



What's the difference between Required, Conditional and Optional?

REQUIRED – Must be reported for all student records. MSDS will produce an error if the data are not reported.

If a **component** is required, the file will be rejected on upload if it is not included in each student record.

- *Component Example: The Submitting Entity Component must always be reported.*

If a **characteristic** is required and the component in which it is included is submitted, the file will be rejected on upload if it is not included.

- *Characteristic Example: The 10/30 Day Rule characteristic must be reported any time the FTE Component is submitted.*

CONDITIONAL – These data MAY be required by MSDS for student records under certain conditions. An error will occur if the data are not reported when the student record meets the criteria that requires the data to be submitted.

- *Example: Attendance data are required when the collection is for the End of Year OR the student is being exited from the district.*
 - **Component level:** *If the Attendance Component is not submitted with each record in the EOY General Collection, MSDS will reject the file on upload.*
 - **Characteristic level:** *If an exit status code other than 19-continuing is provided in the Spring General Collection and the Attendance Component is not included, a record-level validation error will occur.*

OPTIONAL – This indicates that the MSDS **system** cannot determine when or for which students the data are required. This does not mean that if the data are applicable for a student, the data are not to be reported. You and your local student information system have to determine when it is required to submit the data.

- *Example: FTE is optional because MSDS cannot determine when a student meets the criteria to be counted in your membership for FTE. You need to identify which students are reported with the FTE Component and how much FTE is reported in each FTE characteristic. Failure to submit FTE data when it is applicable will result in no state aid payment for that student.*
 - **Component level:** *If an optional component is not submitted with each student record, the file will pass file validation.*
 - **Characteristic level:** *If an optional characteristic is not included in either a required or optional component, the file will pass validation.*

Remember:

OPTIONAL does **not** mean the data do not have to be reported when they are applicable to the student. It means the **MSDS system** cannot determine when or for which students the data are **REQUIRED**. It is up to you and your local system to identify when the data must be reported based on program requirements.
