Troubleshooting School or LEA IDs Converted by Excel

CSV files are designed to be text-based files where each value is separated by a comma. Opening a CSV file in Excel will sometimes change the formatting of a cell to make it easier to work with numeric values or display long strings of numbers like the School ID or LEA ID as scientific notation (e.g., 4.56785E+11). Unfortunately, this means the file cannot be read by the CRDC data collection tool system.

When Excel changes School IDs or LEA IDs to scientific notation numbers or to truncated numbers with dropped leading zeros, try out the fixes listed below to see if you can resolve the issue. The solution will often depend on what version of Excel you are using and how the CSV file was created. The CRDC Partner Support Center can also help trouble shoot the issue.

Fix #1: Expanding the Colum Width (for Scientific Notation Issue)

Try expanding the width of the column. In some versions of Excel, simply expanding the width of the column works to convert 12 digit IDs from the scientific notation to a normal string of numbers.

Fix #2: Changing the Cell Format (for Scientific Notation Issue)
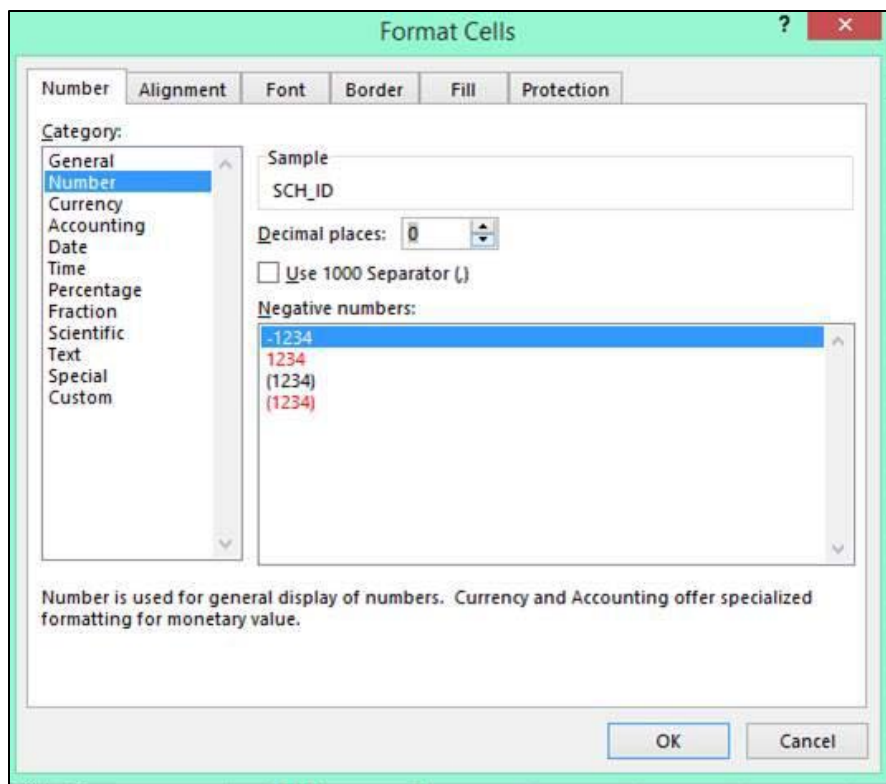
Try changing the format of the cells to resolve the issue.

Start by opening the file and select Column A. Next, right click to show a menu and select "Format Cells".
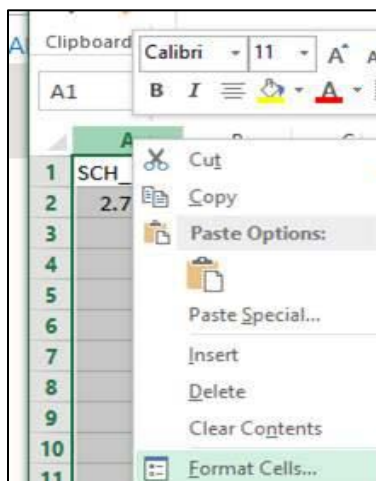
After the "Format Cells" box opens, select Number with 0 Decimal Places.

Note: This will only work for LEAs and schools without a leading zero in their ID.

Finally, expand the width of Column A to ensure the full 12-digit number is visible.

Fix #3: Use a Formula to Convert a Scientific Notation Number to Text or Fix a Truncated Number and Convert to Text

You can also use a formula in Excel to convert a scientific notation number back to text, or fix a truncated number with dropped leading zeros and convert to text. This involves inserting a new column, copying a formula, changing the formula to values, and deleting the original column.

Step 1:

Insert a new column to the right of the first column (New Column B).

Step 2:

In the header row, type SCH_ID just like the original SCH_ID column.

Step 3:

For a number in scientific notation (e.g., 2.70019E+11), copy the following formula into B2 (or the cell right below the new header column) =TEXT(A2,"############"). This will change the school ID in cell A2 into a string of text 12 characters long. *Tip*: Double check there are 12 pound signs in the formula.

For a truncated number with three dropped leading zeros (e.g., 000123456789 → 123456789), copy the following formula into B2 (or the cell right below the new header column) =TEXT(A2,"000#########"). This will change the school ID in cell A2 into a string of text 12 characters long.

Step 4:

Copy and paste the formula into the remaining cells in Column B, only for the rows where there is a SCH_ID.

Step 5:

Select Column B and Copy. Next, choose "Paste Special" and select Paste Values. This changes the formula in each cell to display the actual value.
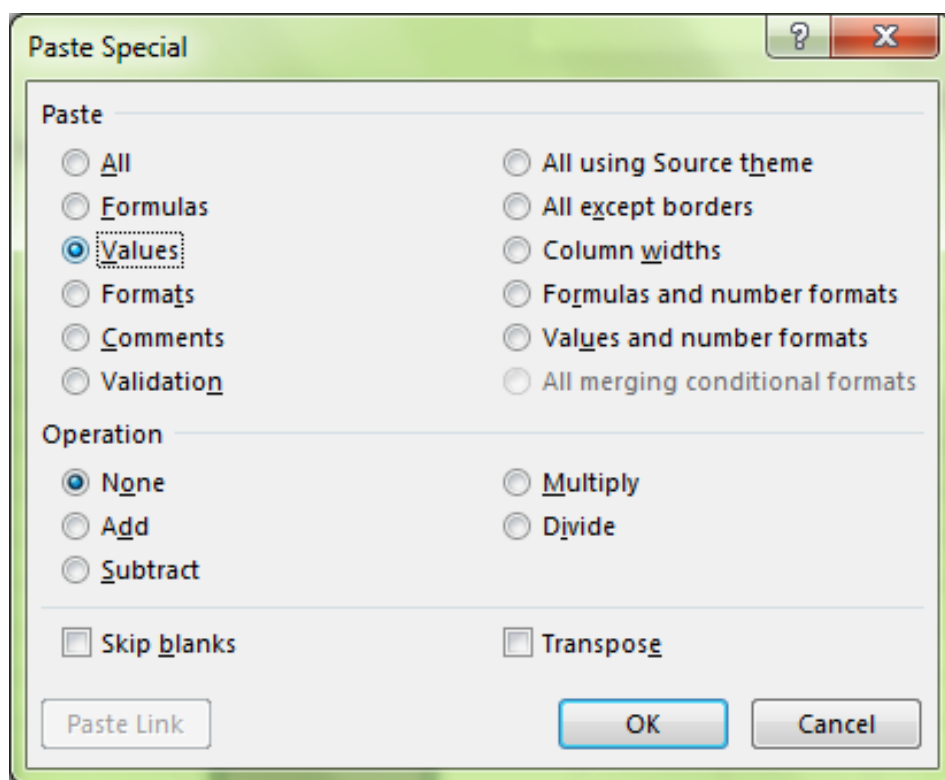
Step 6:

Delete Column A.

Make sure to do Step #5 before Step #6.

Fix #4: Go back to the Excel Template and Re-Save as a CSV File

If you created the CSV file from the Excel template, you can resave the original file as a CSV again following the simple directions in the "How to Convert Excel Files into CSV Files" tip sheet.