Direct Certification Upload Process for Private Schools

Connecticut State Department of Education
Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs
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1. mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
   Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
   1400 Independence Avenue, SW
   Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
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Contents

CSDE Contact Information ii
1 — Upload Steps 3
Important Considerations 10
2 — Resources 11

CSDE Contact Information

For questions regarding direct certification, please contact the school nutrition programs staff in the CSDE's Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs. The CSDE's resource, *County Assignments for School Nutrition Programs*, indicates each Connecticut county's assigned CSDE school nutrition team member who provides technical assistance for the USDA school nutrition programs. For a list of all CSDE Child Nutrition Programs staff, refer to the CSDE's *Child Nutrition Staff and Responsibilities*.

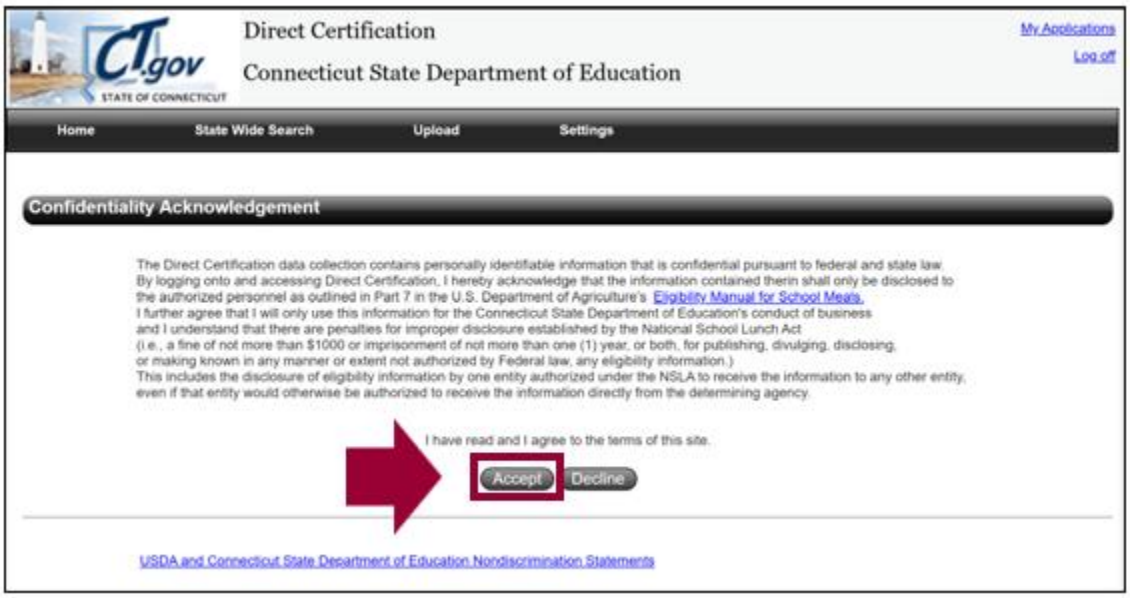
For more information on direct certification, visit the CSDE's Direct Certification for School Nutrition Programs webpage.

1 — Upload Steps

This guide outlines the steps for the direct certification upload process for private schools. For questions regarding this process, please contact the school's assigned school nutrition consultant. For more information, refer to "CSDE Contact Information" in this document.

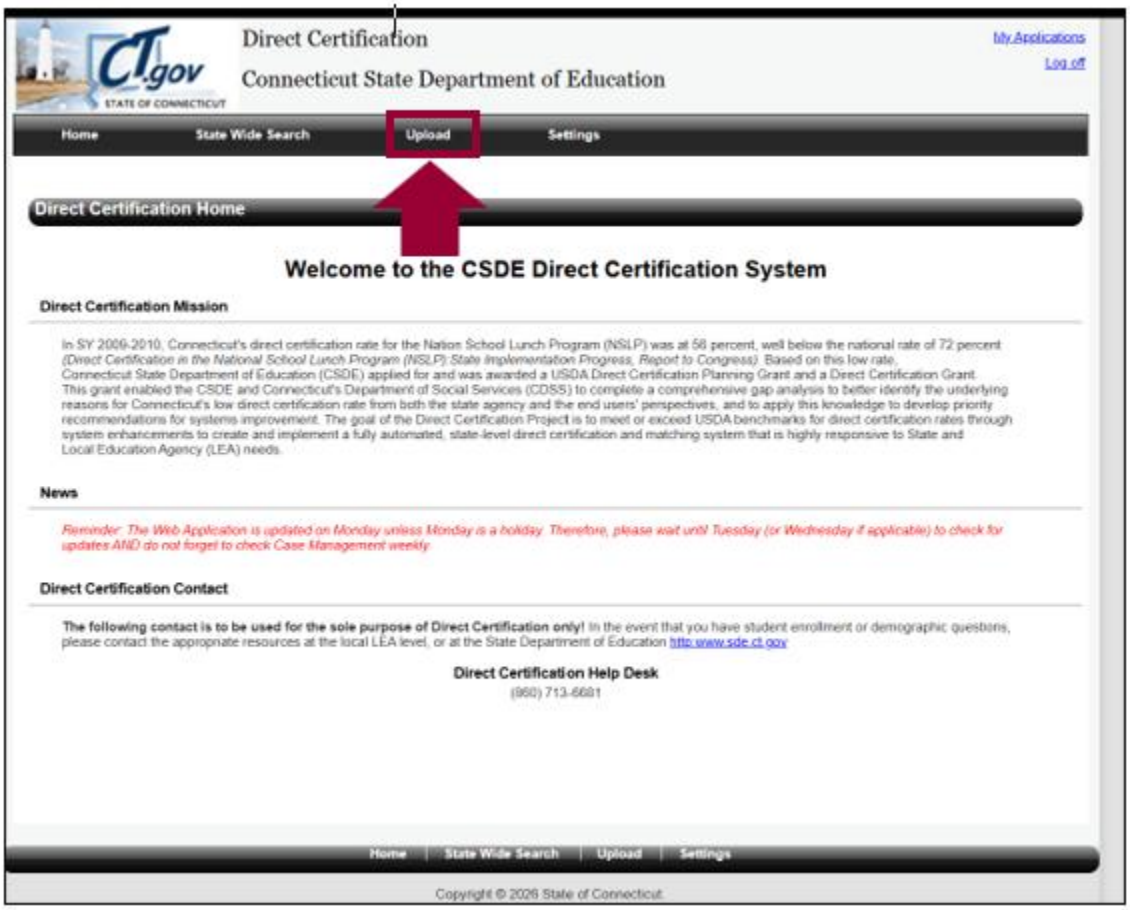
1. The **direct certification contact** enters the Direct Certification Web Application site by logging in with the assigned **User ID** and **password**. The first page to display will be the *Confidentiality Acknowledgement* page as shown below.

2. The user enables the application after accepting the confidentiality terms pressing the **Accept** button.



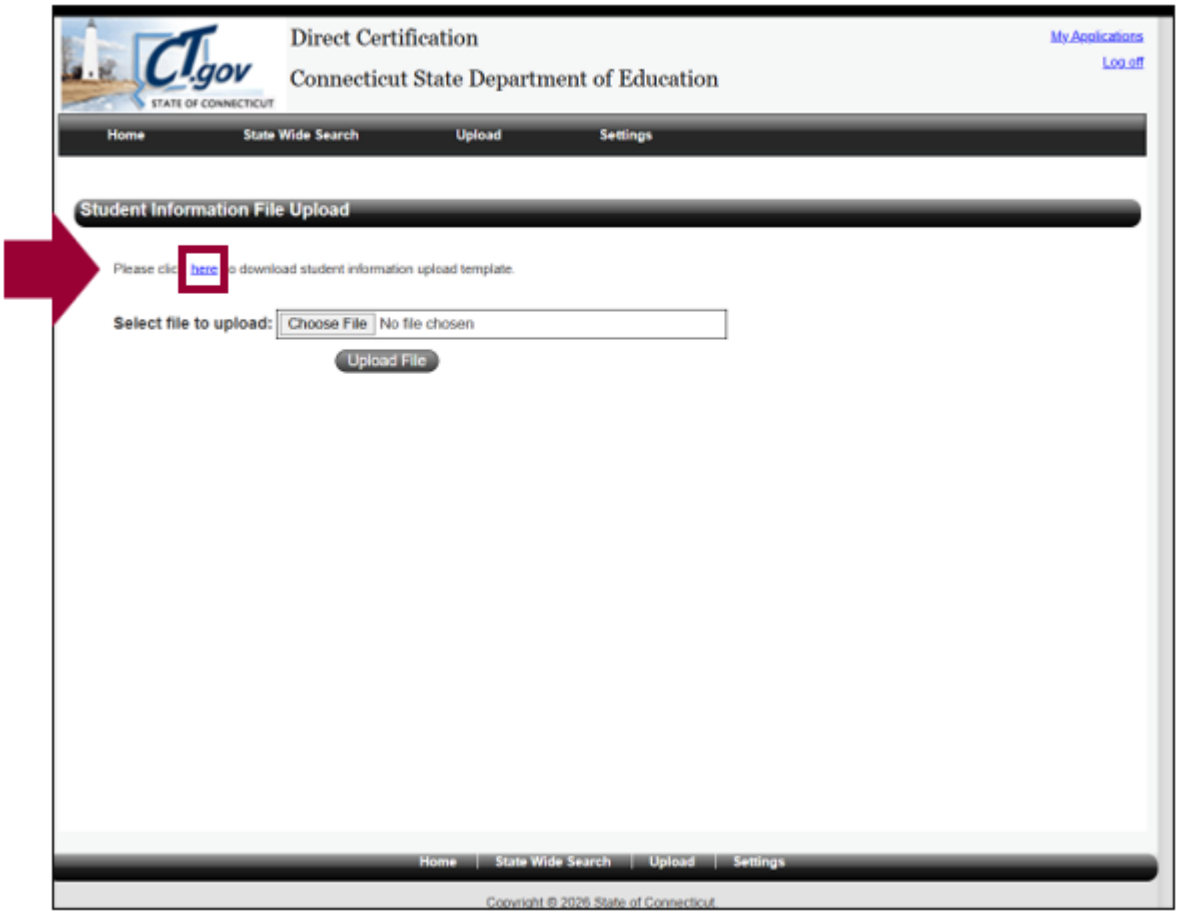
1 | Upload Steps

3. Select **Upload** on the tab bar on the top of the webpage to begin the process of uploading the school's student enrollment information.

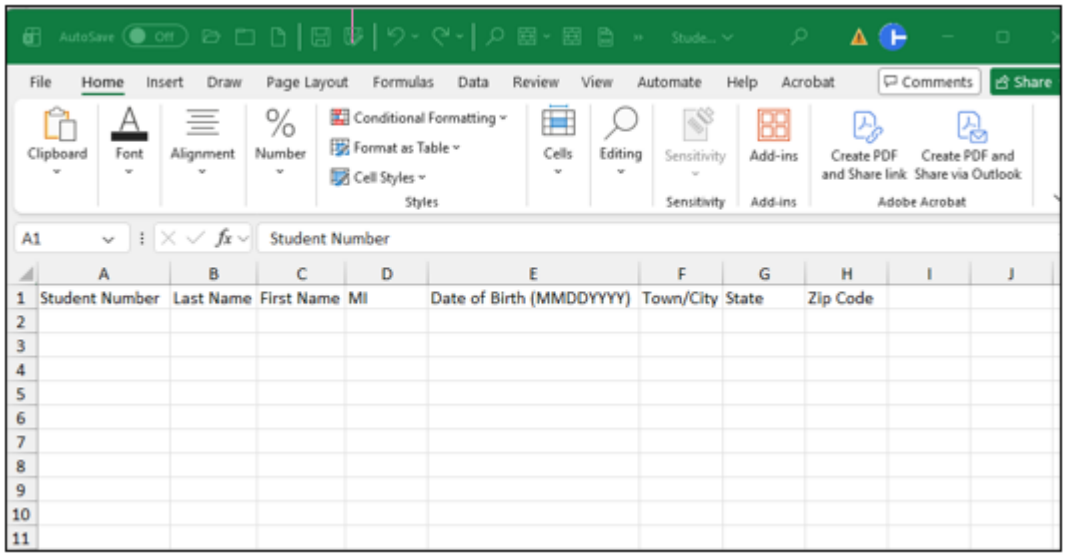


4. The **Student Information File Upload** page displays. Click on **"here"** to download the *Private School Enrollment Template*. This template must be used to upload the school's enrollment data to be matched against the Department of Social Services (DSS) client list to determine if the student is automatically eligible for free meal/milk benefits.

> **Important:** Data must be saved in a CSV (Comma Separated Variable) format, with the extension .csv. This is the only file layout that works with the matching process.



5. The template appears. For ease of use, the template will look like an Excel spreadsheet:



Certain fields are **required**, while others are optional. For example, a student identifying number must be assigned to each student and must be unique to each student enrolled in the school. If the students do not have a number, a sequential number can be assigned for each student (e.g., 1,2,3,4,5… or 0,2,4,6,8…). The required fields are summarized below:

Summary of required and optional fields

Field	Required
Student Number	Yes
Last Name	Yes
First Name	Yes
Middle Initial	No (optional)
Date of Birth	Yes (in this format: **MM**DD**YYYY** (e.g., 02042008)
Town/City	No (optional)
State	No (optional)
Zip Code	No (optional)

Additional Requirements

- **Student number** allows for up to a maximum of 10 characters.

- Full **student names** must be entered into the spreadsheet. Do not use nicknames or shorter versions of names.

- **Date of birth** must be in the **MMDDYYYY** format (e.g., 02042008). Note that the leading zero will not appear when entering the date. For example, 02152004 will appear as 2152004. Do not use dashes, hyphens, or slashes between the numbers.

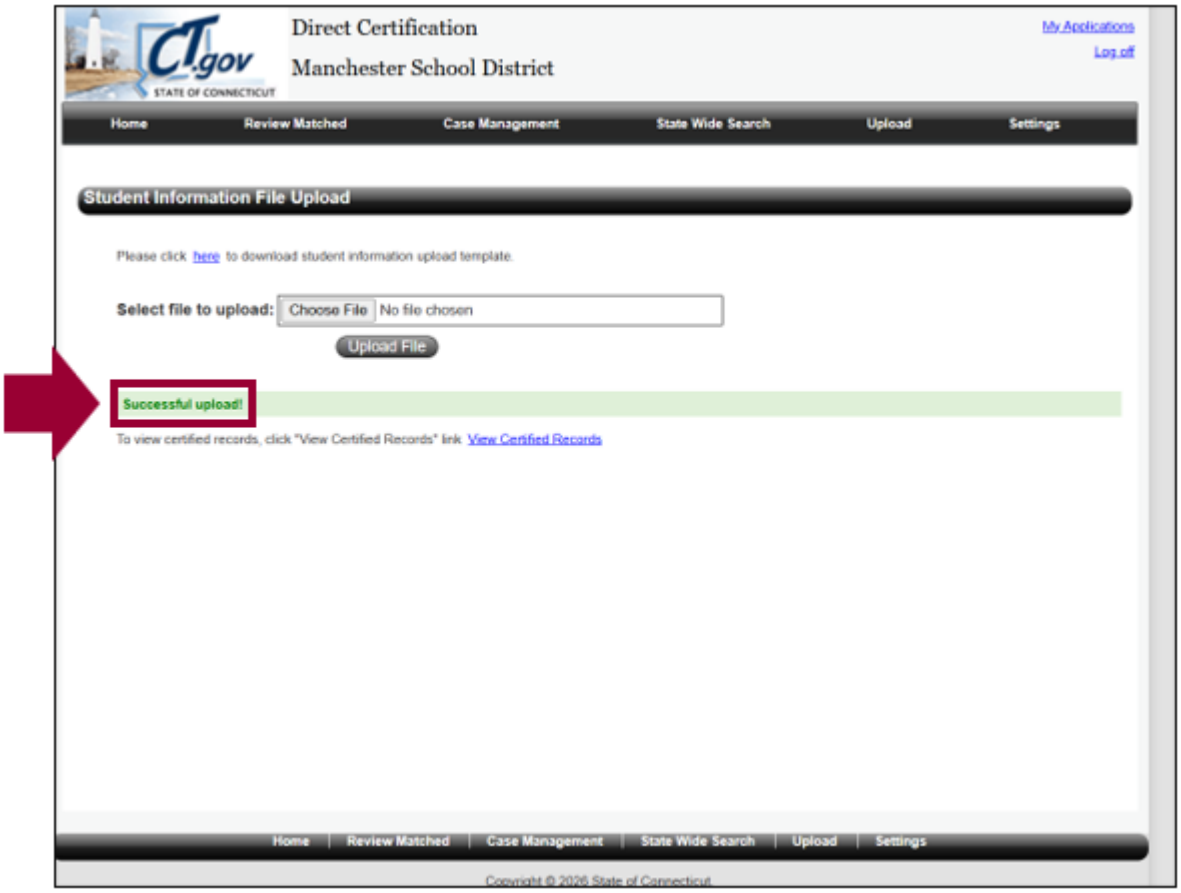
- When the data is completely entered into the file, the file **MUST be saved as a CSV file**, with the extension of **.csv**. The template will default to this extension. In addition, the Upload template appears as an Excel Program Spreadsheet for Schools to enter enrollment data. However, when saved as a CSV file, an information message may appear indicating that some Excel functions may be lost. Press the “Save” button since the Excel function is not used in the CSV file.

6. After completing and saving the file, the user can upload the file. The user has the option of **entering the name** of the saved file or pressing the **Browse** button to search the directories for the location of the saved file. After the file is selected, press the **Upload File** button. The match process will begin.

    - If there are **errors** in the file, a message will display with the line number and error description. The Upload File process will begin again once the errors are corrected.

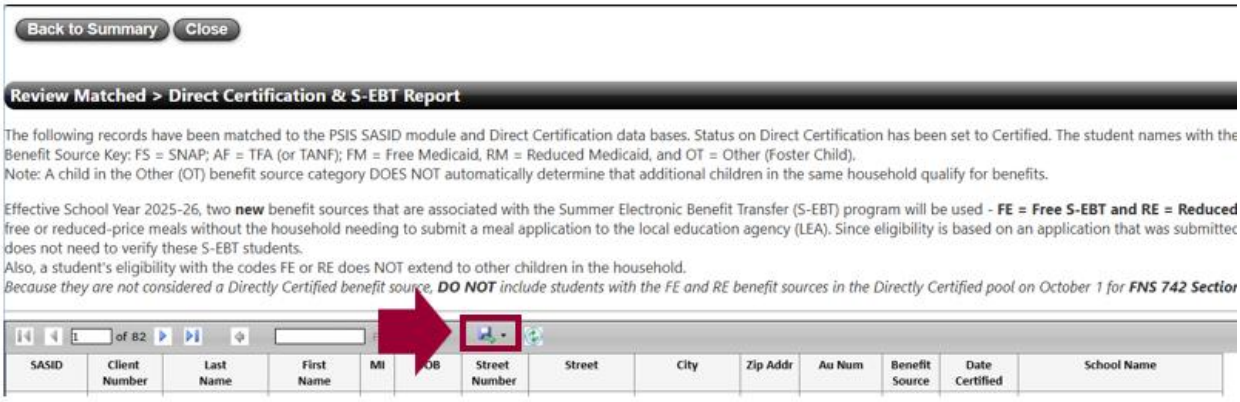
    - Once completed, the user will receive a **"Successful upload"** message on the screen as shown below

      .



7. After the match process is successful, the **matched report** will display on the screen. To download the report, select the **small blue data disk button** on the report header. Multiple options will be available to save the report, e.g., Excel, CSV, XML, and Word.

> **Important:** The CSDE does **not** store private school data. Private schools are responsible for saving this data for future reporting requirements and audit purposes.



Important Considerations

- The user must use the **.csv template** when uploading files.
- The user can repeat the upload process multiple times.
- The user must **save** the file in the format of their choice in order to keep the results. The CSDE does not save the matched data for private schools.
- To validate an individual student, the CSDE recommends using the **State Wide Search** function. If a match is found, save a copy of the screen as evidence for future reporting/auditing.
- If the user has a student that **did not match** on the report and the school believes the student should have matched, the direct certification contact person should use the **State Wide Search**. This allows for partial name searches. It is possible that the DSS client list and the school enrollment name and/or date of birth can be recorded differently for a student.
- Refer to the USDA's *Eligibility Manual for School Meals* for questions regarding direct certification and eligibility.

2 — Resources

Direct Certification for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):
https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/direct-certification

Eligibility Manual for School Meals (USDA):
https://www.fna.usda.gov/cn/eligibility-manual-school-meals