



National Center for  
Homeless Education

<https://nche.ed.gov>



## A Closer Look at File Specifications: FS 150 and 151

The National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) has developed a series of briefs focused on ensuring data submitted to the U.S. Department of Education (ED) meet quality standards and conform to program requirements. The series supplements information provided in ED's [file specifications](#), which are the primary guidance documents on *EDFacts* data collections. As the fourth in the series, this brief provides information about the data collection and submission process for data on the adjusted-cohort graduation rate (ACGR) under Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) submitted under File Specification (FS) 150: Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate and FS 151: Cohorts for Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate.

### Data Collected by FS 150 and FS 151

[FS 150](#) includes data groups 695, 697, 755, 850, 852, 854, and 856. It provides information on how to report the percentages of students in the adjusted cohort who graduate with a regular or state-defined alternate high school diploma within four years and, as applicable, within the time frame for an extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rate defined by the state (e.g., a five-year rate).

[FS 151](#) includes data groups 696, 698, 756, 851, 853, 855, and 857. It includes information on how to report the number of students in the adjusted cohort who did and did not graduate in four years and, as applicable, the number of students who did and did not graduate as a part of an extended-year adjusted cohort (e.g., a five-year cohort).

In reporting information for both FS 150 and FS 151, states must include data for students experiencing homelessness, as well as for major racial/ethnic subgroups, students with disabilities, English learners, economically disadvantaged students, and students in foster care. Data for FS 150 and FS 151 must be submitted for the school, local educational agency (LEA), and state educational agency (SEA) levels.

### Important Dates

Complete and accurate data for FS 150 and FS 151 are due by the initial close on February 8, 2023, for school year 2021-22. Once the data have been submitted to ED, the data will undergo a data quality review. If data quality issues are flagged, ED will send feedback to states. States respond to the feedback from ED and have the opportunity to resubmit data until the final close data, which is typically in May.

### Data Quality Checks

Data submitted by states are checked during the data quality review to ensure they are timely, complete, and accurate. During the data quality review, data submitted by states will be checked using business rules in the Business Rules Single Inventory (BRSI). The full BRSI, which contains rules for all data submitted through *EDFacts*,

is available at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/edfacts/business-rules-guide.html>.

The questions below are based on rules pertaining to FS 150 and FS 151 contained in the BRSI and tailored for students who experienced homelessness. State coordinators, ED*Facts* coordinators, and others reviewing data reported for FS 150 and FS 151 can use them to validate their data, along with the BRSI. For any question that results in a response of no, state coordinators can investigate the reason and work with liaisons and the data staff submitting information to make corrections prior to submitting information to ED. If, upon further investigation, the data are determined to be correct, state coordinators can work with their state ED*Facts* coordinators to submit explanatory comments with the data.

### *Completeness*

- Does the data file related to FS 150 include an SEA level four-year ACGR for students who experienced homelessness (Business Rule DQR-ACGR-003)?
- Does the data file related to FS 150 include a four-year ACGR for students who experienced homelessness for every high school and LEA with high schools that enrolled students who experienced homelessness (Business Rule DQR-ACGR-003)?
- If the state uses one or more extended-year ACGRs, does the data file related to FS 150 include extended year ACGRs for students who experienced homelessness for each high school and LEA with high schools that enrolled students who experienced homelessness? Is the ACGR also submitted for the SEA? Is each extended-year ACGR defined by the state included (Business Rule DQR-ACGR-004)?
- Does the data file related to FS 151 include the number of students who experienced homelessness in the four-year adjusted cohort who did and did not graduate for the SEA (Business Rule DQR-ACGR-005)?
- Does the data file related to FS 151 include the number of students who experienced homelessness in the four-year adjusted cohort who did and did not graduate for each high school and LEA with high schools that enrolled students who experienced homelessness (Business Rule DQR-ACGR-005)?
- If the state uses one or more extended-year ACGRs, does the data file related to FS 151 include the number of students who experienced homelessness who did and did not graduate within each extended-year adjusted cohort defined by the state? Does the data file related to FS 151 include the extended-year adjusted cohorts for each high school and LEA that enrolled students who experienced homelessness, as well as the SEA (Business Rule DQR-ACGR-005)?

### *Current Year Accuracy*

- For FS 150, given the population of students who experienced homelessness in the state, are four-year ACGRs for the subgroup reported for a reasonable number of the LEAs in the state? (Business Rule DQR-ACGR-034)?
- For FS 151, is the SEA count of students who experienced homelessness included in the four-year adjusted cohort larger than zero (Business Rule DQR-ACGR-031)?
- Does FS 151 include at least one student who experienced homelessness in the four-year adjusted cohort for each LEA with a Grade 12 that reported 10 or more enrolled students who experienced homelessness for FS 118 (Business Rule DQR-ACGR-033)?
- For SEA data, do the adjusted cohort graduation rates for students who experienced homelessness included in FS 150 match the ACGRs obtained by calculating the rates using the counts of students who experienced homelessness included in FS 151 (Business Rule DQR-ACGR-017)?
- For high schools and LEAs with high schools, do the ACGRs for students who experienced homelessness included in FS 150 match the ACGRs obtained by calculating the rates using the counts of students who experienced homelessness included for each high school and LEA included in FS 151 (Business Rule DQR-017)?

## General Notes about Data Quality

The following are additional considerations for preparing ACGR data based on common errors historically seen in data submitted to ED.

As explained in further detail in the Data Reporting Guidelines sections of FS 150 and FS 151, only students who graduate with a regular high school diploma or state-defined alternate diploma may be counted as graduates in the ACGR. (ESEA § 8101(23)(A)(ii), (25)(A)(ii), and (43)).

Although the ESEA does not specify how states define subgroups of homeless students when reporting ACGRs, states use business rules to determine when to include a student in the homeless subgroup. For example, in reporting the ACGR, a state may have a business rule to include a student in a subgroup if the student was a part of the subgroup at any time during the adjusted cohort period. Regardless of the approach used to form the adjusted cohort of students who experienced homelessness, business rules allow the state to easily identify students who belong to the subgroup and consistently assign students to adjusted cohorts.

In calculating ACGRs, students are added or removed from an adjusted cohort based on their enrollment status in the school or LEA. The only reasons a student may be removed from an adjusted cohort are when the school or LEA has written documentation that the student has:

- enrolled in another high school or educational program from which the student is expected to receive a regular or state-defined alternate diploma,
- emigrated to another country,
- transferred to a prison or juvenile detention facility or died.

(ESEA § 8101(23)(B)-(C) and (25)(B)-(C)).

A student who transfers into a high school must be assigned to the adjusted cohort in which the student started grade 9 for the first time. (ESEA § 8101(23)(A)(i) and (25)(A)(i)). Students who drop out of school may not be removed from the adjusted cohort. (See ESEA § 8101(23)(B) and (25)(B)).

All students who experienced homelessness must be included in data reported for FS 150 and FS 151. All states must report four-year adjusted cohorts for FS 151 and four-year ACGRs for FS 150. Additionally, all states using one or more extended-year ACGRs for ESEA Title I accountability purposes must report the rates and respective adjusted cohort counts for those extended year ACGRs. Many states report five- and six-year extended rates, but if a state calculates a seven-, eight-, nine-, or ten-year extended rate, those data must also be submitted via *EDFacts* files 150 and 151 at the SEA, LEA, and school levels.

## Providing Notes About Quality

Many states provide comments in the State Submission Plans that accompany the initial submission of data concerning the timeliness, completeness, or accuracy of the data being submitted. After ED reviews the data and these comments, SEAs are required to respond to the feedback sent to them following ED's data quality review. The following considerations may be useful to states in ensuring their final submission meets requirements.

Aim to:

- Collaborate across program staff and data staff in finalizing the responses to ED comments. Both data quality issues and program implementation issues may be applicable for responding to comments.
- In cases where the data are accurate, make sure the state's responses to ED are clear, concise, and explain the specific issue that was flagged. As applicable, make sure the state's response indicates what steps it took to address the concern noted by ED and show that the state has examined the discrepancy.
- In cases where the data are not accurate, a state should resubmit accurate data by the final resubmission due date.

Avoid:

- Responding only by saying that the data are correct; such statements generally are not sufficient without further explanation.
- Responding that the data reflect the data reported by LEAs. States are responsible for the quality of data from their LEAs that they report to *EDFacts*.
- Responding only by saying that the data are from different sources. We understand that data from related *EDFacts* files do not always align due to differences such as the period of collection or how elements are defined in different collections. However, collections of related data should align and states are responsible for reconciling discrepancies, to the extent possible, before submitting data to *EDFacts*.
- Using the same comment that was used for the previous collection window, even though it is out of date and no longer relevant.
- Including comments for a data point that do not apply to that data.
- Including comments that are unclear, confusing, or indicate that the state did not examine the issue.

The following is an example of a comment that helps clarify data included under FS 150 and FS 151, and therefore is likely to reduce the number of corrections the SEA will be asked to make:

- Our state calculates the homeless student subgroup by including any student who experienced homelessness during high school in the subgroup.

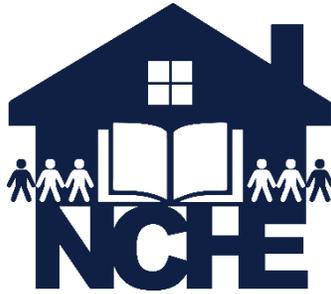
The following are examples of comments that are vague, do not indicate what steps were taken to address the concern noted by ED during the data review, or indicate that the SEA violated a rule included in the file specs or BRSI, and are therefore likely to result in a data flag:

- Data are correct.
- This is the same methodology we used last year.

## Public Availability of Data

ED makes data reported to *EDFacts* publicly available, with appropriate privacy protections applied to ensure they do not include personally identifiable information. ED releases data to the public in order to increase transparency, identify technical assistance and programmatic needs, and provide information to policymakers. The following list provides several examples of how data submitted to ED are released to the public.

- **ED Data Express** is a website hosted by ED to improve public access to data at the district and state levels. ACGR data and related notes on data quality can be accessed by visiting <https://eddataexpress.ed.gov/> and selecting the green download button. After clicking the green reset filters button, the public can select the state, level (LEA or SEA), school year, file specification, and homeless subgroup to create a downloadable file.
- **Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) reports** provide information on long-term goals and performance measures for federal government agencies. ED adopted a goal on high school completion for homeless students using four-year ACGRs as a GPRA measure starting with SY 2018-19 data. This information populates the President's Budget Request for the U.S. Department of Education and Justification of Appropriations Estimates to the Congress, which are available at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/tables.html?src=rt>.
- **Federal Data Summaries** published by NCHIE included state-level four- and five-year ACGRs starting with SY 2017-18 data. These reports are available at <https://nche.ed.gov/data-and-stats/> and <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-formula-grants/school-support-and-accountability/education-for-homeless-children-and-youths-grants-for-state-and-local-activities/performance/>.
- **The Digest of Educational Statistics** published by ED's Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Educational Statistics is available at [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/2020menu\\_tables.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/2020menu_tables.asp). State-level ACGR information is provided in Chapter 2 in a section on high school completers and dropouts.



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