Chapter 2

STATE SURVEY PREPARATION AND PROCESSING

State survey preparation and processing can be divided into the following four major steps that a school district should follow.

- Data preparation
- Transmission of records
- State processing window
- Updates/amendments after the close of the state processing window

Data Preparation
Basic to the data preparation step is a process instituted by the district for making certain that the appropriate data have been accurately entered in the local database and reviewed by staff. Involving appropriate district and school level staff in the data review process is essential.

As preparation is made for a survey, a review of the state reporting formats and individual elements required for the survey must be made in order to ensure that all the required elements and formats are captured for the survey submission. Information services and data processing staff should also familiarize themselves with the survey timelines that are provided in Appendix B.

Once the records for a survey have been produced from the district database and prior to transmission of the records to NWRDC, it is essential that the vast majority of errors be resolved, especially those errors that would cause the records to reject. School districts should run edits locally against the data and correct any errors. See Appendixes O, P and Q for information on downloading and converting edit programs for use by the district.

Transmission of Records
On or before the due date and time for a survey, the records created by the district in the data preparation step are transmitted to NWRDC. Sets of records for each different reporting format are transmitted and datasets are created at NWRDC. The state processing window is scheduled to begin the Monday prior to the due date for Surveys 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 9. Survey 6 and 8 timelines vary somewhat from the other surveys and are available in Appendix B. Surveys A, B, C and D have a limited state processing period of about six business days. The WDIS processing windows for Surveys F, W and S generally begin three to four weeks prior to the due date for a reporting window.

When transmitting a dataset, the district must electronically notify the System as the transmission of each dataset is completed. This is done by creating a special

indicator file at NWRDC. The creation of the indicator file provides the information that the corresponding dataset is available for processing.

Note: All records in an initial transmission are to be submitted with a Transaction Code of "A." Survey A, B, C and D records do not contain a Transaction Code.

State Processing Window
During the state processing window, the following occurs:

1. Computer programs and automated procedures at NWRDC detect the presence of the district datasets of records in the state reporting formats.

2. Appropriate programs are run to process the records and edit the data.

3. Error reports and error files are created. (See Chapter 3 for a discussion of error types and consequences and Chapter 5 for a more detailed discussion of the edit reports.)

4. The district downloads and uses the error reports and files to correct any errors in the records. **Please note that action on the part of the district is required to download the reports; they are not automatically sent**.

5. The district creates datasets for batch updates to add, change and delete records as necessary.

6. Batch updates are transmitted to NWRDC.

7. The process begins again until all records are corrected or the state processing window closes.

Updates/Amendments after the Close of the State Processing Window
For Student Surveys 2 and 3, there is a short moratorium for about a week on accepting updates after the close of the state processing window to allow the Office of Funding and Financial Reporting time to calculate FTE while the database does not change. After this moratorium, districts have until the published final update date to amend their records. A similar update window applies to Student Surveys 1, 4, 5 and 9 and Staff Surveys 2, 3 and 5.

Since WDIS data are directly tied to WDIS funding, it is vital that each district follow the process to submit their data early, correct data errors, and re-submit the data prior to the close of the survey window. However, permission to update WDIS data submitted within the current reporting year, but in a processing window that has already closed may be requested.

To amend Student, Staff and WDIS database records after the close of the state processing window, the district must submit batch updates to NWRDC. EDS will

process these at the published time each week for surveys/record formats that are still updateable.

Using Survey Data after the Close of the State Processing Window
While the districts will, in most cases, have until the final update date to amend their student and staff data, certain data applicable for funding must be corrected sooner or funding delays may occur. In addition, data used for purposes other than funding such as federal and state reporting, school grades and adequate yearly progress calculations, program evaluation, publications, ad hoc requests from the Legislature and the Department as well as other data requests will be captured as soon as possible after the close of the state processing window for each survey. Consequently, it is essential that the district make every effort to ensure the data are as accurate as possible by the close of the state processing window.

Tools Available to Assist with State Survey Preparation and Processing
The following tools have been made available to districts to assist with the state survey steps:

1. data element definitions,
2. state reporting formats,
3. descriptions of individual edit checks to be applied to records submitted,
4. copies of the initial edit programs used by EDS to edit the records once they have been submitted to NWRDC. (The edit programs are written in ANSI standard COBOL LE. Chapter 3 details how these programs can be retrieved from NWRDC, and Appendixes O, P and Q show how the programs can be modified for local use.),
5. supplemental files (See Appendix N), and
6. database handbooks and technical assistance documents.