEA.



Bonner Springs/Edwardsville Unified School District (KS)

LEA with both vendor and SEA support.



Columbine Elementary (CA)

LEA with no support from a vendor or the SEA.

Case Studies from States and Districts



Loudoun County Public Schools (VA)

LEA with both vendor and SEA support.



Paulding County (GA)

LEA with SEA prepopulation support.



Clark County (KY)

LEA with SEA prepopulation support.

Lessons Learned from Case Studies

- New data elements significantly increase the amount of time needed for reporting, as the data elements must be accurately defined and located in the correct data source.
- Writing queries to automate data extracts for creating flat files is initially time-consuming, but most of the queries can be reused against an updated data source for future reporting.
- The difficulties in completing the 2015-16 CRDC revolved around new staff who were not familiar with the CRDC process. This was resolved through information sessions with staff before the 2015-16 CRDC submission window opened, as well as ongoing follow up during the data collection process.

Lessons Learned from Case Studies

- The ability to prepopulate data in the CRDC is largely dependent on the availability of knowledgeable SEA staff, as well as coordinated efforts of an LEA advisory group.
- Sufficient time needs to be allocated for uploading files to the CRDC Online Submission System. Be prepared for the possibility of limited access to the system if many other districts are attempting to upload files at the same time.
- Nuances in definitions of the data required for the CRDC present challenges in finding and reporting the necessary data. For example, the CRDC defines “allegation” as a claim or assertion that someone has done something wrong or illegal, typically made without proof. However, some school districts may track bullying or harassment incidents only if the claim is substantiated and may not track allegations only.

Lessons Learned from Case Studies

- The printed version of the data collection elements were numbered, but the website version was not numbered. This presented a challenge when keying data from the data report based on the printed version into the online submission forms.
- Using a team approach to CRDC reporting by involving applicable data stewards to help with reporting and validation can improve data quality and reduce overall burden.

Appendices

- Appendix A – Process Diagrams

- Four process diagrams show
 - LEA reporting alone
 - LEA with vendor support
 - LEA with SEA providing data to LEA
 - LEA with SEA prepopulation

- Appendix B – Resources

- Resources used in developing the guide.
- A list of technical resources available at <https://crdc.communities.ed.gov/#program>, the CRDC online support website.

Conclusion

- Data collected through the CRDC are used extensively both within the government and by national advocacy groups to study issues related to education equity and access.
- Understanding the data definitions used in the CRDC as they relate to the LEA's data definitions is critical to ensuring data quality.
- Using experienced staff will help reduce the time required for reporting as well as improve the quality of the data reported. This includes involving data stewards who understand specific programmatic data.
- SEA participation in the CRDC has been growing, but it is strictly voluntary. An SEA needs to have sufficient resources to participate.
- Many vendors offer assistance with mapping CRDC data elements to LEA data systems and extracting the necessary data.
- Ultimately, the LEA is responsible for timely and accurate CRDC reporting. The LEA should check all data regardless of vendor or SEA assistance.

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Forum Resources

Forum Guide to Reporting Civil Rights Data

https://nces.ed.gov/forum/pub_2017168.asp

For more information about the Forum, please visit <https://nces.ed.gov/forum/index.asp>

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