



EDFacts Module 2: Replicating a Published Connection

To provide a better understanding of what is expected from the states for *EDFacts* reporting, the Performance Information Management Service (PIMS) created CEDS Connections outlining the data elements that might be used in the calculations necessary for each specified Data Group. The Connections also include Analysis Recommendations that explain how the data is aggregated or specific nuances about the Data Group and reporting requirements. These Connections can be used as a starting point for states to develop their own *EDFacts* Connections.

This tutorial will cover how to replicate a published Connection.

Find a Connection

The first topic we will discuss is how to find the appropriate Connection.

To begin, log in to the [CEDS Website](#); then choose Tools and Connect from the purple menu bar at the top. This will take you to the CEDS Connect main menu. On the far left is a box labeled “Find Existing Connection.” Click on the box to take you to the search screen.

All *EDFacts* Connections can be found under the US Department of Education folder. You now see another folder labeled “*EDFacts*.” You have two options at this point. If you are unsure of which file specification you might be interested in, then click to put a check mark next to *EDFacts*. This will provide a list of all *EDFacts* Connections. However, if you are interested in only a specific file specification, then further expand the *EDFacts* folder by clicking to the left of the folder. You can then click to put a check mark next to one or more file specifications. As you place check marks you will notice a list building at the bottom of the screen.

When you have selected all the file specifications you wish, scroll down to view the list and select the appropriate Connection. Then click Submit. Only one Connection can be viewed at a time. For this tutorial we will use the Connection for Membership at the State Level.

Replicate a Connection

Now that the appropriate Connection has been chosen, we will discuss how to replicate a Connection.

In the top right corner is a green button called “Replicate a Connection.” Click the button and a dialog box appears. You must create a new title for your Connection as well as enter the author and source.

The author should be the person who is responsible for completing the Connection information; in this case the author is most likely you. The source is the group (or individual) who is responsible for the Connection. It may be your agency name or an association.



Click “Replicate” and the new Connection will be created. To access the newly created Connection, go to Connect Main Menu and then Manage Connections. Now find the new Connection in the list. Click on the Connection’s name and you will be taken to the Connection’s main menu. Click on “Modify Connection” to get started.

Parts of a Connection

Now that we have replicated the Connection, we will discuss the various parts of a Connection to familiarize you with how to use Connect.

The first thing to note is the countdown clock in the top right corner. The countdown clock starts at 20 minutes when you first enter a Connection. Clicking around in the published Connection will not change the clock. When the 20 minutes have passed, a dialog box will appear asking if you want to continue or to be logged out. Simply click “Continue” and keep working. Clicking around the CEDS Website will restart the clock as well.

At the top of the Connection is the information you completed when creating the Connection: the title, author, and source. Just below that is where you can enter a description of your Connection. The description is an abstract about the purpose of the Connection. It can expand on the title or question.

Next is how you categorize the Connection. In this section, you can choose from a list of categories and subcategories. This is how a user will search for Connections on the Find Existing Connection screen. Choose as many categories as you like, taking care to consider all search possibilities. If a category is not available, you can suggest a new category by clicking “Suggest New Category.” Suggestions will be reviewed by CEDS staff, and you will be notified about the suggestion. For all state *EDFacts* Connections, the appropriate file specification under the category State *EDFacts* Metrics should be selected.

Beneath the Categories section is where you can add keywords, so that users can more easily find this Connection when searching.

The Data Elements section is where you will select all data elements necessary to answer the question or calculate the metric. Since you have replicated an existing *EDFacts* Connection, the elements have already been grouped together. If you would like to remove an element from the list, click the red X next to the element name and it will be removed. If you would like to add additional elements to a group, go to that group, click “Choose CEDS Elements,” and select one or more elements. To see more information about an element, click on the element’s name and a popup box will appear with the element’s details. If you need to define an element not currently in CEDS, then click on “Define Elements Not in CEDS” and complete the information.

Elements appear only in the particular grouping in which you select the buttons. If you need to have the same element in multiple groups, you will need to add the element each time.

If you need to delete a group, click the “Remove” button to the right of the data label.

Once you have modified the elements list as necessary, you will go to the Analysis Recommendations. The Analysis Recommendations are set up so that you can have multiple subsections. You can keep the information from the original *EDFacts* Connection or you can modify the information. You can develop separate “steps” by adding different subsections. Or you can use this space to define qualifiers about particular elements (for example, in Element A123, only use codes A, C, or E). Add as many subsections as necessary.

Next, scroll down to Related Connections and select the original *EDFacts* Connection you replicated. To find the original Connection, expand US Department of Education, then expand *EDFacts*, and then click to put a check box next to the



appropriate file specification. You now see a list of Connections within that file specification. Click next to the appropriate Connection to add it to your list of related Connections.

The Related References refer users back to the US Department of Education’s file specification documentation and *EDFacts* Initiative website. If you want to remove these references, click the red X on the appropriate line. If you want to add additional references, click “Add A Reference” and complete the information.

If you have any additional information that you would like to add that did not get covered in the sections we have already reviewed, you can add that information into the Author’s Comments box.

When you have made all of your edits, click “Save” and the system will return you to the main menu for your Connection. You can view your Connection as it would appear in its published state by selecting View Published Version, or you can then publish your Connection by selecting Release for Review.

This completes *EDFacts Module 2: Replicating a Published Connection*. You are now ready to replicate an *EDFacts* Connection and populate it with your state processes.

