

Flat File submissions to the Ed-Fi ODS

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Meet The Presenters



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What is a flat file submission?

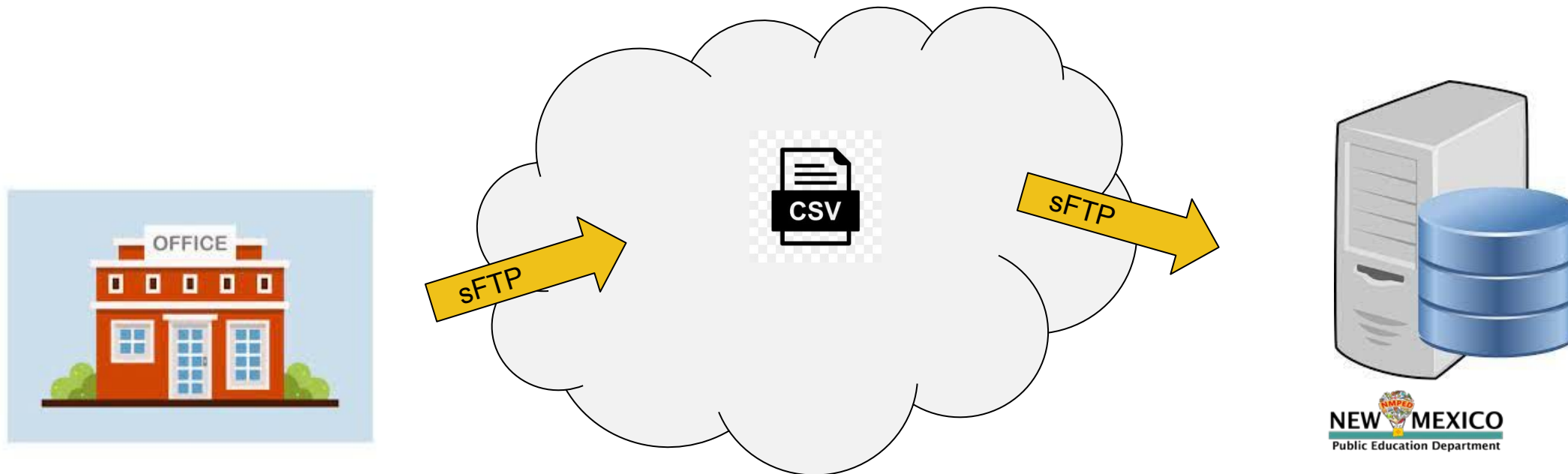
- The preferred method of sending data to the Ed-Fi ODS is via an API connection from the Student Information System (SIS) to the Ed-Fi API.
- Sometimes this data does not work, usually because the data that needs to be submitted is not in the SIS.
- Flat file submissions are a process for sending this data to the Ed-Fi API when the SIS -> API option is not available.

What does it look like?

- The flat file will be a comma-delimited file.
- The files are based on the legacy STARs templates, with the same field names and layout but some key differences.
- See detailed specifications in the [Nova Flat File Spec](#) doc.

Process Overview

Step 1) The District produces the flat file using manual or automated steps and sends it via sFTP over the internet to NMPED

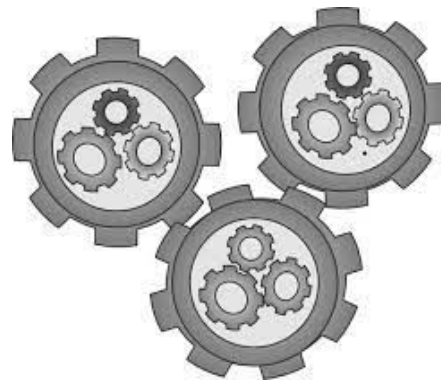


Process Overview (continued)

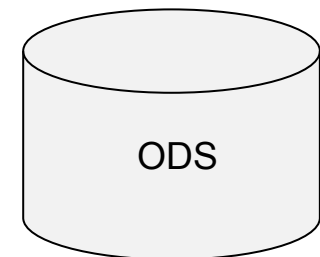
Step 2) Data Import picks up the csv from the sFTP site and turns it into API calls. The Ed-Fi API processes these calls and saves the data into the ODS when it can.



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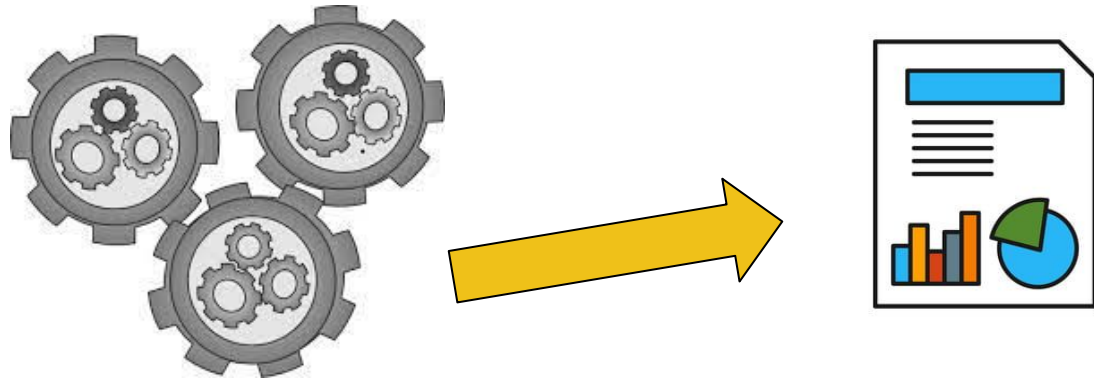


Data Import



Process Overview (continued)

Step 3) Users at the district look at the data import load errors to address any problems they have in their source systems.



Data Import

How is it different than the SIS -> API connection?

Error Handling:

- The SIS API method sends one record at a time, and if there is a level 1 problem with that record then an error message is returned that is presented to the user or administrator in the SIS
- With the flat file, multiple records are sent at once in the same file. It is possible that there will be errors for some of the records, and the user will have to look at reporting to figure out what data needs to be corrected and resubmitted. This is before any of the validation reports are run.

How is it different than the SIS -> API connection?

Timing:

- The SIS will send data to the API on a more regular basis, depending on how it is configured and what the expectations are of NMPED, but probably at least once in a 24 hour period. This is 'behind the scenes' from the district's perspective.
- With the flat file, the district will need a process for generating that data and uploading it to the NMPED sFTP site. Data import will look for these files on the sFTP site, probably once a night.

How is it different than the STARS templates?

- These flat files need to have the column names in the first row, and the column names need to be spelled exactly like is described in the specification document. STARS did everything based on position, this is based on the column name.
- There is no concept of a 'snapshot'. The submissions will need to include begin and end dates.
- All of the data for a particular resource needs to be in the same file. Specifically "Special Education Services" is combined with "Special Education Fact" and "Staff Language" is rolled into "Staff".

What data should be sent via flat file?

- The general rule is that if you can have it go to the ODS via the SIS and API, then you should!
- All flat file submissions will need to be pre-approved and configured by NMPED.
- Review the flat file spec sheet to see what feeds are supported.

What does this mean for me as a district?

If you are planning on submitting data via flat files, you will need:

- A process for generating these files and uploading them to the sFTP site.
- A process for reviewing errors from the import process the following day.
- Credentials for the NMPED sFTP site.
- A PLAN for how you will move that data over to the API eventually.

What is the future of Data Import?

- As mentioned before, NMPED will continue to work with districts, HR software vendors, special education software vendors, and SIS vendors to figure out how to get all data into Ed-Fi using the API.
- Flat file submissions are just a temporary solution, and will hopefully go away in the next couple years.

Important links

- Flat file spec.
- Help desk



Questions?

N VA

Thank You!

Contact Information

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