

Parents and guardians,

There are new guidelines from the U.S. Department of Education regarding the collection of information on race and ethnicity for public school students and staff. The federal government requires all school districts to collect this information yearly; this year the government has changed the way it wants race and ethnicity to be reported. The new reporting is similar to the questions that were asked on the 2010 Census.

According to the federal officials, the new reporting method will give a more accurate picture of the nation's racial and ethnic diversity. Students and staff will be able to be identified in both racial and ethnic categories and in more than one racial category. In the past, individuals could only choose one racial category.

This information will be collected by schools during the registration process. Every school will begin recording this information during the 2010-2011 school year.

The racial and ethnic data that is gathered will be used in reporting and analyzing test results, such as the Colorado Student Assessment Program, or CSAP.

Enclosed are some questions and answers that may help you understand the changes. Additional information is available on the Colorado Department of Education Web site: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/>
Simply type in "race and ethnicity" in the search box.



Race/Ethnicity Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Introduction:

The race and ethnicity of students and staff in Colorado public schools will be collected in a new way beginning in 2010. Schools will begin using a two-part question to collect racial and ethnicity data. These changes are based on an adjustment in federal requirements and will affect students and staff in Colorado schools.

Parent/Guardian Topics

Q: Why are changes necessary in the way racial and ethnicity data is collected?

A: The demographics of society have changed significantly in the last few decades. These changes will allow students and staff to more accurately describe who they are.

Q: Is the federal government checking immigration status?

A: No. The provided information will be maintained in a student record. It will not be reported to any federal agency in a way that identifies a child or a parent.

Q: Will the school release a student's race and ethnicity to other parties?

A: Individual student records are protected by the Federal Education Records and Privacy Act (FERPA). The new race and ethnicity standards have no effect on FERPA's protection of student records. FERPA does not designate race and ethnicity as directory information and race and ethnicity have the same protection as any other nondirectory information in a student's education record.

Q: Why do Hispanic populations have to answer more questions?

A: One of the major changes is the recognition that members of Hispanic populations can be of different races. The federal government would like to afford Hispanic/Latino populations the opportunity to better describe themselves according to their culture and heritage.

Q: How do students know they won't be discriminated against after marking they belong to a minority group?

A: This is exactly why better racial and ethnic data about our students and staff needs to be collected. The district maintains this information about each individual in his or her record, in case a civil rights investigation surfaces.

Q: You can't make students answer the questions, can you?

A: No, we can't. However, the school district is required to provide an answer on the child's behalf, if the child/parent chooses not to provide such information.

Understanding How Race and Ethnicity Information Will Be Reported to the Colorado Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education

Helpful Examples:

A student who identifies as Hispanic/Latino will be reported as Hispanic regardless of any race or combination of races which they also identified.

A student who identifies as not Hispanic/Latino, as well as two or more races, will be reported as two or more races.

A student who identifies as Hispanic/Latino and white will be reported as Hispanic.

A student who identifies as not Hispanic/Latino and white will be reported as white.

A student who identifies as Hispanic/Latino, Asian and Native American will be reported as Hispanic.

A student who identifies as not Hispanic/Latino, black and Pacific Islander will be reported as two or more races.

Question 1: Do you consider your student to be of Hispanic/Latino origin?		Question 2: Which of the following groups describe your student's race?					Reported Racial/ Ethnicity Data
Yes	No	Am. Indian/ Ak. Native	Asian	Black	White	Hawaiian/ Pac. Island	
✓		Any single race or combination of races					→ Hispanic
	✓	✓					→ American Indian/ Alaska Native
	✓		✓				→ Asian
	✓			✓			→ Black
	✓				✓		→ White
	✓					✓	→ Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander
	✓	Any combination of races – but not of Hispanic/Latino origin					→ Two or More Races

Student Race and Ethnicity Collection Form

(To Be Completed by Parent/Guardian)

Student's Name: _____

Grade: _____

Ethnicity Data

1. Do you consider your student to be of Hispanic/Latino origin?

(check only one box)

- No, not **Hispanic/Latino**.
- Yes, **Hispanic/Latino**. A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

You must answer both questions. Question 1 is about ethnicity, not race. No matter what you selected above, please continue to answer Question 2 by selecting one or more races from the five racial groups.

Racial Data

2. Which of the following groups describe your student's race?

(check one or more boxes)

- American Indian or Alaska Native.** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment.
- Asian.** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- Black or African American.** A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.
- White.** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

Did you answer both question 1 and question 2?

- No. **I am aware that not providing an answer to both questions will require the school to use observation to identify or prior data to determine the student's racial/ethnicity data.**
- Yes.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

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If either question was not answered by the parent/guardian, how did the observer identify the student's racial/ethnicity data?

Prior Data _____ Sibling Data _____ Other Records _____ Observation

Additional Comments _____

Observer Identification:

Hispanic/Latino No Yes

American Indian/Alaska Native Asian Black/African American Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander White

Principal or Designee Signature: _____

Date: _____