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## THE SSCR PROCESS

This chapter gives a detailed view of the overall SSCR process, focusing on your school's role as the primary source of information about the borrower's enrollment status. It describes a complete SSCR cycle, discusses the means available for receiving and sending SSCR files, and addresses how you can schedule your SSCR cycles to minimize your ad hoc reporting requirements.

### 3.1 THE SSCR CYCLE

SSCR processing through NSLDS significantly streamlines the entire enrollment confirmation procedure. At the same time, it can optimize the frequency of scheduled reporting cycles and, therefore, the timeliness of the data. The list below describes the entire activity, step by step, showing which participant is responsible for each step. Regardless of how many times you elect to report, each cycle must include the following steps:

1. NSLDS:
  - A. Generates the SSCR Roster File for your school, in your chosen transmission medium (telecommunications or magnetic tape).
  - B. Forwards the Roster File to you or your servicer.
2. Your school (or your servicer):
  - A. Receives the SSCR Roster File.
  - B. Matches the Roster File against registration files.
  - C. Updates each student's enrollment status and effective enrollment status date with valid codes on the SSCR Roster File, as defined in Chapter Five.
  - D. Proposes changes to student identifiers (student's SSN, last name, first name, middle initial, and birth date) as needed.
  - E. Changes or adds student permanent address data as needed.
  - F. Adds a detail record to the file for each new student as needed.
  - G. Checks that the updated file contains valid data, as defined in Chapter Five, to reduce the likelihood that NSLDS will find errors.
  - H. Returns the updated SSCR Roster File, now called the SSCR Submittal File, to NSLDS within 30 days of the date it was sent to the school.

3. NSLDS:
  - A. Receives the SSCR Submittal File.
  - B. Edits (error-checks) the Submittal File contents.
  - C. Updates the NSLDS database with enrollment status changes.
  - D. Captures proposed student identifier changes and new or changed address data.
  - E. Returns the SSCR Error Notification File, which includes any records containing errors, applicable error codes, and a count of accepted and rejected records, to your school (or servicer) for correction. If there are no errors, the file contains a count of accepted records and no detail records.
  - F. Forwards the new and changed data to each affected data provider (such as GAs and Direct Loan Servicer).
  - G. Monitors the timeliness of your school's response, following up as necessary.
4. Your school (or servicer):
  - A. Receives and saves the SSCR Error Notification File.
  - B. If all records were accepted by NSLDS, considers the SSCR cycle complete. Corrects any records with identified errors.
  - C. Returns the corrected records to NSLDS as the SSCR Error Correction File within ten days of the date it is sent to the school (or servicer).
5. If your school returned an SSCR Error Correction File, NSLDS:
  - A. Receives the returned SSCR Error Correction File.
  - B. Edits the returned Detail Records.
  - C. Repeats steps 3c through 3g for the returned Detail Records.
  - D. Sends a revised SSCR Error Notification File to your school (or servicer).

NSLDS begins the next cycle by generating a new Roster File reflecting all changes accepted from the last SSCR Roster, including unresolved errors from the previous cycle.

### 3.1.1 SCHOOL PROCESSING—A CLOSER LOOK

The accuracy of Title IV student loan records depends heavily on the accuracy of the data that your school reports. You must correctly match the NSLDS records with your enrollment records, confirm or update student enrollment status and other student information as needed, and correct any errors identified by NSLDS. In addition, you may learn that the data provider for a particular student's loan does not agree with your proposed changes.

Your roster will include borrowers with enrollment statuses of "F" (Full-time), "H" (Half-time), "L" (Less than half-time), or "A" (Leave of absence). Students with an enrollment status of "W" (Withdrawn) continue to be reported on the roster for 180 days after the enrollment status effective date; then they are dropped from the roster. For example, if a student's last day of attendance in classes was any day in the month of February, that student will remain on the roster until the same day in the month of August. If your school reports a status of "G" (Graduated), "X" (Never attended), or "Z" (No record found), the student will not appear on the next roster. However, if another agency reports to NSLDS a "G", "X", or "Z" status for a student at your school, that student will appear on your roster until you confirm the most recent enrollment status.

### 3.1.2 MATCHING STUDENT RECORDS

Once you receive the SSCR Roster File, you must match the contents of that file against your enrollment or registration records. The following fields may help you match your records:

- Student's Social Security Number
- Student's Last Name
- Student's First Name
- Student's Middle Initial
- Date of Student's Birth

You can compare a printed copy of the Roster File contents against your registration records, but to do this, you will have to convert the SSCR Roster File into a printable format. Another option is to use EDEExpress to obtain a printed copy of the records in your SSCR Roster File. An automated matching process will be a more efficient method. Your administrative computing department or servicer can develop software to match the records, and then you need to manually review only unmatched records.

During the matching process, cases may occur where you are sure that you have a legitimate match, but one or more of the student identifiers provided by NSLDS differs from the information in your school records. Should you be convinced, by the reliable source of your data or documentation on file, that your information is correct, you may propose a correction to the NSLDS identifier data. NSLDS provides special fields for this purpose, which share the student identifier field names prefixed with the word "New". For example, the Student's Social Security Number field may contain a constructed, or pseudo-SSN, while you know the actual SSN. You

would propose the real SSN in the field named New Student's Social Security Number. Because the data provider is ultimately responsible for the accuracy of the data, NSLDS does not automatically change the student's SSN in its files. Rather, NSLDS forwards the proposed change to the data provider for its review and, if confirmed, updates the NSLDS database.

### **3.1.3 UPDATING STUDENT INFORMATION**

For each matching record, you must either confirm or update the student's enrollment status as provided by NSLDS, using the status codes assigned by ED for this purpose. When updating a student's status, you must also provide the effective date of the new status.

**The first time a student appears on your SSCR Roster File, you must enter the student's permanent address. If the student's permanent address changes, update the address fields in subsequent SSCR submissions.**

### **3.1.4 RETURNING THE SSCR ROSTER FILE AS THE SUBMITTAL FILE**

After you update the SSCR Roster File, it becomes the SSCR Submittal File. You must return the Submittal File within 30 days of the time the Roster File was transmitted to you.

### **3.1.5 SSCR SUBMITTAL FILE PROCESSING AND HIGH LEVEL EDITS**

Upon receiving the Submittal File, NSLDS edits the file according to the specifications described in Chapter Five. Detail Records that pass all edits are accepted and processed through the remaining steps. Detail Records that fail one or more edits are returned in the SSCR Error Notification File for correction and re-submission. Each Detail Record has one or more error codes appended to the end of the record explaining why each record was rejected. Except for appended error codes, the Error Notification File has the same format as the Roster File, with fewer Detail Records. You have up to ten days to correct and return the file as the SSCR Error Correction File. If you have not received an Error Notification file within 48 hours of transmitting your submittal file, you must contact the NSLDS Customer Service Center at 1-800-999-8219.

Figure 3-1 shows the first phase of the SSCR cycle, which involves NSLDS and schools or their servicers.

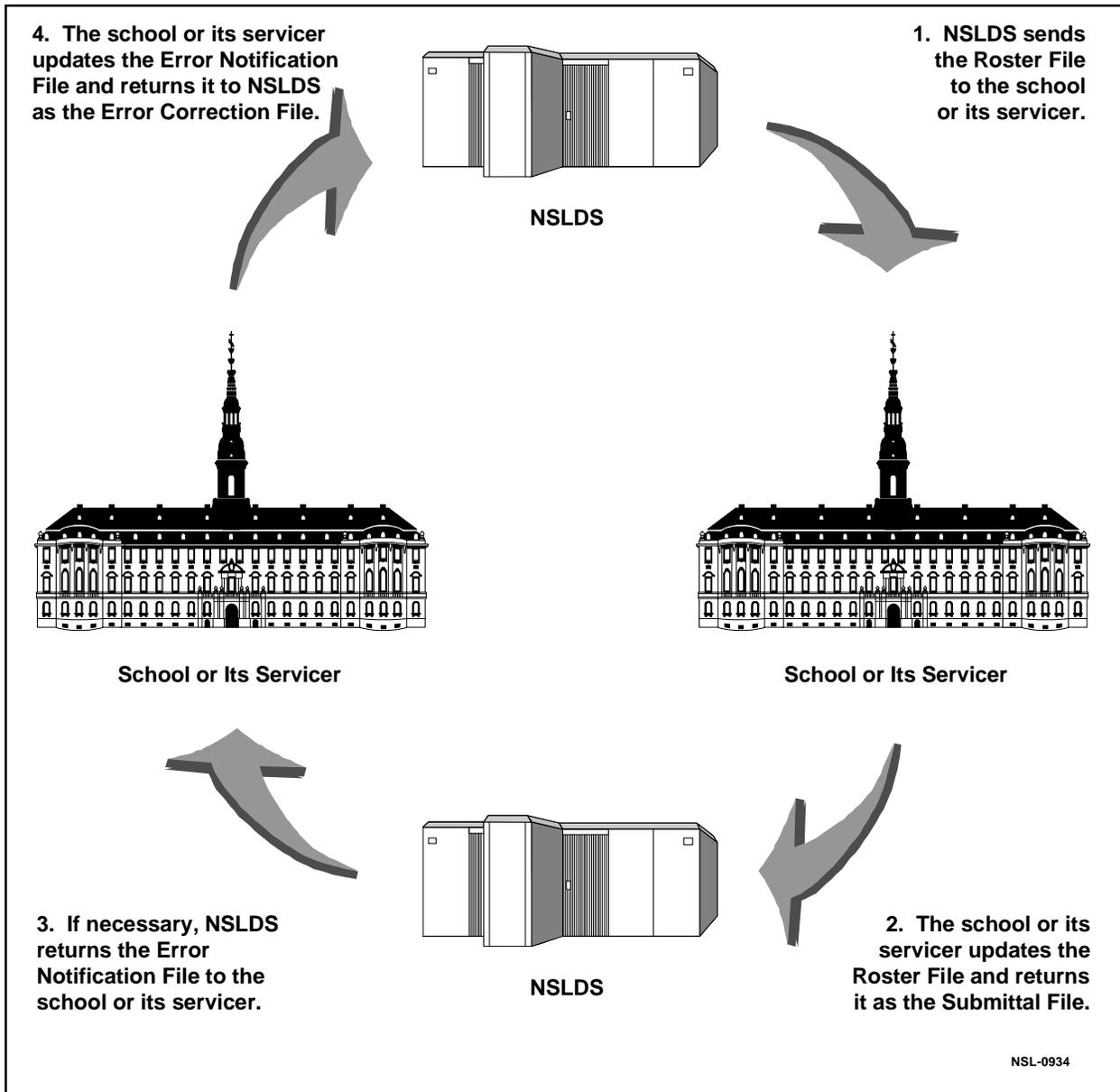


Figure 3-1, SSCR Cycle, School Phase

### 3.1.6 THE DATA PROVIDER AND THE SSCR ROSTER FILE

As noted earlier, discrepancies may exist between the data in the NSLDS files, which comes from the holder of the loan or the data provider, and your school's data. When this occurs and you propose corrections, NSLDS forwards the proposed changes to the data provider for its consideration. The data provider researches conflicts by checking its electronic and printed or written files, and contacting the originating lender or, if necessary, the student for clarification. If the data provider determines that the proposed corrections are warranted, it corrects its records and updates the NSLDS record, and the next SSCR Roster File your school receives will contain the updated information. If the data provider does not agree to the proposed changes, or if the

data provider has not yet responded to the change, NSLDS leaves the proposed changes in the “New” identifier fields, where you will find them in the next SSCR cycle. You may leave them there for future consideration, or you may withdraw your proposed changes by deleting the “New” data.

Figure 3-2 shows the second phase of the SSCR cycle, which involves NSLDS and data providers.

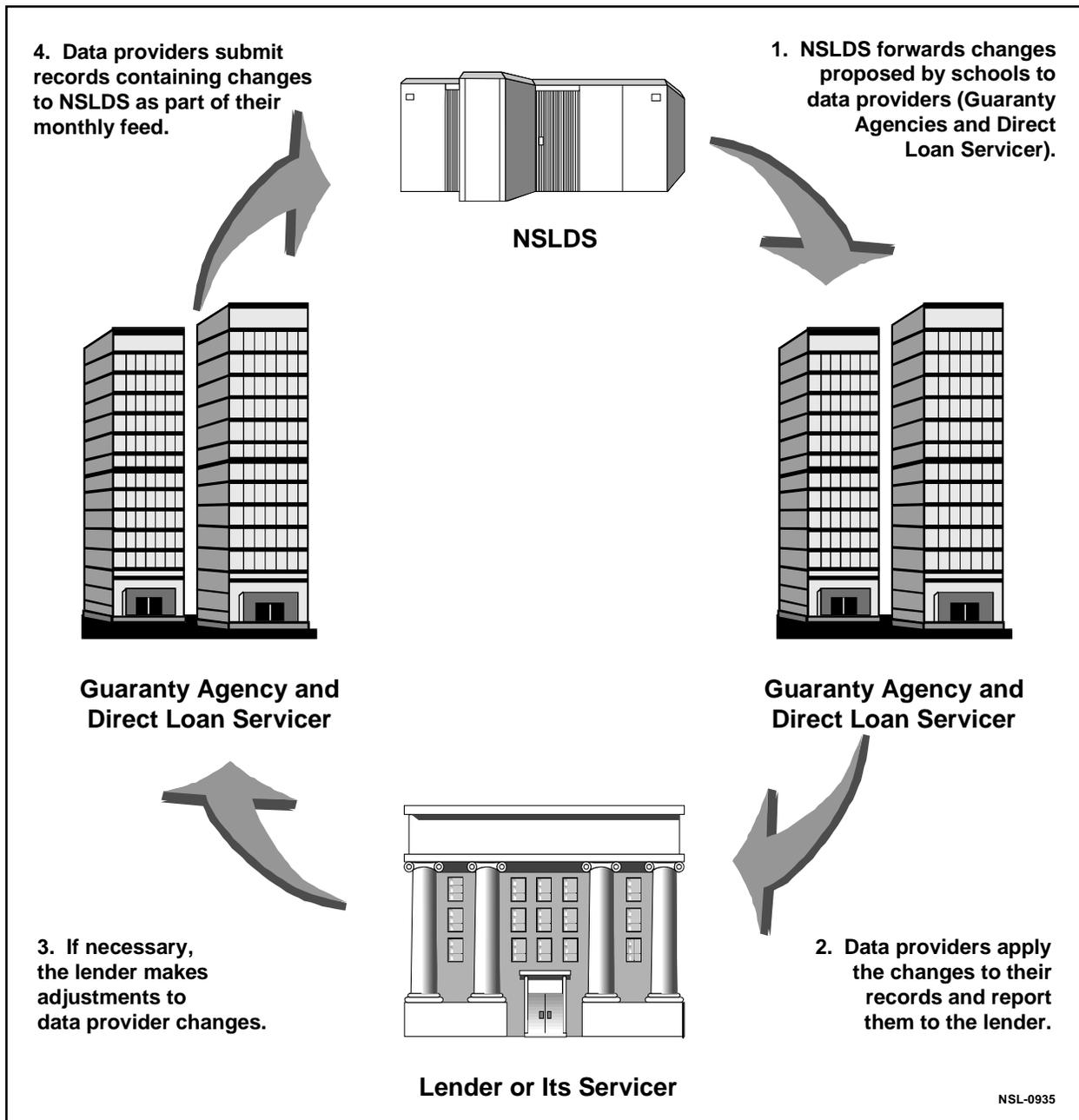


Figure 3-2, SSCR Cycle, Data Provider Phase

## 3.2 SENDING AND RECEIVING SSCR DATA

This section describes your options for receiving and sending SSCR data. You have two main choices: telecommunications or magnetic tape (reel or cartridge). If your school is not equipped to take advantage of either of these options, or if you simply prefer to delegate the SSCR automation, you may employ a servicer to receive, process, and send the SSCR files for you.

### 3.2.1 OVERVIEW OF DATA TRANSMISSION

Most schools find batch processing to be the most efficient method of data transmission. Batch processing occurs when the SSCR Detail Records are received from NSLDS as a single file (the Roster File), fully processed in your school's (or servicer's) computing environment, and then transmitted back to NSLDS—again as a single file (the Submittal File). It is the most useful way to process large quantities of data. NSLDS also supports online processing, which allows you to update small amounts of data.

Your options for sending and receiving SSCR data are:

- **Telecommunications (Title IV WAN)**—The Department of Education's Title IV Wide Area Network (WAN) is used to send and receive data electronically. You can log on to the Title IV WAN from a mainframe computer or a PC and send or receive data through the Store-and-Forward facility for batch processing of files. You must have the EDConnect software which is supplied when you sign up for Title IV WAN to use this facility.

From a PC, you can also log on to the Title IV WAN for online processing of SSCR records. You must have the NET\*CONNECT software which is supplied when you sign up for Title IV WAN to update records online. Online processing works best when you need to update only a small number of records or change your school's SSCR processing choices.

Mainframe connections will not support online processing.

To sign up for the Title IV WAN, call Title IV WAN Customer Service at 1-800-615-1189 and ask for enrollment information, forms, and the Title IV WAN User's Guide.

*Title IV WAN Customer  
Service can be reached at  
1-800-615-1189.*

- **Magnetic Tape (Reel or Cartridge)**—You can exchange SSCR files between your school and NSLDS on magnetic tape. NSLDS supports only mainframe tape reels and cartridges.

### 3.2.2 EXCHANGING SSCR DATA

This section describes in detail the available methods for exchanging SSCR data.

#### 3.2.2.1 The Title IV WAN Store-and-Forward Facility

The most efficient method of exchanging SSCR data is through the Title IV WAN Store-and-Forward facility. If you choose this facility as your data transmission medium, NSLDS will transmit your school's SSCR Roster File to your Title IV WAN electronic mailbox on the SSCR schedule that you have designated. You then retrieve the SSCR Roster File from your mailbox, using either your mainframe connectivity software or the PC communications software called EDConnect provided by ED. At this point you can process the SSCR Roster file.

*Coordinate Registrar and Financial Aid Office duties if both participate in the Title IV WAN.*

Figure 3-3 shows the data transmission cycle when you use the Store-and-Forward facility.

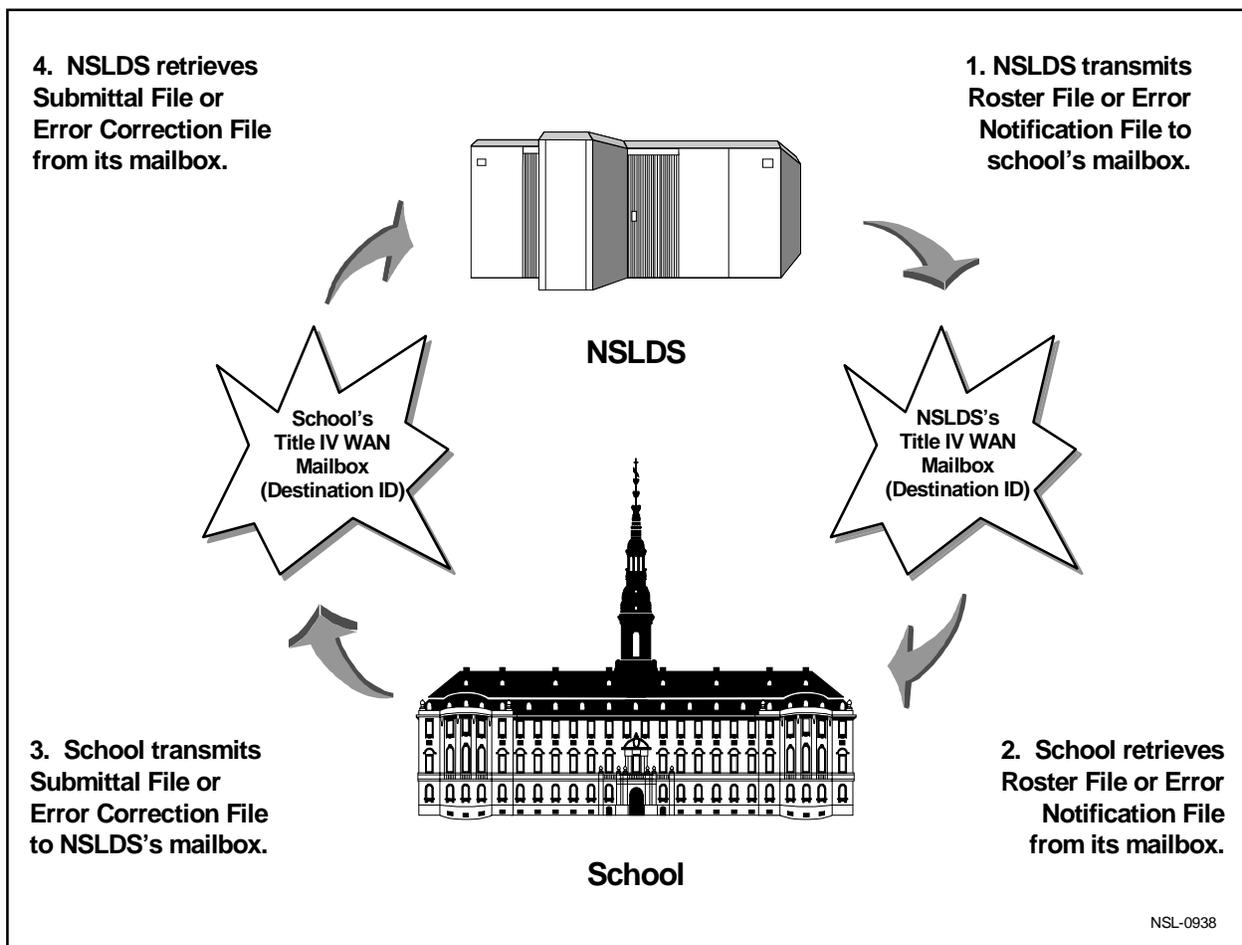


Figure 3-3, Store-and-Forward Facility

After you update the Roster File and it becomes the SSCR Submittal File, the transmittal process is reversed. You connect to the Store-and-Forward facility and transmit the Submittal File to the NSLDS mailbox, where NSLDS retrieves it. NSLDS then edits the Submittal File and updates the database with records that pass the edit. NSLDS also notifies the applicable data providers of any proposed changes to student information. NSLDS transmits the SSCR Error Notification File, which contains a count of accepted records and any Detail Records that failed the edits, to your mailbox. You will receive the Error Notification File from your mailbox. If the file contains records in error, correct them as needed and transmit the corrected file, now called the SSCR Error Correction File, to the NSLDS mailbox.

For complete instructions on using the Store-and-Forward facility, refer to the *Title IV WAN User's Guide*, which can be obtained from the Title IV WAN Customer Service Center at 1-800-615-1189.

### **3.2.2.2 Title IV WAN Online Processing**

Although not envisioned for use in regular SSCR reporting cycles, Title IV WAN online processing lets you directly access the NSLDS database to perform both inquiries and updates. You can view a student's data from a PC as it is stored in the database at that moment. Your changes and additions update the database immediately, not later as in batch processing. Like batch processing, though, you are allowed only to propose changes to student identifiers, in equivalent fields labeled "New", which must be reviewed and accepted by the data provider before the actual identifier data is changed.

This real-time, online access is most effective and cost-efficient when used to:

- Update the School Profile, when you need to change your contact person, reporting schedule, or transmission medium. The only way to change SSCR schedules is online.
- Perform ad hoc enrollment status changes between regular SSCR cycles.
- Correct previously reported data.

### **3.2.2.3 Magnetic Tape (Reel or Cartridge)**

Exchanging data electronically through the Title IV WAN is faster and requires less manual intervention than exchanging data on cartridge or reel tapes. However, if the size of your SSCR Roster File makes electronic exchange difficult, or if your computing department or servicer cannot support a link to the Title IV WAN, you can send and receive SSCR files by mail on magnetic tape. NSLDS prefers cartridges because they are more compact and easier to handle than reels.

Tapes are mailed to the school on the first business day of the month. The school prepares an SSCR Submittal File from the Roster File on the tape. The school must then return the Submittal File to NSLDS so it arrives within 30 days of the date and time when NSLDS sent the Roster File.

NSLDS supports the following EBCDIC magnetic standard label tape specifications:

- **Reels**
  - IBM 6250 BPI
  - IBM 1600 BPI
  - IBM 800 BPI
  
- **Cartridge**
  - IBM 3480

### **3.2.3 USING A SERVICER**

If your school already uses or is considering using a servicer for SSCR processing, you may choose to use that servicer to handle the SSCR process. You may designate the servicer when you sign up for the Title IV WAN or at any time thereafter, through the Title IV WAN forms. The SSCR cycle, when using a servicer, proceeds as follows:

1. NSLDS sends your school's SSCR Roster File to the servicer.
2. The servicer matches the Roster File to enrollment data that you provide to the servicer.
3. The servicer returns the SSCR files to NSLDS.
4. NSLDS processes the file and returns the Error Notification File to the servicer.
5. The servicer corrects any errors and returns the SSCR files to NSLDS.

The servicer chooses the transmission medium (Title IV WAN or magnetic tape) best suited to its computing environment.

As with any school/servicer arrangement for the administration of Title IV programs, the school remains responsible for submitting timely, accurate, and complete responses to SSCR requests and for maintaining proper documentation in accordance with 682.610(c) of 34 CFR.

### 3.3 SCHEDULING SSCR CYCLES

Under the Title IV federal loan programs, all schools must complete any SSCR Roster sent to it by ED or by a guaranty agency. In addition, when a student's enrollment status changes in any way that affects his or her deferment privileges, you must notify the lender within 30 days of the enrollment change through an ad hoc report, unless an SSCR is to be processed within 60 days of the enrollment change. An ad hoc report is one of the following:

- An unscheduled Submittal File (created on a PC using EDEExpress or on a mainframe) that is sent to NSLDS, which contains Detail Records for the students whose enrollment status has changed
- The online updating of student records using the SSCR functions of NSLDS

#### 3.3.1 GUIDELINES

Because different schools have different academic calendars, the SSCR process lets you determine how your school can best meet its reporting requirements. You may choose up to six cycles each year. You set up your reporting schedule through the Title IV WAN connection to NSLDS. These online SSCR functions are described in Chapter 6. When establishing your schedule, you must comply with the following:

- Regular term-based schools (semester, quarter, or trimester) must complete at least one SSCR cycle each regular term. A summer session does not count as a term.
- Schools that do not use regular terms must complete at least two SSCR cycles each year at dates that they choose, but the dates must be at least four months apart.
- All reporting cycles must be at least 60 days apart.

#### 3.3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

To fulfill the regulatory requirement for informing the lender of students whose enrollment status changes, ED recommends that you schedule an SSCR cycle every other month during the academic year. Such a schedule eliminates the need for ad hoc reporting. If you cannot schedule SSCR cycles that often, ED encourages you to schedule one or more cycles beyond your minimum requirement, to reduce the amount of ad hoc reporting as much as possible.

Figure 3-4 shows recommended SSCR cycle dates for schools on different academic calendars. You should modify these recommendations to take into account your school's workload throughout the year.

Bear in mind that you will receive an Error Notification File within three working days of sending your Submittal File, and you must correct any errors and return an Error Correction File within ten days of receipt. Consequently, you should avoid scheduling an SSCR cycle when resources are limited or unavailable.

Semester Schools	Quarter Schools	Other Schools
September	October	October
November	December	December
January	February	February
March	April	April
May or June	June	June
		August

Figure 3-4, Recommended SSCR Cycle Dates

Schools may change their schedule at any time, as long as they meet the minimum of two reporting cycles.

### 3.3.2.1 Processing the SSCR via EDEExpress

The file format for the NSLDS SSCR has been incorporated into EDEExpress. Refer to the EDEExpress User's Guide for instructions on importing, processing, and exporting the SSCR Roster Files.

### 3.3.2.2 Message Classes

Use the following message classes when processing SSCR data via Title IV WAN:

- **SSCRYYOP**—The initial SSCR Roster File sent to your school by NSLDS.
- **SSCRYYIN**—The completed SSCR rosters, also called Submittal Files (initial and error), that you return to NSLDS.
- **SSCEYYOP**—The Error/Notification File sent to your school by NSLDS.
- **SSCRYYIN**—The files generated as a result of ad hoc reporting.

Note: "YY" should be replaced with the last two digits of the current academic year. Thus, for the 1997-1998 academic year, "YY" should be replaced with "98".