*System Training and Response (STaR) Team – SAIS Information Series*

# Recommended Procedure
## *Verifying the Federal Special Education Census*

This document is intended to summarize the steps that are recommended for personnel from public educational agencies (PEAs) to verify that SAIS data completely and accurately reflect the actual number of students receiving Special Education Services on October 1.

## Background

Due to Federal Government reporting requirements, the Exceptional Student Services (ESS) Section of the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) requires each public educational agency (PEA) to verify the number of students, ages 3-21, who were receiving special education services on October 1[1]. Therefore, each PEA is required to submit a letter verifying the number of students served on October 1 ***and*** is required to ensure that the data that reside in SAIS match the verified number of students. Additionally, PEA personnel are expected to ensure that SAIS data accurately identify the Need Category that has the greatest adverse impact on the student's ability to access and progress through the general curriculum via submission of the Federal Primary Need Indicator (FPNI).

The ultimate goal of the census verification process is to ensure that the final count extracted from SAIS and displayed on the ADE generated SPED07 report matches the actual count of students served on October 1 as submitted by the PEA in the verification letter.

## Recommended Procedures

We recommend that the following procedures be performed to verify the actual count of students receiving Special Education services on October 1 and to ensure that the data that reside in SAIS are complete, accurate and Integrity error free.

1. Determine the total number of students who were ages 3 to 21 and were receiving Special Education services on October 1. In addition, non-charter schools must specify the number of students in this group who were 3-5 years old on October 1.

   *Notes:*

   - *Students who are tuitioned-in to a school district should be excluded from the count. Tuitioned-in students are counted by the district that pays tuition for the student's services.*

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[1] Students are counted as receiving services on October 1 if they were enrolled as a participant in Special Education on October 1. This is without regard to such factors as absence from school, not being scheduled to receive services, or school not in session on October 1.

- *The number(s) should be derived from data available at the school and/or district/charter level. Most student management systems (SMS) either generate a report for this purpose or will allow users to perform a query to show the number of students receiving services on a particular date. Assuming that the data that have been entered in the SMS are complete and accurate, the number could be derived from the report generated by the SMS or the results of the query. Otherwise, this number would need to be derived from another source such as a printed student roster.*

2. Enter and submit the number of students who were ages 3-21, and 3-5 if required to do so, and were receiving Special Education services on October 1 in the boxes provided for this purpose within the ESS Census Verification application on ADE's Common Logon[1].

3. Submit the verification letter that is generated within the ESS Census Verification application to ADE Exceptional Student Services by U.S. Mail or Fax as specified in the letter. Deadline dates for submission as specified by ESS are available in the instructions for the ESS Census Verification application.

4. Ensure that SAIS data for all students who participate in Special Education programs are complete, accurate and Integrity error free by examining the ADE generated reports available in the Download Area of the Student Detail Data Interchange (SDDI) for this purpose. The SDSPED71[2], SDSPED72-1[3] and SDSPED72-2[4] contain real time (current) raw data that has been submitted to and successfully processed in SAIS.

   a. If information for students is found to be missing, incomplete or inaccurate, appropriate corrections must be submitted to and successfully processed in SAIS.

   b. If student records are shown to be failing as a result of SAIS Student Integrity processing, examine the *Student Integrity Status Report* (accessed from the SDDI Download Area at the school or district/charter holder level) to determine the cause, and submit appropriate corrections to SAIS.

   *Note: Every time that data related to Special Education Service Participation are submitted to and successfully processed in SAIS, the raw data reports (i.e., SDSPED71, SDSPED72-1 and SDSPED72-2) are updated, meaning that to be certain the data are complete, accurate and Integrity error free, the reports must be checked on a regular basis. For all purposes (i.e., state funding, Federal Census, SPED Annual Data Collection, AIMS Test Labels) we strongly recommend that the raw data reports contain complete, accurate, Integrity error free data on the last ADE business day of every month from November through June.*

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[1] See the instructions provided by ESS concerning additional requirements for traditional school districts to submit the number of students enrolled in private schools within the boundaries of the district and who are homeschooled.

[2] SDSPED71 lists current data for all SPED students who attend a particular school.

[3] SDSPED72-1 lists current data for all SPED students who attend a school within the district/charter.

[4] SDSPED72-2 lists current data for all SPED students who are tuitioned-out to a public or private school or who attend Head Start.

## Purpose and Use of the SPED07 Report

The SPED07 report displays a list of students who had records in SAIS at the time the report was updated indicating that they were ages 3 to 21 and receiving valid Special Education services on October 1 of the year selected for the report. A single record is displayed for each student regardless of the number of disabilities for which he/she received services. Except for students who are both deaf and blind (indicated with a category of DB), disability categories are displayed on the SPED07 in accordance with the particular category that was designated as the Federal Primary Need in SAIS. PEA personnel use the SPED07 to compare the numbers extracted from SAIS to their own roster of students who were ages 3 to 21 and who were receiving Special Education services on October 1.

The following procedures should be performed to ensure that the results of the extract of data from SAIS to update the SPED07 report are as expected.

1. Examine the SPED07 Report which is generated from within the ESS Census Verification application on the ADE Common Logon to ensure that students are listed as expected.

   *Notes:*

   - *Because the SPED07 is extracted from SAIS, it is necessary to ensure that the data in SAIS are complete, accurate and Integrity error free in order for it to display results that match the actual verified count.*

   - *Because the SPED07 is updated only periodically as a result of the most recent extract of SAIS data, and the SDSPED71, SDSPED72-1 and SDSPED72-2 display data as they currently reside in SAIS, there may be a lag between the time that data are successfully processed in SAIS and show on those reports and the time the extracted results are displayed on the SPED07.*

   - *The date of the most recent update of the SPED07 report is displayed in the upper right corner of each page of the report.*

2. Investigate any discrepancies found and report any which cannot be explained to ADE by contacting the System Training and Response Team.

   *Note: There are several reasons that explain why a student would be listed on a SDSPED71, SDSPED72-1 or SDSPED72-2 report, yet be excluded from the SPED07. Please consult the checklist below before reporting any discrepancies between the SPED07 and your actual list of students receiving services on October 1.*

   A student may be listed on a SPED71, 72-1 or 72-2 report, yet be excluded from the SPED07 report for any of the following reasons:

   _____ The student was not receiving SPED Services on October 1.

   _____ The student was less than 3 years old on October 1.

   _____ The student reached his/her 22nd birthday on or before October 1.

_____ The student's district of residence (DOR CTDS) is other than that of the district in which the student receives services.

_____ The student's Special Education Service Participation record was added to SAIS after the most recent update of the SPED07.[1]

_____ The student's records were failing as a result of SAIS Student Integrity processing for the federal Special Education business rules (FED SPED Integrity) at the time of the most recent update of the SPED07.[2]

## Additional information

For additional information regarding submitting and verifying SAIS data, please see the following documents from the System Training and Response Team's *SAIS Information Series* available at http://www.ade.az.gov/schoolfinance/star.

**Document No. 21 – Specific Details Related to Submitting and Verifying SPED Data**

This document is intended to assist Local Educational Agency (LEA) personnel who are responsible for submitting and/or verifying data for students who participate in Special Education programs to the Arizona Department of Education's Student Accountability Information System.

**Document No. 22 – SAIS Codes Applicable to SPED – From Fiscal Year 2008 to Present**

## Additional assistance

The ADE System Training and Response Team offers training and on-demand assistance to PEA personnel regarding issues related to submitting and verifying SAIS data. PEA personnel are always welcome to confer with a member of the STaR Team regarding issues related to submitting and verifying SAIS data by submitting a *Request for Training and Assistance* form available on our web site at http://www.ade.az.gov/schoolfinance/star.

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[1] In such cases the student's records would be expected to appear on the SPED07 the next time it is updated.

[2] In such cases, if corrections are submitted to SAIS to successfully address the cause of the Integrity failure prior to the next data extract, the student's records would be expected to appear on the SPED07 the next time it is updated.