

# Data Management Group Policy

## Reporting on Data in Small Cells or Extremes

**Policy Identification Number:** DMG-2009-004-SE  
**Policy Name:** Reporting on Data in Small Cells or Extremes  
**Date Approved:** June 25, 2009  
**Approval Authority:** Data Management Group (DMG)  
**Statutory Reference:** FERPA

**Policy Statement:** DPI will mask results when the number of individuals in a group is less than the minimum cell size to protect the privacy of students and staff in reporting aggregate data in compliance with FERPA guidelines and agency standards for public distribution of data.

**Reason for Policy:** To protect the privacy of students and staff and ensure compliance with FERPA.

### Policy Details and Related Documents:

#### Minimum Cell Size

- Student Group – 10
- Staff Group – 5

Results will not be displayed or distributed in a breakdown by group where the number of individuals in the group is less than the minimum cell size listed above. Instead, the report will show “\*” or “N/A” (or other symbol) with an appropriate explanation.

In any group where the percentage of individuals is greater than 95% or less than 5%, the actual values may not be displayed because of federal privacy regulations (FERPA). In these cases, the results will be shown as >95% or <5%. This ensures that student and staff information remains anonymous. The policy further ensures compliance with the interpretation of FERPA that small cell sizes must be removed from statistics made public or offered to outside organizations or persons to avoid the disclosure of personally identifiable data.

**Effective Date:** This policy will take effect for data reported for the 2015-16 school year and will continue for each year thereafter.

**Related Documents:** FERPA Regulations (<http://www.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/finrule/2008-4/120908a.pdf>).

**Contacts:** The Division of Data, Research and Federal Policy is the proponent for this policy. Questions related to this policy or exception to the policy should be directed to the Enterprise Data Manager at 919-807-3241.

### Revision History:

Version #	Version Date	Source file	Description of Change	Author
5	5/29/2015	O:\PSP\DMG\Current Policy Drafts	Increased minimum cell size for students to 10	D. Dulaney

This policy applies to all data used by the agency in the performance of its mission. This data includes any that is collected, stored, processed, and/or disseminated using DPI information systems.

Version 5- 5/28/15