



# Charter School Subsidy Redirection Request Process Using New CFRS-CSR Module

Beginning February 2022

# Overview of State Law

- Charter School (CS) redirection process currently based in state law
  - School Code Section 1725-A(a)(5)
  - Includes both current-year invoices and prior-year reconciliations
  - The “Date Sent to SD” field of a redirection request, a CS must first send a payment request to the resident school district (SD)

# Overview of State Law

- Charter School (CS) redirection process currently based in state law
  - If no or insufficient SD payment received by the 5th of the month, CS may send to PDE for redirection
  - Request must be received by PDE between the 15th and 25th of the month
  - Payment will be made on the last Thursday of the following month, pending available SD subsidies

# Overview of Redirection Process

- Uploads and Timing of Request
  - CFRS-CSR uploads must adhere to template format, otherwise CFRS will not allow uploads
  - Requests may only be submitted within window (15th-25th); CFRS-CSR automatically closes after 11:59pm on the 25th

# Common Questions

- What tuition rates should be used?
  - Three options in CFRS-CSR (no change)
    1. Use rates from PDE-posted Excel spreadsheets (based on SD-created PDE-363)
    2. Use rates from SD-created PDE-363 (that do not appear on website)
    3. Use CS-created PDE-363 (that must include deductions for both federal expenditures and Ready to Learn Block Grant)

# Common Questions

- What tuition rates should be used? (cont'd)
  - For each SD, the source of rates used is the primary indicator on the Tuition Rate upload
  - If the rates used in the request (invoice or reconciliation) have been posted on PDE's website, use code "PDE" and don't include rates:
    - Do not attach PDE-363 and
    - Do not attach PDE's list of posted rates
    - Rates must be from the fiscal year of the request being submitted

## Common Questions

- What tuition rates should be used? (cont'd)
  - For an SD-created PDE-363 not on website, upload form to CFRS-CSR and use code “SD” on Tuition Rate template
  - For a CS-created PDE-363, upload form to CFRS-CSR, use code “CS” on Tuition Rate template, and add text in Notes section regarding source of data used in rate calculation

## Common Questions

- How do I correctly include all PDE Subsidy Deductions on the Summary documents?
  - This is no longer necessary -- PDE will automatically upload previous deductions to CFRS-CSR
  - Charter schools are only required to include 1) direct payments made by school districts or 2) refunds provided directly to school districts



# Common Questions

- What dates are required for my submission?
  - In CFRS-CSR, only the date that the invoice or reconciliation was provided to the resident school district (as part of a payment request) is required
  - Previously, additional dates were required (date prepared, date sent to PDE) but are no longer necessary due to CFRS-CSR now automatically logging those dates

## Common Questions

- Is an e-mail still required for a subsidy redirection submission to PDE?
  - No, requests are no longer e-mailed
  - CFRS-CSR will be exclusively used, with no other communication with PDE necessary outside of CFRS

## Common Questions

- When will PDE return requests that cannot be processed due to errors?
  - PDE will begin reviewing requests the first business day after the submission window has closed (i.e., on the 26<sup>th</sup> of the month)
  - Due to CFRS-CSR validations, error checking will be done at the time of upload; CFRS-CSR will automatically prevent file uploads that do not meet specifications

## Common Questions

- When will PDE return requests that cannot be processed due to errors?
  - Any errors related to PDE's review of uploaded supporting documentation will be referenced in returns after the close of the reporting window
  - PDE anticipates that returns made in CFRS-CSR will be related to individual school districts, such as tuition rates and PDE-363 supporting documentation

## Common Questions

- Will PDE continue to send “confirming receipt” e-mails to charter schools?
  - It will no longer be necessary for PDE to send confirmation e-mails as CFRS-CSR will automatically note the submission date/time on the screen

## ▶ January 2022 Question

What are the signature options that PDE will allow on the Summary of Unipay Request (SUR)?

- Original, “wet” signature (SUR printed, signed, scanned to PDF)
- Signed using Adobe Fill & Sign with electronic copy of CEO signature block
- Official digitally-certified signature using DocuSign or other official service

Note that a signature applied using a typed font (cursive or otherwise) will *not* be accepted.

## ▶ January 2022 Question

When submitting subsidy redirection requests, can a charter school reference tuition rates from a prior school year if a school district's tuition rates are not available for the year being submitted?

Yes. Charter schools that submit requests in CFRS-CSR must use the tuition rate code "SD" in this instance and can upload one of two types of source documentation:

- 1) a school district-prepared PDE-363 or
- 2) the Excel file from PDE's website.

# Common Errors

- Common Errors that CFRS-CSR will now prevent before submission is possible:
  - Redirection requests can only be submitted during the open window
  - Data errors on uploads, such as:
    - Including tuition rates not matching PDE website
    - Including incorrect SD AUNs



## Common Errors

- Common Errors that CFRS-CSR will now prevent before submission is possible:
  - Invalid enrollment months included on submission will not be permitted by CFRS-CSR; maximum enrollment month will be month in which request is submitted to PDE

# Common Errors

- Common Errors that CFRS-CSR cannot prevent but will result in a return:
  - Submitting an SD-prepared PDE-363 without the second page
  - Submitting an SD-prepared PDE-363 that PDE cannot verify as authentic
  - Submitting a CS-prepared PDE-363 that doesn't meet requirements (e.g., CS signature included; contact information omitted)

# Timeline for Submission to PDE

- Commonwealth Payment Schedule
  - PDE state subsidy payments occur in the Unipay (last Thursday of each month)
  - Schedule set by Office of Comptroller Operations
  - Unipay Schedule is posted online:  
[www.education.pa.gov](http://www.education.pa.gov), Policy and Funding, School Finances, Reporting, Office of Comptroller Operations

# PDE Suggestions

- Double-check data before submitting request to PDE
  - Complete updated Checklist (internally) and use every time a redirection request is prepared
  - Verify tuition rate source was accurately used in upload
  - Reference tuition rate data source (PDE, SD, CS) and provide supporting documentation for each SD and CS rate included in upload

# Contact Information

For more information on this topic:

[www.education.pa.gov/CSFunding](http://www.education.pa.gov/CSFunding)

[ra-CSFunding@pa.gov](mailto:ra-CSFunding@pa.gov)

# Mission Statement

*The mission of the Department of Education is to ensure that every learner has access to a world-class education system that academically prepares children and adults to succeed as productive citizens. Further, the Department seeks to establish a culture that is committed to improving opportunities throughout the commonwealth by ensuring that technical support, resources, and optimal learning environments are available for all students, whether children or adults.*