Great! SCHOOLS.org

Data Feed User Manual

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Overview

Documentation

This document covers general information about the GreatSchools data feed, plus explanations of some structural components and data idiosyncrasies. In addition to keeping this manual up-to-date as the feed evolves, a release-specific read me file will be delivered with each new version of the feed.

Partner support

Questions or requests with regard to the data feed should be directed to feedsupport@greatschools.org. This email address is monitored by product management, engineering and business development teams.

Feed update schedule

A production-ready version of our feed is available for download at any time; however, it is updated once each month, after which an announcement is sent to all feed partners via email (along with documentation). If you are manually downloading the feed, you should do so within one week of the announcement. If you want to automatically download the feed, we recommend scheduling your downloads every other Thursday.

Feed Structure

Download options

Directory & census data

Ø Individual state XML or text files zipped into 1 file
Ø Schema for XML files (link is in files mentioned above)

Academic Performance (test score) data

Ø Individual state XML or text files zipped into 1 file
Ø Schema for XML files (link is in files mentioned above)

Test score subgroup data

Ø Individual state XML or text files zipped into 1 file
Ø Schema for XML files (link is in files mentioned above)

Community ratings and reviews

Ø Individual state XML or text files zipped into 1 file
Ø Schema for XML files (link is in files mentioned above)

GreatSchools 1-10 Ratings

Ø Individual state XML or text files zipped into 1 file
Ø Schema for XML files (link is in files mentioned above)

GreatSchools Subratings

Ø Individual state XML or text files zipped into 1 file
Ø Schema for XML files (link is in files mentioned above)

Identifiers

Element	Format	Description
universal-id	Numeric Schools: FFGGGGG Districts: 1FFGGGGG	Districts begin with a 1 FF = state FIPS code (see Appendix A) GGGGG = zero-padded 5 digit GreatSchools ID
id	Numeric, up to 5 digits	GreatSchools school ID, not zero-padded (schools only)
state-id	Numeric or alphanumeric, variable length	The state's own identifier for the school or district; format varies by state and school/district type
nces-code	Mostly numeric; private schools can be alphanumeric Public districts: DDDDDD Public schools: DDDDDDSSSSS Private schools: SSSSSSSS	School or district code assigned by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)

Directory

The <level-code> tag

Each school, district, and test entity has a level code associated with it. The level code is a set (p,e,m,h) that contains some combination of 'p', 'e', 'm' and 'h'. 'p' is an abbreviation for preschool, 'e' is an abbreviation for elementary, 'm' is an abbreviation for middle and 'h' is an abbreviation for high.

In the context of a school, 'e' indicates the school has elementary school grades. In the context of a district, 'e' indicates the district has elementary school grades (i.e., an elementary school). In the context of a test, 'e' indicates the test is given at the elementary school level. A test with a level code of 'e,m,h' indicates the test is administered in elementary, middle and high school grades. All the possible level codes are enumerated in the schema.

The <grade> tag

Each test result element contains a grade name. Grade name is the abbreviated name for a grade. For example, the grade-name for first grade is '1'.

The <school-summary> tag

Each K-12 school now has a school summary available. School summaries provide a brief overview of the school. See the example below:

Canyon De Chelly Elementary School, located in Chinle, Arizona, serves grades 1-5 in the Chinle Unified District. Based on its state test results, it has received a GreatSchools Rating of 2 out of 10.

The <subtype> tag

Where available, schools are tagged with a subtype allowing for categorization beyond school level and school type. For example, special_education, coed, gifted_talented, religious, etc. A complete list of subtypes is available in Appendix C. Limited coverage.

Test Data

What's included in the feed

In general, the GreatSchools data feed includes each state's main tests, covering all levels of schools – elementary, middle and high. In the majority of states, the results are broken down by grade and subject. We include up to four years of historical results for schools and districts, where available. Historical coverage varies widely by state, test and entity type.

We update test data according to its availability. Not all states have the full range of test data available, and there are plenty of unusual cases, which we have documented below. The feed includes a description for each test.

To comply with federal student privacy laws, all test score data is masked whenever the number of students comprising a particular data point sizes is small (example: >10 students), so individual students cannot be identified.

Standards-based scale: % at or above proficient

Test results are typically discussed in terms of what percentage of students are "proficient" or above. Standards of proficiency vary by state.

If a <test-result> does not contain a proficiency band ID, it is a "% at or above proficient" score.

Note: The test descriptions provided in the feed correspond to this scale.

Standards-based scale: % in each proficiency band

A more granular view of test results is to show the percentage of students scoring in each proficiency band (such as basic, proficient, advanced). Proficiency bands are defined differently for each test, and not all states provide their results this way.

Proficiency bands are assigned IDs and are classified into "proficiency band groups," each of which has a unique group ID. These relationships are defined in the following file: http://www.greatschools.org/feeds/greatschools/gs-proficiency-band.xml

If a <test-result> does not contain a proficiency band ID, it is a "% at or above proficient" value.

Note: The test descriptions provided in the feed correspond to the "% at or above proficient" scale.

Special cases

Some of the <test-result> scores contain character strings that correspond with HTML code.

For example:

 <score>>=90.0</score> translates to >=90

Coverage notes

In general, we try to collect test data at the state, district, and school-level, when available. Hawaii is a special case where the entire state is listed as one district.

Subgroup results

Test results for student groups are included in the local-gs-new-test-subgroup-feed. Student groups are defined by the state departments of education and can include ethnicities, gender, economic status, English language proficiency, and disability status. Subgroup results are available for the most recent test year only.

All states are represented in local-gs-new-test-subgroup-feed with a minimum of the "% at or above proficient" test results, also found in the local-gs-new-test-feed. These results are identified by <breakdown-id>1</breakdown-id>. Breakdown ID 1 corresponds to the "All students" group. Additional

subgroups are identified by ID; the student group corresponding to each ID is displayed in Appendix B. Coverage varies by state. Proficiency band results are not included in local-gs-new-test-subgroup-feed.

Census Data

The feed contains some teacher and student statistics that we refer to as "census data." The data varies by state; the list below shows all possible data points.

There is an optional <level-code> attribute that will appear with some census data state averages, when we have different state averages for each school level.

Data point (data-type)	XML tag	Notes
Total enrollment (enrollment)	<enrollment> <universal-id> xxxxxxxxx </universal-id> <value> xxx </value> <year> xxxx </year> </enrollment>	Only most recent year available is included in feed. Most recent year differs across states. A year value of 0 indicates that the enrollment was manually edited.
Students with limited English proficiency (percent-students-with-limited-english-proficiency)	<percent-students-with-limited-english-proficiency> <universal-id> xxxxxxxxx </universal-id> <value> xxx </value> <year> xxxx </year> </percent-students-with-limited-english-proficiency>	
Students eligible for free or reduced price lunch (percent-free-and-reduced-price-lunch)	<percent-free-and-reduced-price-lunch> <universal-id> xxxxxxxxx </universal-id> <value> xxx </value> <year> xxxx </year> </percent-free-and-reduced-price-lunch>	Alternative to economically disadvantaged; only used in two states
Economically disadvantaged students (percent-economically-	<percent-economically-disadvantaged> <universal-id> xxxxxxxxx </universal-id>	

disadvantaged)	`<value> xxx </value>`
	`<year> xxxx </year>`
	`</percent-economically-`
	`disadvantaged>`	

Student ethnicity breakdowns (ethnicity)	`<ethnicity>`
	`    <universal-id> xxxxxxxx`
	`    </universal-id>`
	`    <name> xxxx </name>`
	`    <value> xxx </value>`
	`    <year> xxxx </year>`
	`</ethnicity>`	

Head official name (head-official-name)	`<head-official-name>`
	`    <universal-id> xxxxxxxx`
	`    </universal-id>`
	`    <value> xxx </value>`
	`    <year> xxxx </year>`
	`</head-official-name>`
		Limited coverage

Head official email address (head-official-email)	`<head-official-email>`
	`    <universal-id> xxxxxxxx`
	`    </universal-id>`
	`    <value> xxx </value>`
	`    <year> xxxx </year>`
	`</head-official-email>`
		Limited coverage

Community Ratings & Reviews

GreatSchools offers our community reviews and ratings as part as a standalone feed.

Community reviews include that individual parent's rating of the school's overall quality.

Community rating values are on a scale of 1-5 (5 being best). A value of "decline" means the parent did not provide a rating, only written comments.

Appendix A: State FIPS Codes

State	FIPS State Code
AL	1
AK	2
AZ	4
AR	5
CA	6
CO	8
CT	9
DE	10
DC	11
FL	12
GA	13
HI	15
ID	16
IL	17
IN	18
IA	19
KS	20
KY	21
LA	22
ME	23
MD	24

MA	25
MI	26
MN	27
MS	28
MO	29
MT	30
NE	31
NV	32
NH	33
NJ	34
NM	35
NY	36
NC	37
ND	38
OH	39
OK	40
OR	41
PA	42
RI	44
SC	45
SD	46
TN	47
TX	48
UT	49

VT	50
VA	51
WA	53
WV	54
WI	55
WY	56

Appendix B: School Subtypes

Subgroup Value	Display Dictionary
adult_education	Adult Education
all_female	All Female
all_male	All Male
alternative	Alternative School
alternative_program	Alternative Program
boarding	Boarding School
boarding_and_day	Boarding and Day School
Coed	Coed
combined_elementary_and_secondary	Combined Elementary and Secondary School
continuation	Continuation School

Core_Knowledge	Core Knowledge Curriculum
correctional	Correctional School
elementary	Elementary School
gifted_talented	Gifted and Talented Education
high	High School
home_school_program	Home School
independent_study	Independent Study
KIPP	KIPP Curriculum
magnet	Magnet School
magnet_program	Magnet Program
middle	Middle School
Montessori	Montessori Curriculum
Nonprofit	Nonprofit School
opportunity_community	Community School
other_alternative	Alternative
preschool_early_childhood_center	Preschool/Early Childhood Center
religious	Religious School
secondary	Secondary School

special_education	Special Education
special_education_program	Special Education Program
state_run	State Run School
tribal	Tribal School
virtual_online	Virtual/Online School
vocational_technical	Vocational/Technical School
Waldorf	Waldorf Curriculum
yr_round	Year Round