



Office of the Commissioner

785-296-3202
785-291-3791 (fax)

120 SE 10th Avenue • Topeka, KS 66612-1182 • 785-296-6338 (TTY) • www.ksde.org

January 5, 2009

Dear Administrators:

As you are aware, changes in the collection and reporting of race/ethnicity data are needed for district/school 2009 enrollment forms. The federal government, for more than a decade, has tried to clarify a major issue regarding the distinction between race and ethnicity, and to provide individuals the opportunity to select multiple races to more fully describe their heritage. Federal agencies have been working to implement regulations that were adopted by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget in 1997, and the Department of Education is among the last to finalize adoption. The US Department of Education's adoption of these regulations last year will finally make education data consistent with the Census data and other national data sets.

The new regulations specify the following five races:

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White

Please note that Hispanic/Latino/Mexican is not considered to be a racial category; under these regulations it is an ethnicity.

In terms of how data will be **collected by schools and districts**, a two-part question—both parts of which must be answered—must be implemented for fall 2009 enrollments. (Please note that KSDE highly recommends that the data be collected from all students and staff members—not just new enrollees). Note that the order of the questions is important: Part A must be asked first, then Part B.

- A. Are you Hispanic/Latino or of Spanish origin? (Every student and staff member must respond **YES** or **NO** to this question and then must respond to the next question.)
- B. Select one or more races from the following racial groups:
 - a. American Indian or Alaska Native
 - b. Asian
 - c. Black or African American
 - d. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - e. White

Schools and districts will report this data to KSDE via KIDS and other student-level data collections in exactly this same manner—Hispanic Ethnicity will be a Yes/No field and Race will be a separate field allowing one or more of the five racial categories to be reported. (Please note that *Refused to Designate* is no longer a valid response).

When KSDE reports the data to the federal government and to the public (via the Report Card) the data will be aggregated, including each individual in exactly one of the following seven categories:

- Hispanic/Latino of any race
- For individuals who are non-Hispanic/Latino only:
- American Indian or Alaska Native
 - Asian
 - Black or African American
 - Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - White
 - Two or more races

Individuals included in Hispanic/Latino will not be included in any other category for reporting purposes. This ensures that assessment data will still be disaggregated by both race and ethnicity (e.g., Hispanic/Latino) so that assessment scores of Hispanics/Latinos will not also be in the racial category.

What does this mean for districts? It means that districts will need to change enrollment forms this winter/spring. SIS vendors will need to change systems this spring and this should be done at no charge to you. (Note that KSDE has already been talking with SIS vendors for several months regarding this). District enrollment forms will need to implement the 2-part question for all fall 2009 enrollees. Districts should plan to train staff to assist enrollees in responding to the two-part question.

To assist schools and districts in implementing the new categories, the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) has prepared the enclosed CD, which contains sample parent and staff letters, sample enrollment forms, a brochure explaining the changes, a FAQ sheet, a schedule of training sessions via LiveMeeting available to districts, and a PowerPoint presentation which could be used in local sessions. The information on the CD is also posted on the KSDE website at <http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=3370>. An additional schedule of training sessions for those interested in attending in Topeka is being developed and will be available in mid January. The Federal regulations will also be discussed in various scheduled ITVs during January and February.

I hope you find this information helpful. Thank you for your great work on behalf of all the children and youth in Kansas.

Sincerely,



Alexa Posny
Commissioner of Education