

Helpful Hints for March SIMS State Reporting 2020

The Support Team has prepared a list of helpful tips and recommendations to prepare and report your data for the March SIMS Report.

- **The report date for the March SIMS collection is March 1** (if this falls on a weekend date, select the first week day in March). **** FOR MARCH 2020: The 'As of Date' will be Monday, March 2 (03/02/2020). **** The data submitted for this collection should be as of that date.

SIF Districts – Set the Last Transmission Date to 03/02/2020 for March SIMS. In order to report students enrolled as March 2 in your SIMS transmission and to report the accurate Days in Attendance/Days in Membership, SIF districts must set the Last Transmission Date is set to 03/02/2020. This is set on the DOE ID Manager > DOE Maintenance > DOE Parameters screen. DOE Parameters are school specific so this must be done for each school. The DOE will pull your SIMS Attendance Data as of March 2, 2020 for the 2020-2021 school year.

Helpful Hint! If you are missing new students in your SIMS transmission report and found the Last Transmission Date was not set to 03/02/2020, after you update the Last Transmission Date, use Delete SIF Temp Table to clear the StudentPersonal and StudentSchoolEnrollment Objects and then use SIF Reporting > SIMS to send the data for the schools that need updating. Before doing this, make sure you have also confirmed your School Calendar and Academic Year Settings Terms Start Dates are correct for the first day of school.

NOTE: The Last Transmission Date will reset to the date used when running a SIMS 52 export or SIMS 13 (SCS) export. We recommend that you run these exports using 03/02/2020 no matter when you are running the report (before/after March 1). If you run the exports with a different date, be sure to check the DOE Parameters screen to make sure the Last Transmission Date is set back to 03/02/2020.

Helpful Hint! Refer to important "Additional Notes for SIF Districts" below for more information specific to SIF districts.

- **Make sure that your school calendars have the correct Start/End Dates for the School Year & Terms and that your day count as of March 2 is correct.** Check each school calendar to confirm the school year Start/End Dates are accurate and that all holidays, vacation days, and snow/weather days have been entered as a Holiday. This will make sure the day count is correct and Days in Membership is accurate for the March SIMS.

The Scheduling System > Academic Year Settings Start/End Dates for each term must also be accurate to insure attendance is accurate. These may need to be adjusted to account for any snow/weather days.

- **Make sure that all of the students enrolled after October 1 have a SASID number and are marked as Report to DOE = Yes. REMINDER: All new students added to iPass default to Report to DOE = No.** This is so that students are not reported to the DOE through SIF until a SASID is entered into the student record. **Report to DOE must be updated to Yes after the SASID is entered.** The Report to DOE indicator is located at the top of the Student Biographical > MA DOE screen.

Helpful Hint! 2019-2020: iPass has not yet implemented DESE's new SIF SASID Request. For now you can run the DOE ID Manager > Import/Export > Export for SASIDs report to find students with a blank SASID. This file can be sent to DESE to have SASIDs assigned. The returned file can then be uploaded to iPass using Import SASIDs. After the SASIDs have been imported you will need to update the students from Report to DOE = No to "Yes." This can be done on the individual student's MA DOE screen or for a group using the new Biographical

System > Mass Update Students > SIF Report to DOE field. See Helpful Hint below for more detail.

Helpful Hint! You can download a query from iPass Help to find all enrolled students with Report to DOE = No. The query is titled [Enrolled Students Report DOE NO](#) and can be found in My Queries > Query Files for Download. Instructions to import can be found in My Queries > [How do I import a query file into my iPass database?](#)

Helpful Hint! A mass update feature has been added to the Biographical System > [Mass Update Students screen labeled "SIF Report to DOE"](#) which will allow you to select students and set the Report to DOE to Yes.

- **Make sure that all students enrolled after October 1 have a Race/Ethnicity code.** As part of the enrollment process, the Race/Ethnicity must be selected and submitted on the Student Biographical > Confidential screen. This step is sometimes skipped, particularly when the student's Race/Ethnicity is the same as the default value.

Helpful Hint! To find students missing this code, go to the DOE ID Manager > Export 52 Elements report and run the report. **(See important note below.)* Then, go to DOE ID Manager > Import/Export Viewer and select the file to view. All 52 SIMS fields are viewable for each student. Look in the DOE010 Race column for any fields highlighted in red. This will indicate there is a missing Race/Ethnicity code in iPass. You can click on the missing data field and get to the student's MA DOE screen. Select the Confidential tab to get to the screen to select the Race/Ethnicity. Use the Ctrl-key to select multiple races or to add Hispanic or Latino ethnicity. If the student is the same Race/Ethnicity as the default screen value (ie. *01 – White, Non-Hispanic*), **the Confidential screen still must be submitted to save the student's Race/Ethnicity (including the default value)**. The DOE ID Manager > Mass Update can also be used to update all blank DOE010 fields to a default value.

***NOTE:** The date used to run the SIMS 52 export will reset the Last Transmission Date used for SIF SCS and EPIMS. We recommend SIF districts run this export using 03/02/2020. If you run the export with a different date, be sure check the DOE Parameters screen to make sure the Last Transmission Date is set back to 03/02/2020.

- **Identify the students that turned 6 years between October 2 and March 2 and make sure their DOE034 Special Education Placement code is set to the age category of 6-21 year olds.** Students who began the school year as age 5 may still have Special Education Placement codes for the age category of 3-5 year olds.

Helpful Hint! To find these students, use the Birthday List report: Select Months = October, November, December, January, February and March; Set Older Than = 6 and Younger Than = 6; Set Sort By = Month of Birth. This will give you a list of all 6 year olds with a birthdate between October 1 and March 31. Run the report for each school that contains 6 year old students. You want to make sure that students who turned 6 between October 2 and March 1 are updated to the appropriate 6-21 year old Special Education Placement code.

- **Identify students that are no longer Special Education students since the October SIMS Report.** These students must be updated to the age-specific (3-5 or 6-21 year old) DOE034 code of "01 – Not currently a special education student, but was previously a special education student during the current school year."

NOTE: Special Education students that changed to a **504 Plan** after October 1 must be coded in DOE039 as an active 504 Plan student. If the student also has the DOE034 field set to "504 – Special Services – No IEP" to flag the student as "504" for class rosters and reports, be aware that DESE will expect these former Special Education students to be reported with a code of

"01 – Not currently a special education student, but was previously a special education student during the current school year." The DOE034 field will need to report a state code of "01".

- **Identify students that are no longer on a 504 Plan after the October 1 SIMS Report.** These students must be updated to report them as 02 – Student was on a 504 plan earlier this year, but is not currently on a 504 plan.
- **Make sure that students that have transferred from one school to another within the school district after October 1, including Out of District placements, are coded properly.** The student must be withdrawn from the school they are leaving with an Entry/Withdrawal code of *"TRF - Transferred Out - within the District"* and then enrolled in the new school with an Entry/Withdrawal code of *"Re-Enrolled Same District."* The student maintains an Enrollment Status of *"01 – Enrolled"* even in the withdrawal record.

Helpful Hint! This process is outline in online Help > Biographical System > FAQ > [How do I transfer a student to another school within the same school district?](#)

NOTE: Use the *"TRF - Transferred Out - within the District"* withdrawal record procedure above to report a change in status to/from Resident/School Choice.

- **Make sure your outplacement students have attendance as of March 2 entered in to the Enrollment Record.** The Days in Attendance (reflecting Absences) should be entered as a negative number in the Carry Over Attendance field so that they will be subtracted from the Days in Membership.
- **Make sure that students are not marked absent on a non-school day or on the day they were withdrawn.** If you get the error *"Unexcused Days + Days Attendance Greater than Days in Membership"*, check the number of days they are marked absent and check *which* days the student was marked absent. Students may have been marked absent on a day that was removed from the calendar (ie. snow/weather day). If this is the case, you will need to put the non-school day back into the calendar temporarily and update the attendance code. To do this, delete the Holiday (snow/weather day) from the Enter/Modify Holiday screen, adjust the student's attendance from Absent to Present, and then re-enter the Holiday.

Students should not be marked absent on the same date they are withdrawn. The withdrawal date should be the first school day AFTER the last day they were in attendance. If the withdrawal record date is correct, the *Absent* code needs to be changed to *Present*. To protect the integrity of student enrollment records, the [Entry/Withdrawal code in an existing enrollment record can no longer be updated from a "withdrawn" to "enrolled" code](#).

Helpful Hint! New Method to update Attendance: To update attendance for a withdrawn student, click into the student's withdrawal record, scroll to the bottom of the screen and click on **Adjust Student Attendance**. This will bring you to a screen where the attendance codes can be modified or deleted

- **Check Special Education, LEP, 504 (DOE039), Title I, Low Income (Free/Reduced Lunch), Voc/Tech, Military Family Status, etc., codes to make sure the students are accurately coded as of March 2.** Student status may have changed since the October 1 SIMS Report and the associated codes may need to be updated. See the section below on *Data Reports, Viewing & Update Options* for recommendations on how to get a report of students currently coded in the various SIMS data categories. These lists can be shared with the program administrators for review.

Helpful Hint! Use DOE ID Manager > Mass Update to set default values for students (ie. Does not apply).

- **First (Native) Language (DOE024):** Beginning in 2017-2018, DESE began collecting the NCES codes for language instead of the MA Legacy numeric codes. All districts require SIF mapping for all Languages. Go to SIF Agent > Data Mapping in the drop down look for Z39.53 Language Codes, make sure your iPass Language codes are mapped properly.
- **Military Family Status (DOE029):** Districts are responsible for reporting whether or not a student is a member of a military family. Beginning in 2017-2018, new values were added. Values are 01 – Yes, child of active duty member, 02 – Yes, child of members or veterans who are medically discharged or retired for 1 year, 03 – Yes, child of member who died on active duty. iPass will default all students to “00” – No. This field is available on the DOE Mass update screen.
- **Non-Instructional Title I Targeted Assistance Services (DOE030):** Districts who have Title I targeted assistance services must select the appropriate codes for each student. Districts that are non-Title I or are school-wide Title I can report this element as “00 – Not Receiving Non-Instructional Title I Targeted Assistance Services.”

Helpful Hint Districts that want to set all students to the same code of “00 – Not Receiving Non-Instructional Title I Targeted Assistance Services” can use DOE ID Manager > Mass Update. The first time you do this select “Blank” in the DOE030 field in the Student Selection Filter section to find all the students. Select the code of “00 – Not Receiving Non-Instructional Title I Targeted Assistance Services” in the DOE030 field in the Update Criteria section. Schools designated with DESE as Schoolwide Target 1 need to go to Administration > School Resources > School Profile > and check off the box for Schoolwide Title 1.

- **High School Completer Plans (DOE033):** In 2018-2019 a new value of “10 – Apprenticeship” was added to the element.
- **Student Last Name/Suffix:** Beginning in 2017-2018, DESE began collecting the student name and suffix in separate fields in the Security Portal SASID Registration. In iPass the student’s suffix (ie. Jr, II) needs to be entered into the Suffix field on the Student Biographical Profile screen. If you want the Suffix to be used in iPass reports such as Report Cards and Transcripts, the suffix also needs to be entered in to the Last Name field. iPass has been updated so that it will not send in the SIF SIMS transmission a suffix if it is found in the Last Name field. You can run an Advanced Export Report to get a list of students with a Suffix.
- **SIF Homeless and Foster Care:** Although not part of the SIMS submission, DESE would like SIF districts to transmit their Homeless and Foster Care data in their SIMS transmission. There are three elements that are transmitted in the StudentPersonal SIF Object in addition to the Homeless status. These elements can be found on the Student’s MA DOE and Confidential screens. These include: Foster Care, Dwelling Arrangement, Homeless Youth Unaccompanied by Parents or Legal Guardian.

Helpful Hint You can download a query from iPass Help to create a report which shows the status of the Homeless, Foster Care, Dwelling Arrangement, and Unaccompanied Youth fields. The query is titled *Homeless and Foster Care Query* and can be found in My Queries > Query Files for Download and also in DOE ID Manager > Help > [Homeless and Foster Care Query](#).

Helpful Hint These fields are available on the Biographical System > Mass Update Students screen for mass updating students to default values.

More information can be found at iPass Help > SIF > Help > [MA DESE Guidance for Entering Homeless and Foster Care Student Data](#).

- English Language Education Program Status (DOE026):** (*Change 2018-2019*) DESE has added a new code value of 05 - Transitional Bilingual Education. (Reference DESE SIMS Handbook for details.) If you did not already add this for October SIMS, go to Biographical System > Maintenance - Biographical > Bilingual Ed Status *or* English Language Learners Program Status Tab > Add new Status Code, Description, and State Code. The ELLProgramStatus SIF element is sent in the StudentSchoolEnrollment Object.

Helpful Hint! There have been changes over the years to these codes. You may want to take this time to update the iPass code descriptions to reflect the current code descriptions referenced in the SIMS Handbook. Do not delete old codes, just add “Discontinued” to the front of the Description so you do not remove from historical records.
- Career/Vocational Technical Education (CVTE): Competency Attainments (DOE031):** (*Change 2018-2019*) DESE has discontinued codes 02-07 and 12-14 for this field. (Reference DESE SIMS Handbook for details.) If you did not already make updates for October SIMS, go to DOE ID Manager > Maintenance - DOE > Fields > scroll to very bottom to Technical Competency Attainment field ** (DO NOT RENAME THIS FIELD) ** and add "Do Not Use" or "Discontinued" to the Description for codes 02-07, 12-14. Leave 01-Completed Chapter 74 Program, 11-Completed Non-Chapter 74 Program and, 500-Does not apply codes alone since these are still active codes. VocTechEdAttainment SIF element is sent in the StudentPersonal object.
- Quality Career Pathways Program Type (DOE045) and Quality Career Pathways Program Participation (DOE046):** Introduced in 2018-2019, these two elements apply to the High Quality Career Pathway and Program in which a Vocational/Technical School student is enrolled. Non-Voc/Tech schools will set all students to 500 – Does not apply. Use DOE ID Manager > Mass Update to set all students. The HQPCType and HQPCParticipation SIF elements are sent in the StudentSchoolEnrollment Object.
- Early Childhood Education Experience (DOE050):** (*New 2018-2019*) This element is an indicator of the student’s early childhood education experience. A Center Based Program is defined as an EEC licensed child care center, Head Start program, or public preschool program. This element must be reported for students in grade levels KP, KF, and KT. Students in grade level PK must be reported as 99 (Not Applicable). Grade levels 01-SP may be reported with any value. If unknown, report student as 99 (Not Applicable). Use DOE ID Manager > Mass Update to set all students. The EarlyChildhoodExperience SIF element is sent in the StudentPersonal Object.

Changes for 2019-2020 SIMS Report:

- NEW for 2019-2020 – Reason for Enrollment (DOE013):** An indication of the reason for a student’s enrollment in the receiving school district. A new value of 12 - Out of District - Foster Care Student has been added. ReasonForEnrollment SIF element is sent in the StudentSchoolEnrollment Object.

DESE Guidance: Starting in the October 1SIMS collection, districts should report out-of-district foster care students using the new value 12 in the Reason for Enrollment data element (DOE013). If a student has been moved to a new foster care placement outside of the district but continues to attend school in the district (the district of origin*) on October 1, the district of origin should report the student in SIMS using enrollment codes 03,01,12 (DOE011, DOE012, DOE013) with the DOE014 town code of where the student now resides. In cases where the foster care student is enrolled in the district of origin and is outplaced by the IEP Team to a private school or collaborative program, the sending district should report the student using codes 02,01,12 with the DOE014 town code of where the student now resides.

For the purposes of Chapter 70 school funding, students reported with either of these code combinations (03,01,12 or 02,01,12) will be assigned to the district of origin (not district of residence) for financial responsibility and state aid. *District of origin = district the student was enrolled in when living placements changed.

- **Updated for 2019-2020: Seal of Biliteracy (DOE028):** Introduced in 2018-2019, this element applies to Graduates only and is used to indicate that a graduate has attained the Seal of Biliteracy. **A new value has been added for:** 02 - Student has earned a Seal of Biliteracy with Districition. For October & March SIMS all students should be reported as 00 – Student does not have a Seal of Biliteracy. Use DOE ID Manager > Mass Update to set all students. SealofBiliteracy SIF element is sent in the StudentSchoolEnrollment Object.
- **Updated for 2019-2020: Industry Recognized Credential (DOE047, DOE048, DOE049):** Introduced in 2018-2019, these elements identify up to three specific Industry Recognized Credential (IRC) that a Vocational/Technical School student earned. **New values have been added for:** 196 HIPAA Certification, 197 CIW Site Development Assistant, 198 CIW JavaScript Specialist, 199 CIW Advanced HTML and CSS3 Specialist, and 200 MA DEP Drinking Water Supply Facility Operator License have been added. Non-Voc/Tech schools will set all students to 500 – Does not apply. Use DOE ID Manager > Mass Update to set all students. The IndustryRecognizedCredentials SIF element is sent in the StudentPersonal Object.

Additional Notes for SIF Districts:

- Make sure your SIF Events and Response Processors are running and that there are SIF Events in the Events Logs. This is found at the top of the SIF Processor screen under the header “SIF Processers.” It is recommended that you keep the daily Logs throughout the reporting period in case they are needed for reference. Previous reporting period logs may be purged.
- The DOE “pulls” the Attendance data nightly (approx. 2:00am) and the Special Education data twice daily (approx. Noon and 3:00am). This can be confirmed by checking your SIF Agent > SIF Transaction Viewer. You can confirm the student attendance values and Special Education codes pulled for each student by clicking on the Object file. The Status is a good indicator that it was pulled successfully (ie. Status = 100). The Packet Count is NOT the number of students, just an indicator of how many “packets” of data were transmitted.
- To identify the data transmitted for a specific student you will need to know the Student Refid. This can be found using the SIF Agent > Refid Locator. Enter the Student ID (option for SASID) from iPass, Submit, and you will get the SIF Refid for that student. This Refid can be used to search (Find Ctr-F) the SIF Events Log, Student Attendance Summary, and Student Special Education Summary.
- The Support Team has provided several resources to educate you on the SIF transmission process. The following is available in iPass Help > SIF folder:
 - [Video 1: SIF Objects and How to Send Them](#)
 - [Video 2: How to Set Up SIF](#)
 - [Video 3: Reading SIF Logs and Transaction Viewer](#)
 - [How do I send SIF data objects to the DOE and which objects do I send for each state report?](#)

More information is available for SIF reporting in iPass Help > [SIF](#).

SIF – March SIMS

[Quick Guide: Preparing for Massachusetts March and EOY State Reporting](#)

- In order to report SIMS as of March 2, SIF districts need to make sure the Last Transmission Date is set to 03/02/2020. This is set on the DOE ID Manager > DOE Maintenance > DOE Parameters screen. DOE Parameters are school specific so this must be done for EACH school.

The Last Transmission Date will reset to the date used when running a SIMS 52 export or SIMS 13 (SCS) export. We recommend that you run these exports using 03/02/2020 no matter when you are running the report (before/after March 1). If you run the exports with a different date, be sure to check the DOE Parameters screen to make sure the Last Transmission Date is set back to 03/02/2020.

- Recycle the SIF Processors – At the start of each new reporting period it is recommended to [shut down and restart the SIF Processors](#) and to purge the old log files.
- The data being validated is based on the data transmitted to the DESE since the October SIMS Report.

NOTE: For March 2 transmission you will need to send the SIMS SIF Objects to the DESE after you update your Last Transmission Date. It is recommended that you go through the check list above first to get your data as accurate and clean as possible and then send the Objects. Prior to sending the object, use SIF Delete Tmp Table to clear the SIF Temp Table. Information on how to send SIF Objects can be found in iPass Help > SIF > [How do I send SIF data objects to the DOE and which objects do I send for each state report?](#)

- If you were required to make any changes after October 1 reporting to any “summer transfer” student records you will also need to [send the SIMS Summer Transfers SIF Objects](#).
- The DOE “pulls” the Attendance and Special Education data nightly. This can be confirmed by checking your SIF Agent > SIF Transaction Viewer. You can check the data pulled for student attendance values by clicking on the StudentAttendanceSummary Object file and the Special Education values by clicking on the StudentSpecialEducationSummary Object file. The Status is a good indicator that it was pulled successfully (ie. Status = 100). The Packet Count is NOT the number of students, just an indicator of how many “packets” of data were transmitted.
- To identify the data transmitted for a specific student you will need to know the Student Refid. This can be found using the SIF Agent > Refid Locator. Enter the Student ID# from iPass (option to use SASID#), Submit, and you will get the SIF Refid for that student. This Refid can be used to search the SIF Events Log, StudentAttendanceSummary, and StudentSpecialEducationSummary. Use the Control Key short cut of Ctrl-key + F to use the Find field to search for the Refid.

Data Reports, Viewing & Update Options:

- **DOE ID Manager > DOE Import/Export > Import/Export – Select any one of the 52 DOE fields to export.** This is helpful to create files for review with just specific SIMS data elements such as LEP, 504 (DOE039), Special Education, Title I, Free/Reduced Lunch, Race/Ethnicity, etc. This export file is run by School (Set Default School). You can filter the report by Grade Level or Sped Status. You can run the report for the entire school or filter for just one student or group of students. In the Students field you can enter a single Student ID # or a series of Student ID #'s separated by comma and no space (ie. 1234,3456,5678).
- **DOE ID Manager > DOE Import/Export > DOE Export 52 Elements – This creates an export file with all 52 SIMS elements.** This is used to create the SIMS file for Legacy submission. The file can also be used to identify the SIMS codes in iPass to compare to the [SIF SIMS data transmission file](#). These export files are run by School (Set Default School). You can filter the report by Grade Level or Sped Status and Include Summer Transfers in desired. You can run the report for the entire school or filter for just one student or group of students. In the Students field you can enter a single Student ID # or a series of Student ID #'s separated by comma and no space (ie. 1234,3456,5678).

NOTE: The Last Transmission Date will reset to the date used when running a SIMS 52 export or SIMS 13 (SCS) export. We recommend that you run these exports using 03/02/2020. If you run the

exports with a different date, be sure to check the DOE Parameters screen to make sure the Last Transmission Date is set back to 03/02/2020.

- **DOE Import/Export Viewer – This viewing tool lets you view the data in the SIMS DOE Export 52 file (aka MA DOE 35 Field CSV) and look for missing codes.** Any of the DOE fields that are missing data will be highlighted in red. You can click-through from this screen to the student’s MA DOE screen and have access to the Biographical System Tabs. This Viewer is especially helpful when looking for missing SASID numbers or Race/Ethnicity codes. The missing Race/Ethnicity code can be entered on the Confidential screen by clicking through right from the Viewer. Note, missing SASID numbers can only be entered on the DOE ID Manager > LASID/SASID Update screen. Reminder: All students with a SASID number must be manually updated to Report to DOE = Yes.

