# SNP Memo #2019-2020-03

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**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA   
Department of Education**

DATE: July 24, 2019

TO: School Nutrition, EIM, and SIS Contacts (Addressed)

FROM: Sandra C. Curwood, PhD, RDN, Director, Office of School Nutrition

Susan M. Williams, Director, Office of Education Information Management

## SUBJECT: LEA Enrollment File for New 2019-2020 Direct Certification Procedures

The purpose of this memorandum is to facilitate collaboration between the LEA school nutrition contact and the Student Information System (SIS) contact to create the required space delimited text file of SIS data for the new direct certification procedures that will be implemented in School Year 2019-2020. Webinars have been scheduled in the next few weeks to provide information on the enrollment file data and requirements. The required file format was previously distributed in April 2019 and will be posted in SNPWeb, Download Forms. Each LEA is asked to create a test enrollment file as soon as possible which will be used as part of the direct certification regional training offered to all LEAs in October. Full implementation of the new direct certification process for all LEAs will be no later than January 2020.

### Direct Certification

Direct certification is the process by which LEAs certify students as eligible for free meals using data from certain other means-tested programs, eliminating the need for a meal application. The direct certification process in Virginia uses participant information provided by the Department of Social Services (DSS) to the Department of Education (DOE) for benefit programs including SNAP and TANF; Medicaid households that meet income eligibility guidelines; and, children placed in foster care. Currently, the data exchange occurs by DOE passing the DSS information for school-aged children in a specific locality to the LEA for local level data matching. The new direct certification procedures will transfer the data matching process to the DOE SNPWeb software. LEAs will initiate the match by uploading a formatted space delimited text file of SIS data for all enrolled students to SNPWeb. This LEA SIS data extract must be in the required space-delimited text file format for the process to work.

### LEA SIS Enrollment Data Extract and Required Space Delimited Text File Format

A data extract from the SIS should be the source for the LEA enrollment file required for direct certification. The file must be formatted as a space delimited text file. The specific field positions, field lengths, and acceptable field values defined in the LEA Enrollment File Format must be used. Each student record must contain exactly 239 characters, using spaces to complete the required field length when necessary.

The file specifications were reviewed by DOE EIM; EIM staff also assisted with the file format and field definition document. Beta testing of the new DC procedures and the required space delimited file format was conducted with a sample of public school divisions this spring. SNP and SIS contacts in Bristol, Lynchburg, Prince Edward, and Prince William were successful in creating the required space delimited file and conducting a test DC match with the new software.

#### Tips for working with the file:

* Do not open the file in Excel to view or edit – use Notepad or another text program.
* The file will be needed on a monthly cadence.
* You are strongly encouraged to work with SIS software vendors to create a data extract template that meets the file format requirements.
* If any SIS vendor cannot help you create this file, contact [Resultshelp@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:Resultshelp@doe.virginia.gov).

### Additional Direct Certification Communications

A Superintendent’s Memorandum on the new direct certification process requirements, data extracts, and export files will be published in the next few weeks. The direct certification SIS data extract will also be added as a required LEA report in the DOE Calendar of Reports. LEA SNP, EIM, and SIS contacts should work collaboratively to produce the LEA enrollment data extract file in preparation for testing and implementing the new DC procedures.

If you have questions or need more information, please contact Sara Bennett, SNP Systems Analyst Specialist, at [sara.bennett@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:sara.bennett@doe.virginia.gov), or Lynne Fellin, Technical Assistance Specialist, at [lynne.fellin@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:lynne.fellin@doe.virginia.gov).

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