

A GUIDE TO EDUCATION UNITS AND DIRECTORY DATA



Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

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**Assistant Superintendent of Data Strategy and
Student Information**

Prepared by:

- **Jen Appleyard**, Director of Data Governance
jen.appleyard@k12.wa.us | 360-725-6005



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DIRECTORY DATA 101

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) is responsible for the numbering and stewarding of the data that define the education units in our state, that is, a directory. These data are the cornerstone for all state and federal reporting and accountability, and attention to their accuracy and timely notification of changes is vital for policymakers, researchers, program managers, and the public to have accurate information about education in Washington. This guide was created to support shared information for OSPI staff, external school, district, education service district (ESD), and local education agency (LEA) staff, researchers, stakeholders, and others who use directory data.

Education Unit Hierarchy

1. **State (SEA)**
2. **Educational Service District (ESD)**
3. **Local Education Agency (LEA)**
4. **School (SCH)**

The directory records include the following information on each education unit:

- Unique identifiers (e.g., name, school code)
- Contact information (e.g., addresses, principal name, website address)
- Descriptive information (e.g., vocational school, virtual school status)

Every school is associated with only one LEA, or ESD, acting as an LEA. The school code and county-district code identifiers link the education units to each other in the hierarchy.

The education units' official list and directory records are in the Education Data System Administration (EDS admin) application. The system is maintained and supported by OSPI EDS Technical Support (eds.support@k12.wa.us) and the change process is owned by the Director of Data Governance with support of the OSPI Directory Review team. Details about the directory review process are communicated annually by bulletin.

DEFINITIONS OF EDUCATION UNIT

School (SCH)

A school is an organization authorized by public authority and financed primarily through public funds to provide a public education program to students from pre-kindergarten through the twelfth grade or any part thereof, including vocational educational courses and otherwise permitted by law.

Under this definition, schools:

- Are operated by a public school district, independent charter district, or state agency on behalf of the state (or federal government in the case of Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) and Department of Defense (DoD) schools);
- Provide instruction to students;
- Have one or more teachers;
- Have an assigned administrator(s) (principal) responsible to public authority; and
- Receive public funds as its primary support.

Educational Service District (ESD)

A regional, public multi-service agency authorized by state law to develop, manage, and provide services or programs to LEAs. There are nine ESDs in Washington. These organizations may also operate as the LEA for a school, particularly juvenile detention centers, re-engagement schools, and others.

Local Education Agency (LEA)

An LEA is a public authority legally constituted within Washington state for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public schools. In Washington, LEAs include the following:

School District (SD)

Local school districts are political subdivisions of the state (RCW 28A.315.005) and were recognized as legally organized districts on April 25, 1969, per RCW 28A.315.035. There are 295 school districts in Washington.

Charter District

A local education agency (LEA) that acts as the school district for a single charter school in Washington according to state law RCW 28A.710.020: "A charter school established under this chapter...Functions as a local education agency under applicable federal laws and regulations and is responsible for meeting the requirements of local education agencies and public schools under those federal laws and regulations..."

Tribal Compact Agency

A local education agency (LEA) that acts as the school district for a tribal compact school in Washington. These agencies operate according to RCW 28A.715.010, and their contract with OSPI establishes the governing tribe and indicates the grade or grades from kindergarten through twelve that will be offered at the school.

State-funded Institution

A local education agency (LEA) that acts as the school district for a single state-funded institution in Washington. According to RCW 72.40.010, there are two state-funded institutions: the Washington State Center for Childhood Deafness and Hearing Loss and the School for the Blind.

Military Department

A local education agency (LEA) that acts as the school district for the Department of Defense (DoD) school in Washington.

Community and Technical Colleges

A local education agency (LEA) with interlocal agreements with local school districts to provide occupational and academic programs for high school students. Technical colleges may enter into interlocal agreements with local school districts to provide instruction in courses required for high school graduation, basic skills, and literacy training for students

enrolled in technical college programs. This is authorized under RCW 28B.50.533. Community and Technical Colleges may also be directly funded in accordance with WAC 392-121-187.

FEDERAL SCHOOL TYPE DEFINITIONS

Below are the definitions for the four federal school types from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Package (OMB 1850-0925) that authorizes the collection of EdFacts Directory Data in File Specification 029. The definitions below come directly from the Department of Education and do not represent OSPI's use of these terms.

Regular School

A regular school is a public elementary/secondary school that does not focus primarily on career and technical, special, or alternative education, although it may provide these programs in addition to a regular curriculum.

All schools that are not marked with one of the specific values below and are reportable under EdFacts file definitions will be default reported as a "regular school."

Special Education School

A special education school is a public elementary/secondary school that focuses primarily on serving the educational needs of students with disabilities (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act- IDEA) and adapts curriculum, materials, or instruction for these students. Special education schools are public elementary/secondary schools that focus on serving the educational needs of students with disabilities (IDEA).

For "special education school" federal school type, mark "special education school" in EDS Administration

Career and Technical Education School

A career and technical education school is a public elementary/secondary school focusing primarily on providing secondary students with an occupationally relevant or career-related curriculum, including formal preparation for technical or professional occupations. Career and technical education schools are public elementary/secondary schools that focus on occupation and career-related curricula.

For "career and technical education school" federal school type, mark "vocational/technical school" in EDS Administration (only allowable for Skills Centers).

Alternative Education School

An alternative school is a public elementary or secondary school that addresses the needs of students that typically cannot be met in a regular school program and is designed to meet the needs of students with academic difficulties, students with discipline problems, or both students with academic difficulties and discipline problems.

Alternative education schools are public elementary/secondary schools that serve students whose needs cannot be met in a traditional classroom setting. These may include students who:

- Are at risk of academic failure or dropping out of school,

- Have been suspended or expelled or are at risk of being suspended or expelled,
- Are pregnant or parenting,
- Are in dropout recovery or credit recovery,
- Are juvenile offenders or “delinquents,”
- Engage in high-risk health behaviors,
- Are disruptive or exhibit behavioral or discipline problems,
- Are chronically truant or absent and/or
- Have health problems that prevent attendance at a regular school

Alternative education schools may be sited in locations other than a traditional school building such as hospitals, mental health centers, jails, or juvenile detention centers.

OSPI also includes schools with 50 percent of their students attending from outside of their LEA boundary as “alternative education schools” to the Department of Education.

DEFINITIONS IN EDS ADMINISTRATION COLLECTION

School Organization Categories

Public School

[See school definition](#)

Tribal School

A Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) recognized school of a sovereign nation.

Institution

Provides basic education services to incarcerated juveniles, previously incarcerated youth who are transitioning back to their community, and youth with significant developmental, behavioral, and medical needs.

Private School

A school operating in Washington State that is approved by the State Board of Education is not maintained at public expense and does not meet the definition of a common school as defined in RCW 28A.150.020.

School Types

Affiliated with a District

This school type is used with contract and tribal schools to confirm their relationship with a legal school district.

Not Affiliated with a District

This school type is used with contract and tribal schools when they do not have a relationship with a legal school district.

Preschool

A school that serves only pre-kindergarten students.

Private School Type

A school operating in Washington State that is not maintained at public expense and does not meet the definition of a common school as defined in RCW 28A.150.020.

Regular School

[see Regular school](#)

Alternative School

[See alternative education school](#)

Special Ed School

[See special education school](#)

Vocational/Technical school

[see Career and Technical Education School.](#) This is used only by Skill Centers and Northwest Career and Technical High School in Clover Park Technical College.

Re-engagement School

A school that only provides 1418 open doors youth reengagement services as approved by OSPI's Reengagement Program Supervisor.

School Facilities

Adult Jail

This school-type assignment is determined by Institutional Education. Adult jails are essentially interim correctional facilities. Their population falls within three general categories: 1) those awaiting trial, 2) those awaiting transfer to another setting such as prison, and 3) those sentenced to serve some period not exceeding one year. Individuals held in jails are thus accurately presumed to be in transition, whether this be to another institution or back to the community. As institutions intended and designed for a transient population, jail policies and procedures focus on population management, security, and accommodation to court processes (e.g., visits with attorneys, court hearings, trials, etc.).

Correction or Detention Facility

This school-type assignment is determined by Institutional Education. County or regional detention centers house juveniles under the age of 18 while they are awaiting court processes, as well as juveniles who are serving short-term sentences. Detention sentences

are a maximum of 30 days (although concurrent 30-day sentences are possible). Education provided by a local school district or an Education Service District is a major part of the day, e.g., 5 hours/day in a detention facility with attendance mandatory and non-participation sanctioned. Other services, such as anger management and Functional Family Therapy, are also typically available, as are referrals to community-based services for the youth and family. These are intended to support rehabilitation and transition either to school and the community or to another institution established for lengthier stays.

Hospital

Educational services are provided to students in a hospital building.

Other

Any facility type that does not meet any other existing definitions.

Postsecondary Institution

Educational services are provided to students in a postsecondary Institution building.

Residential Facility

Students at Residential Habilitation Centers have substantial medical and medication management needs and often cannot be cared for by their parents. Most of these students have individual (1:1) aides with them throughout the day. While some may return home to their families, many will go onto group home care. In these facilities, students reside in separate housing units alongside long-term adults with significant developmental disabilities. Operated by the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA), and Behavioral Health and Service Integration Administration (BHSIA).

School Building

Educational services are provided to students in a school building.

Vocational Training Facility

Educational services are provided to students in a vocational training facility.

Special Programs Emphasis School Status

This school is designed to provide an academic or social focus on a particular theme (e.g., science/math, performing arts, gifted/talented, or foreign language): yes, or no? This field is used only to report magnet school/special program reporting in the 129 (CCD School) ED Facts file to the Department of Education annually.

Directory Records

Legal Name

The full legally accepted name of the educational unit is used for all public, state, and federal reporting. Abbreviations should not be used if the full name can be entered in 60 characters. If the name is longer than 60 characters, it will need to be abbreviated.

To avoid confusion:

- Report the Local Education Agency (LEA) name differently from any school names associated with the LEA. For example, add the word “agency” to the LEA.
- Include the types of grades served in the school name. For example, “Jones School” should be specified as “Jones Elementary School,” “Jones Middle School,” or “Jones High School.”

School names represent part of the local community, are printed on a student’s high school transcript, are used for state and federal reporting, and are an important way that the public connects with their local education jurisdictions. Thoughtful consideration and care should be used when selecting a school name, such as engagement with the local community, families, and students for suggestions, input, and opinions. Historical names should be evaluated for appropriateness with specific attention to racial and social context. Some school settings often become part of a name and can lead to a negative stigma or incorrect perception of a school (e.g., detention center school, youth camp, or alternative school). Great care should be taken to create a name representing a school and the community's uniqueness while focusing on the education provided, not the setting in which it was delivered.

Common Name – not utilized

Acronym – not utilized

School Code

a unique, four-digit code assigned by OSPI to every school in Washington. Also known as the State School Identifier Number. This code is used for all state reporting and is required.

District Code

a unique, five-digit code assigned by OSPI to every LEA in Washington. Also known as a County-District Code (CCDDD). The first two digits represent the county of the LEA of a school district. The third digit indicates how the LEA is apportioned public dollars in the School Apportionment and Financial Services system.

NCES LEA Number

The seven-digit unique identifier is assigned to the LEA by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Also known as NCES LEA ID. The first two digits are the two-digit NCES State Code, and the last five digits are unique within the state. This is populated by OSPI after assignment by NCES and cannot be edited by the LEA. This field will be blank for any LEA that is not reported to the Department of Education by OSPI.

NCES LEA Name

The legal name as submitted according to EdFacts submission requirements set by NCES. This cannot be edited by the LEA. This field will be blank for any LEA that is not reported to the Department of Education by OSPI.

NCES School Number

The NCES identifier for a school is five digits that are unique within each LEA and within the

state. This is populated by OSPI after assignment by NCES and cannot be edited by the LEA. This field will be blank for any school that is not reported to the Department of Education by OSPI.

Grade Span

The lowest student grade level the education unit serves and the highest student grade level the education unit serves. This data is required for all schools and cannot be edited by the LEA. The grade span for all LEAs is calculated by OSPI from the lowest student grade level offered at all schools within the LEA and the highest student grade level the LEA serves.

Physical Address

The set of elements that describes the physical location (e.g., where an overnight delivery can be made) of the school or LEA, including the street address, city, state, ZIP code, and ZIP code + 4.

The physical location address is divided into the following fields:

- Address Location 1 – The street address that names the physical location, limited to 30 characters (NO POST OFFICE BOXES)
- Address Location 2 – Additional street address information, limited to 30 characters (optional)
- City – The location address city
- State Code – The valid two-character United States Postal Service (USPS) code for the state, District of Columbia, and the possessions and freely associated areas of the United States
- ZIP code – The five-digit code
- ZIP code plus 4 – The four-digit extension of the ZIP code (optional)

OSPI uses the location address to obtain the local codes, geographic locations, and congressional districts of LEAs and schools from the U.S. Census Bureau. It is extremely important that the location addresses are accurate. This can be edited by the LEA at any time and should be kept accurate and timely.

Mailing Address

The set of elements that describes the location where mail is delivered for the education entity, including the street address, city, state, ZIP code, and ZIP code + 4. The mailing address is divided into the following fields:

- Address Mailing 1 – the mailing street name and number or post office box, limited to 30 characters
- Address Mailing 2 – additional mailing street address information, limited to 30 characters (optional)
- City the mailing address city

- State Code – the valid two-character United States Postal Service (USPS) code for the state, District of Columbia, and the possessions and freely associated areas of the United States
- ZIP code – the five-digit code
- ZIP code plus 4 – the four-digit extension of the ZIP code (optional)

This address is where OSPI will mail official correspondence. This can be edited by the LEA at any time and should be kept accurate and timely.

Shipping Address

The optional set of elements that describes the location where assessment shipments are delivered for the education entity, including the street address, city, state, ZIP code, and ZIP code + 4. The shipping address is divided into the following fields:

- Address Shipping 1 – the mailing street name and number or post office box, limited to 30 characters
- Address Shipping 2 – additional mailing street address information, limited to 30 characters (optional)
- City – the shipping address city
- State Code – the valid two-character United States Postal Service (USPS) code for the state, District of Columbia, and the possessions and freely associated areas of the United States
- ZIP code – the five-digit code
- ZIP code plus 4 – the four-digit extension of the ZIP code (optional)

This address is where OSPI will ship assessment materials if not blank. This can be edited by the LEA at any time and should be kept accurate if utilized.

Telephone Number

The 10-digit telephone number, including the area code, for the education entity. Reported publicly on the OSPI K–12 website and to the Department of Education. This can be edited by the LEA at any time.

Web Address

The Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for the unique address of a web page of an education entity. Reported publicly on the OSPI K–12 website and to the Department of Education. This can be edited by the LEA at any time.

County

The largest administrative division within the state. There are 39 (01-39) counties within Washington.

Updating, Changing, or Correcting Educational Units

WAC 392-117-020 provides authority for OSPI to require a request process for local educational

agencies (LEAs) to notify OSPI of changes to educational units (listed below) no later than the first business day in June prior to the school year in which the change will occur. This process was established in 2011–12 to prevent late notification to OSPI of critical directory changes and to ensure accurate reporting.

Changes that require OSPI approval and must be requested by June:

- Opening a new school in the upcoming school year,
- Re-opening a school that was previously closed,
- Closing a school,
- Grades offered at a school,
- School facility or type changes (alternative, vocational, special education, etc.),
- School association from your district to another (or Educational Service District),
- Graduating status,
- Residential boundaries, and
- Any other change that results in a 50 percent or greater change to the student population of a school.

Specific instructions on the process for requesting directory changes are sent to district data security managers (DDSMs) each spring. An accompanying OSPI bulletin is sent to district superintendents and DDSMs to inform them of the process and information needed for that year. OSPI will communicate any questions or concerns to LEAs regarding requests and will update OSPI data systems with all approved changes and communicate to LEAs via email.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) IDs for all new schools are issued by NCES the following year.

What changes should result in a school being closed and a new school being opened?

OSPI needs to maintain the history and continuity of schools for longitudinal data accountability and accurate state and federal reporting. Therefore, closing a school and opening schools are reviewed closely by OSPI for the appropriate assignment of new school codes. The lists below present possible reasons for creating a new school as it relates to the assignment of a new code, and reasons that would not warrant assigning a new code.

New school codes are assigned when:

- The grade span of the school changed by more than three grades, not including prekindergarten or kindergarten as grades.
- The school's physical location changed, and the attendance area changed significantly.
- Two schools of about the same size or with different grade spans merge. The two original entities would be closed, and the merged education unit would be reported as a new school.

New school codes are not assigned when:

- The grade span of the school changed by three grades or less, not including prekindergarten or kindergarten.
- The school's physical location or address changed, but the attendance area did not change significantly (50% or greater student population change).
- A smaller school merges with a larger entity that provides essentially the same grade span.
- A school just changes charter status or magnet status.
- A school undergoes restructuring under provisions under School Improvement Grants (SIG) or ESEA.
- The name of a school changes.

Updating, Changing, and Correcting Directory Records

Changes that do not require OSPI approval and should be updated directly in the Education Data System Administration application by your district data security manager (DDSM) at the time of the change:

- School address changes (that do not result in student population or residential area changes)
- Change to principal (or email address and other contact information)
- Changes to the superintendent (or email address and other contact information)
- Legal school name changes (that do not result in student population or residential area changes)
- Fire protection code changes
- Locale code changes
- In and Out Code changes

APPENDIX

Appendix A: Relevant State Law

Washington State Constitution

[This below section is pulled from the website of the Office of the Code Reviser.](#)

ARTICLE IX EDUCATION

SECTION 1 PREAMBLE. It is the paramount duty of the state to make ample provision for the education of all children residing within its borders, without distinction or preference on account of race, color, caste, or sex.

SECTION 2 PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM. The legislature shall provide for a general and uniform system of public schools. The public school system shall include common schools, and such high schools, normal schools, and technical schools as may hereafter be established.

Common schools

general and uniform system to be established: State Constitution Art. 9 § 2. special legislation affecting prohibited: State Constitution Art. 2 § 28. superintendent of public instruction to supervise: State Constitution Art. 3 § 22.

RCW 28A.150.020

Common Schools

"Common schools" means schools maintained at public expense in each school district and carrying on a program from kindergarten through twelfth grade or any part thereof including vocational educational courses otherwise permitted by law.

RCW 28A.150.010

Public Schools

Public schools means the common schools as referred to in Article IX of the state Constitution, charter schools established under chapter 28A.710 RCW, and those schools and institutions of learning having a curriculum below the college or university level as now or may be established by law and maintained at public expense.

RCW 28A.300.065

Classification and Numbering System of School Districts

(1) The superintendent of public instruction is responsible for the classification and numbering system of school districts.

(2) Any school district in the state that has a student enrollment in its public schools of two

thousand pupils or more, as shown by evidence acceptable to the educational service district superintendent and the superintendent of public instruction, is a school district of the first class. Any other school district is a school district of the second class.

(3) Whenever the educational service district superintendent finds that the classification of a school district should be changed, and upon the approval of the superintendent of public instruction, the educational service district superintendent shall make an order in conformity with his or her findings and alter the records of his or her office accordingly. Thereafter, the board of directors of the district shall organize in the manner provided by law for the organization of the board of a district of the class to which the district then belongs.

(4) Notwithstanding any other provision of chapter 43, laws of 1975, the educational service district superintendent, with the concurrence of the superintendent of public instruction, may delay approval of a change in classification of any school district for a period not exceeding three years when, in fact, the student enrollment of the district within any such time period does not exceed ten percent, either in a decrease or increase thereof.

Appendix B: Citation Code of Federal Regulations

The Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 directed IES to use definitions from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

TITLE I—EDUCATION SCIENCES REFORM

SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002”.

SEC. 102. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

- (1) **IN GENERAL.**—The terms “elementary school”, “secondary school”, “local educational agency”, and “State educational agency” have the meanings given those terms in section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801) and the terms “freely associated states” and “outlying area” have the meanings given those terms in section of such Act (20 U.S.C. 6331(c)).

Below is the definition of an local education agency (LEA) from the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR).

34 CFR § 303.23 Local educational agency

- (a) **GENERAL. LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY** or LEA means a public board of education or other public authority legally constituted within a State for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary schools or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a state, or for a combination of school districts or counties as are recognized in a state as an administrative agency for its public elementary schools or secondary schools.
- (b) **EDUCATIONAL SERVICE AGENCIES AND OTHER PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OR AGENCIES.** The term includes the following:

- (1) EDUCATIONAL SERVICE AGENCY, defined as a regional public multiservice agency—
 - (i) Authorized by state law to develop, manage, and provide services or programs to LEAs; and
 - (ii) Recognized as an administrative agency for purposes of the provision of special education and related services provided within public elementary schools and secondary schools of the State.

- (2) Any other public institution or agency having administrative control and direction of a public elementary school or secondary school, including a public charter school that is established as an LEA under State law.

- (3) Entities that meet the definition of INTERMEDIATE EDUCATIONAL UNIT or IEU in section 602(23) of the Act, as in effect prior to June 4, 1997. Under that definition an INTERMEDIATE EDUCATIONAL UNIT or IEU means any public authority other than an LEA that—
 - (i) Is under the general supervision of a State educational agency;
 - (ii) Is established by State law for the purpose of providing FAPE on a regional basis; and
 - (iii) Provides special education and related services to children with disabilities within the State.

- (c) BIE-FUNDED SCHOOLS. The term includes an elementary school or secondary school funded by the Bureau of Indian Education, and not subject to the jurisdiction of any SEA other than the Bureau of Indian Education, but only to the extent that the inclusion makes the school eligible for programs for which specific eligibility is not provided to the school in another provision of law and the school does not have a student population that is smaller than the student population of the LEA receiving assistance under the Act with the smallest student population.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1401(5), 1401(19))

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