

FEDERAL-STATE COOPERATIVE SYSTEM FOR PUBLIC LIBRARY DATA

POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR REVIEW OF DATA ELEMENTS

Any changes to the existing data elements, additions of new data elements, or deletions of existing data elements should be undertaken only after careful consideration of:

- the burden placed on local public libraries and state libraries; (That is, to what extent are data available or how feasible is it to collect data?);
- the extent to which policy formulation and analysis, and decision-making would be improved or enhanced;
- the effect on other data elements; and
- the extent to which integration with other data elements is possible.

The Data Elements Subcommittee of the FSCS Steering Committee is responsible for:

1. ongoing review and analysis of existing data elements to determine whether a particular data element needs to be changed or deleted;
2. taking a proactive stance with respect to responding to a compelling need for the addition of a data element; and
3. limited editing of data elements and their definitions to correct grammar or spelling errors or to clarify meaning.

Although the Data Elements Subcommittee has a special mandate to review data elements, any State Data Coordinator¹ or member of the FSCS Steering Committee is eligible to propose that an FSCS data element be added, changed, or deleted.

THREE YEAR CYCLE

The following schedule outlines a three-year cycle of procedures that should be followed as closely as possible in order to ensure thoughtful deliberation. Data elements edited by the Data Elements Subcommittee, as outlined in number three above, will not be subject to this schedule.

This cycle is based on a "program year." The term "program year" refers to the year beginning with the Annual Meeting and concluding the month prior to the next Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting is held in December. There are at least three FSCS Steering Committee meetings per year (March, June and September). The first meeting of the Steering Committee is held at the conclusion of the Annual Meeting.

¹ In addition to the 50 states, SDC representation includes the District of Columbia and the territories as defined by the Institute for Museums and Library Services (IMLS) which governs eligibility for federal funding under the Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL). The territories include: Puerto Rico, American Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, and Guam.

YEAR ONE

1. At the annual meeting of Data Coordinators, the proposed addition, change, or deletion should be identified.
2. The person(s) making the proposal shall submit it in writing to the Chair of the FSCS Steering Committee. The proposal should:
 - identify the proposed addition, change, or deletion;
 - identify unfamiliar methodologies for local libraries and also Data Coordinators;
 - provide a clear rationale for the proposed action; and
 - provide new or revised definitions, or a proposal to delete all or part of an existing definition.
3. Time will be allowed during the annual meeting of Data Coordinators to present proposals to the group for discussion.
4. The proposal must be endorsed by at least ten (10) Data Coordinators and forwarded to the FSCS Steering Committee before its first meeting of the following program year (held at the conclusion of the annual meeting). The Chair of the Data Elements Subcommittee will solicit issue papers in support of and in opposition to any proposed changes, additions, deletions from State Data Coordinators and Chair of the COSLA Research and Statistics Committee.
5. The Chair of the Data Elements Subcommittee will solicit comments in support of and in opposition to any proposed change, addition, or deletion from Data Coordinators and the Chair of the COSLA Research and Statistics Committee.
6. Between the Steering Committee's first and second meetings (December, March), NCES and Census staff will review the proposal and raise any issues that must be addressed at the second Steering Committee meeting.
7. The Steering Committee will fully discuss the proposal and the issues related to methodology, training, and impact on FSCS at its second meeting of the following program year. These issues include any raised by NCES and Census staff.
8. After the second Steering Committee meeting, NCLIS staff will send out a ballot on behalf of the Steering Committee to all State Data Coordinators. Included with the ballot will be any issue papers that have been submitted to the Steering Committee. Signatures on the ballot will be required from both the Data Coordinator and Chief Officer. Adoption of a proposal will be determined by the majority of the ballots cast by the Data Coordinators submitting data that is accepted and published. Robert's Rules of Order will be used by the FSCS Data Elements Subcommittee.
9. By April 15, a record of the ballot results will be sent to all Data Coordinators and Chief Officers and posted on the NCLIS website. Census will revise data collection software to reflect new/revised/omitted data elements and definitions.
10. By May 1, the OMB approval package will be submitted by NCES staff.
11. At the third Steering Committee meeting, new and revised data elements will be addressed in the training plan for the next annual meeting of the State Data Coordinators. State Data Coordinators will alert local public libraries to the change so that the local data collection and reporting effort can reflect the change. Questions about definitions and issues of interpretation will be referred to the Data Elements Subcommittee usually via the PLRSNet and COSLA listserv. Use of the COSLA listserv is at the discretion of Chair of the COSLA Research and Statistics Committee.
12. By September 1, NCES will have obtained OMB clearance.

13. At its fourth Steering Committee meeting, the committee will address new and revised elements in planning for the next annual conference.

14. By November 15, the WinPLUS software will be released via the Web and Data Coordinators will be notified of its availability.

15. At the annual conference (December), training on new and revised data elements will be provided.

YEAR TWO

1. State Data Coordinators will receive training related to any new or revised data elements at the annual meeting.

2. A new or revised data element will be reported on a trial basis by any State Data Coordinator able to do so. Trial data will be electronically released but not published.

3. The Steering Committee will review trial data at its third and fourth meetings (September, December). Any issues identified in this review related to new or revised data elements will be addressed in the training plan for the next annual meeting of the State Data Coordinators.

YEAR THREE

The added or changed data element will be reported in the annual data submission and will be electronically released and published.

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