FY 2026-27
EDITION

L STAR

EMPLOYMENT FILE

MINNESOTA

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR
LICENSING AND STANDARDS BOARD

STAR primer	L_A employment file	L_B assignment file	N_A non-licensed file

Staff Automated Report (STAR) Guidance Series

About this Handbook

The *Staff Automated Report (STAR) Employment (LA) File Guidance* handbook is part of the Staff Automated Report (STAR) Guidance Series. This handbook focuses exclusively on the Employment (LA) file.

Guidance within this publication is not meant to be exhaustive. Rather, it provides a general sequence of steps to be completed. Supplement this information as needed with additional resources published online at https://mn.gov/pelsb/districts/star/ and by participating in the STAR working sessions held throughout the collection time period. STAR working sessions are included on the Board calendar found on PELSB's website homepage.

If you are responsible for completing STAR data entry for your district, before proceeding in this guidebook ensure you have a valid Education Identity and Access Management (EDIAM). Also, make sure you have been designated as a STAR Coordinator by the district's EDIAM IOwA, identified official with authority.

Questions related specifically to this publication, or licensure compliance in general, may be submitted to:

Caren Custer

Data and Compliance Specialist

Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board

1021 Bandana Blvd. E, Suite 222, Saint Paul, MN 55108

Star.PELSB@state.mn.us

SY2026-27 Dates of Note

- **Thursday, October 1, 2026**: STAR opens for submissions
- **Thursday, October 1, 2026**: Snapshot Date. *This is not the due date.*
- **Wednesday, November 25, 2026:** STAR closes for submissions.

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Acronyms

DB: Database, refers to PELSB's database

EDIAM: Education Identity and Access Management

MDE: Minnesota Department of Education

PELSB: Minnesota Professional Educators Licensing and Standards Board

SIS: Student Information System

STAR: Staff Automated Report

STARWES: Staff Automated Report Web Edit System

Employment File Inclusions and Exclusions

An important note, ***PELSB does not make a distinction between temporary and permanent hires***. That is an employer designated status. If a person meets the three criteria included in the next section, they should be included in your district's Employment (LA) file.

Inclusions

If a person meets all three of the following criteria, they must be included in the Employment (LA) file:

1. Required to hold a PELSB-issued license;[1]
2. Directly employed by the reporting district;[2] and
3. Was newly hired, continued employment, went on leave, or termed employment between Oct. 1, of the previous year and Oct. 1, of the current reporting year.

Staff Serving in a Licensed *and* Non-Licensed Position

If a person is completing both a licensed and non-licensed assignment, they will need to have an Employment (LA), Assignment (LB), and Non-Licensed (NA) record.

Staff Hired and Termed Between Previous Oct. 1 and Current Oct. 1?

Staff required to hold a PELSB-issued license who are no longer with your district need to be reported with a termed date and status. This applies even if they were not included in the previous year's STAR submission. This means a district might report a staff person with both a new employment code and an inactive or termination code. In such an instance, report both a hire date and dismissal date.

Exclusions

Exclude the following categories of people:

- **NOT Required to Hold a PELSB-Issued License.** Anyone not required to hold a PELSB-issued license should not be reported in the Employment (LA) file.
- **Other Exclusions.** Additionally, there are other categories of people to exclude:
    - School board members
    - Short-call substitutes, *unless employed as a Building Reserve Substitute*
    - Coaches
    - People under 18 years of age

[1] There are people who must be licensed, but their license is not issued by PELSB. Examples include occupational therapists, physical therapists, and speech-language pathologists *assistants*. Those individuals should be included in the Non-Licensed (NA) file.

[2] Directly employed means on the district's payroll. The district can hire and fire. A person whose time is contracted through another district, organization, or entity should not be included.

Preparing for STARWES Operations

Before adding records into the Staff Automated Report Web Edit System (STARWES), data needs to be collected and coded to conform with STAR parameters.

Districts Have Multiple SIS Options

Districts have multiple options when it comes to collecting and retaining information on employees, students, and course scheduling. Some districts contract with SIS vendors. Others have their internal IT staff create bespoke databases. Still other districts are so small they may use a series of Excel files to track information.

PELSB has a Singular Guidance Option

What this means is that STARWES is the *only* system that each district has in common. This handbook will be based exclusively on STARWES. We trust district staff can make necessary adjustments as they navigate their internal system and PELSB's.

Before Starting within STARWES

Appendix A contains a list of all required data elements that need to be collected for the manual creation of records. Detailed information about each unique element is provided including tips and tricks about clearing validation errors. Appendix B contains information about the requirements for the Excel file direct upload and the Text file upload.

Download Last Year's Submission

In case you do not have your own copy of last year's submission; before getting started, PELSB recommends downloading the contents of each sandbox within STARWES:

1. Click on the name of the sandbox within the top navigation bar.
2. Do not enter anything into the fields, just click on the Search button. This returns the sandbox contents.
3. Scroll to the bottom of the screen.
4. Click the Download All button at the bottom left of the screen.

Nothing in the sandbox? Request a copy of last year's licensed files, Employment and Assignment, by emailing star.PELSB@state.mn.us Be sure to include the district number in the subject line. The Non-Licensed file must be requested from MDE.

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STARWES Order of Operations



☐ 1. Add Records

Manually create records within STARWES sandboxes, or upload via PELSB-provided Excel or Text file templates.



☐ 2. Audit (optional)

Use audit guide to catch and correct most commonly occurring errors or omissions.



☐ 3. Run Edits

Ensures records meet coding parameters. Repeat this stage as often as needed.



☐ 4. Validations

Errors generated for non-conforming coding. Cleared by district prior to file submissions. Repeat step as often as needed.



☐ 5. Submit Files

District's annual obligation is submission of files on or before published deadline.

https://mn.gov/pelsb/districts/star/ star.PELSB@state.mn.us Last updated: September 2026

STARWES Order of Operations

Let's get started! A gentle reminder, guidance within this publication is not meant to be exhaustive. Rather, it provides a general sequence of steps to be completed. Supplement this information as needed with additional resources published online at https://mn.gov/pelsb/districts/star/ and by participating in the STAR working sessions held throughout the collection time period. STAR working sessions are included on the Board calendar found on PELSB's website homepage.

Add Records



There are three methods of adding records into STARWES sandboxes:

1. Manually created records;
2. Excel file direct upload; or
3. Text file upload.

Manually created records. It is possible to manually create records within STARWES. This option is best for districts with small staff or for districts with limited staff turnover from year-to-year.

Excel file direct upload. PELSB provides a template that can be used to directly upload data into STARWES. Since the template is an Excel file, STAR Coordinators can copy and paste data extracted from their district's internal databases into the template.

Text file upload. Some software vendors have a module that enables districts to extract files to use for their STAR submission. Some of those extracted file versions initially begin as an Excel file. Each row of data must be modified to conform to strict formatting requirements. The resulting rows of data are then copied into a text file. It is the text file that gets uploaded into STARWES.

Add Records Stage Good Stuff to Know

- ✓ The link to access STARWES is published at: https://mn.gov/pelsb/districts/star/
- ✓ Within STARWES, the Clear/ Upload function clears the contents of the selected sandbox while simultaneously uploading the selected file. Even if the upload is unsuccessful, the sandbox contents will be cleared.

Audit

This stage is optional but strongly encouraged. Spending a few moments to catch and correct the most commonly occurring miscoding mistakes will reduce, and maybe even eliminate, validations errors that would need to be cleared. Reference the "Pre-Edit Audit" section which follows the next page.



Recommended Audits for Employment (LA) File

Begin by displaying all records within the sandbox. Click on the name of the file in the navigation header. Do not enter anything into the fields. Instead, click on the Search button. This will display the contents of the sandbox.

Search results. With sandbox records displayed, check the search results figure at the upper-left of the table. The number of search results should *approximately* match how many total licensed employees you would expect. This file should include a record for each person continuing employment, newly hired, went on leave, or termed employment between Oct. 1, of the previous year and Oct. 1, of the current reporting year.

General At-a-Glance Audit. Make sure that all fields contain an entry. Additionally, double-check that the data appears to be located within the appropriate fields. Example, if the formatting in an uploaded file is off the data will 'spillover' into adjacent columns. When this occurs, it is visually obvious. If this has occurred, it will be necessary to return to your upload file, correct the formatting, and re-upload the data and then re-run edits.

File Folder Number. In the first column, click on the "File Folder Number" title. This will sort the records by the file folder number. This number needs to be unique per person. Carefully review results to double-check you have not accidentally assigned the same number for more than one person. Every person in this file should have a file folder number. Make sure there are no records with all zeros in this field. Also, check the small numbers to make sure you did not accidentally use a license function code. For instance, 180100 seems to be one that frequently appears.

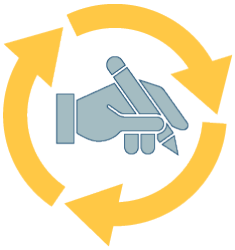
Name. In the second column, click on the "Name" title. This will sort records by name. Perform cursory review to ensure all names conform to formatting requirements of Last Name, First Name Middle Initial. Carefully review each of the records to ensure that all required records are included. Double-check that you have accounted for all required records.

While records are sorted by name, be sure to do one final audit. Look for a single person with more than one record. A single person *cannot* have more than one record in the Employment (LA) file. You are completing this audit to determine if someone is missing a record, or if there are duplicative records. If you reported a person as termed in the previous year's submission, delete the Employment (LA) record. Be sure to delete any accompanying Assignment (LB) records.

Gender. Make sure that all entries are coded either 'M' for Male, 'F' for Female, or 'U' for Undeclared.

Birth Date. Check for the oldest year of birth. You do this to get a sense of whether this is reasonable for your oldest licensed employee. Example, you would not expect to find a record with a birthdate over 80 years of age. Check for the youngest year of birth. Remember, you should not be including anyone younger than 18 years of age.

Run Edits



Once the records within the STARWES sandbox have been made as complete and accurate as possible, the STAR Coordinator needs to select the Run Edits option. Within STARWES, click on the name of the sandbox within the top navigation bar. Select the Run Edits option.

Run Edits Stage Good Stuff to Know

- ✓ Repeat this stage as often as needed.
- ✓ Do NOT Run Edits on Employment (LA) file until the Assignment (LB) file is also uploaded.

Validations

After the Run Edits stage is complete, click on the name of the sandbox within the top navigation bar. Select the Validations option.



Do you have a list of validation errors? If the number of records with validation errors is small, it is likely easiest to make corrections within the sandbox. After running edits, if there are hundreds of validation errors, PELSB recommends making needed corrections in the source of your data. Make corrections in the district's internal system, pull a new copy of data, upload it into STARWES, re-run edits, clear validations.

Validations Stage Good Stuff to Know

- ✓ Every single record in the Employment (LA) file will generate multiple errors if you complete the Run Edits stage before the Assignment (LB) file has been uploaded. Save yourself the panic. Wait to Run Edits once both the Employment (LA) and Assignment (LB) files are uploaded and ready to be validated.
- ✓ Click on the Edit link to open record. Carefully read the error message at the top of the record. That message contains guidance on how to clear the error.
- ✓ Repeat the add records stage and repeat the run edits stage as many times as needed.
- ✓ The goal is to have a message indicating "No records found."
- ✓ *This phase does not check for licensure violations. The validation phase ensures data meets STARWES coding parameters*.

Submit Files



Once all validation errors have been cleared the next step is to submit the file. The Employment (LA) and Assignment (LB) files need to be submitted together. Submit the files by selecting the Submit option under the Home category on the navigation bar. Click on the radio button to the right of the word "Licensed." Click on the Submit button The "Submitted Results" table will fill in with the date submitted timestamp and total count of records.

Submit Files Stage Good Stuff to Know

- ✓ *Clearing validation errors does not submit files. District staff must complete the submit file process.*
- ✓ STARWES generates an FTE document available for download upon submission of the Employment (LA) and Assignment (LB) files.

- Download and review the contents of this document. Best practice would be to review each row of data. At minimum, sort by the FTE and look for the highest and lowest amounts. This allows identification of FTEs more than or lower than expected levels.

✓ A district can repeat the cycle of adding records, running edits, clearing validations, and submitting files as often as needed to correct records, but only if STARWES is still open for collection.

✓ Once all three files have been submitted, take a screenshot of the "Submitted Results" table for your own records. Download the FTE file for your own records.

Optional Operation Stage

A district's obligation is met once they have submitted all three of the required STAR files. If a district submits their files prior to the submission deadline, they may attempt to clear up any existing violations on their own. This is entirely optional. Alternatively, a district can choose to wait until PELSB contacts them during the data clean up phase.

Appendix A: Manual Records Creation Method

Required Data Elements

Records in the Employment (LA) file consist of demographic and salary-related information. This appendix contains a list of the required data elements for the Employment (LA) file. Use this reference to identify information that must be collected and reported for each person. Detailed information for each unique element includes tips and tricks for clearing validation errors. The validation stage does not check for licensure violations. This stage simply ensures data conforms to STARWES coding parameters.

FILE FOLDER NUMBER (FFN)



- **Number of Characters**: Seven (7)
- **Character Type**: Numeric
- **Range or Limits**: 0000001 to 9999999
- **Information**: A File Folder Number (FFN), also referred to as a license number, is issued by PELSB once an application payment has been successfully processed.
    - Existence of an FFN does NOT guarantee a license has been approved and awarded.
    - Use PELSB's License Lookup to verify accuracy of FFN, ***and existence of valid license***.
    - If employee's FFN is only six-digits then add a leading zero. For example, 123456 would be entered as 0123456.

Validation Hints

- **File Folder Number duplication found**. Occurs is two or more people in the file are reported with the same file folder number (FFN). Correct as needed.
- **File Folder Number is Invalid.** Needs to be seven digits long. If FFN is only six digits add a leading zero. Example, FFN 123456 would be entered as 0123456.
- **File Folder Number not found in Educators DB.** FFN does not exist. Check data entry accuracy.

STAFF NAME



- **Number of Characters**: Limited to forty-eight (48)
- **Character Type**: Alphabetic
- **Format**: Last Name, First Name MI
- **Information**: Enter name as it appears on the person's employment eligibility document. Example, Robert not Bobby. If document name does not match name displayed on PELSB's License Lookup, staff will need to update their PELSB Educators online account. Detailed instructions are published on PELSB's website: Updating My Name or Contact Information

Validation Hints

Last Name does not match Educators DB. Last name must exactly match spelling, spacing, and punctuation displayed on License Lookup. If attempts to correct are unsuccessful, contact PELSB via star.PELSB@state.mn.us

Name is Invalid. Formatting does not conform to STARWES parameter of Last Name, First Name MI

BIRTH DATE



- **Number of Characters**: Eight (8)
- **Character Type**: Numeric
- **Format**: Enter as four-digit year, followed by two-digit month, and two-digit day. Example YYYYMMDD.
- **Information**: District-entered data needs to match exactly to PELSB's Educators database.

Validation Hints

- **Birth Date does not match Educators DB.** The district-entered birthdate entered does not match the birthdate listed on the staff's license record. Verify that the file folder number (FFN) has been entered correctly. Double-check that date of birth has been entered accurately. If error is not resolved, contact PELSB via star.PELSB@state.mn.us
- **Birth Date is Invalid**. Incorrectly formatted. To meet STARWES coding parameters must be YYYYMMDD. Single digit months or days should be preceded with a zero. Example, January would be entered as 01 and not 1.

GENDER



- **Number of Characters**: One (1)
- **Character Type**: Alphabetic
- **Allowable Designations**: F for Female; M for Male; U for Undeclared
- **Information**: PELSB recognizes that gender is not binary. The agency continues to work on inclusive terminology for gender identification. Until such time PELSB can incorporate additional choices into its online systems, please use Undeclared, or U, for individuals not identifying as male or female. We appreciate your understanding as we continue to bring our system up to date

Validation Hints

- **Gender does not match Educators DB.** Verify file folder number (FFN) has been entered accurately. If that does not resolve issue, contact PELSB via star.PELSB@state.mn.us
- **Gender is Invalid.** Field must contain entry. Allowable designations are M, F, or U.

ETHNICITY



- **Number of Characters**: One (1)
- **Character Type**: Alphabetic
- **Allowable Designations**: Y for Yes; N for No
- **Information**: This field indicates if the person identifies as Hispanic or Latino. By replying yes, this person will only be counted as Hispanic/ Latino even if additional race is reported.

Validation Hints

- **Ethnicity Hispanic/ Latino is Invalid.** This field must contain either a Y or N.

RACE	• **Number of Characters**: One (1) for each sub-element • **Character Type**: Alphabetic • **Allowable Designations**: Y for Yes; N for No • **Information**: A response is required for each sub-element. At least one reply must be Y for Yes. Individuals who identify with more than one race will be categorized as multiracial in the PELSB database. They will count as two or more races in aggregated reports. Due to this, some districts choose to enter only one race. ***Please enter the race information which the staff person identifies.***
Validation Hints	• **Race [fill in the blank] is Invalid.** Any validation errors indicting a race is invalid means the entry needs to have a reply of wither Y or N. • **Race is Invalid.** At least one racial designation needs to be answered as Y for Yes.

More About Reporting on Race for STAR

PELSB is partnering with the state's IT Department to ensure the agency's databases conform to revised federal policy for collecting, maintaining, and reporting data on race and ethnicity. The Board will comply by the effective date of March 28, 2029.

PELSB has modeled race and ethnicity options on the federal reporting standards.

Hispanic/ Latino. The federal definition includes person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American or other Spanish culture or origin; regardless of race including, but not limited to, Colombian, Ecuadorian, Guatemalan, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Salvadoran, Spaniard, Spanish, Spanish-American, etc.

American Indian or Alaskan Native. The federal definition includes people who have origins in any of the original peoples of Central, North, or South America and who maintain cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.

Asian. Includes persons having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, but not limited to, Asian Indian, Burmese, Chinese, Filipino, Hmong, Karen, Korean, Vietnamese, etc.

Native Hawai'ian or Other Pacific Islander. Includes persons having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawai'i, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

Black or African American. Includes persons having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa including, but not limited to, African American, Ethiopian, Oromo, Liberian, Nigerian, Somali, etc.

White or Caucasian. Includes people who have origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS



- Number of Characters: Two (2)
- Character Type: Numeric
- Information: Accurately reporting employment status is incredibly important. Take care to ensure employees are not incorrectly reported as newly hired for multiple years in a row.
- Allowable Designations: Choose the most appropriate designation:
    - **00**: Default value used for returning staff who were reported as working with your district the previous year. Also use for staff who will be reported with terminated employment.
    - **01**: Newly licensed staff person who is a Minnesota graduate *OR* is being reported for the first time since receiving a Minnesota license.
    - **02**: Staff returning after a break in service or was not reported the previous submission. *Years of experience must be reported when using this code.*
    - **03**: Transferred from another public Minnesota district and was reported on the previous submission.
    - **04**: Transferred from another school in another state, country, or Minnesota non-public school, and was not reported on the previous submission. *Years of experience must be reported when using this status code.*
    - **05**: Newly licensed person that is an out of state or out of country graduate and reported in STAR for the first time in a licensed position.
    - **06**: Long-term substitute is an individual filling a position for more than 20 consecutive school days and or acting as Teacher of Record. Use this code only if the person is considered an employee of the district.
    - **07**: Employed less than one year. Can be used for an employee hired after October 1 of the previous year who did not return this year. Only use if it is unknown what the employment status was for this person.
    - **08**: Transferred from a non-licensed position to a licensed position *within your district*. If employee is moving from a licensed to non-licensed position this is a change of status. Review Inactive, Transfer, Termination status element.
    - **19**: Missed employment on most recent STAR submission. For example, person was employed the previous year before October 1, and is returning this current year, but was not reported on district's STAR submission in previous year.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Validation Hints	• **Employment Status of 01 or 05 is Invalid.** Do NOT enter Years of Experience for either of these status designations. • **Employment Status of 02 or 04 is Invalid**. Both status designations require Years of Experience to be entered. Each sub-element must have a response. Enter 00 if the employee does not have experience in that category. • **Employment Status cannot be Default (00)**. If an employee was not reported in STARWES for the previous year's submission they cannot be reported with this designation. If this person was employed as of October 1 of the previous year and was missed in reporting use the code designation 19. • **Employment Status is Invalid**. Field is blank or contains an invalid designation code. • **Employment Status must be greater than 00**. Do NOT include a hire date for employees with a status designation of 00. If the person is a new hire or is reported returning from leave, then the code designation must be greater than 00.

HIRE OR RETURN FROM LEAVE DATE



- **Number of Characters**: Six (6)
- **Character Type**: Numeric
- **Format**: Four-digit year followed by two-digit month. Example, 202609
- **Information**: Used to report people hired or returned from leave after October 1 of previous year through and up to October 1 of current reporting year. ***Hire date should be left blank*** for employees reported with Employment Status 00 Default, Returning Staff.

Validation Hints	• **Hire Date Missing or Invalid.** Any Employment Status between 01 and 08 must have a Hire Date.



- **Number of Characters**: Two (2)
- **Character Type**: Numeric
- **Information**: Default status for all records for this element is 00, indicating that the employee is active in the reporting year.
- **Allowable Designations**: Choose the most appropriate designation from the applicable status category.
    - ***Leave of Absence.*** Applicable when employee is still under contract with the district, but not currently in an active position. *Update annually until employee returns to active position or terms employment.*
        - **21**: Maternity, Paternity, or Adoption
        - **22**: Illness
        - **23**: Personal Obligations, Other
        - **24**: Travel
        - **25**: Professional Growth
        - **26**: Military Service
        - **28**: Extended leave, Alternative Career Exploration, Sabbatical
        - **29**: Employed but has no assignment at the time of reporting
    - ***Intra-District Transfer***
        - **30**: Intra-district transfer from a licensed to non-licensed position.
    - ***Termed***
        - **46**: Staff reduction
        - **47**: Personal reasons
        - **49**: Retirement
        - **50**: Death
        - **51**: Educator in another Minnesota district
        - **52**: Educator in another state or outside of the United States
        - **54**: Other educational position
        - **57**: Not offered continued employment for reasons other than staff reduction
        - **59**: Long-term substitute used only when individual was reported as employed on the district's most recent previous STAR submission.
        - **60**: Reason for no longer employed unknown or other

INACTIVE, TRANSFER, TERMINATION

Validation Hints	• **Inactive, Transfer, or Termination is Invalid.** Field is blank or invalid code entered. Refer to list of allowable designations and make necessary corrections. • **Inactive, Transfer, or Termination must be greater than 00.** If employee has been reported as transferring to non-licensed position, going on leave, or terminating employment then the status code cannot be 00.

TERMINATION OR LEAVE EFFECTIVE DATE



- **Number of Characters**: Six (6)
- **Character Type**: Numeric
- **Format**: Four-digit year followed by two-digit month. Example, 202609
- **Information**: Used to report staff who went on leave or were termed after October 1 of previous year through and up to October 1 of current reporting year. ***Term date should be left blank*** for employees reported with Term Status 00 Staff Returning or New Staff.

Validation Hints	• **Termination Date is Missing or Invalid.** Any inactive, transfer, or term status of greater than 00 must include an effective date. Entry needs to conform to YYYYMM. Example, June 2026 would be 202606.

CONTRACT SALARY



- **Number of Characters**: Six (6)
- **Character Type**: Numeric
- **Range or Limit**: Between 000000 and 999999
- **Information**: If salary is less than six figures, then figure entered must be preceded by zeros. Example, if annual salary is $50,000 correct entry format is 050000 and NOT 500000. The former indicates $50,000, the latter $500,000, or half million.
    - Round to the nearest whole dollar. Do not use commas or decimals.
    - Report salary effective on October 1 Snapshot date, even if salary changes after due to contract update.
    - Report only salary pertaining to licensed assignment(s). Do NOT include salary paid for non-licensed assignments.
    - Include incentives as well as payment for optional and overload periods. Do NOT include benefits or salary for extracurricular activities like coaching or summer school.
    - For people paid on an hourly basis, estimate annual salary by multiplying hourly rate by contracted allowable hours.
    - For individuals with inactive or termed employment, report 000000.

Validation Hints

- **Contract Salary is Invalid.** Formatted incorrectly. STARWES requirements are six digits. Any salary amount of less than six figures needs to be preceded with zeros when needed. Do not use commas.
- **Contract Salary is over the allowed Maximum.** Salary is over the maximum allowed. Check to ensure the salary was entered correctly and, if needed, is preceded by zeros. If salary is accurate, check to ensure assignment information is correct.

More About Reporting on Contract Salary for STAR

State government, federal government, and assorted other organizations use salary data in multiple ways. Minnesota legislators use this data when determining funding or grants. Inaccurate information could affect which districts qualify for funding and or the amount of funding awarded.

Average salary is determined by dividing an individual's reported contracted salary by their reported FTE. In turn, these individual calculations are used to determine each district's average salary. Salaries appearing to be too high or too low will not be included in the average salary report. The district average salary data will be annotated with the directive to contact PELSB for additional information.

CONTRACT DAYS



- **Number of Characters**: Three (3)
- **Character Type**: Numeric
- **Range or Limits**: Between 000 and 265
- **Information**: Total number of days the employee is obligated to report on for employment in a contract year. Enter 000 for any employee being reported as termed.

Validation Hints

- **Contract Days is Invalid.** Formatting is incorrect. STARWES requires three digits between 000 and 265.

HIGHEST EDUCATION LEVEL



- **Number of Characters**: Two (2)
- **Character Type**: Numeric
- **Information**: All staff should be reported with their actual highest education level. This does not need to match district's internal records maintained for purposes of lane changes. Ensure that at least the degree level is accurately reported. This data is used for the Minnesota Report Card to meet ESSA reporting requirements.
- **Allowable Designations**: Choose the designation which most accurately reflects the education level achieved by the employee. Not being pursued but has been achieved.
    - **01**: 0-2 years of college
    - **02**: 3 years of college
    - **03**: Bachelor's degree awarded
    - **04**: Bachelor's degree + 15-29 additional credits beyond bachelor's degree
    - **05**: Bachelor's degree + 30-44 additional credits beyond bachelor's degree
    - **06**: Bachelor's degree + 45-59 additional credits beyond bachelor's degree
    - **07**: Bachelors' degree + 60 or more additional credits beyond bachelor's degree
    - **08**: Master's degree
    - **09**: Master's degree + 15-29 additional credits beyond master's degree
    - **10**: Master's degree + 30-44 additional credits beyond master's degree
    - **11**: Master's degree + 45-59 additional credits beyond master's degree
    - **12**: Master's degree + 60 or more credits beyond master's degree
    - **13**: Ed. Specialist, a specialist degree in education beyond a master's degree
    - **14**: Doctoral degree

Validation Hints	• **Highest Education Level is Invalid.** Field must contain entry. Response must conform with allowable designations.

OUT OF DISTRICT ASSIGNMENT



- **Number of Characters**: One (1)
- **Character Type**: Alphabetic
- **Allowable Designations**: Y for Yes; N for No
- **Information**:
  - Report 'Y' for Yes when:
    - Employee's contract FTE is 1.0 because they provide instruction or related service within your district ***AND*** another district. Such as instances when a district holds a contract with a non-public school for licensed instruction such as special education.
  - Report 'N' for No when:
    - Employee's contracted FTE is fulfilled completely within your district.
    - Also, use when a person works 1.0 FTE within your district, even if they also work in another district. The other district must report that assignment as an intentional overload assignment.

Validation Hints

- **Out of District is Invalid.** Entry is blank or does not conform to STARWES parameters. Correct as needed.
- **Out of District N and Full-Time needs Total FTE >=0.80.** This validation error generates when the employee has been reported as full-time, working completely within the district, and the total assignment time is less than 1,440 minutes per week. Check all assignment records to ensure periods per week and length of period have been entered accurately.
- **Outside of District N needs Assignment**. Occurs when an Employment (LA) record exists but no Assignment (LB) record exists. If the employee completes the entirety of their FTE outside of the district, that is you are the employing district and all time is contracted by other districts, then change Out of District to Y for Yes. If the person works within the reporting district, create applicable Assignment (LB) records.
- **Outside of District Y needs Total FTE <1**. A district should not report an employee as Outside of District Y for Yes if they are also reporting full-time assignments. Outside of District should only be Y for Yes when the employees' assignments within the district are less than full-time and they are providing instruction or services to another district as part of their full-time employment.
- **Reported Full-Time at another District**. Verify file folder number entered correctly. Next, if you know this person works in other districts, verify with those districts that your district should be reporting the employment. Finally, if you cannot resolve on your own, contact PELSB via star.PELSB@state.mn.us

FULL-TIME/ PART-TIME



- **Number of Characters**: One (1)
- **Character Type:** Alphabetic
- **Allowable Designations**: F for Full-Time; P for Part-Time
- **Information**: STAR uses 1,800 minutes per week as the 1.0 Full-Time Equivalency (FTE).
    - Use 'F' for Full-Time
        - Licensed employment equals or exceeds 1,440 minutes per week.
        - Person serves part-time as teacher and part-time as an administrator.
        - Person is contracted for full-time employment but provides services outside of the district for part of the day or week.
        - Person is contracted for full-time employment even if they do not have an active assignment on the October 1 Snapshot Date. In this situation, the person would be reported with an Inactive Status code of 29.
    - Use 'P' for Part-Time
        - Licensed employment is less than 1,440 minutes per week.

If the employee works in both a licensed and non-licensed position, then both the Employment (LA) record and Non-Licensed (NA) record should be reported as part-time.

Validation Hints

- **Full-Time/ Part-Time is Invalid.** An FTE with total assignment time of 1,440 minutes or higher per week should be reported as F for Full-Time.
- **Total FTE exceeds 1.** This validation error is generated when total assignment time exceeds 1,800 minutes per week. Verify you have not accidentally entered duplicate records. Check that reported periods per week and length of periods were entered accurately. Intentional overloads need to have a Mode of Teaching of L for Online Learning or X for Extra Assignment.



- **Number of Characters**: Two (2) for each sub-element
- **Character Type**: Numeric
- **Range or Limits**: Between 00 and 99
- **Information**: *ONLY* used when reporting Employment Status as **02** Staff returning from break in service; or **04** Transferred from a school in another state, country or Minnesota non-public school.
    - Contains four sub-elements: Superintendent, Principal, Classroom Teacher, and Other.
    - For staff serving in more than one area, report only one category per year prioritizing as follows: superintendent, principal, teacher, and then other. For example, if your superintendent is also an elementary principal, the year of experience should be applied to superintendent.

Validation Hints

- **Years of Experience as [fill in the blank] is Invalid.** Entries need to be numeric values of 00-99 and should not include the current year. Only enter Years of Experience for Employment Status of 02 or 04.
- **Years of Experience Total is Invalid.** Must conform to STARWES coding parameters of two numeric digits. Only use for Employment Status of 02 or 04.
- **Years of Experience Total is Invalid for Age.** This validation error is generated when the birth date or years of experience is incorrect.

More About Reporting on Years of Experience for STAR

All staff with less than three (3) years of experience are considered inexperienced under ESSA. When determining years of experience a district:

- May include years of service completed outside of Minnesota or in a Minnesota non-public school setting. Only years when a valid license for the position was held should be included.
- May include long-term subbing positions that occurred between STAR submissions, but only when the following conditions are met: each position was a minimum of 30 days, and the teacher provided long-term subbing for a combined minimum of 90 student contact and or school days.
- Does NOT include time spent working as a Short Call Substitute.
- Does NOT include inactive time regardless of whether they receive a salary.

If years of experience are unknown, email star.PELSB@state.mn.us In subject line “FFN: requesting YOE.”



- **Number of Characters**: Ten (10)
- **Character Type**: Alpha or Numeric
- **Information**: This field is completely optional. Use if desired to enter helpful reference. Example, enter employee's last name. If using the Text file upload method and not using this field for any information you must enter ten spaces.

Validation Hints

- There are no validation errors for this element.

Appendix B: Document Upload Method

There are two upload methods. One uses an Excel template directly upload. The other initially uses an Excel template from which the information is copied and pasted into a Text file. Ultimately, the *Text* file is the uploaded document. Reference respective tables in Appendix A for detailed information about each data element, including allowable code designations.

Excel Template Direct Upload

Districts wishing to use the Excel template direct upload method should request the templates by emailing star.PELSB@state.mn.us This method became effective September 30, 2025. For SY2026-27, PELSB will continue to directly oversee use of this method to ensure districts are able to successfully upload documents.

The Excel template used for this method contains the following columns. Be prepared to collect and enter all the required data.

Column	Element Name	Character Limit	Format	Notes
A	Record Type Indicator	2	LA	Enter LA for each row; this element is required only for upload method.
B	District Number	4	Numeric digits	Use leading zeros when required. Example, Special School District 1 Minneapolis Public Schools would be entered as 0001.
C	District Type	2	Numeric digits	Uncertain about district type? Use MDE ORGS to identify.
D	File Folder Number	7	Numeric digits	Add leading zeros if FFN is 6-digits in length. Example, FFN 123456 would be entered as 0123456.
E	Staff Name	48	Last Name, First Name MI	Must match PELSB's License Lookup.
F	Gender	1	Letter	F for Female; M for Male; U for Undeclared
G	Birth Date	8	Numeric digits	Do NOT use dashes or slashes. Entered YYYYMMDD. The values in the column must be this format, and not a formula.
H	Employment Status	2	Numeric digits	Refer to respective tables in Appendix A for allowable code designations.
I	Termination/ Inactive Status	2	Numeric digits	Refer to respective tables in Appendix A for allowable code designations.

Column	Element Name	Character Limit	Format	Notes
J	Contract Salary	6	Numeric digits	Do NOT use commas or decimals. If employee is termed, enter six (6) zeros. If salary is less than six digits enter leading zeros. Example, a salary of $50,000 would be reported as 050000
K	Highest Education Level	2	Numeric digits	Refer to respective tables in Appendix A for allowable code designations.
L	Contract Days	3	Numeric digits	Enter all three zeros for termed employees. Otherwise, enter between 001 and 265 for all other employees.
M	Experience: Superintendent	2	Numeric digits	Only needs entry if Employment Status is 02 or 04.
N	Experience: Principal	2	Numeric digits	Only needs entry if Employment Status is 02 or 04.
O	Experience: Teacher	2	Numeric digits	Only needs entry if Employment Status is 02 or 04.
P	Experience: Other	2	Numeric digits	Only needs entry if Employment Status is 02 or 04.
Q	Out of District	1	Alpha character	Enter Y for Yes; N for No
R	Full Time/ Part Time	1	Alpha character	Enter F for Full-Time; P for Part-Time
S	District Use	10	Characters or spaces	Optional use. A district may choose to use this field.
T	Hispanic/ Latino	1	Alpha	Enter Y for Yes; N for No
U	American Indian or Alaskan Native	1	Alpha	Enter Y for Yes; N for No
V	Asian	1	Alpha	Enter Y for Yes; N for No
W	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1	Alpha	Enter Y for Yes; N for No
X	Black or African American	1	Alpha	Enter Y for Yes; N for No
Y	White	1	Alpha	Enter Y for Yes; N for No
Z	Hire Date	6	Numeric digits	Do NOT use dashes or slashes. Entered YYYYMM. The values in the column must be this format, and not a formula.
AA	Termination Date	6	Numeric digits	Do NOT use dashes or slashes. Entered YYYYMM. The values in the column must be this format, and not a formula.

Text File Upload

Both the Excel template and directions for the Excel to Text file transfer are published here: https://mn.gov/pelsb/districts/star/

- PELSB makes available an Excel template which districts can use for this upload method. The Excel file contains three tabs, one for each respective file: Employment (LA), Assignment (LB), or Non-Licensed (NA).
- Character limits are exact. Any deviation will result in unsuccessful file upload.
- Once all data is entered into the Excel template, final column must be copied and pasted into Notepad. Use of Notepad is important to ensure the upload works correctly.

The Excel template used for this method contains the following columns. Be prepared to collect and enter all the required data.

Column	Element Name	Character Limit	Format	Notes
A	Record Type Indicator	2	LA	Enter LA for each row; this element is required only for upload method.
B	District Number	4	Numeric digits	Use leading zeros when required. Example, Special School District 1 Minneapolis Public Schools would be entered as 0001.
C	District Type	2	Numeric digits	Uncertain about district type? Use
D	File Folder Number	7	Numeric digits	Add leading zeros if FFN is 6-digits in length. Example, FFN 123456 would be entered as 0123456.
E	Social Security Number	9	Enter 9 zeros	Please do NOT enter SSN. Enter nine (9) zeros for each row of records.
F	Staff Name	48	Last Name, First Name MI	If employee's name is less than 48 characters, use the space bar to meet character requirement. Failure to meet exact character limits for Staff Name is the most frequent cause of upload error.
G	Gender	1	Letter	F for Female; M for Male; U for Undeclared
H	Birth Date	8	Numeric digits	Do NOT use dashes or slashes. Entered YYYYMMDD. The values in the column must be this format, and not a formula.
I	Race/ Ethnicity	1	Enter 0 for all records	This is an artifact of a previous version of STAR. PELSB now models its collection on federal reporting. If using the Text upload, districts must enter a placeholder of zero (0) in each record.
J	Employment Status	2	Numeric digits	Refer to respective tables in Appendix A for allowable code designations.

Column	Element Name	Character Limit	Format	Notes
K	Termination/ Inactive Status	2	Numeric digits	Refer to respective tables in Appendix A for allowable code designations.
L	Contract Salary	6	Numeric digits	Do NOT use commas or decimals. If employee is termed, enter six (6) zeros. If salary is less than six digits enter leading zeros. Example, a salary of $50,000 would be reported as 050000
M	Highest Education Level	2	Numeric digits	Refer to respective tables in Appendix A for allowable code designations.
N	Contract Days	3	Numeric digits	Enter all three zeros for termed employees. Otherwise, enter between 001 and 265 for all other employees.
O	Experience: Superintendent	2	Numeric digits	This cell must contain response. Enter double zeros (00) if there is no experience in this licensure category.
P	Experience: Principal	2	Numeric digits	This cell must contain response. Enter double zeros (00) if there is no experience in this licensure category.
Q	Experience: Teacher	2	Numeric digits	This cell must contain response. Enter double zeros (00) if there is no experience in this licensure category.
R	Experience: Other	2	Numeric digits	This cell must contain response. Enter double zeros (00) if there is no experience in this licensure category.
S	Out of District	1	Alpha character	Enter Y for Yes; N for No
T	Full Time/ Part Time	1	Alpha character	Enter F for Full-Time; P for Part-Time
U	District Use	10	Characters or spaces	Optional use. A district may choose to use this field. Each record must contain 10 characters and or spaces.
V	Hispanic/ Latino	1	Alpha	Enter Y for Yes; N for No
W	American Indian or Alaskan Native	1	Alpha	Enter Y for Yes; N for No
X	Asian	1	Alpha	Enter Y for Yes; N for No
Y	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1	Alpha	Enter Y for Yes; N for No
Z	Black or African American	1	Alpha	Enter Y for Yes; N for No
AA	White	1	Alpha	Enter Y for Yes; N for No
AB	Hire Date	6	Numeric digits	Do NOT use dashes or slashes. Entered YYYYMM. The values in the column must be this format, and not a formula.

Column	Element Name	Character Limit	Format	Notes
AC	Termination Date	6	Numeric digits	Do NOT use dashes or slashes. Entered YYYYMM. The values in the column must be this format, and not a formula.
AD	Filler	5	Spaces	Enter five (5) spaces in each row