

RACE AND ETHNICITY INFORMATION

Dear Parent or Guardian,

All school districts in Utah are required to report to the Utah State Office of Education (USOE) annually the race and ethnicity of each of its students. The state reports school-level data — but not individual student information — to the federal government.

What is changing?

The federal government has developed a new way to report ethnicity and race that includes new categories. These new categories have been developed to provide a more accurate picture of the nation's ethnic and racial diversity, enabling individuals to be identified in ethnic and racial classifications and in more than one racial category. The new categories are explained on the reverse side of this letter.

How will this information be used?

The new categories will replace the existing categories for use in all state and federally sponsored statistical data collections that include data on ethnicity or race — the same as in previous years.

What do I need to do?

Please review the ethnicity and race section of your student's Student Information Form included in the registration materials to make sure it accurately reflects your child's heritage.

How to complete the race and ethnicity information

There are new federal requirements for collecting and reporting race and ethnicity data. There are now TWO questions that must be answered for every student.

In order for these new guidelines to best reflect the identities of our communities, it is important to understand the way the new categories work. Please be thoughtful about the most accurate way to report your child's identify when choosing the appropriate categories.

What are the new categories?

Question #1: ETHNICITY

- **Hispanic or Latino**
- **Not Hispanic or Latino**

All persons of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin – descended from Central or South American, Mexican, Cuban, Puerto Rican, Dominican, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race should answer Hispanic or Latino. All persons are required to answer Question #2 even if they answered Hispanic or Latino to Question #1.

Question #2: RACE Select at least one of the following racial categories on your student's form. All persons who choose more than one category will be reported as multiracial.

- **American Indian or Alaska Native**
 - **U.S.:** *A person having origins in any of the indigenous peoples of the continental United States or Alaska.*
 - **Latin America and Canada:** *A person having origins in any of the indigenous peoples of Canada, Mexico, Central America, South America, or the Caribbean.*
- **Asian:** *A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent.*
- **Black or African American:** *A person having origins in any of the original peoples 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.*

What are the major changes?

Race and Ethnicity Information Required: All students must answer both Question #1 and Question #2. A "declined to report" response is no longer allowed by federal reporting requirements.

Latino/Hispanic Students: One of the major changes is the recognition that members of Hispanic/Latino populations can be of different races. Individuals may identify as Hispanic and White, or Latino and Central American Indian, or Hispanic and Black and Pacific Islander, or any other combination. The federal government considers "Hispanic/Latino" to be an ethnicity, not a race; this is why Hispanic/Latino is not listed as a race identification category. If you answer in the affirmative to Question #1, you will be counted as Hispanic/Latino.

Multiracial Students: You may have noticed that there is no "multiracial" category you can select. The new categories allow individuals to self-identify with more than one racial or ethnic category. Everyone who chooses more than one race in Question #2 will be reported as multiracial in our data systems.

Where can I learn more?

If you have questions, visit www.davis.k12.ut.us (Parent Resources) or call your school office.

Davis School District Updating Student Race and Ethnicity Data

Frequently Asked Questions

All school districts in Utah are required to report to the Utah State Office of Education (USOE) annually the race and ethnicity of each of its students. The state reports school-level data — but not individual student information — to the federal government.

Because the federal government has changed the reporting categories for this data, the Davis School District is working to update all students' records in 2010.

What is changing?

There are new federal requirements about how race and ethnicity data is recorded. Every school district in the United States is required to collect and report the race and ethnicity of students using the new categories explained below. Both Question #1 and Question #2 must be answered for all students. A “declined to report” response is no longer allowed by federal reporting requirements.

Why is this important?

It is important to change to the new standards because they: allow individuals to more accurately identify themselves; are required for federal education eligibility and accountability reports; align with other agencies that are using the new standards, removing the need for “dual” reports; are consistent with Census data and other national data sets, facilitating state and local-level policy analyses; and reflect population changes.

What do the new standards mean for school districts?

Race and ethnicity data have always been collected and reported to the Education Department (ED). Federal education funds are allocated through data reported to ED. Continued civil rights enforcement is an important reason for maintaining accurate race and ethnicity information about individual students at the school and district levels.

What do I need to do?

Your student's ethnicity and race need to be updated on the [Student Information Form](#). All families are being asked to update their records during the registration process.

Am I required to answer these questions?

Each family is asked but not “required” to answer these questions. If you do not answer the questions yourself, your student's records may not accurately describe racial and ethnic identity. However, the district **is required** to report race and ethnicity data for all students.

What will happen if I do not provide an answer to these questions?

Under the federal guidelines, the district is required to provide an answer on your behalf if you choose not to provide this information about your student(s). Self-identification is the most beneficial option and the district is prepared to provide information and support to families and individuals to encourage self-identification.

If your student's record is incomplete on his/her [Student Information Form](#), you will be contacted again in the fall. If you still do not self-identify, the school will use observer identification to complete this information on your behalf. A “declined to report” response is no longer allowed by federal reporting requirements.

Will the school release my student's race and ethnicity information to other parties?

There are no changes to the laws protecting your privacy and your other rights. This information will not be reported to any federal agency in a way that identifies you or your child.

Individual student records are protected by the Family Educational Rights 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 privacy protections as any other non-directory information in a student's education record.

Will the information we provide be used to check our immigration status?

No. This information will be maintained in your student's records and is protected by federal law. It will not be reported to any federal agency in a way that identifies you or your child. No one will check for immigration status from the information you provide here.

How do I know my student won't be discriminated against?

Under no circumstances will this happen. State and local laws are in place to ensure that racial and ethnic data will not be reported elsewhere in a way that any individual may be identified. The state and district follow FERPA rules and regulations to safeguard the privacy of student records. All privacy laws and rules are still in effect.

I am Latino/Hispanic. Why do I have to answer more questions?

One of the major changes is the recognition that members of Hispanic/Latino populations can be of different races. The federal government considers "Hispanic/Latino" to be an ethnicity, not a race; this is why Hispanic/Latino is not listed as a race identification category. You will be asked to select one or more race, even if you have indicated that you are Hispanic/Latino. If you answer in the affirmative to Question #1, you will be counted as Hispanic/Latino.

What is the difference between ethnicity and race?

Ethnicity is about tradition, learned behavior and customs. It is about learning where you come from, and celebrating the traditions and ideas that are part of that region. The ethnicity you identify yourself with can change over the course of your life, but your racial composition cannot.

Race is your biologically engineered features. It consists of physical attributes and genetic composition which are inherited. It can include skin color, skin tone, eye and hair color, as well as a tendency toward developing certain diseases. It is not something that can be changed or disguised. Race does not have customs or globally learned behavior.

Why is "multiracial" not a self-identification option?

For the first time, individuals have the opportunity to identify themselves as being of or belonging to more than one race. This change allows individuals to more accurately report their racial and ethnic background by not limiting them to only one racial category. Individuals are reported as multiracial if they choose more than one race. The information you provide may help us as a district maintain consistent data, make better educational alignments, and obtain appropriate funding levels for specific programs.

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