July 10, 2019

Dear Special Education Local Plan Area Director:

Charter School Reporting for Special Education Students

The California Department of Education (CDE) recently provided two communications:

- On May 29, 2019, charter schools were informed, through the annual announcement of the opportunity to change reporting status, that due to the upcoming transition of the California Special Education Management Information System (CASEMIS) into the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS), they would have to submit data for students with disabilities (SWD) and general education students in the same way.

- On June 20, 2019, Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) Directors, County and District Superintendents and Charter School Administrators received letters regarding the upcoming transition, and in that letter were informed that beginning in 2019–20, charter schools must submit SWD and general education student data in the same way.

The changes noted in these communications mean that charter schools that currently submit their CALPADS and CASEMIS data differently must choose one reporting option, and inform the California Department of Education (CDE) of the chosen option by July 15, 2019. Charters may inform CDE by submitting the Charter School Reporting Status Change Form which can be downloaded from the CDE CALPADS and Charter Schools Data Reporting Policy Web page at https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/sp/cl/charterschools.asp

The purpose of this letter is to highlight the importance of this issue and to provide further guidance for how charter schools, that need to change how they report their data, can implement the necessary change. It is critical that charter schools submit their data for SWD and general education students consistently because local educational agencies (LEAs) and charters with inconsistent submissions will receive fatal errors from the CALPADS system and will be unable to certify their CALPADS Fall 1 and End-of-Year submissions. Specifically, LEAs will receive the following errors:

- SPED0002 – Invalid Reporting School – This compares the school of attendance in the file and the reporting LEA. For independently reporting charters, the reporting LEA would be the charter itself.
- **SPED0443 – Invalid SELPA for Reporting LEA** – This compares the reporting LEA to the SELPA code. For independently reporting charters, the reporting LEA would be the charter itself.

Charter schools that currently report their data to CALPADS and CASEMIS the same, either directly or through their authorizing LEAs, do not need to make any changes. Charter schools that currently report their data differently must decide how they will report their data beginning in 2019–20. Below are the two current reporting scenarios that would require a charter school to make a reporting change, and the options the charter school has for implementing that change.

**Charter School Reporting Scenarios and Options for Making Changes**

**Scenario 1:**

Charter schools that are LEAs for special education purposes and currently report non-special education data through their authorizing LEA: Charter schools that have opted to be an LEA for special education purposes and are members of a SELPA, but currently report data to CALPADS through their authorizing LEA, **must become an independently reporting charter (IRC)** and report all data directly to CALPADS independent of their authorizing LEA. This can be accomplished in one of two ways:

1. Collect, maintain, and submit all data for all students in a student information system (SIS) managed by the charter school; OR

2. Work with the authorizing LEA to use their SIS by:
   a. Changing its reporting status to an IRC by submitting the Charter School Reporting Status Change Form; AND
   b. Granting its authorizing LEA an edit role in CALPADS so once the charter school has reviewed data for its students, the authorizing LEA can submit data from their SIS on behalf of the charter school.

**Scenario 2:**

Charter schools that are currently independently reporting charters (IRC) and currently submit CASEMIS data through their authorizing LEA have two options:

1. Remain an IRC and report **all** data, including data for SWDs directly to CALPADS. To do this, the IRC would continue to collect, maintain, and submit data through their student information system, and then EITHER:
   a. Collect, maintain, and submit all data for SWD in a special education system (SES) managed by the charter school; OR
b. Grant the authorizing LEA an edit role in CALPADS so once the charter school has reviewed data for its SWD, the authorizer can submit data from their SES to CALPADS on behalf of the charter school. The authorizing LEA will have to work with their SES to create separate files for the charter school that includes the charter school as the reporting LEA in the file.

2. No longer be an IRC and report all data through their authorizing LEA. To do this, the charter must:

a. Gain agreement with its authorizer for the authorizer to maintain and submit data for all students enrolled in the charter school in the authorizing LEA’s SIS; and

b. Change its reporting status to reporting data through the authorizing LEA by submitting the Charter School Reporting Status Change Form.

There is no default charter school reporting status (independent or reporting through the authorizing agency) for new charter schools. A new charter school must inform the CDE of its reporting status within 30 days of the charter school’s effective date. This reporting status must stay in effect for at least that reporting year (July 1 through June 30).

A charter school that has the State Board of Education as its authorizing agency is considered an independently reporting charter school and will continue to report their special education data directly to CALPADS.

**Responsibilities for Authorizing Agencies when Reporting Charter School Data**

Charter schools that elect to have their authorizing agency report CALPADS data on their behalf, are giving the authorizing agency responsibility for:

- Obtaining and maintaining Statewide Student Identifiers (SSIDs) in CALPADS for all enrolling and exiting students.

- Maintaining and submitting CALPADS Fall 1 data (individual student data and staff assignment data, and beginning in 2019–20, special education data previously collected via CASEMIS), Fall 2 data (course enrollment, staff demographics and assignments), and End-of-Year (EOY) data (course completion, career technical education, program participation, cumulative enrollment, discipline, chronic absenteeism, and special education data).

Charter schools electing this option are strongly encouraged to have open dialogue with their authorizing agency about local practices, procedures, and data system logistics to ensure that the authorizing agency can report the charter school data as well as meet the CALPADS reporting requirements, including the certification of data by published deadlines.
Responsibilities for Charter Schools Reporting their Own Data

Charter schools that elect to report CALPADS and CBEDS data independently from their authorizing agencies are responsible for:

- Obtaining and maintaining SSIDs in CALPADS for all enrolling and exiting students.
- Maintaining and submitting CALPADS Fall 1 data (individual student data and staff assignment data, and beginning in 2019–20, special education data previously collected via CASEMIS), Fall 2 data (course enrollment, staff demographics and assignments), and End-of-Year (EOY) data (course completion, career technical education, program participation, cumulative enrollment, discipline, chronic absenteeism, and special education data).
- Submitting data to CBEDS.

Responsibilities for Special Education Local Plan Areas

Charter schools that are members of a SELPA will be required to submit their own data to CALPADS and their SELPA will need to approve that data for final certification. Charters that are independently reporting but are not members of a SELPA will also need approval by the SELPA in which their authorizing LEA is a member. SELPAs will be responsible for:

- Assisting LEA data stewards, including CALPADS coordinators, LEA Directors of Technology, and Superintendents understand the legal requirements and data specifications of special education student level data.
- Assisting in developing technical and/or business processes that result in consistent data for students with disabilities (SWD) in the SES and SIS.
- Reviewing and approving the special education data for each of its LEAs by the CALPADS December 20, 2019, Fall 1 certification deadline, and the EOY certification deadline, including all independently reporting charter schools.

SELPAs, LEAs and charter schools are strongly encouraged to have open dialogue with their about local practices, procedures, and data system logistics to ensure that the authorizing agencies can report the charter school data as well as meet the CALPADS and CBEDS reporting requirements, including the certification of data by published deadlines.

Federal Consequences for Failure to Certify Data by Published Deadlines

LEAs and charter schools are reminded that failure to submit and certify data timely and accurately may result in noncompliance, annual determinations with special conditions.
on the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act grant, and/or sanctions (34 Code of Federal Regulations 300.602).

NOTE: It is the responsibility of the authorizing LEA to ensure that IRC schools fulfill their state reporting obligations. If a charter school closes and fails to fulfill its reporting obligations, the authorizing LEA is responsible for the reporting.

**Annual Time Period for Changing Reporting Status**

Charter school administrators may change the reporting statuses for existing charters one time each year. This annual period during which charter schools may change their CALPADS and CBEDS reporting statuses for the following academic year occurs in June. This year the reporting deadline for informing the CDE of a reporting change has been extended to July 15, 2019 and charter schools and LEAs were informed of this extension. Charter school administrators will receive notification prior to the annual window, with instructions regarding changing their charter school reporting statuses.

New charter schools are asked to designate their reporting statuses at the time that they apply for their county-district-school (CDS) code.

**Reporting Requirements, Resources, and Contact Information**

Important information about CALPADS reporting requirements, system documentation, listserv subscriptions and training opportunities can be found on the CDE CALPADS Web page at [http://www.cde.ca.gov/calpads](http://www.cde.ca.gov/calpads).

A charter school’s current reporting status may be viewed on the CDE CALPADS and CBEDS Online Reporting Application (ORA) Data Submission Web page at [https://www3.cde.ca.gov/calpadscbeds/selectdistrict.aspx](https://www3.cde.ca.gov/calpadscbeds/selectdistrict.aspx).


If you have any questions, please contact the CALPADS Service Desk by phone at 916-325-9210 or by email at calpads-support@cde.ca.gov. All questions will be routed to the appropriate CALPADS or special education staff.

I encourage you to review the CALPADS and CBEDS reporting information when making decisions about how to report charter school data. It is critical that charter schools and authorizing agencies thoroughly discuss the two reporting options, come to an agreement on what option to use, and actively support the chosen option to ensure a timely and accurate submission.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,
Shiyloh Duncan-Becerril, Education Administrator
Special Education Division

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