

For Immediate Release

The Access 4 Learning Community delighted to welcome New Zealand and publish the inaugural SIF Specification (New Zealand)

Washington, DC, 17 June, 2020---The Access 4 Learning (A4L) Community is delighted to announce New Zealand as our newest global community member. The official recognition of this new Community comes after three years hard work developing the SIF Data Model Implementation Specification (New Zealand) 3.0, by a team of data architects from New Zealand's government education agencies: The Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education Commission, and NZ Qualifications Authority, working in support of The Ministry's *Te Rito* information sharing project.

The **Te Rito project** is intended to save schools and teachers time and improve accuracy and efficiency, by enabling effective, secure sharing of information between schools, and providing a way for important learner information to travel with the learner throughout their education. As a new A4L locale, the New Zealand collaborative's new SIF Data Model Specification breaks ground in a number of areas:

- It is the first local SIF Data Model Specification that has been built from the ground-up with a focus on "all of life learning" and its data objects are tailored to support Early Childhood Education (ECE), K-12 Schooling, and Tertiary Education.
- It is the first local SIF Data Model Specification where the code set enumeration values and descriptions are recorded in two languages: English and Te Reo Māori. This provides support for application providers whose products are used by schools that teach entirely in Te Reo Māori.
- It is the first local SIF Data Model Specification where JSON is a first-class citizen, including JSON Schemas alongside the usual set of XML Schemas. In addition, the SIF NZ Data Model also includes a sample OpenAPI specification, defining GET, POST and PUT operations on each data object, with request and response bodies and examples in both XML and JSON.

"Stuart McGrigor's contribution to the ITB and other global groups has proven an amazing resource" states A4L Community Technology Director, John W. Lovell. "Stuart brings a lifetime's experience with computers and a commitment to practical solutions yet is open to current trends in technology and demands from the marketplace. These attributes make Stuart that rare technical person who can work on the details, while keeping the big picture and larger goals in mind. It is no wonder he is New Zealand's choice to lead its key interoperability and reporting efforts for its education system."

During 2020, the Ministry of Education will be working with their community of Student Management System (SMS) vendors who will be implementing SIF API calls to exchange data with The Ministry's Te Rito platform "powered by SIF".

"We hope you will join us in welcoming our New Zealand friends into the Community" states Larry L Fruth II PhD, CEO/Exec Director, A4L Community. "We are excited to support and help the Ministry of Education, NZ, grow our newest A4L Community."

To review the SIF Data Model Specification (New Zealand), please go to:
<https://www.a4l.org/page/DataModelNZ>

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About the Access 4 Learning Community

There is no other global community made up of educational policymakers, marketplace product and service providers and the customers they serve, collaborating daily to address real word learning information and resource issues.

The Access 4 Learning (A4L) Community, previously the SIF Association, is a unique, non-profit collaboration composed of schools, districts, local authorities, states, US and International Ministries of Education, software vendors and consultants who collectively address all aspects of learning information management and access to support learning. The A4L Community is "Powered by SIF" Specifications as its major technical tool to allow for this management and access simply, securely and in a scalable, standard way regardless of the platform hosting those applications. The Access 4 Learning Community 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 <https://www.A4L.org>