

Ethnicity and Race Data
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Parents

The U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) has instituted new ethnicity and race data collection and reporting guidelines that go into effect in SY 2010-2011. The following Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) have been compiled to help parents better understand the new guidelines and new Student Enrollment Form. If you have already enrolled your child, then the information you provided on the Student Enrollment Form will automatically be transferred to the new federal categories.

1. *What are the new required guidelines?*

The previous method of reporting required states to combine those who marked Asian or Pacific Islander into a single category called "Asian/Pacific Islander." The new reporting method separates this category into two distinct categories: "Asian" and "Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander." In addition, there is a new category called "Two or more" that is intended to capture those who are multi-racial. The new federal ethnicity and race categories are:

Ethnicity: Hispanic

Race: American Indian or Alaska Native

Asian

Black or African American

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

White

"Two or more races" (This category is a reporting category and is not on the enrollment form. It is derived from an individual's responses to the other categories included on the enrollment form. See item #2 below for a list of the categories on the enrollment form).

2. *What does this mean for my child? (How will my child be counted and reported?)*

The State of Hawai'i does not report individual information. The state reports total counts of students by different sub-group categories of race and ethnicity.

On the new enrollment form there are three questions that are important. How you complete these sections will determine how the state will count the race and

ethnicity of your child into the sub-groups that need to be reported to the federal government.

First, the enrollment form will ask:

“Are you (**J**) Hispanic (Ex. Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Spanish, other Hispanic)?” Yes No

If you check **yes**, then your child will be counted and reported as Hispanic. If you check **yes**, you may continue to answer the race question that follows; **however**, for reporting purposes your child will only be counted as Hispanic.

Second, the enrollment form will ask for race information. You may check all that apply. The choices that will be on the form are listed below. If you select more than one race, then for reporting purposes your child will be counted as “Two or more” unless the multiple races are also of same origin (e.g., Chinese and Korean are considered of Asian origin and would be counted as such in the larger federal category of “Asian”; however, Chinese (Asian origin) and Samoan (Pacific Islander origin) are not of same origin and would therefore be counted as “Two or more.”)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A American Indian or Alaskan Native | <input type="checkbox"/> K Samoan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> B Black | <input type="checkbox"/> L White |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C Chinese | <input type="checkbox"/> N Indo-Chinese (Ex. Cambodian, Laotian, Vietnamese) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> D Filipino | <input type="checkbox"/> O Micronesian (Ex. Chuukese, Marshallese, Pohnpeian) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> E Native Hawaiian | <input type="checkbox"/> P Tongan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> G Japanese | <input type="checkbox"/> Q Guamanian/Chamorro |
| <input type="checkbox"/> H Korean | <input type="checkbox"/> R Other Asian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I Portuguese | <input type="checkbox"/> S Other Pacific Islander |

Third, the enrollment form will ask:

“What is the student’s *primary* race? (Select only ONE letter from either the Ethnicity or Race list and fill in the blank) _____.”

If you have selected more than one race, then *primary* means the race with which you feel your child associates most. For example, if you identify your child as (C) Chinese and (E) Native Hawaiian, then with which of these do you consider your child to be primarily associated. If you feel, for example, that your

child primarily associates with (E) Native Hawaiian, then you would put an “E” in the blank. Your child would then be counted and reported as Native Hawaiian to the USDOE. If you do not complete this question about primary affiliation, then your child will be counted in the “Two or more” group. Given the harmful impact of these new guidelines on the demographic representation of indigenous populations such as Native Hawaiians, it is important for those of Native Hawaiian ancestry to note, if this question is left blank your child will NOT be counted as part of the Native Hawaiian sub-group when reporting to the federal government. If you do not complete this question about primary affiliation, then your child will be counted in the “Two or more” group. If you feel that your child primarily associates with (C) Chinese, then your child will be counted as “Two or more” for federal reporting. For state purposes, your child may be counted as (C) Chinese, (E) Native Hawaiian, Asian, or Pacific Islander depending on the purpose for a given count (e.g., research, program evaluation, grant writing, etc.).

3. *How will the ethnicity and race data be used by the USDOE?*

Information on race is required for many federal programs and is critical in making policy and funding decisions. States use these data to meet a variety of legislative mandates. Race data are also used to promote equal employment opportunities and to assess racial disparities in health and environmental risks.

4. *Why is the data important?*

The information is collected by the USDOE so that informed decisions can be made with regard to policies and funding. Ultimately, these decisions affect Hawaii DOE schools.

5. *Do I have to provide ethnicity and race information?*

Although you have the right as a parent to decline providing this information to the school, the federal guidelines require that every student be assigned an ethnicity and/or race category. The requirements allow schools to designate an ethnicity and/or race category in the event a parent declines to provide the information. On the new enrollment form, you will see a check box with the statement:

“I decline to provide ethnicity and race information. I understand that if I do not provide this information, a school representative will designate the ethnicity and race categories for my child.”

You may check this box if you do not wish to provide the information.

If this box is checked, school personnel will make the determination as to your child's ethnicity and/or race. Also included on the new enrollment form is an item:

"Ethnicity/Race Observed: _____ Initial _____ Date."

Whoever makes the observed determination for your child's ethnicity and/or race must initial and date the form.

6. ***If I decline to provide the information, how will observer identification of ethnicity and/or race for my child be determined?***

Observer identification will be made based on the following criteria:

1. Previous knowledge of the student or family
2. Student's surname
3. Best guess

7. ***Can I change the ethnicity and race for my child(ren) already enrolled in a Hawaii public school?***

Yes. Parents can change the ethnicity and race of their children at any time. The information can only be made with the permission of the parent. Permission can be obtained by writing a letter to request the change and completing the Ethnicity and Race Change Form. The form can be obtained at the school office.

8. ***My children have been enrolled in a Hawaii public school for a year (or more) and I provided this information at the time they were enrolled. Recently, I received a form requesting that I provide this information again. Why am I being asked to provide this information again?***

The previous state categories included "Other" as an option for selection. The new federal guideline will no longer allow states to have an "Other" category; therefore, the department has implemented a Re-survey Project. Those parents who identified their children as "Other" when their child was first enrolled are being given the opportunity to update their child(ren)'s ethnicity and race information. The addition of some new categories and the ability to mark multiple categories provides parents with more options.

9. Who do I contact if I have more questions or need further clarification?

If you have more questions, please feel free to contact the following:

Question related to...	Person to call	Office/Number
general policy and information regarding the regulations	Mel Decasa Lisa Watkins-Victorino	Information System Services Branch 586-3215 System Evaluation and Reporting Section (SERS) 733-4008
the enrollment form or technical questions with regard to entering information into eSIS	eSIS Help Desk	Information Resource Management Branch (IRMB) 692-7290 select option 2, then select option 3 Email: help_esis@notes.k12.hi.us
Round 1 or round 2 re-survey of "Other"	Bob Hillier	Student Assessment Section (SAS) 733-4100