



For additional information,
Contact: Penny Murray
+1 202.621.0547
pmurray@sifassociation.org

For Immediate Release

The SIF Association publishes tools to make “SIF Simple”
***An Open Blueprint for transporting the Common Education Data Standards
for simple education application usage or entire data enterprise development.***

Washington, DC, 30 July 2014 - The SIF Community is continuing in its seventeen-year leadership role in developing the most comprehensive and open technical blueprints for educational data management, movement and usage for learning. “SIF Simple” consists of tools, technical support and effective practices within 3 focus areas:

Simple: Modern technology usage, like REST transport, and new freely accessible developer “Try It Out” tools enables two applications to securely share educational data in minutes reducing data entry time for school, district and government staff – even without middleware.

Secure: Ensuring that access to critical learning data is restricted solely to applications specifically authorized by the local 'data steward', whether the data is held locally, in the cloud, or in partnership with third party providers thereby reducing the risk to the organization. It also supports multiple authorization types and restricts which application gets what data.

Standard: Already in use by hundreds of applications, regardless of platform or vendor provider, the new SIF Implementation Specification (North America) 3.2 is the only standard that includes ALL of the Common Education Data Standards (CEDS) developed by the U.S. Department of Education. Data definitions are CEDS, SIF allows for CEDS transport and utilization. Other CEDS “aligned” data initiatives utilize part of CEDS for a product – that is not a standard.

“SIF Simple” is the culmination of thousands of hours of volunteer technical and policy work from schools, government entities and vendors. This SIF Implementation Specification (North America) 3.2 is made up of a globally utilized reference infrastructure and a North America specific data model focusing on supporting the CEDS initiative. The REST-based SIF Infrastructure Implementation Specification 3.0.1 allows the transport of various data models, including those from the other global SIF communities, as well as data from the numerous “alphabet soup” data initiatives that are populating the education landscape. In essence, education can now utilize a standardized “one wire with one plug”, not the never-ending proprietary API’s and “one off” connections!

“The improvements by SIF do more than just move data better”, touts Peter Tamayo, Chief Information Officer, Information Technology Service for the Washington State Office of Superintendent. “They are being responsive to the needs of state and local education agencies by simplifying the technical environment and helping organizations see gains in productivity and efficiency of their staff and systems.”

The SIF Association supports the fluid movement of data between applications, with the goal of improving the quality and efficiency of learning, teaching, and communication. Technology needs to bring along people; meet their concerns; be simple, understandable, accessible; and non-proprietary. The Community is listening to these real world needs beyond SIF and has developed tools and approaches to let data custodians do their jobs.

Details of the *SIF Simple* components can be found at www.sifassociation.org while the SIF Data Model Implementation Specification (North America) 3.2, containing all of CEDS 4.0, can be found at https://www.sifassociation.org/Specification/Pages/NA_3-2.aspx.

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About the SIF Association

The SIF Association is a unique, non-profit collaboration composed of over 3,200 schools, districts, local authorities, states, US and International Ministries of Education, software vendors and consultants who collectively define the rules and regulations for educational software data interoperability. The SIF Implementation Specification enables diverse applications to interact and share data efficiently, reliably, and securely regardless of the platform hosting those applications. The SIF Association has united these education technology end users and providers in an unprecedented effort to give teachers more time to do what they do best: teach. For further information, visit <http://www.sifassociation.org>.