

**U.S. Department of Commerce  
U.S. Census Bureau  
OMB Information Collection Request  
Annual Survey of School System Finances  
OMB Control Number 0607-0700**

Part B – Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods

1. Universe and Respondent Selection

The fiscal year (FY) 2023 universe consisted of 14,733 governmental school systems as counted in the most recent list of school systems in the Governments Master Address File and was distributed as follows:

Independent School Districts	12,179
Dependent Educational Service Agencies (SEAs)	1,116
Dependent School Systems (not SEAs)	1,438

In addition to the governmental school systems from the Governments Master Address File, the U.S. Census Bureau also collected finance data from approximately 5,200 non-governmental school systems such as charter schools for the FY 2023 collection for the Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) using a list of local education agencies from NCES’ Local Education Agency Universe (School District) Survey. The full size of the combined universe is approximately 19,887 school systems.

NCES has maintained annual reimbursable agreements with the Census Bureau that require the collection and dissemination of universe data. The full universe of school systems is included in the annual survey.

Due to the use of central collection from state education agencies, the approximate unit response rate for the FY 2023 Annual Survey of School System Finances survey cycle was 97 percent.

2. Procedures for Collecting Information

1The form, F-33, contains the elementary-secondary education finance items collected by the Census Bureau. In practice, this form serves more as a data-reporting guide for respondents rather than as a data collection instrument. The Census Bureau relies heavily on collecting this public school system finance data centrally at the state education agency. All states provide significant amounts of these data centrally to the Census Bureau via the Internet using File Transfer Protocol (FTP). Supplemental forms are sent to school systems in states where the state education agency cannot provide information on assets (F-33-L1), indebtedness (F-33-L2), or both (F-33-L3).

The Census Bureau facilitates central collection by accepting from states data in one of two formats. Currently, 17 states provide the Census Bureau electronic copies of state-specific detailed education finance data files. The Census Bureau maintains programs for converting these data from the state

agency format to the Census Bureau F-33 format. Thirty-four states reformat state-specific data files into the Census Bureau's format prior to submitting the data electronically to the Census Bureau.

All school systems are canvassed in the survey. As such, there is no sampling error for the school systems estimates. However, data are subject to nonsampling errors such as respondent error, coverage error, nonresponse error, and processing error. To mitigate the impact of the nonsampling errors, editing and item imputation (e.g., prorating state level amounts to school districts) are used.

### 3. Methods to Maximize Response

Nonresponse does not have a major impact on the data from this survey. State education agencies provide most of the finance data centrally for their school systems and this survey benefits from the multiple methods that states can use to increase response. Fiscal data reported to state education agencies by school systems are important factors in determining how much state money each school system receives, and thus this incentive helps minimize nonresponse. Fiscal data are used to determine Title I and Impact Aid federal grant allocations.

The Census Bureau uses traditional mail canvass techniques to enhance response for the forms it sends to school systems to obtain debt and asset information. Conducting follow-up mailings to nonrespondents, initiating central data collection techniques, soliciting audit reports in lieu of completed questionnaires, and an Internet collection for debt and asset data are several methods the Census Bureau uses to maximize response.

The Annual Survey of School System Finances has unit and item response rate goals of 85 percent, which meet the response rate thresholds specified in OMB, Census Bureau, and NCES Quality Standards.

The Annual Survey of School System Finances has always exceeded these response rate goals due to long-standing central collection agreements with each state and the District of Columbia. State education agencies generally require school districts to submit complete financial data to them. The survey has received a file from every state respondent every year, which ensures a high response rate.

### 4. Test of Procedures or Methods

There are no revisions to the collection instruments at this time. Whenever changes to the collection is proposed, NCES and the Census Bureau discuss the proposed changes with state fiscal coordinators to ensure there is a match between the data that is being collected and SEAs are able to provide. We are continually in contact with respondents and NCES through webinars and informal discussions regarding current and future data collections and the feasibility.

### 5. Contacts for Statistical Aspects and Data Collection

#### Statistical Aspects monitored by:

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Data Collection questions to:

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1 Attachments to the Supporting Statement:

Appendix A: Announcement letter, Form F-33, Supplemental forms F-33-L1, F-33-L2, and F-33-L3, and Screenshots from online application.

Appendix B: U.S.C. citations.

Appendix C: Letters of Support from 60-day Comment Period