



## Part B Child Count Data Collection (Table 1)

### Questions and Answers

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*The purpose of this document is to assist states with collection of data about the number of children with disabilities served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) receiving special education and related services on the child count date. States should use this document to supplement the General Instructions provided in Table 1.*

*Table 1 is located on the Data Accountability Center website at [www.IDEAdata.org](http://www.IDEAdata.org) in the Data Collection Forms, Part B Forms section. The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) provides instructions for Table 1 to communicate data collection requirements under the IDEA to state special education program offices. All states that receive IDEA Part B funds must submit all data elements outlined in the instructions, regardless of data submission method. The data submission method may be via the DANS system or the EDFacts file specifications. For states submitting data via EDFacts, the information in this document is relevant to file specifications N002 (school age child count) and N089 (preschool child count).*

**1. The instructions for the Part B child count data collection form (Table 1) state that the child count is to be taken on a date designated by the state between October 1 and December 1 (inclusive) and that the state must use the same count date each year. How should the state proceed if it finds it necessary to change the child count date due to unforeseen circumstances?**

Under *IDEA* regulations [34 CFR §300.641 (a)], states are given the flexibility and allowed the opportunity to establish a state-specific child count date between October 1<sup>st</sup> and December 1<sup>st</sup>. It is important for data interpretation purposes that, once the state establishes that child count reference date, the date is to continue to be used each year. If your state plans to change the child count date, you should contact the *IDEA* data collection Project Officer, with a copy to the *IDEA* data collection grantee and your MSIP State Contact, to explain the proposed change and the reason that your state is now finding this change necessary. For example, to allow sufficient time for data verification prior to the February 1 submission date, a state may choose to move the child count date from December 1 to October 1. OSEP expects that the state should be able to provide sufficient advanced notice for such a change – a minimum of 60 days prior to the due date of the child count data. If your state submits data via *EDFacts* only, the same procedures apply.

## **2. How should the state proceed if the established child count reference date falls on a weekend or on a holiday?**

OSEP expects that most data systems are capable of establishing a count on a date that school is not in session. However, if your state is incapable of making this adjustment, there is some flexibility in how the state might proceed. As the child count date is a point-in-time reference, it is necessary to establish a cutoff point, after which no additional children who enter or exit the system will be accounted for in the report. This could be accomplished by setting the cutoff point at the close-of-business on the day preceding the weekend or holiday or at the opening of business on the following the weekend or holiday. If the state's data system is unable to freeze the data long enough to establish a count and is forced to take the count on a day that either reflects additional entrances/exits in the system or fails to account for valid entrances/exits in the child count reference period, the choice as to which way to proceed is at the state's discretion. Note, however, that if the established reference date is October 1, OSEP expects that the state would choose a later date, so as to keep the reference period between October 1 and December 1. Similarly, if the state's established reference date is December 1, OSEP expects that the state would choose to move to an earlier date, to remain within the required reference period.