



Managing an Identity Crisis: Forum Guide to Implementing New Federal Race and Ethnicity Categories

http://nces.ed.gov/forum/pub_2008802.asp

This best-practice guide was developed to assist state and local education agencies in their implementation of the new federal race and ethnicity categories—thereby reducing redundant efforts within and across states, improving data comparability, and minimizing reporting burden. It serves as a toolkit from which users may select and adopt strategies that will help them quickly begin the process of implementing the new standards in their agencies.

The document begins by describing the new standards and providing an overview of the background and rationale for the changes made to the federal race and ethnicity categories. It then discusses policy and procedure development, touching on issues such as the identification of relevant state laws, estimation of costs, and establishment of timelines for implementation. Also discussed is the need for staff to inform personnel about what the new standards are, how to implement them correctly, and how to communicate about them. The guide also covers communication, providing some example communications used to inform key internal and external stakeholders. The process of re-identifying students' and staff members' race and ethnicity is discussed, including the survey question format and the occasional need for observer identification. Options for coding, storing, and reporting data are also presented, as well as a report on “bridging” the new standards to earlier years' reports to facilitate longitudinal analyses.

Additionally, the guide includes a collection of case studies that spotlight the experiences of districts and state agencies that implemented the new standards early, along with numerous vignettes throughout the guide highlighting issues of particular importance to districts.

This publication is available electronically at http://nces.ed.gov/forum/pub_2008802.asp. Instructions for ordering print copies are also available on the National Forum on Education Statistics website.

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