

## Managing Flat File Submissions

For local educational agencies (LEAs) with numerous schools and a high volume of data, the file submission feature of the Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) allows flexibility for managing data submissions.

### Organizing File Submissions

Modifying file formats to automatically upload files results in a more efficient submission than manually entering data. LEAs can upload CRDC data in a single large file, or in multiple files broken down by modules, schools, or time of year at which certain data become available, saving time over a manual data submission.

### Partial Files

A **partial flat file submission** means a file may contain:

- Data for a subset of schools or institutions within the LEA
- A subset of data elements or topics
- Any combination of topics and schools

For example, a partial flat file may consist of all the required data for only one school, only the interscholastic athletics data for all schools, or only the grades enrolled and enrollment data for a subset of schools within the LEA.

### Tips for Using Partial Submissions

The [submission tool](#) will read a properly formatted file upload, as long as the file contains appropriate data element headers. A partial file can be as simple as an individual data element for an individual school. Other tips to consider are presented below:

- The first data header must begin with **LEA\_ID** for LEA data uploads, or **SCH\_ID** for school-level uploads. See the section *Tips to Avoid Common Flat File Submission Mistakes* below for more details.
- Include a data element header for each data element included in the file.
- If a data element contains a value, then it will overwrite previously submitted data.
- Blank values in a file will not overwrite data currently in the CRDC.
- Use **NS** (Not Submitted) to delete or erase previously submitted data.

### Delegating Responsibilities

Depending on where data are stored for different topics, it may make sense to delegate responsibilities for submitting data among a group of individuals. Some questions to consider when delegating responsibilities to different individuals include:

- Who will gather the data for each topic and/or school?
- Who will format the data for uploading?
- Will one or multiple individuals be responsible for uploading data to the CRDC?
- How will individuals be informed of what tasks they are responsible for?
- How will completion of delegated tasks be checked or communicated?

## Assigning Permissions for File Submission

To upload a file into the CRDC survey data submission tool, a user must have **Write** access for all the modules and all the entities (e.g., schools) included in the file. See the [CRDC Submission System User Guide](#) for instructions on granting permissions to users.

## Submitting Data

The following are general steps for submitting data into the CRDC survey data submission tool using the flat file submission method:

- Create flat files in comma-separated values (.csv) format,
- Access the **File Upload** screen of the CRDC survey data submission tool,
- Add the prepared file, and
- Initiate the upload process.

For specific instructions on how to create flat files for submission, see the [Flat File Submission Method Instructions document](#). For detailed instructions on how to upload files into the CRDC survey data submission tool, see the [CRDC Submission System User Guide](#).

## Tips to Avoid Common Flat File Submission Mistakes

The first data element header must be a **CRDC/NCES LEA\_ID** or **SCH\_ID**.

- The first data header, and the first value reported in each additional line, must be either a **CRDC/NCES LEA ID** or **School ID**.
- Verify that the spelling for the data element header is correct. Be sure to include underscores.
- If the first data element header (**LEA\_ID** or **SCH\_ID**) is missing or mistyped, then the file will receive a file upload error that reads: *Checking error: The file does not start with the correct header row. The first six characters in the file should be either "LEA\_ID" or "SCH\_ID".*

### The LEA ID or School ID must be the CRDC/NCES LEA ID or CRDC/NCES School ID

- ✓ The CRDC/NCES IDs provide a unique ID in a standardized format for all LEAs and schools in the nation.
- ✓ The CRDC/NCES LEA ID is a 7-character ID.
- ✓ The CRDC/NCES School ID is a 12-character ID.
- ✓ If any number other than the 7-character CRDC/NCES LEA ID or the 12-character CRDC/NCES ID is entered into the system, then the following error will be displayed: *Submission error: XXXXXXX does not look like a proper form ID. Form IDs should be either 7 (LEA) or 12 (School) characters.*

## Data Element Headers Must be Present and Must Be Valid Data Element Headers

- Each data element header must be entered exactly as it appears in the CRDC List of Elements ([2023-24 Flat File Specifications](#)) document.

- If any data header is entered differently, then it will trigger an error. For example, if **SCH\_GRADE\_G09** is entered as **SCH\_GRADE\_G9**, then it will trigger the following error: *Could not find SCH\_GRADE\_G9 in the data dictionary.*

### File Must be Saved as a CSV File

- The upload file must be a CSV file.
- Text files and Excel files will not be recognized by the system.
- Any file other than a CSV file will not upload and will receive the following error: *Checking error: File name extension should be “.csv” for data files.*

### Contact the Partner Support Center

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