

A GUIDE TO SCHOOL AND DISTRICT DIRECTORY DATA

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SCHOOL AND DISTRICT DIRECTORY DATA 101

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) assigns and manages the official numbers and information used to identify all schools, districts, and other education agencies in Washington. This collection of information is called the school and district directory.

These directory details are essential for accurate state and federal reporting. Policymakers, researchers, program staff, and the public rely on this information, so it is important that updates are accurate and reported quickly. This guide is designed to help staff at schools, districts, ESDs, and LEAs—as well as researchers and other users—understand and use directory data.

Each directory record includes information about an education organization, such as:

- **Unique identifiers** (like the organization name or school code)
- **Contact information** (such as addresses, principal name, and website)
- **Descriptive details** (for example, whether it is a vocational or virtual school)

Education Unit Hierarchy

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

Every school belongs to one LEA (or an ESD acting as an LEA). School codes and county-district codes connect each school and district within the overall system.

The official directory and its records are stored in the Education Data System Administration (EDS Admin) application. OSPI's EDS Technical Support team maintains the system (eds.support@k12.wa.us). The Director of Data Governance, supported by the OSPI Directory Review team, manages the process for making updates. Information about the directory review process is communicated each year through an OSPI bulletin.

EDUCATION UNITS

Washington State recognizes schools, local education agencies, and educational service districts as the as education units.

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 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 instructions 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

This is an 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

This is an 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

This is an 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.

Community and Technical Colleges

This is an 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 TYPES

There are four federal school types. These are used in OSPI's annual reporting of Directory data to the Department of Education in ED Facts File Specification 029.

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 reportable under ED Facts file definitions and not identified with one of the specific values below are reported as "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. This is 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.

EDS ADMINISTRATION

The official list of schools, districts and ESDs and their directory records are in the EDS Admin application. In EDS Admin, schools are identified by their Directory Records. They are also identified by Organization Categories, School Types, Special Emphasis Status, and School Facilities; options and definitions are described below.

Directory Records

Directory records are the data elements associated with each school.

Legal Name

This is the full and legally-accepted name of the education 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 work "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

This is a school's short name which may be used as an alternative to Legal Name. Common Name is used in some applications.

Acronym

Acronym is not actively used and may be retired.

School Code

This is 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

This is 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

This is 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

Grade span is the lowest grade level and highest grade level served by the school. This is required for all schools and cannot be edited by the LEA. The LEA grade span is identified by OSPI using the lowest and highest grade levels offered at all schools within the LEA.

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

This set of elements 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

This optional set of elements 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. This is 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. This is 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

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

Organization Categories

Public School

[See school definition.](#)

Tribal School

This is a Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) recognized school of a sovereign nation.*

Institution

This 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

This is a school operating in Washington that is approved by the State Board of Education and 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

This is a school that serves only pre-kindergarten students.

Private School

This is a school operating in Washington 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 Education 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

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

*These definitions are under review and may be retired.

Special Programs Emphasis School Status

This status is to identify schools designed to provide an academic or social focus on a particular theme (e.g., science/math, performing arts, gifted/talented, or foreign language). The status is indicated in EDS Admin as Yes or No. Those identified as Yes are used only in magnet school/special program reporting of CCD School data to the Department of Education annually in ED Facts File Specification 129.

School Facilities

Adult Jail

This assignment is determined by OSPI's Institutional Education team. 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 for court processes (e.g., visits with attorneys, court hearings, trials, etc.).

Correction or Detention Facility

This assignment is determined by OSPI's Institutional Education team. 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

This is used for educational services provided to students in a hospital building.

Other

This is used for a facility type that does not meet the existing definitions.

Postsecondary Institution

This is used for educational services provided to students in a postsecondary institution building.

Residential Facility

This is used for facilities such as Residential Habilitation Centers serving students with 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

This is used for educational services provided to students in a school building.

Vocational Training Facility

This is used for educational services provided to students in a vocational training facility.

Changes to Education Units

WAC 392-117-020 provides authority for OSPI to require a request process for LEAs to notify OSPI of changes to education units 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 one district to another (or Educational Service District),
- Residential boundaries, and

- Any other change that results in a 50 percent or greater change to the student population of a school.

Instructions about 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. 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 must maintain the history and continuity of schools for longitudinal data accountability and accurate state and federal reporting. Therefore, closing 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.

Changes to Directory Records

These changes to directory records do not require OSPI approval and should be updated directly in EDS Admin by DDSMs at the time of the change:

- School address changes (that do not result in student population or residential area changes).
- Changes to principal (or email address and other contact information).
- Changes to 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
- In and out code changes.

School Type and School Type Codes

Table 1: School Type and School Type Codes

School Type	School Type Code	Notes
Public School	P	Used as default and when no other school type is assigned
Tribal Compact	Q	School associated with a Tribal Compact Agency
Fifty Percent School	5	School in which more than fifty percent of students are from outside of the district
Special Education School	S	Follows federal definition
Vocational/Technical Skills Center	V	Follows federal definition for CTE school
Alternative School	A	Follows federal definition for alternative education school
Re-engagement School	R	School only provides 1418 open doors youth re-engagement services as approved by OSPI's Re-engage Program Supervisor
Non-Public (Private) School	N	A school operating in Washington state that is not maintained at a public expense and does not meet the definition of a common school as defined in RCW 28A.150.020.
Institution	I	
Adult Jail/Juvenile Detention	J	

Source: OSPI School and District Directory (EMS), March 2026.

School types/type codes Tribal School (T) and Contract School (Z) are no longer actively assigned.

APPENDIX

Washington State Constitution

RCW 28A.150.020: Common schools.

RCW 28A.150.010: Public schools.

RCW 28A.300.065: Classification and numbering system of school districts.

Federal Regulations

Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 See Sec. 102. Definitions.

eCFR :: 34 CFR 303.23 -- Local educational agency.

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