



STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

August 16, 2023

MEMORANDUM

TO: City and County Superintendents
FROM: Eric G. Mackey *EGM*
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) require 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 may be helpful to reiterate that their response has no bearing on eligibility and will be kept confidential. If the person does not provide the information, an alternative method of collecting the information must be used. Appropriate methods include using school enrollment data or direct certification data. The USDA has determined that making a judgment of race or ethnicity based on appearance is not reliable. 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 School Programs staff at (334) 694-4657.

EGM/ATK/AF

- cc: Child Nutrition Program Directors
- City and County School Principals
- Private School Administrators
- Residential Child Care Institution Administrators
- Brandon T. Payne
- Angelice Lowe
- Julie Autrey
- Jason Swann
- Susan Tudor Crowther

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**CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM
 ETHNIC AND RACIAL DATA COLLECTION FORM
 Fiscal Year _____**

Institution/sponsor: _____ **Site:** _____

All Child and Adult Care Food Program center sponsors must annually determine the number of potentially eligible participants by ethnic/racial category for the area served and submit this information with the application.

The traditional definition of **race and ethnicity** is related to biological and sociological factors respectively. **Race** refers to a person's physical appearance from descent or heredity, such as skin color, eye color, hair color, etc. **Ethnicity**, on the other hand, relates to cultural factors such as nationality, culture, ancestry, language and beliefs.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Enrolled #** - the number of participants currently enrolled in the program. This data can be obtained from data provided on the Income Eligibility Forms.
2. **Complete** one form for each site under your Institutional Agreement.

Ethnic Categories (select one)	Enrolled number
Hispanic or Latino (Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race.)	
Non-Hispanic or Non-Latino	
Total	
Racial Categories (may select more than one)	Enrolled number
White	
Black or African American	
American Indian or Alaskan Native	
Asian	
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	
Unknown	
Total	

Data gathered for this report is confidential. **PLEASE KEEP ON SITE FOR EVALUATION OR AUDIT.**

Sponsor Signature: _____ Date: _____