

FEDERAL COMPLIANCE OF DATA

The Child Nutrition Programs (CNP) section of the Alabama State Department of Education is in the process of ensuring compliance with federal civil rights regulations in School Meal Programs. The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) requires all School Meal Program sponsors to collect race and ethnicity data of applicants and participants. The purpose of this data collection effort is to determine how effectively School Meal Programs are reaching potentially eligible students. Responses have no effect on eligibility

Please see the memo below from the Child Nutrition Programs (CNP) section of the Alabama State Department of Education.

MEMO: CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS (CNP) SECTION OF THE ALABAMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

August 16, 2023

MEMORANDUM

TO: City and County Superintendents

FROM: Eric G. Mackey, State Superintendent of Education

RE: Collection of Race and Ethnicity Data for School Meal Programs

The Child Nutrition Programs (CNP) section of the Alabama State Department of Education is in the process of ensuring compliance with federal civil rights regulations in School Meal Programs. The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) requires all School Meal Program sponsors to collect race and ethnicity data of applicants and participants. The purpose of this data collection effort is to determine how effectively School Meal Programs are reaching potentially eligible students. Responses have no effect on eligibility.

To meet this requirement, School Meal Program sponsors must notify applicants and participants that (1) the purpose for collecting race and ethnicity data is to determine how effectively School Meal Programs are reaching potentially eligible students, (2) provision of this data is voluntary, (3) responses are kept confidential, and (4) responses have no effect on eligibility. Notifications must be posted on local school food authority or school websites no later than October 1, 2023, in a language and format that applicants and participants can understand.

There are situations when applicants or participants choose not to provide this information. It is the policy of the State Department of Education that no action will be taken against any applicant or participant who does not provide the information, and that no action will be taken against any school or school district that does not provide the information. Appropriate methods include using school enrollment data or direct communication with the USDA to determine the making a judgment of race or ethnicity based on appearance is not made. It is no longer allowable for school personnel to use visual observation to identify race and ethnicity.

If you have any questions, please contact the Child Nutrition staff at (205) 654-4637.

EDMATHAM

cc: Child Nutrition Program Directors
City and County School Principals
Private School Administrators
Residential Child Care Institution Administrators
Brandon T. Farris
Angelle Love
Julie Adams
Jason Heath
Susan Tuttle-Chandler

FNS 2023