

# The New Look of Direct Certification



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# Training Purpose



To help schools and institutions participating in the school Child Nutrition Programs learn the new direct certification procedures that will be in place for the 2014-15 school year so that all children have timely access to healthy nutrition

# Direct Certification Webinar Agenda



## Direct Certification Old and New

- Recent history of direct certification in Connecticut
- Current direct certification process
- Side-by-side comparison of the current versus the new direct certification process
- Walk-through of the new direct certification system
- Frequently asked questions (FAQs)
- Contact information for follow-up questions and concerns

# Direct Certification Background



- **2009-10:** Connecticut's direct certification rate for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) was 56%, well below the national rate of 72%\*.
- **2010:** USDA sets required statewide benchmark of 95% direct certification to be met by 2013-14.
- **2010-11:** CSDE and EDUCATION CONNECTION's Center for Collaborative Evaluation and Strategic Change (CCESC) complete a needs assessment for the direct certification process and develop priority recommendations for improvement.
- **2012:** USDA provides funding to renovate Connecticut's direct certification process.  
**Project goal:** Create and implement a fully automated, state-level direct certification and matching system that is **highly responsive** to state and district needs that will meet and exceed USDA benchmarks.
- **2012-14:** Overhaul of the direct certification system, monitored by CCESC. New process piloted February-March 2014 with 10 Connecticut school districts. Feedback is positive and enthusiastic.
- **Current Status: Ready to go! All districts are required to use the new system beginning Summer 2014!**

*\*Direct Certification in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP): State Implementation Progress, Report to Congress*

# Side-by-side Comparison of Current and New Systems



Current	Future
DSS provides file to District 3 times per year	DSS provides to CSDE data file weekly
Districts download file within a limited timeframe	Districts will be provided access to data 24/7, with weekly updates through web portal
DSS data represents all children qualified within Districts	CSDE provides only students that are Certified with Districts
LEA determines which children are Directly Certified	CSDE Directly Certifies children, provides only DC children to Districts
Limited format of data file	Multiple choices of data file format
Manual Case Management for non-matching records	On line Case Management tool
No Unique Identifier	State Assigned Student ID (SASID) included for each record
No search function	On-line Search Function with Multiple viewing options
No automatic data retention	Data Reports available for viewing & downloading 24/7, do not expire during current school year.
Does not distinguish source of benefits (SNAP, TFA, etc)	Records display source as SNAP, TFA or other

# Key Elements of New Direct Certification

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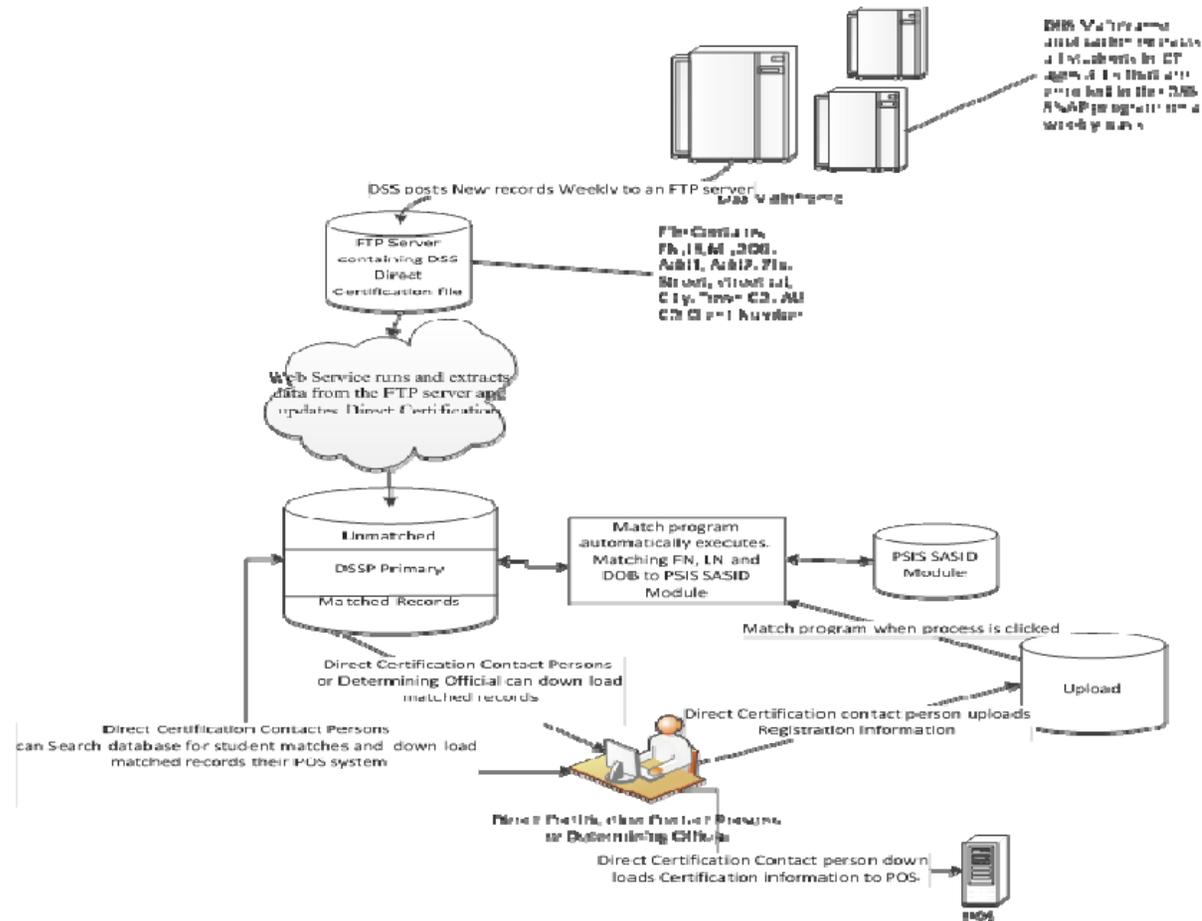


Accuracy

Timeliness

Efficiency

# Two-Tier Application Flow



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**Welcome to the CSDE Direct Certification System**

**Direct Certification Mission**

In SY 2009-2010, Connecticut's direct certification rate for the Nation School Lunch Program (NSLP) was at 56 percent, well below the national rate of 72 percent (*Direct Certification in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP): State Implementation Progress, Report to Congress*). Based on this low rate, Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) applied for and was awarded a USDA Direct Certification Planning Grant and a Direct Certification Grant. This grant enabled the CSDE and Connecticut's Department of Social Services (CDSS) to complete a comprehensive gap analysis to better identify the underlying reasons for Connecticut's low direct certification rate from both the state agency and the end users' perspectives, and to apply this knowledge to develop priority recommendations for systems improvement. The goal of the Direct Certification Project is to meet or exceed USDA benchmarks for direct certification rates through system enhancements to create and implement a fully automated, state-level direct certification and matching system that is highly responsive to State and Local Education Agency (LEA) needs.

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**Direct Certification Contacts**

<p><b>Operational Support</b></p> <p>Teri Dandeneau (860) 807-2079 <a href="mailto:Teri.Dandeneau@ct.gov">Teri.Dandeneau@ct.gov</a></p>	<p><b>Technical Support</b></p> <p>Bill Bowden (860) 713-6461 <a href="mailto:William.Bowden@ct.gov">William.Bowden@ct.gov</a></p>
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SASID	Client Number	Last Name	First Name	MI	DOB	Street Number	Street	City	Zip Addr	Au Num	Benefit Source	Date Certified	School Name
00099901	00099901	CERTKID1	CERTKID1		05/01/1995	00901	ANY ST	MIDDLETOWN	06457	00099901	FS	04/23/2014	SDE REVIEW SCHOOL
00099910	00099910	CERTKID10	CERTKID10		05/10/1995	00910	ANY ST	HARTFORD	06106	00099910	FS	04/23/2014	SDE REVIEW SCHOOL
00099911	00099911	CERTKID11	CERTKID11		05/11/1995	00911	ANY ST	HARTFORD	06106	00099911	AF	04/23/2014	SDE REVIEW SCHOOL
00099912	00099912	CERTKID12	CERTKID12		05/12/1995	00912	ANY AVE	HARTFORD	06106	00099912	FS	04/23/2014	SDE REVIEW SCHOOL
00099913	00099913	CERTKID13	CERTKID13		05/13/1995	00913	ANY RD	HARTFORD	06106	00099913	FS	04/23/2014	SDE REVIEW SCHOOL
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00099915	00099915	CERTKID15	CERTKID15		05/15/1995	00915	ANY BLVD	HARTFORD	06106	00099915	AF	04/23/2014	SDE REVIEW SCHOOL
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00099917	00099917	CERTKID17	CERTKID17		05/17/1995	00917	ANY ST	MIDDLETOWN	06457	00099917	FS	04/23/2014	SDE REVIEW SCHOOL
00099918	00099918	CERTKID18	CERTKID18		05/18/1995	00918	ANY AVE	MIDDLETOWN	06457	00099918	FS	04/23/2014	SDE REVIEW SCHOOL
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00099905	00099905	CERTKID5	CERTKID5		05/04/1995	00905	ANY RD	WALLINGFORD	06492	00099905	AF	04/23/2014	SDE REVIEW SCHOOL
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00099907	00099907	CERTKID7	CERTKID7		05/07/1995	00907	ANY ST	WALLINGFORD	06492	00099907	FS	04/23/2014	SDE REVIEW SCHOOL
00099908	00099908	CERTKID8	CERTKID8		05/08/1995	00908	ANY ST	WALLINGFORD	06492	00099908	FS	04/23/2014	SDE REVIEW SCHOOL
00099909	00099909	CERTKID9	CERTKID9		05/09/1995	00909	ANY ST	WALLINGFORD	06492	00099909	FS	04/23/2014	SDE REVIEW SCHOOL

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 Benefit Source Key: FS=SNAP; AF=TFA (or TANF); OT=Foster, Homeless, Runaway, Head Start, Pre K Even Start.

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SASID	Client Number	Last Name	First Name	MI	DOB	City	Zip Addr	Au Num	Benefit Source	Date Certified	School Name
00099901	00099901	CERTKID1	CERTKID1		05/01/1995	MIDDLETOWN	06457	00099901	FS	04/23/2014	SDE REVIEW SCHOOL
00099910	00099910	CERTKID10	CERTKID10		05/10/1995	HARTFORD	06106	00099910	FS	04/23/2014	SDE REVIEW SCHOOL
00099911	00099911	CERTKID11	CERTKID11		05/11/1995	HARTFORD	06106	00099911	AF	04/23/2014	SDE REVIEW SCHOOL
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00099916	00099916	CERTKID16	CERTKID16		05/16/1995	HARTFORD	06106	00099916	FS	04/23/2014	SDE REVIEW SCHOOL
00099917	00099917	CERTKID17	CERTKID17		05/17/1995	MIDDLETOWN	06457	00099917	FS	04/23/2014	SDE REVIEW SCHOOL
00099918	00099918	CERTKID18	CERTKID18		05/18/1995	MIDDLETOWN	06457	00099918	FS	04/23/2014	SDE REVIEW SCHOOL
00099919	00099919	CERTKID19	CERTKID19		05/19/1995	MIDDLETOWN	06457	00099919	AF	04/23/2014	SDE REVIEW SCHOOL
00099902	00099902	CERTKID2	CERTKID2		06/02/1998	MIDDLETOWN	06457	00099902	FS	04/23/2014	SDE REVIEW SCHOOL
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00099922	00099922	CERTKID22	CERTKID22		05/22/1995	WALLINGFORD	06492	00099922	FS	04/23/2014	SDE REVIEW SCHOOL
00099923	00099923	CERTKID23	CERTKID23		05/23/1995	WALLINGFORD	06492	00099923	FS	04/23/2014	SDE REVIEW SCHOOL
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00099909	00099909	CERTKID9	CERTKID9		05/09/1995	WALLINGFORD	06492	00099909	FS	04/23/2014	SDE REVIEW SCHOOL

- XML file with report data
- CSV (comma delimited)
- Acrobat (PDF) file
- MHTML (web archive)
- Excel
- TIFF file
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Select	Client ID	First Name	Last Name	MI	DOB	Street Address	City	Town Code	Au Num
<a href="#">Details</a>	000099999	BETTY	BOOP		9/24/1995	859 NEWFIELD ST	MIDDLETOWN	83	
<a href="#">Details</a>	000099998	CORAGOUS	CAT	C	8/27/1994	68 CHURCH ST	MIDDLETOWN	83	
<a href="#">Details</a>	000099994	OSCAR	DELAJOYA	K	5/14/1994	586 HALL ST	WALLINGFORD	148	
<a href="#">Details</a>	000099991	RICHARD	DELGABO		4/25/1995	24 MAIN ST	HARTFORD	64	
<a href="#">Details</a>	000099990	FOREMAN	GRILL		3/23/1993	21 COOK ST	HARTFORD	64	
<a href="#">Details</a>	000099993	LESLIE	JONES		8/24/1995	127 ANY RD	MIDDLETOWN	83	
<a href="#">Details</a>	000099995	MICHEAL	MORENO		6/18/1995	159 CAPITAL AVE	HARTFORD	64	
<a href="#">Details</a>	000099997	MINNIE	MOUSE		4/18/1994	234 SCHOOLHOUSE RD	WALLINGFORD	148	
<a href="#">Details</a>	000099992	JOHN	SMITH		7/10/1995	85 CENTER ST	WALLINGFORD	148	
<a href="#">Details</a>	000099996	HOWARD	THE DUCK	F	6/5/1995	759 ALGONQUIN AVE	WALLINGFORD	148	

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**PSIS Registration**

Ticket Id	SASID	First Name	Last Name	MI	DOB	School
10202	000099998	CAT	CORAGOUS	CC	8/27/1994	WOODROW WILSON MIDDLE SCHOOL

**DSS Record**

Select	Client Number	First Name	Last Name	MI	Dob	Street Address	City
<input type="checkbox"/>	000099998	CORAGOUS	CAT	C	8/27/1994	68 CHURCH ST	MIDDLETOWN

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Last Name  First Name

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Name | **SASID** | Client Number

Enter partial or full names for search criteria

Last Name  First Name

**PSIS Record**

SasId	Client Id	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	DOB	District Name	Date Certified
000999911	000999911	CERTKID11	CERTKID11		5/11/1995	SDE-REVIEW	4/23/2014

**DSS Record**

Client Number	Last Name	First Name	MI	DOB	Town Name
000999911	CERTKID11	CERTKID11		5/11/1995	Hartford

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State Wide Search

Name	SASID	Client Number
	SASID <input type="text" value="000999911"/>	

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State Wide Search

Name | SASID | Client Number

SASID  Search Reset

SASID	Client Number	Last Name	First Name	MI	DOB
000999911	000999911	CERTKID11	CERTKID11		5/11/1995

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State Wide Search

Name	SASID	Client Number
		Client Number <input type="text" value="000999911"/>

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**State Wide Search**

Name | SASID | Client Number

Client Number  Search Reset

SASID	Client Number	Last Name	First Name	MI	DOB
000999911	000999911	CERTKID11	CERTKID11		5/11/1995

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# Review: Key Elements of New Direct Certification

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Accuracy

Timeliness

Efficiency

# Direct Certification FAQs



- **Why is the State of Connecticut implementing changes to the current Direct Certification processes?**

In SY 2009-10, Connecticut's direct certification rate for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) was at 56 percent, well below the national rate of 72 percent. Based on this low rate, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) applied for and was awarded a USDA Direct Certification Planning Grant and a Direct Certification Grant. These grants enabled the CSDE and Connecticut's Department of Social Services (DSS) to complete a comprehensive needs analysis to better identify the underlying reasons for Connecticut's low direct certification rate from both the state agency and the end users' perspectives, and to apply this knowledge to develop priority recommendations for systems improvement. The goal of the Direct Certification Project is to meet or exceed USDA benchmarks for direct certification rates through system enhancements to create and implement a fully automated, state-level direct certification and matching system that is highly responsive to state and Local Education Agency (LEA) needs.

- **When does this new process become active?**

The new process goes live in July 2014 for the school year 2014-15.

## Direct Certification FAQs



- **Will I still be able to follow the old method if I choose?**

No, the DSS file will no longer be produced and distributed at the local level. All data matching will be done at the state level through this new CSDE Direct Certification process.

- **Why do I have to agree to keep this information confidential? What if another organization in my district would like to review the data?**

This data contains highly confidential details about students and is not to be shared with any other agency or department in the LEA.

- **Will we need to continue sending the free and reduced lunch letters home with students at the beginning of the year?**

Yes, in general, the letters that you may have included in information packets can continue to be sent informing that students may be eligible for this program. Please note that families will no longer receive letters from DSS that they are eligible for this benefit.

## Direct Certification FAQs



- Does this change the number of times a year that the data is available to the LEAs? (Currently three times per year).

Yes. The data will be updated on a weekly basis and is available for viewing/downloading 24/7 on the new web portal. The data also will remain on the portal beyond the current 30 days of availability.

- Will this new process mean that the LEAs are no longer responsible for matching the student enrollments to the DSS data?

Yes. The matching of data will be conducted at the state level. The matched data will be available to the LEAs on the new web portal. The data files available on the web portal will include only matched data. The LEAs should no longer have to search through the file for matches.

- Does this project impact public and private institutions?

Yes. It includes all institutions that participate in the NSLP or SMP programs.

## Direct Certification FAQs



- **Will I have the ability to search by student name? If so, will I be limited to students only in my district?**

Yes, the new web portal has the function to search for a student based on name, State Assigned Student Identifier (SASID) or DSS Client number. The search results will include all matches state wide for any child that is qualified for benefits. The search results are not restricted to a single LEA.

- **Are there alternate ways to search for a student's information beside last name?**

Yes, the search can be conducted by using a last name/first name combination, or by SASID or DSS number. You can choose to view the data based on the state PSIS information, the DSS information or a combination of both. The search feature also has a “Fuzzy Search” feature that allows searches to be done on partial first and last names.

## Direct Certification FAQs



- Sometimes we are unable to exactly match a student's information by name and date of birth. This proves very time consuming to research. Will there be an ability to match these students in the new application? Yes. The match process is not always able to determine a direct match. Based on a probabilistic formula, the search engine will offer suggested matches through the Case Management feature on the web portal. This feature allows the user to see the most likely matches for a given student. The user will have the option to complete the match or dismiss as not a match. The user can also perform no function to allow time for researching the names to return later and complete.
- Will I be able to see student information statewide or am I limited to my LEA only?  
The reports containing the matched student lists will contain information for your LEA only. The Search feature in the web portal will allow you to search names on a statewide basis.

## Direct Certification FAQs



- **Will there be different methods by which the LEA can download the matched student list report?**  
Yes. Download methods will include Excel, HTML, Comma Separated Values (CSV), Word or PDF.
- **The reports for large districts can contain large amount of students. Will there be a way to search online through the report for certain words?**  
Yes, the report page has a built in function allowing to search for text within the report.
- **Now that the data is processed weekly, what if I miss a weekly download?**  
Unlike prior years, where data was only available to the LEAs for 30 days, the weekly files will remain available throughout the full year. However, it is imperative that the LEAs download the data and get it into their systems as soon as possible to ensure that children are getting their benefits. It is suggested that a file download should never go longer than 10 days from creation date.

## Direct Certification FAQs



- **How does this impact the way LEAs load data into their POS systems?**  
There is no one answer to this question, as there are multiple POS systems used throughout the state. In many cases it may be no different than how it works today. It is advisable that each LEA contact their particular POS vendor to discuss this impact. The Direct Certification portal will give the LEA multiple options for downloading the data. They should discuss these options with their POS vendor and see what works best for them. The CSDE is only tasked with getting the matched data to the LEA, however we are always available to discuss these options and questions with the LEA and vendor.

## Contact Information



Therese A. Dandeneau, M.S., R.D.  
Connecticut State Department of Education  
Office of Student Supports and Organizational Effectiveness  
Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education  
Phone: 860-807-2079  
E-mail: [teri.dandeneau@ct.gov](mailto:teri.dandeneau@ct.gov)

**Tech Support:**  
David Donovan  
Connecticut State Department of Education  
Project Manager – Direct Certification  
Information Technology Department  
Phone: 860-807-2077  
E-mail: [david.donovan@ct.gov](mailto:david.donovan@ct.gov)