

Georgia Department of Education

School Locale Codes

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Web site maintains a complete listing of locale codes. LEAs may find the locale code for the school district and each of the schools it serves at www.nces.ed.gov/ccd. Under the “Data Tools” tab, select “Search for Public Schools”.

Locale Codes

“Locale codes” are derived from a classification system originally developed by NCES in the 1980’s to describe a school’s location ranging from “large city” to “rural.” The codes are based on the physical location represented by an address that is matched against a geographic database maintained by the Census Bureau. This database is the Topographically Integrated and Geographically Encoded Referencing system, or TIGER. In 2005 and 2006, NCES supported work by the Census Bureau to redesign the original locale codes in light of changes in the U.S. population and the definition of key geographic concepts

School District Locale Code Assignment

A school district’s locale code is not assigned on the basis of the central office address. It is derived from the locale codes of the schools in the district. If 50 percent or more of the public school students attend schools with the same locale code, that locale code is assigned to the district. For example, if 60 percent of students were enrolled in schools with a “rural - distant” locale code, and 40 percent were enrolled in schools with a “town - small” locale code, the district would be assigned a “rural – distant” locale code. If no single locale code accounts for 50 percent of the students, then the major category (city, suburb, town, or rural) with the greatest percent of students determines the locale; the locale code assigned is the smallest or most remote subcategory for that category.

Title VI, Part B formula funds are allocated based on locale codes of 6, 7, and 8. According to the U.S. Census Bureau:

- A locale code of “6” indicates an area outside of a metropolitan statistical area (MSA) and has a population of at least 2,500 persons, but fewer than 25,000 persons.
- A locale code of “7” indicates a place outside a MSA and has a population of fewer than 2,500 persons.
- A locale code of “8” indicates a place that is inside a MSA and has a population of fewer than 2,500 persons.