NSLP vs ESEA

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What is ESEA?

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act is the main federal law for K–12 education funding.

*Provide **financial support to schools**, especially those serving low-income students. The school might NOT be participating in the NSLP program (Non-NSLP school).

Programs Under ESEA:

- **Title I** – Academic support for low-income students
- **Title II** – Teacher training
- **Title III** – English learners
- **Title IV** – Student support & enrichment

Managed By:

- District/state education departments
- Overseen by U.S. Department of Education

ESEA Survey

May be called:

- "Income Eligibility Form"
- "Household Income Survey"
- "Alternative Poverty Data Form"

Helps to determine:

- Title I eligibility
- Funding allocations
- Poverty percentages

Parents/Guardians self select the indicator based on their household income and number living in household.

Indicator 1

- Represents the lowest income level
- Equivalent to Free Meal eligibility (NSLP)

Indicator 2

- Represents moderate low-income level
- Equivalent to Reduced-Price Meal eligibility (NSLP)

Paid

- Represents higher income households
- Equivalent to Paid meal status (NSLP)

What is NSLP?

The National School Lunch Program is a federally assisted meal program that provides free or reduced-price meals to eligible students.

A school is classified as NSLP if a school chooses to participate and is approved and will have these main components:

- Income-based eligibility (Free, Reduced, Paid)
- Applications collected from families
- Direct certification (e.g., SNAP, TANF)
- Benefits:
  - Meals for students
  - Data often used by other programs

Managed By:

- School nutrition/food services department
- Overseen federally by USDA

NSLP Application or Direct Certification

Applications

Online or paper provided to guardians and is regulated by the USDA and state level agencies.

Guardians must complete detailed information about:

- the number of household members
- All sources of income for any household member
- Including a signature certifying information is true and correct

Guardians may be required to provide proof of income during an audit to prove their eligibility.

Direct Certification

- Students are identified from another program on file with the state that will automatically provide the Free status for NSLP.
  - SNAP
  - TANF
  - Foster
  - Homeless/migrant students
- The direct certification is provided to the school to enter the record for the student.
- Applications for NSLP are not necessary to determine eligibility.

Where People Get Confused

NSLP Schools must:

- use the NSLP application or direct certification to report the data in their system.
- This data can be utilized for Title Programs for education funding in addition to free/reduced meal reimbursement to the school.

ESEA surveys CANNOT be used to support the NSLP data collected for a family to determine free, reduced, or paid status for meals. Is used only for Title Programs, educational funding.

Reporting

NSLP

- Eligibility of students
- Meal counts daily (breakfast/lunch)

ESEA

- Number of students among each eligibility category
  - Indicator 1
  - Indicator 2
  - Paid

    *Can use the NSLP application data to determine this eligibility

Common Compliance Risks:

- Mismatched NSLP vs. ESEA counts
- Missing or incomplete applications/surveys
- Incorrect poverty percentages
- Failure to retain documentation (5 years)

Reports to Use:

- Student Detail Reports
- Program Participation Reports
- Integ report

Validate in your SIS first.

Questions?