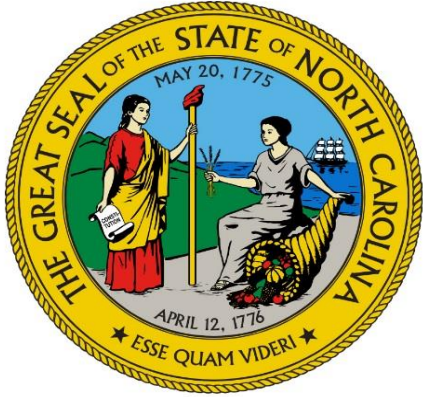




NC★ECIDS

North Carolina Early Childhood
Integrated Data System

How to Democratize Data Under the Scrutiny of FERPA

ECDataLab Conference

10/22/2025

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

Mission and Vision

Mission

Maintain and enhance a high quality, comprehensive, integrated early childhood data system for North Carolina to inform policies and practices that produce better outcomes for children and families.

Vision

To maintain a high-quality early childhood integrated data system (ECIDS) for North Carolina (NC) that is in support of state priorities to improve early childhood and later life outcomes, particularly for the most vulnerable children. The NC ECIDS will be readily accessible and relevant for use by state and local agencies, policy makers, program and community leaders, researchers, community leaders, and advocacy groups to make data-informed decisions in a way that fosters data responsibility and integrity.

History of NC ECIDS

- The North Carolina Early Childhood Integrated Data System (NC ECIDS) is the single source for integrated early childhood data for selected education, health, and social services programs to help answer key policy and program questions.
- NC ECIDS was originally funded by the State of North Carolina through a federal Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant, Preschool Development Grant, and is now maintained by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services.

What is Data Democratization?



- Break down barriers
- Make data accessible to everyone
- Empower individuals to make informed action-based decisions
- Enable data driven insights

Why is Data Democratization Important?

- Enables individuals and organization to make informed decisions, drive innovation, and create a positive impact.
 - Makes data understandable and actionable
 - Provides self-service analytic tools
 - Removes bottlenecks
 - Contributes to better outcomes
- Implements processes for de-identifying data, data governance, and technology for data sharing.



NC ECIDS Goal to Data Democratization

NC ECIDS believes early childhood integrated data leads to:



Better insight

into how early
childhood services
are utilized across
NC



Better answers

to key early
childhood policy
and program
questions



Better decisions

regarding use and
refinement of early
childhood programs



Better outcomes

for the children and
families of North
Carolina

NC ECIDS Programs

- Data integration from education, health, and social services programs:
 - NC Pre-K
 - Subsidized Child Care (SCC)
 - Infant-Toddler Program – Early Intervention – IDEA Part C
 - Special Education – IDEA Part B
 - Food & Nutrition Services (FNS)
 - Child Protective Services (CPS)
 - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
 - Home Visiting Healthy Families America (HFA)
 - Home Visiting Nurse Family Partnership (NFP)
 - Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI)



Agreements and Data Security

NC ECIDS ensures data sharing is secure between stakeholders, programs, and data requesters. To secure data with data sharing, NC ECIDS uses:

- Data Use Agreement (DUA)
- Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
- Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)
- Secure File Transfer Service (SFTP)
- Extract, Transform, and Load (ETL) Automation



Data Use Agreement
Between the North Carolina Early Childhood Integrated Data System (NC ECIDS)
and Data Requester
for Data Obtained Pursuant to

Data Request ID:	209
Data Request Title:	Request: 209

PARTIES

The parties to this Data Use Agreement ("Agreement") are the North Carolina Early Childhood Integrated Data System ("Data Provider") and the Data Requester.

PURPOSE

This Agreement covers the use, security, disclosure, and reporting regarding the data requested in the above-referenced Data Request.

DEFINITIONS

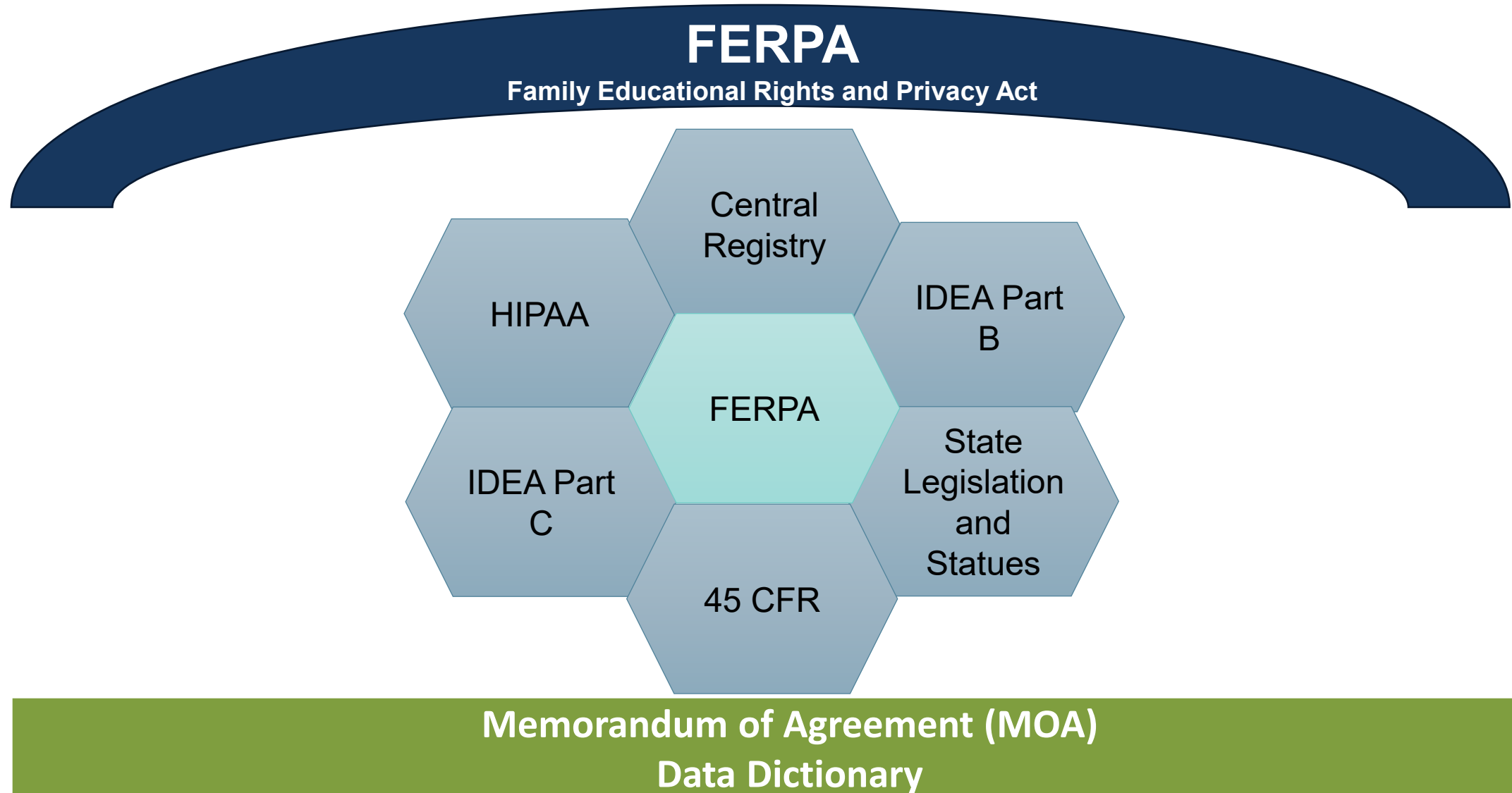
Data Requester: The individual who requests and receives the data is the Data Requester. The Data Requester shall be responsible for transmitting all Data Requests and maintaining a log or other record of all data requested and received pursuant to this Agreement, including confirmation of the completion of any projects and the return or destruction data as required by this Agreement. NC ECIDS or its agents may, upon request, review the records required to be kept regarding the Data Request. The Data Requester may also be referred to as the Principal Investigator. A Data Request may also have a Co-Data Requester (Co-Principal Investigator). If so, this person must sign the Research Staff Agreement.

Authorized Representative: An organization or individual who may receive data containing Personally Identifiable Information (PII). The authorized representative may be the Data Requester or another individual who may sign for the organization that employs the Data Requester.

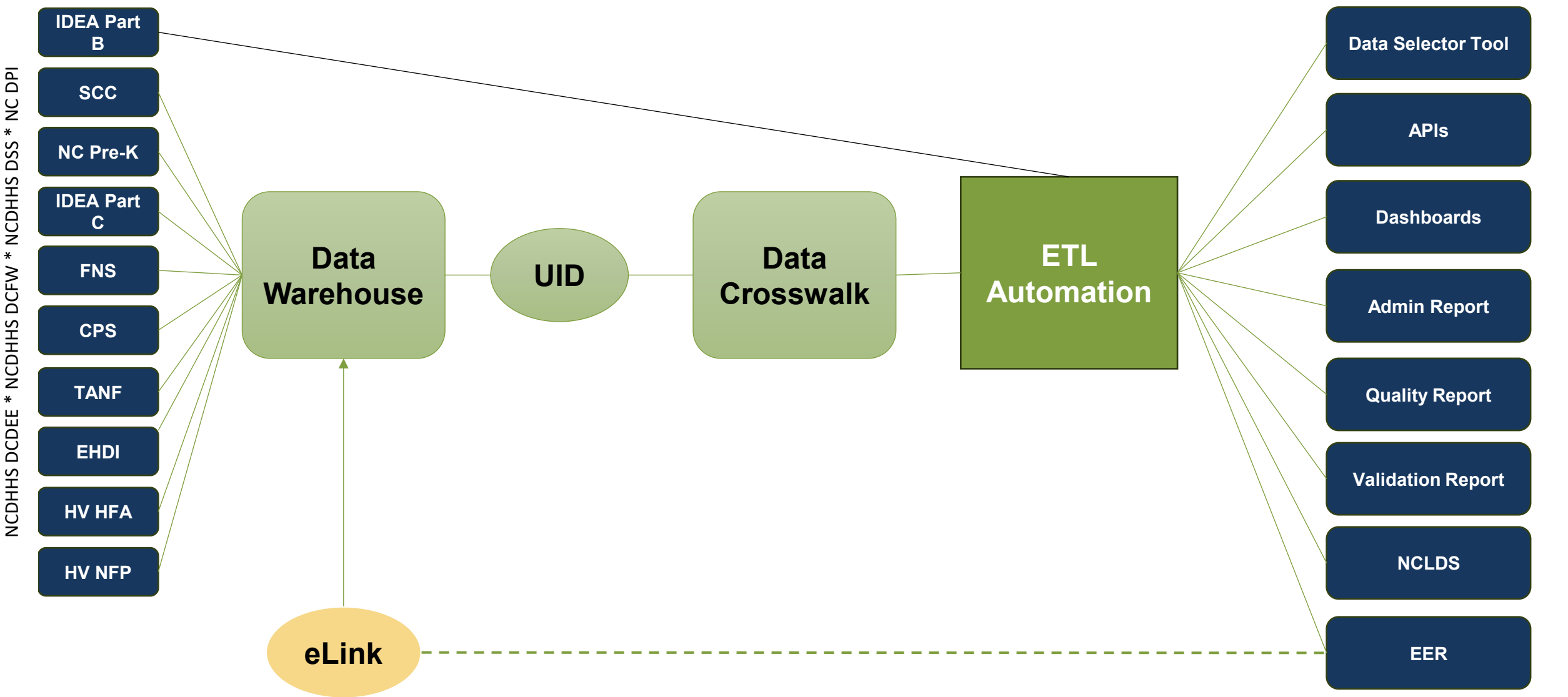
Data Request: An application submitted on the NC ECIDS website requesting creation of data files containing selected data elements. All Data Requests must be submitted online using the procedures and forms provided on the NC ECIDS website. Each Participating Agency reviews each Data Request involving data from its information system. A Data Request may be denied if the data requested does not align with the stated research questions, or if release of the data is inconsistent with the mission of NC ECIDS or with applicable law or regulation.

Participating Agency: Any agency that is responsible for or contributes data to NC ECIDS. NC ECIDS includes data that are under the custody of and/or maintained by: NC Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and NC Department of Public Instruction (DPI) Office of Early Learning. Within DHHS, data supplied through NC ECIDS is owned and maintained by the Division

Data Classification under the Umbrella of FERPA



Linking Data for Integration



Data Democratized Under FERPA



De-Identification of Data



Strip personally identifiable information (PII) from datasets



Use suppression rules, masking, or data perturbation to protect identities



Ensure that de-identified data cannot be re-identified, especially in small populations



Assigns an algorithm generated ID for data requested to link data

Data Modernization and Standardization

Added 13 standard data fields across programs

Placed data fields in logical order instead of alphabetical order

Created Validation and Quality Reports for each program

Developed an Admin Report to track data requests

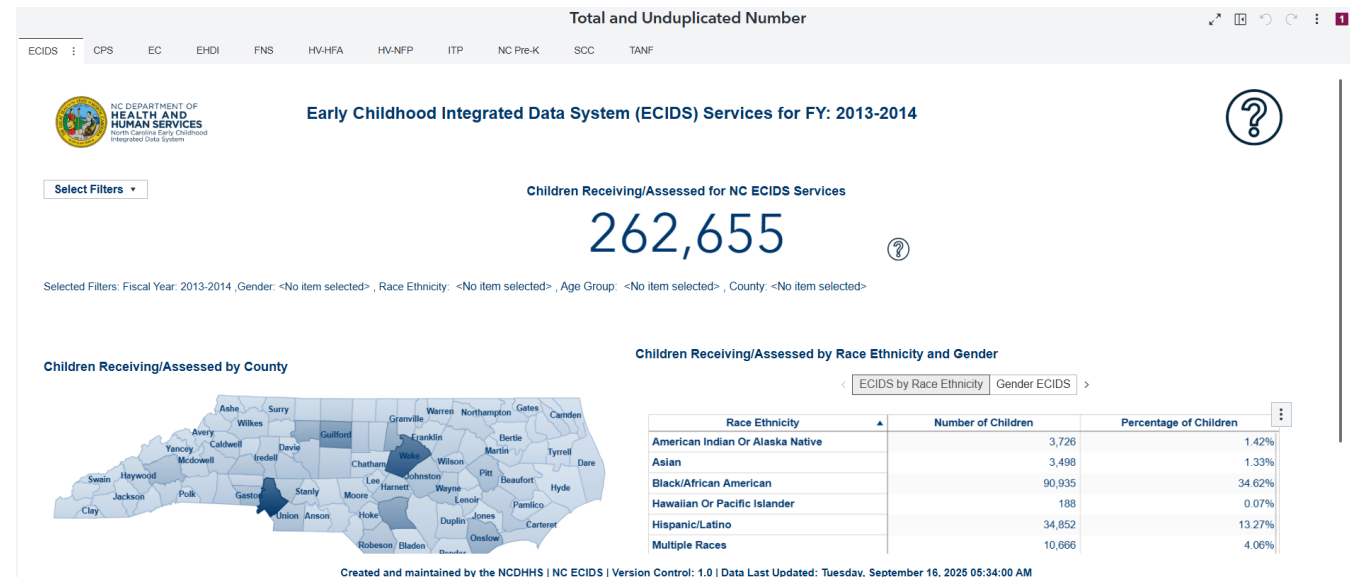
Designed a Data Selector Tool for data requests

Field Name	Type	DS Field Label
ECIDS_Program_Nm	Character	ECIDS Program Name
ECIDS_Program_Abbr	Character	ECIDS Program Abbreviation
ECIDS_Program_Cd	Character	ECIDS Program Code
ECIDS_Fiscal_Year	Character	ECIDS Fiscal Year
ECIDS_Fiscal_Year_Range	Character	ECIDS Fiscal Year Range
ECIDS_Fiscal_Year_Display	Character	ECIDS Fiscal Year Display
ECIDS_Age	Numeric	ECIDS Age
ECIDS_Gender	Character	ECIDS Gender
ECIDS_Race_Ethnicity	Character	ECIDS Race Ethnicity
ECIDS_County_Nm	Character	ECIDS Fiscal Year
ECIDS_Reportable_Ind	Character	ECIDS Reportable Indicator
ECIDS_Approved_Data_Ind	Character	ECIDS County Name
ECIDSSchoolYear	Numeric	ECIDS School Year

Public Facing Dashboards

The data sources in the NC ECIDS Report tool features:

- Includes 4 types of reports
 - Total and Unduplicated Number by NC ECIDS Service
 - Number of Children Receiving Multiple NC ECIDS Services
 - Number of Children Receiving Two NC ECIDS Services
 - Number of NC Pre-K Age Eligible Children Receiving NC ECIDS Services
- Multiple ways to slice data by: Fiscal Year, Gender, Race/Ethnicity, Age and County
- Print and download
- Total and unduplicated number by service



Data Selector Tool

The Data Selector has 3 different views:

Requester

Reviewer

Admin



Each view has assigned roles and responsibilities.

NC★ECIDSTM tlmorgan3

Data Request ID:209
Title: Request: 209

Status
Submitted

CANCEL  

Data Request

Data Use Proposal
Created: Oct 02, 2025
Last Modified: Oct 02, 2025
VIEW

Data Use Agreement
Created: Oct 02, 2025
VIEW

Research Staff and Research
Staff Agreements
Created: Oct 02, 2025
Last Modified: Oct 02, 2025
VIEW

IRB Status
Created: Oct 02, 2025
Last Modified: Oct 02, 2025
VIEW

Research Data Elements
Created: Oct 02, 2025
Last Modified: Oct 02, 2025
VIEW

Data Set

The data set extracts are not available yet. Once the administrators approve this request, you will be able to download them here.

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Data Governance

Build out a cross agency and division collaborative data governance approach (related to data quality, data standards, prioritization of requests, etc.).

NC ECIDS

- Oversees and makes decisions on the policies for data use and operating procedures of NC ECIDS.
- Provides ongoing support, guidance, and accountability for NC ECIDS policies and procedures.
- Includes cross-agency leadership, program management, and other support.

Data Office

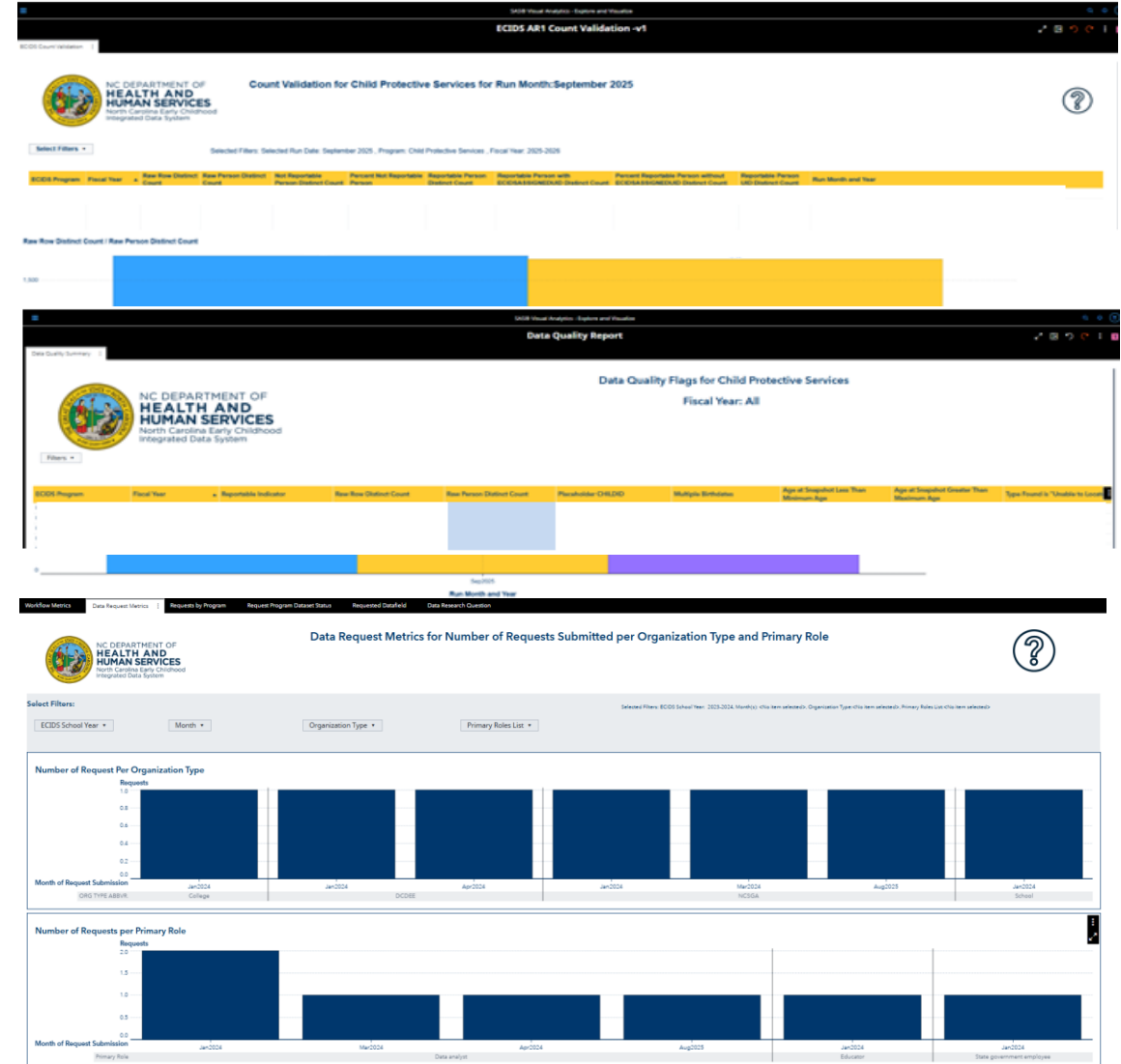
- Provides strategic leadership and tactical support to enable trustworthy, well-governed data for data-driven decisions to optimize services and improve outcomes.
- Created a NCDHHS Data Sharing Guidebook for sharing and integrating data among the agency and strategic partners.

NCLDS

- Includes a Steering Committee to provide advice to NCLDS Executive Director.
- Recommend policies and processes for the NCLDS management of and requestor access to data.
- Proposes NCLDS data quality policies and processes.

Dashboards – Admin, Validation, and Quality

- **Validation Report** is for data validation. It is updated as data is refreshed monthly, quarterly, and yearly.
- **Quality Report** is to take deeper dives into each month's data. It focuses on data that has not met the defined criteria.
- **Admin Report** is designed for the NC ECIDS Admin to view all data requests over time.
- Access is role-based and limited to identified users.



Challenges to Democratizing Data



Estimated time for contracts

Developing partnerships

Integrating data from multiple programs

Defining criteria to apply across each program data

Validating data to release for use

Assigning a unique identifier (UID) to link data



Questions?