

## Getting Started

This manual is written for data providers who submit data to NSLDS from either a mainframe (OS/390 LE) batch environment or a PC-based platform using Windows (95, 98, or NT), and who use the ED-provided software, DataPrep. Data providers who use other platforms or who wish to develop their own software should contact ED for more information. Data provider-developed software must meet the standards established in this manual.

## System Requirements

To run the DataPrep software and submit your data, the minimum system requirements are either:

- An IBM/IBM compatible mainframe running the OS/390 LE environment operating system and an appropriate sort utility, or
- A fully IBM-compatible personal computer with at least a 200 MHz Pentium processor, Windows 95, 98, or NT operating system, 64 Mb of available memory, and 8 Mb of hard disk space store the program and work files, and additional hard disk space to store data files and backups. For more information about ED system requirements, see Action Letter GEN-97-12 (November 1997). For optimal viewing of reports, you may have to set your monitor's resolution to 1024 x 768 pixels.



**LE Runtime Library**  
If you're running in the OS/390 LE environment, your LE Runtime Library must be in your standard system program library concatenation.

## Estimated Required Disk Space

You will need approximately 8 Mb of disk space to store the DataPrep software and its associated test data files. This is the minimum disk space required and does not include storage space for your data files. You should also allow enough space in which to sort work files.

Estimate your space requirements by adding the following:

Database Extract Files	$N * 300 \text{ bytes} * Y$
Submittal Files	$[(N * 300 \text{ bytes}) + (PPC * 300 \text{ bytes})] * Y$
Extract Error Files	$X * 300 \text{ bytes} * Y$
Extract Error Reports	$X * 132 \text{ bytes} * Z * 1.1$
Load Process Error Files	$X * 300 \text{ bytes} * Y$
Load Process Error Reports	$X * 132 \text{ bytes} * Z * 1.1$
Threshold Error File	32,000 bytes
Loan Detail File	$N * 300 \text{ bytes} * Y$
Loan Detail Reports	$N * 132 \text{ bytes} * Z * 1.1$

(Equals) \_\_\_\_\_ bytes of space required

Where:

N = Number of records extracted from your database.

X	=	Estimated number of errors.
PPC	=	Estimated number of Past Period Change (PPC) records.
Y	=	Number of Backup files created and stored.
Z	=	Number of Reports Generated.

All mainframe examples in this document assume use of Direct Access Storage Device (DASD). Tape may be substituted for DASD for any of the NSLDS files, but in that case, you are responsible for converting the calculations from DASD to that medium.

## Setting Up Communications Links with NSLDS

All data providers access NSLDS through the Title IV WAN using EDConnect software. Data providers are assigned a mailbox, which is used both to request and retrieve data from NSLDS. The WAN ID account number serves as the mailbox identifier.

Title IV WAN Customer Service Center is responsible for setting up new user accounts on the Title IV WAN. You may obtain enrollment information, forms, and copies of the Title IV WAN user's guide by calling (800) 615-1189. For more information, see Action Letter GEN-98-24.

## Setting Up a Submittal Schedule

When you sign up with NSLDS, you will be assigned scheduled days and times when you will have to send updates to NSLDS. All submittal schedules are preset and are based on the state where the institution is or the servicer used. For more information, or to obtain a copy of the schedule, contact the NSLDS Customer Service Center (CSC) at (800) 999-8219.

## Initial Population

The first-time transfer of information from schools or data providers that sign up with NSLDS is called the initial population. In addition to current loan data, the initial population also includes data for loans that are closed. See Appendix A for detailed information about what data to include in an initial population Database Extract file.

Except for the addition of closed loan data and a slight difference in data reporting requirements, the process for an initial population submission is the same as the one you follow for subsequent updates.

## File Protection and Backups

Files are subject to corruption, especially during transmission. Therefore, we recommend that you keep at least two backups of your last two Database Extract files and Submittal files in case errors occur during the NSLDS validation or Submittal file transmission processes. DataPrep provides a quick way to create



### Signing Up for NSLDS

To sign up for NSLDS you must use the Title IV WAN Enrollment Document. For more information, phone Title IV WAN Customer Service Center at (800) 615-1189.



### Saving Generations

We recommend that you plan on saving at least two generations of all your files and reports. DataPrep can help you using the File

and organize backup copies of these files. The process for backing up files is described in detail on page **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

While we recommend a minimum of two generations, the sample JCL for OS/390 LE environments provided in Appendix D allows for four generations. Mainframe operators who use the sample JCL provided in Appendix F will find that a backup of the Submittal file, named NSLDS.SUBMIT.BKUP, is created automatically by the software.

## Getting Help

The NSLDS CSC is available for all data provider questions. The CSC offers comprehensive assistance on all aspects of using the DataPrep software, from step-by-step installation questions to retrieving error reports. The CSC can help you identify and correct Extract problems resulting from file- and domain-level edits, and NSLDS update problems resulting from record-level and load-level errors. The CSC will address your Perkins data provider set-up and scheduling questions and will distribute your school's yearly data provider load schedule each November.

In addition, the CSC can help:

- Identify other data providers to resolve identifier conflicts
- Clarify Data Provider Instructions
- Schedule initial and ongoing data loads
- Troubleshoot problems on DataPrep installation
- Discuss submittal requirements
- Explain specific error codes
- Review your submittal schedule

When you call the CSC you may be asked to provide specific information including:

- Your OPE ID code and school name and phone number
- Whether you are using the mainframe or Windows-based version of the software
- The release date of the DataPrep software you are using
- The nature of the problem
- The part of the process you were working with at the time the problem occurred
- Whether you have been able to duplicate the problem and, if so, what the conditions were at the time
- Error messages or other indicators of the source of the problem.



**Customer Service Center**  
Contact the CSC at (800) 999-8219 between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. Eastern time, weekdays, except on federal holidays. Customer Service personnel will log your call, issue a confirmation number, answer questions, and, if possible, resolve problems immediately. If the problem requires further research, Customer Service will estimate when you can expect a return call.

## Using Servicers

While the school maintains the responsibility for timely and accurate submission of its data to NSLDS, you may choose to work with a servicer or third-party to process and submit all of your loan-level records to NSLDS (including a centralized collection office for a multi-campus school).

If you use a servicer, you must consider and incorporate into your reporting procedures the following:

- **Coordinating Any Changes to Identifiers**—Whenever an identifier changes, the new identifiers on each loan must be submitted. This must be done through the servicer.
- **Transferring Records From School to Servicer or Third Party**—The same organization reporting on a loan must report all attributes for that specific loan. If the responsibility for reporting on a specific loan is transferred from one party to another, all the data for that record must be transferred. The receiving party would then continue to report all required attributes on that loan even though there may not be updates to a specific attribute.

For example, when a school transfers the loan to the servicer, the school must transfer all the data for that loan including the student's enrollment status at the time the loan was first disbursed. Although the servicer may not update this attribute, the servicer must include it as part of the loan record that it extracts and submits to NSLDS. All data fields in the NSLDS extract should be transferred.

- **Changing Servicers**—If a school changes services, it must carefully coordinate with both the current and new servicers to ensure that all data is properly transferred. Regardless of any change in servicer, the school is expected to transmit the Submittal file within 90 days. ED has determined that servicers should transfer portfolios using the same file layout as a Submittal file to NSLDS. The same data should be extracted and prepared as if a Submittal file was to be created. That Extract file should be sent to the new servicer. The new servicer in turn uses the Submittal file to populate its database so the same student and loan identifiers are provided to NSLDS.

## Multiple Schools or School Branches

Servicers that report data for multiple schools and/or schools that report data for multiple branches where the branches have separate OPE IDs (Code for Original Schools) must submit a single file to NSLDS containing data for all the schools or branches being reported. The NSLDS DataPrep software has been developed to process a Database Extract file containing multiple OPE IDs.

When combining schools or branches, the data records must be concatenated into one single file for processing through DataPrep. The resulting file should be structured to contain a Header record, followed by all Detail records for the first school or branch, and all Past Period Change records for that school or branch.



### Institutional Responsibility

Because systems and procedures vary significantly from one institution to another, each school is responsible for determining how it will meet the NSLDS reporting requirements.



### Numbers of Schools or Branches

There is no limit on the number of school or branch sets of data that may be appended together in a single Database Extract File.

Following the first school records, the second school's data may then be appended to the file. The file structure is illustrated in the box at right.

Once the combined Database Extract file has been prepared properly, it can be sent through the DataPrep software just as a file containing a single school's data.

Note that you do not insert a trailer record because DataPrep will do so for you in the Extract Validation process.

## Installing DataPrep for Windows-Based Users

To install DataPrep on your PC, insert Disk 1 in your floppy disk drive, select Run in the Start menu, type in a:\setup (or the appropriate letter denoting the drive), and select OK. The setup procedure will guide you through the installation process and will prompt you when to insert the remaining diskettes.

During the setup procedure, you will have to determine the file names and paths DataPrep will use to access your Extract files. DataPrep will default to specific names that are strongly recommended. Any of these can be changed later in the Options menu. In addition, before you complete the installation process, you will have a chance to review your selections and make any necessary corrections.

If you need to change anything during installation, you can simply return to an earlier screen by selecting "Back."

If you are running Windows NT, you may not have administrative privileges to install new software. Therefore, some of the system files associated with DataPrep will not be installed properly. The install program will look first to see if you have administrative access. If you do not, you will get this message:



You can still install DataPrep, but some of the functions may not work (for example, the print function using the DataPrep viewer). Check with your information technology department before proceeding.

When the installation process is complete for the first time, the Directories screen (see below) will appear, prompting you to select the directory path where the DataPrep files are read from and written to. Default values will be inserted but the directory paths can be updated as needed. It is essential that you insert the correct paths and file names or DataPrep will be unable to locate your data files. In addition, when you transmit your data to NSLDS via the Title IV WAN, you will have to specify the correct directory path.



### Multiple School/Branch File Structure

School 1 Header Record  
 School 1 Detail Record  
 School 1 Detail Record  
 School 1 PPC Record  
 School 2 Header Record  
 School 2 Detail Record  
 School 2 Detail Record  
 School 3 Header Record  
 School 3 Detail Record  
 School 3 Detail Record  
 Etc.



### Diskettes

DataPrep is sent to you on six diskettes, with the Data Provider Instructions on [www.IFAP.ed.gov](http://www.IFAP.ed.gov), from which you can download and print the instructions.



### Administrative Privileges

If you run Windows NT and do not have administrative privileges to install new software on your computer, you will get a warning when you try to install DataPrep. You can still install the software, but some of the functions may not work properly. If you get this warning, you should check with your information technology department before proceeding.



### Directories

- Temp: the location of your temporary sort work files (\*.tmp).
- Extract: the location of your database Extract

If you press OK and there is no existing directory path, DataPrep will ask you if you want to create the specified directory path.

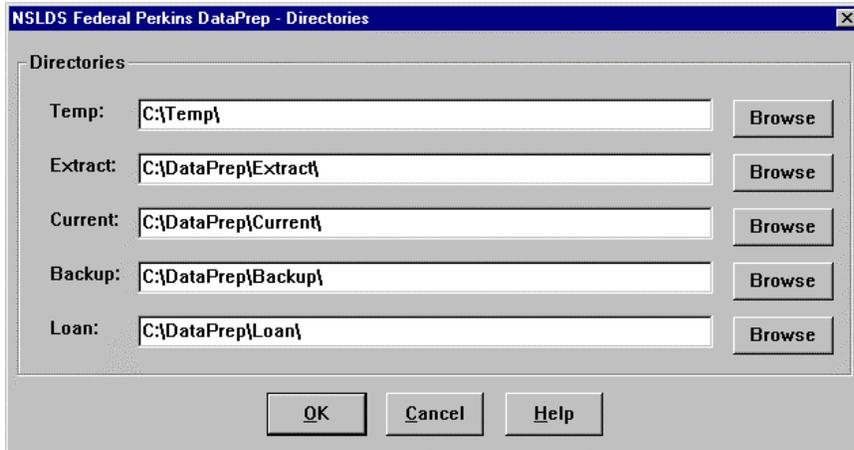


Figure 1, Directories Dialog Box

If you want to change the directory path later, click Options on the menu bar of the DataPrep Main Menu, then Directories. This will bring up the Directories dialog box.

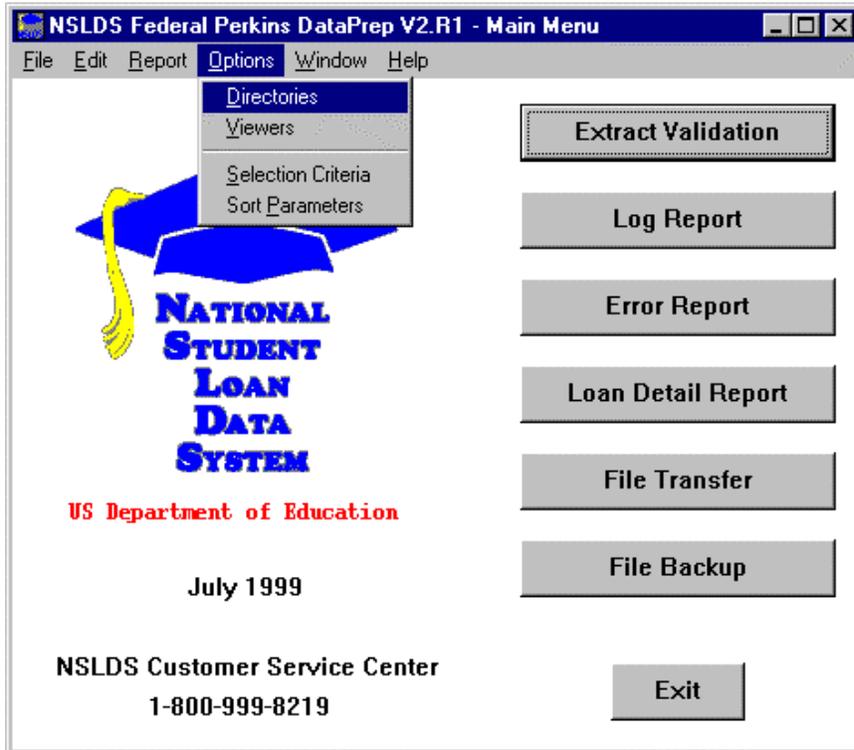


Figure 2, DataPrep Main Menu with Options Menu Selected

## Setting Up Viewers

DataPrep allows you to select which word processing software you wish to use to view or print the various reports. The default viewer developed for DataPrep (NSLDS-V2/uta0.exe) enables you to easily view the reports generated with the correct format.

However, DataPrep also includes Notepad and Microsoft Wordpad as optional viewers (note that if you use either of these you may have to reformat the reports to fit the paper). If you wish to change the default viewer, you do so from the main menu. Click Options, then Viewers.

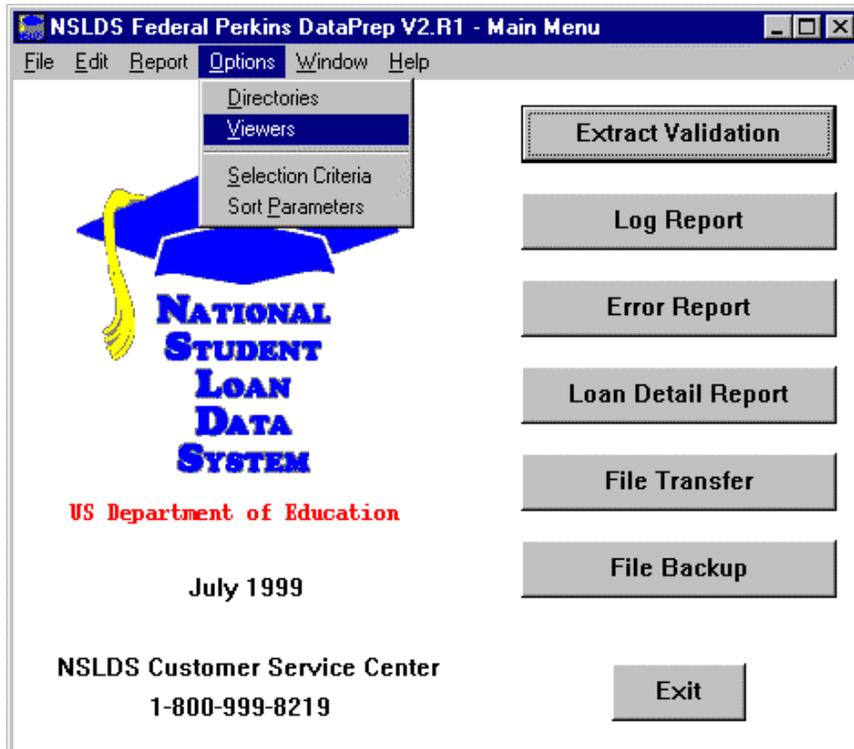


Figure 3, DataPrep Main Menu with Options/Viewers Selected

The Viewer Maintenance dialog box will then appear:



Figure 4, Viewer Maintenance Dialog Box



### Selecting the Viewer

The word processing software at the top of the list is the viewer selected. If you want to use a different viewer, you first highlight it, then choose Move, then point the cursor to the top of the list and click. The new viewer selected will be moved to the top of the list and DataPrep will use it to view reports.



**Pressing OK Does NOT Change the Viewer**  
From the Viewer Maintenance screen,

The word processing software that appears at the top of the list is the software DataPrep will use to view reports, the default viewer. To change the default viewer, you must highlight the software you want, then press Move, then point the cursor to the top of the list, and click the mouse. This will move the highlighted software to the top. You then select OK to exit the screen.

If, after you highlight the software you wish, you only press OK, that viewer *does not* become the default viewer. You must move the software to the top of the list for it to be your viewer!

If you wish to add word processing software, you first select Add and then specify the directory path for the software.

To remove the word processing software, select the software you wish to delete from the Viewer option and then Remove. DataPrep will ask you to confirm that you wish to delete the viewer program from the list.

You will be able to use any viewer to view a particular report after it is generated, *if it is one of the viewers on the list*. But you can only change the default viewer from the DataPrep Main Menu.

## Installing DataPrep for OS/390 LE-Based Users

To install DataPrep on your mainframe, you must first install an Unload JCL that unloads the DataPrep installation program. Note that by installing DataPrep JCL for OS/390 LE, you will be creating dataset names on your system when unloading the tape. The Unload JCL provided contains a specific naming convention. In particular, the second and last node in the dataset names contain identifying information (Version/Release/Levelset Date) to assist in tracking and identifying software in use. **We strongly recommend that you retain this naming convention.**

### Install the Unload JCL That Unloads the Tape

The following JCL will be used once to unload additional JCL, which, in turn, will unload the rest of the tape. Your site will probably have a JCL file similar to this that executes IEBCOPY. Modify the file to have the file names indicated below.

## The Unload JCL

```
//PSY20002 JOB (P75333AA-5100AAAA,066),'SCH TAPE UL1',
// CLASS=A,MSGCLASS=A,REGION=4M
//*
/* ----- PSY20002 -----
/* JOB DESCRIPTION
/*
/* SYSTEM SOFTWARE      - SCH DATA PROVIDER TAPE UNLOAD - PART1
/*
/* PSTEP010             - IEBCOPY
/*
/* -----
/*
//          SET DB2=NSLD
//          SET ENV=P
//          SET LVLSET=LS990715
//          SET SPACE01=CYL
//          SET UNITPERM=SYSDA
//          SET UNITTAPE=CART
//          SET VR=PROD
/*
/* ----- IEBCOPY -----
/*
/* JOBLIB   DD   DISP=SHR,DSN=????????????????????
/*
/*
/*
//PSTEP010 EXEC PGM=IEBCOPY
/*
//SYSIN     DD DUMMY
/*
//SYSPRINT DD SYSOUT=*
/*
//SYSUT1    DD DSN=NSLDS.&VR..CUTTAPE.&LVLSET,
//          DISP=SHR,
//          UNIT=&UNITTAPE
//***      VOLSER=??????
/*
//SYSUT2    DD DSN=NSLDS&ENV..&VR..CUTTAPE.&LVLSET,
//          DISP=(NEW,CATLG,DELETE),
//          SPACE=(&SPACE01,(30,3,400)),
//          UNIT=&UNITPERM
/*
/*
//          IF PSTEP010.RC NE 0 THEN
//PSTEP011 EXEC CKRCODE
//          ENDIF
/*
```

## Run the Unload Tape JCL

The JCL that appears in Appendix G was unloaded to your system after running step 1. This JCL will be run to set up the actual libraries and software to allow you to execute the DataPrep software. This install JCL will normally only run once. However, if you need to run this JCL again to reinstall DataPrep, be aware that step PSTEP005 will delete all datasets previously created.

This JCL may be referenced from the library created with CUTTAPE as part of the name (created in step 1). The library member name is UNLOAD.

