NOTE TO REVIEWER:

This appendix includes the SFA Study Notification and School Data Verification E-Letter and the SFA School Data Verification Reference Guide which was sent as an attachment to the letter.

The following were also sent with this email correspondence:

- Copy of the Official Study Notification E-Letter from FNS to FNS Regional Liaisons (see Exhibit O1-3 in Appendix O1: Sample Frame Development and Selection Process)
- APEC III Fact Sheet (for SFAs and Schools) (see Appendix O10: APEC III Fact Sheet for SFAs and Schools

OMB Number: 0584-0530 Expiration Date: XX/XX/XXXX



Third Access, Participation, Eligibility and Certification Study Series



Dear <<SFA CONTACT NAME>>,

By now, you should have received notice from your State's Child Nutrition Office that <<SFA NAME>> was randomly selected to participate in the third Access, Participation, Eligibility and Certification Study (APEC III) series. For this effort, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has contracted with Westat to conduct APEC III.

APEC III is authorized under the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Improvement Act (IPERIA) of 2012 to ensure the financial and programmatic integrity of programs such as the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP).

APEC III is a research study, not an audit of any type. All information collected will be kept private to the extent provided by law and will not affect meal reimbursements or meal program benefits for any participating State agency, SFA, school, or household. The attached APEC III Study Fact Sheet provides information about the study and data collection.

Your assistance is critical to ensure a representative sample, scientifically valid findings, and improvements to the NSLP and SBP.

Sample of Schools from your SFA

We have compiled a list of schools in your district from the National Center for Education Statistics' Common Core of Data. This data included school names, addresses, grade levels, number enrolled, number of students certified for free and reduced-price meals and Provision 1, 2 or 3 status.

To get started with the sampling of schools from <SFA NAME>>, we request that your office review the file and confirm the information or provide updates and/or corrections to us. The list of your schools can be accessed from the study's web-based portal. We have enclosed a reference guide that provides instructions on (a) how to access the web-based portal, (b) how to conduct the review of your data, and (c) how to submit updates and/or corrections.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0584-0530. The time required for the SFA Director to complete this information collection is estimated to average 3 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data sources, gather and maintain the data needed, and complete and review the collection of information.

Next Steps

To begin, you can access the APEC III Web-based Portal using the URL and PIN number provided below:

URL: www.apec3sfa.org

SFA PIN: <<PIN NUMBER>>

You may go to the Web Portal and begin reviewing this information at any time. In about a week or two, an APEC III Research team member will contact you to ensure that you received this request, answer any questions you may have about the study and provide assistance as needed.

We kindly request that your SFA's information is confirmed and/or updated within the next 30 days.

Once again, please feel free to contact the research team at 1-855-820-6138 or email us at schoolmealstudy@westat.com if you have any questions.

Thank you in advance for your help and cooperation.

Sincerely,

<NAME AND TITLE OF SENDER>

Attachments:

- 1. Official Study Notification E-Letter from FNS to FNS Regional Liaisons [see Exhibit O1-3 in Appendix O1: Sample Frame Development and Selection Process]
- 2. APEC III Fact Sheet (For SFAs and Schools) [see Appendix O10: APEC III Fact Sheet for SFAs and Schools)]
- 3. School Data Verification Reference Guide for School Food Authorities (SFAs) [see Attachment on next page]





Third Access, Participation, Eligibility and Certification Study Series

School Data Verification Reference Guide for School Food Authorities (SFAs)

July 2016



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1. SUMMARY

Thank you for your participation in the Third Access, Participation, Eligibility and Certification Study (APEC III).

The information about your School Food Authority's schools presented in the *School Verification* page of the APEC III Web Portal was obtained from the National Center for Education Statistics' Common Core Data (CCD). We need your assistance in verifying, and if needed, updating this information for your SFA's schools. The success of this important study relies on having up to date and accurate data.

If at any time you need assistance, please call 1-855-820-6138 Monday through Friday between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight time or send an email to schoolmealstudy@westat.com.

Please see page 4 of this Reference Guide for detailed instructions on how to log on and navigate the Web Portal.

2. WHAT WE ARE ASKING YOU TO DO

- **2.1.** At the School Food Authority (SFA) level: Provide your SFA's main address and phone number.
 - Please click on the "*Update/Comment*" button at the bottom of the SFA information to enter the SFA complete main address and telephone number including area code.
- **2.2.** At the school level: Review and update your school data.
 - 2.2.1 Reviewing school data
 - Please review a school's information across each row.
 - As part of your review specify if a school is a CEP or not.
 - If all the rest of the information about the school is correct, click on the "Yes" button in the *Is this information correct?* column (second to the last). A check mark will appear in the *Status* column.
 - If any school level information needs updating/correcting, please click the "No" button in the *Is this information correct?* column. You will be directed to the *Update School Information* page where you will be able to update and correct any of the fields described on Table 1.
 - Table 1 provides a summary of the data elements at the school level and the update instructions.



Table 1. Review and Update Instructions

Data Element at the School Level	Update Instructions
a. Confirm if the lowest and highest grades for	There are two drop down boxes where you will
the school are correct.	be able to select the lowest and highest grades.
b. Confirm that the number of enrolled students falls within the range provided.	If the current school enrollment falls outside the range, please enter the <u>actual</u> number of students enrolled. The system will calculate the range.
c. Confirm if the number of students eligible for free and reduced meals falls within the range provided.	If the current number of students eligible for free and reduced meals falls outside the range, please enter the <u>actual</u> number. The system will calculate the range.
d. Select whether the school is a CEP school.	Click on the "Yes/No" radio buttons in the column Is this a CEP school? or go to the Update School Information page and use the drop down box to select "Yes/No."
e. Confirm if the school is a Provision 1, 2 or 3 school.	To update this information you need to go to the <i>Update School Information</i> page and use the drop down box to select "Yes/No."

2.2.2 Removing a school

• If a school is closed or no longer has enrolled students, please click on the button "Remove School." It is the last column to the right. This button will take you to a verification page where you will need to first enter a reason for the closure and then confirm the deletion by click the "Yes" button. Remember to do it in this order because once you click on "Yes" you will not be able to provide the reason. When you are done with this process, an will appear in the Status column in the School Data Verification page.

2.2.3 Adding a school

• If you find that a school is not included on the list, please click on the button "Add School" located at the upper left of the page just below the School Data Verification title.

2.3 CEP Schools

- If you do not have any CEP schools in your SFA and you verified all the school information, you will be all done after you submit your responses.
- If your SFA has CEP schools, and you submitted your verification, you will be directed to a page that asks you to verify if the list is complete and accurate.



- If the list is correct, you will need to click "Yes." If the list is not complete, you will click "No" and you will be directed back to the School Verification page where you will be able to fix the CEP status for the incorrect school(s).
- When the list of CEP schools is correct, you will be directed to a page that asks about the
 grouping of the CEP schools. By groups we mean claim percentages used by individual
 school, by group of schools, or district wide based on the identified student percentage
 (ISP).
- If ALL the CEP schools in your SFA are claimed district wide, please click on the "Yes" button in response to this question, and you will be all done.
- If your SFA claims percentages by a group of schools or on a school-by-school basis, please click on the "No" button. You will then be asked to assign your CEP schools to their group based on claiming percentage. If a school is in a group by itself, only assign that one school to a group.

3. NOTES REGARDING THE WEB PORTAL

- The system allows the option to sort any of the columns either from highest to lowest or from lowest to highest values. The School Name column can be sorted alphabetically either from A-Z or from Z-A.
- The default number of schools per page is 10, if your SFA has more than 10 schools and would prefer to see more schools per page, there is a drop down menu at the bottom left of the page where you can select 10, 25, or 50 schools per page.
- As you work on verifying the school data you have two options to save your work, depending on what you plan to do next.
 - O You can click the "Save Responses and Continue" button if you want to save your work and either keep working or stop briefly (i.e. stepping away from your desk for 15 minutes). If you select this option, you will remain at the screen that you were when you saved your work.
 - O The second save option is "Save Responses and Exit." You will select this option if you have not verified all the schools, but want to continue in another session or another day. If you select this option, you will see a page that lets you know that your work has been saved.



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• When <u>every</u> school has a check mark or an in the *Status* column click on the "*Verification Completed, Submit Responses*" button. The next steps are determined by whether or not your SFA has CEP schools.

4. INSTRUCTIONS FOR NAVIGATING THE WEB-BASED PORTAL

4.1 Getting Started

- The screenshots included in these instructions were captured from a test version of the website. The actual screens on the website may appear slightly different.
- ❖ You will need your SFA Personal Identification Number (PIN) and the web portal URL to login to the Portal. This was provided in the cover letter we sent along with this guide.
- ❖ The Web Portal is designed to work with any browser, such as Google Chrome, Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, etc.
- Please contact us Monday through Friday between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight time at 1-855-820-6138 or send an email to schoolmealstudy@westat.com if you need your PIN or if you have any technical questions or issues using the Web Portal.

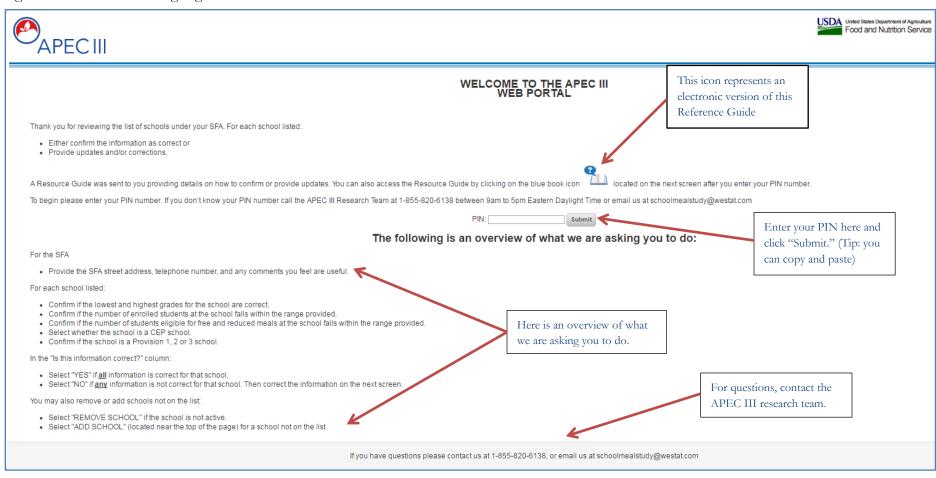
4.2 Accessing the Web Portal

- 1) To access the Web Portal go to www.apec3sfa.org. This link will take you to the landing page where you will be able to:
 - ✓ Login using your PIN
 - ✓ Read an overview of what we are asking you to do, and
 - ✓ Find contact information for help



SFA School Data Verification Reference Guide for SFAs

Figure 1 – Web Portal Landing Page

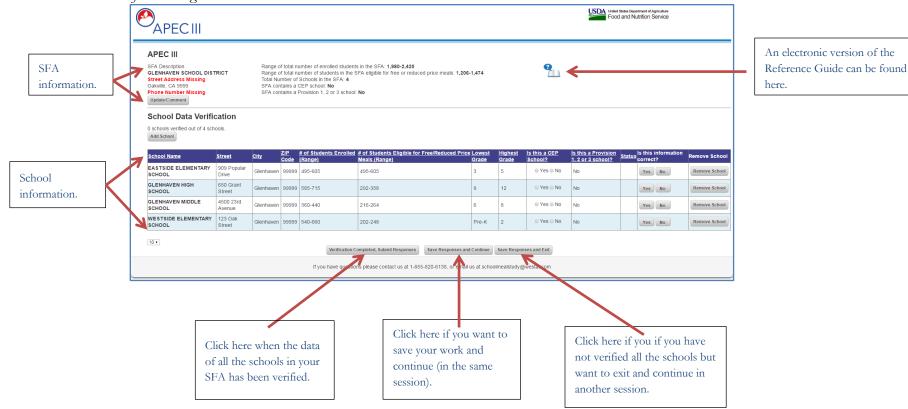




SFA School Data Verification Reference Guide for SFAs

2) After a successful login, the School Data Verification page opens.







SFA School Data Verification Reference Guide for SFAs

4.3 Saving Your Work

3) If you click on "Save Responses and Continue" you will remain in the same page you are working on; if you click on "Save Responses and Exit" you will see the page below (figure 3). Once you are directed to this page, you will be able to exit the Web Portal.

Figure 3 – Saved data notification



4.4 Reviewing and Updating SFA Contact Information

4) School Food Authority information is located in the upper portion of the *School Data Verification* page and this is where you will provide the SFA's main office street address and telephone number.

No review is required for the General Information section. The general information about the SFA appears to the right of the contact information; it is dynamic and will change automatically when you update information at the school level. This information includes:

General information

- ✓ total number of students enrolled,
- ✓ total number of students eligible for free or reduced meals,
- ✓ total numbers of schools, and
- ✓ information if the SFA contains CEP and/or Provision 1, 2, or 3 schools

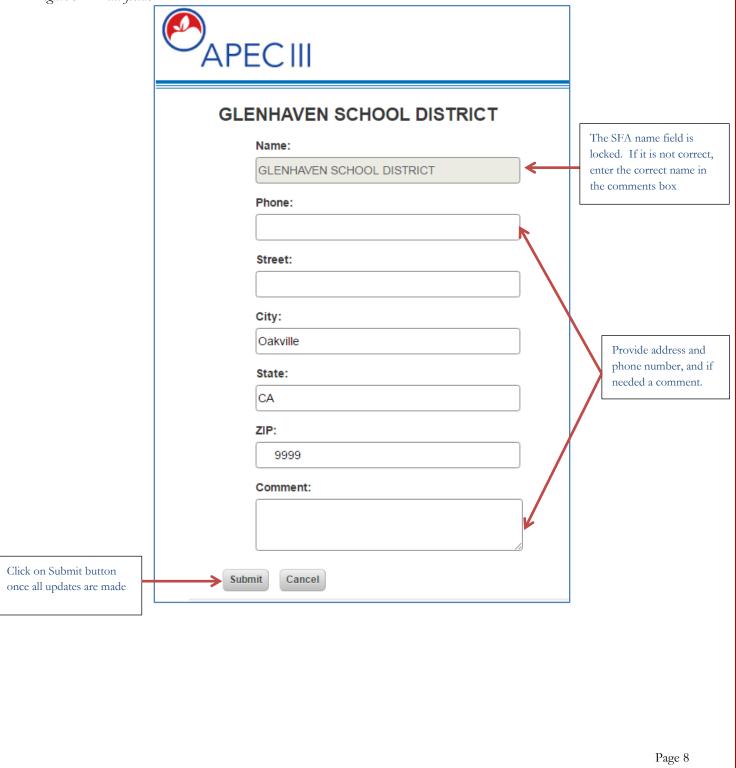
This information reflects the cumulative information of all the schools in the SFA Figure 4 - SFA information APEC III APEC III SFA Description Range of total number of enrolled students in the SFA: 1.980-2.420 GLENHAVEN SCHOOL DISTRICT Range of total number of students in the SFA eligible for free or reduced price meals: 1,206-1,474 Street Address Missing Total Number of Schools in the SFA: 4 Oakville, CA 9999 SFA contains a CEP school: No **Phone Number Missing** SFA contains a Provision 1, 2 or 3 school: No Update/Comment Click here to provide the SFA street address and telephone number.



SFA School Data Verification Reference Guide for SFAs

5) This is the SFA Edit Contact Information page where you will provide the street address and telephone number for the SFA.

Figure 5 – Edit fields

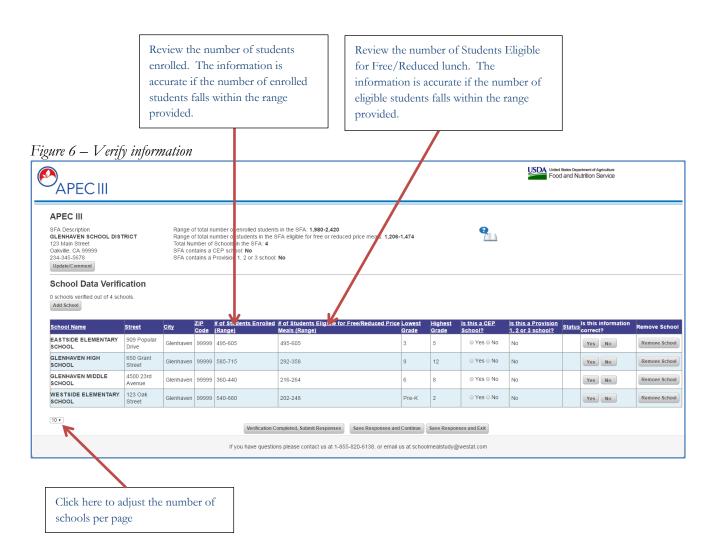




4.5 Reviewing and Updating School Information

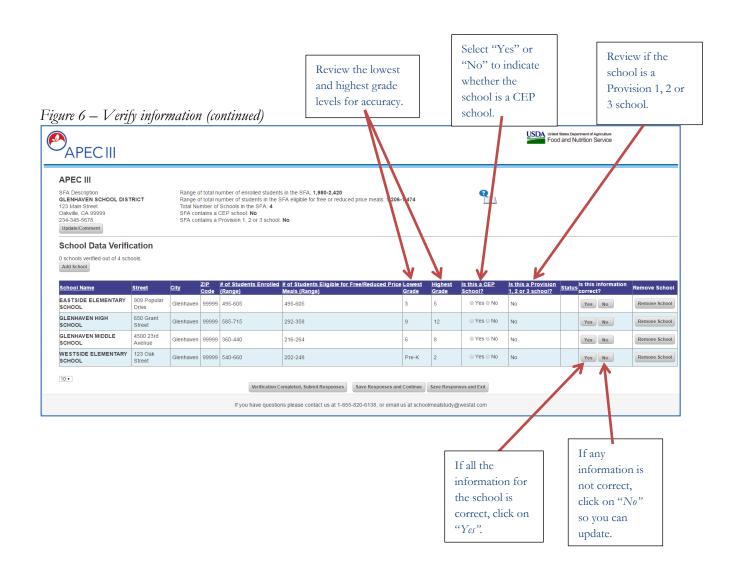
6) School level information is located in the lower portion of the *School Data Verification* page. This is where you will review each school's information for accuracy.

Each column can be sorted from highest to lowest or from lowest to highest values by clicking on the column header. The school names can also be sorted alphabetically.





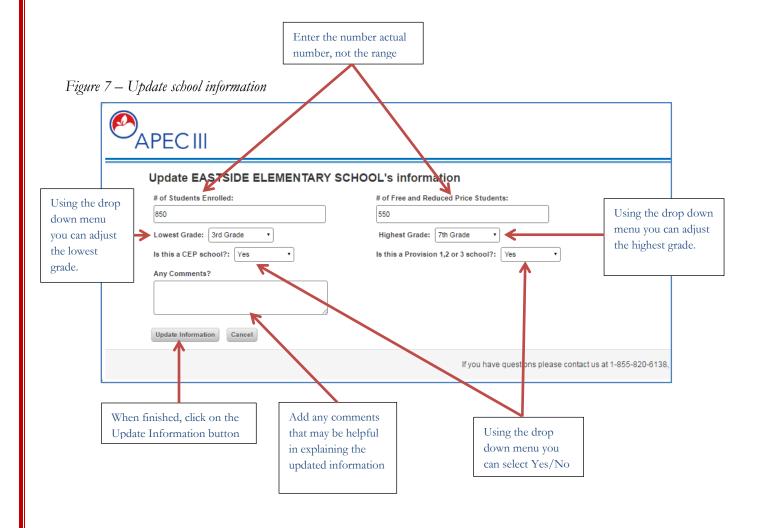
SFA School Data Verification Reference Guide for SFAs





7) If you entered "No" for "Is this information correct?" you will see this page. Here is where you will edit, update, or correct inaccurate school information. Only correct the fields for information that were inaccurate.

In this example we updated the number of students enrolled (from 550 to 850), the highest grade level (from 5th to 7th grade), the CEP status (from "no" to "yes"), and the Provision status (from "no" to "yes").

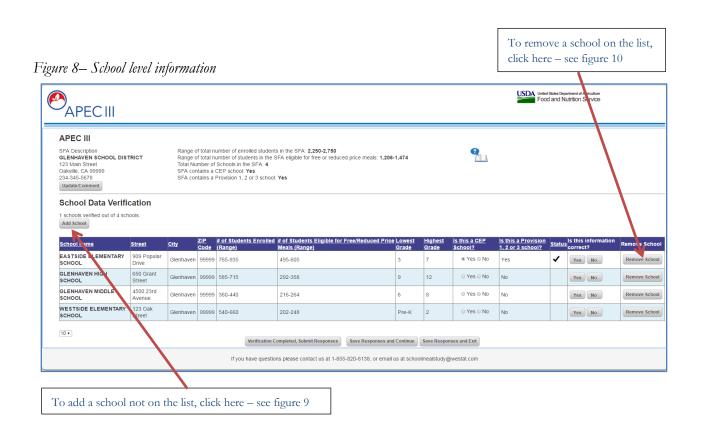




SFA School Data Verification Reference Guide for SFAs

4.6 Adding or Removing a School

- 8) The list of schools provided may not reflect the current list of schools in your SFA.
 - If your SFA has a school not on the list, click on the "Add School" button.
 - If a school on the list no longer has enrolled students, click on the "Remove School" button.





SFA School Data Verification Reference Guide for SFAs

4.6.1 Add a New School

9) If you click on "Add School" (see figure 8), you will go to the Add School Information page where you will be able to enter information about the new school.

Figure 9a – New school template with empty data fields

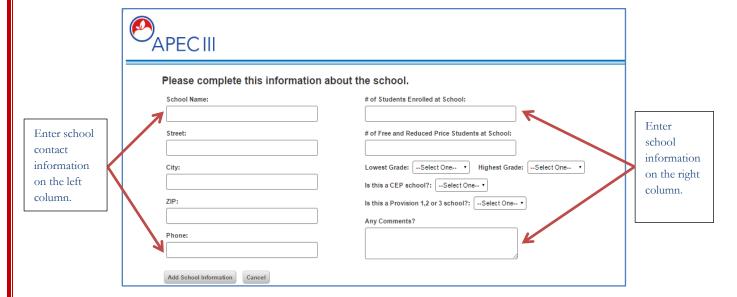
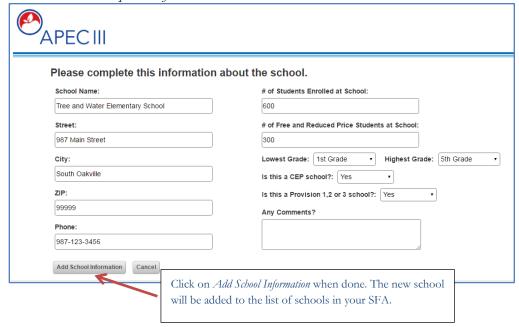


Figure 9b – New school with completed information



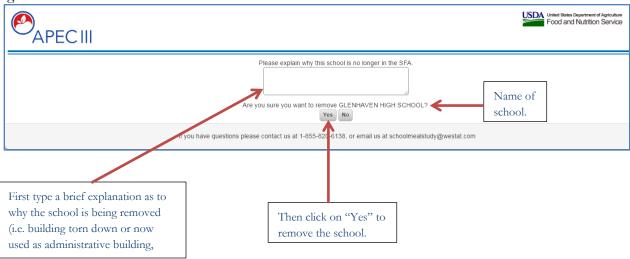


SFA School Data Verification Reference Guide for SFAs

4.6.2 Remove a School

10) If you click on "Remove a School" (see figure 7), you will go to the Remove School page.

Figure 10- Remove School



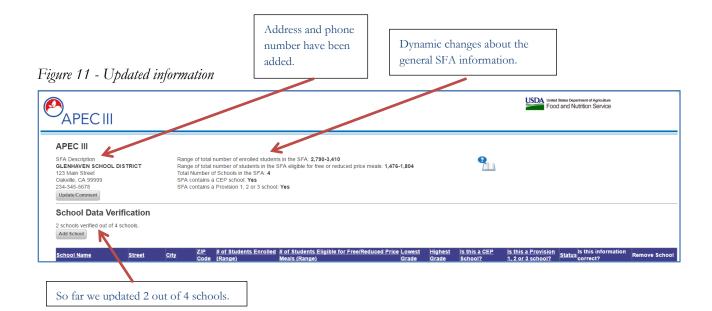


SFA School Data Verification Reference Guide for SFAs

4.7 Reviewing your Progress

11) This screen shot shows how the general information about the SFA automatically changed based on the updates that were made. The number of schools remains 4 because we added and removed a school. However the range of students enrolled changed and the range of students eligible for free or reduced price meals has changed. Also, the information about CEP schools and about Provision 1, 2, or 3 schools has changed.

Another place to monitor your progress is the information located just above the "Add School" button. That information will let you know the total number of schools in the SFA, and of those, how many have been verified.

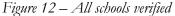


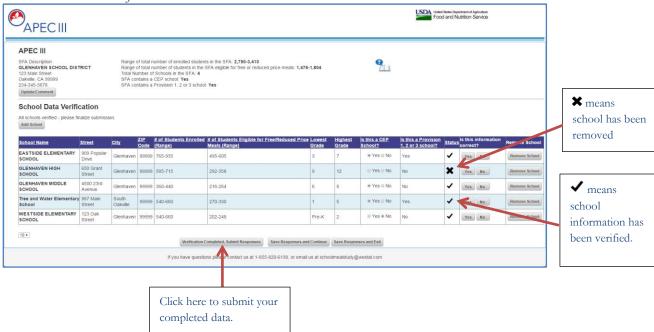


SFA School Data Verification Reference Guide for SFAs

12) When selecting "Yes" in the Is this information correct column or by updating the information on the update information page, you will see a in the Status column. If a school has been removed, you will see an in the status column.

When all schools have been verified, please click on "Verification Completed, Submit Response" to submit the data.





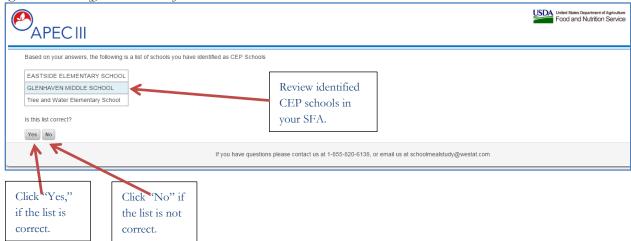


4.8 SFAs with CEP Schools

13) If you have no CEP schools, you will be directed to the *Thank You Page* after you submit your verification – Figure 17.

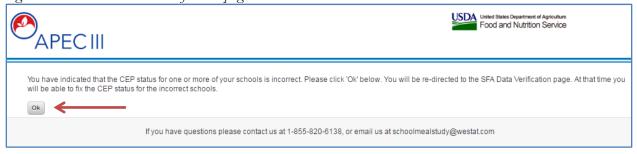
If your SFA has CEP schools, and you submitted your verification, you will be directed here (Figure 13). This page asks you to verify if the list of identified CEP schools is accurate. If all CEP schools are accounted for, click on "Yes" and you will be asked about grouping of CEP schools (see figure 15). If you discover that it is not accurate, click "No" and you will be directed to a confirmation page (see figure 14).

Figure 13 – Verify that the list of CEP schools is correct



14) Please click "Ok" (see red arrow) to be re-directed to the *School Verification* page where you will be able to fix the CEP status for the incorrect schools.

Figure 14 – Back to School Verification page



15) If your SFA has CEP schools and you verified that the list is accurate (you clicked "Yes" in the page that confirms for accuracy) you will see this page (Figure 15). This page asks if all the CEP schools are grouped district wide. Please click on "Yes," only if all the CEP schools are grouped



SFA School Data Verification Reference Guide for SFAs

district wide using the same claiming percentages. You will then be directed to the *Thank You* page (see figure 17).

If your SFA claims percentages by groups, please click on " N_0 ," and you will be directed to the page that asks about the grouping of CEP schools.

Figure 15 – Type of grouping of CEP schools



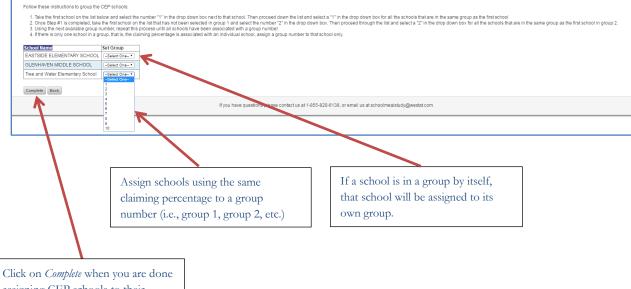


SFA School Data Verification Reference Guide for SFAs

USDA United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service

4.8.1 CEP schools in More Than One Group

16) On this page (Figure 16) we are asking you to associate each CEP school to other CEP schools in the same group that use the same claiming percentage. To do this, follow the instructions on the page. When you are done, click on "Complete" button (see red arrow) and you will be routed to the Thank You Page (figure 17).



assigning CEP schools to their groups.

Figure 16 – Grouping of CEP Schools



SFA School Data Verification Reference Guide for SFAs

17) When you see this page (Figure 17), you are all done! Thank you again for your participation!

Figure 17— Thank You Page

