



For Immediate Release

**The SIF Association® and IMS Global Learning Consortium Release the First Version of the Assessment Interoperability Framework and Expand U.S. Collaboration with NCES Grant Support**

*Washington, DC and Lake Mary, FL, 8 May 2012*--- IMS Global Learning Consortium and the SIF Association are proud to announce the release of version 1 of the Assessment Interoperability Framework (AIF). This release furthers the SIF Association and IMS partnership established to support the US Department of Education's Race to the Top Assessment (RTTA) Program.

These two leading technical standards organizations are also proud to announce that the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) is providing contract support for the development of a final version of the AIF, identification of required data points to possibly be included in the Common Education Data Standards (CEDS) and the development of "gap" specification guidelines between assessment system components where they do not exist. This support ideally will benefit the two RTTA Consortia, the development and usage of CEDS and enable the entire marketplace to better deliver on the needs for comprehensive assessment systems being asked for by schools and states.

Jack Buckley, the Commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics, states, "NCES and the Department of Education recognize that full interoperability is essential for the success of the RTTA consortia. With the assistance of IMS and SIF, we believe that we can help the consortia close any existing specification gaps and ensure that the next generation of assessment rests on a solid foundation of interoperability."

"We are thrilled to have the release of version 1 of the AIF and, with NCES's contract support, we will be able to expand upon the deliverables that were originally envisioned by IMS and SIF", touts Larry Fruth II Ph.D. Executive Director of the SIF Association. "We know this partnership between the three organizations will reap great benefits for the entire marketplace."

Representatives from educational marketplace providers, the SBAC and PARCC assessment consortia, US Department of Education and the two standards communities have been meeting for the past six months to outline the current and future use cases that these developing assessment systems must enable to measure the progress of learning. The AIF is a set of documents describing how to combine educational technology and assessment standards from the SIF Association and IMS Global Learning Consortium to address the assessment lifecycle. It is expected that the AIF can be applied to a wide variety of assessment programs and applications while focusing on RTTA and the assessment program architectures being developed by the two larger consortia, PARCC and SBAC, as well as by Dynamic Learning

Maps and the National Center and State Collaborative General Supervision Enhancement Grant.

The AIF initiative will include:

- Definitions, assumptions, use case analysis and interoperability requirements derived from SBAC, PARCC and industry sources,
- A high-level interoperability architecture for a modular Assessment Platform and how the Assessment Platform integrates with the broader education systems enterprise,
- A demonstration proving the use cases and architecture; and
- Documentation for best practices and implementation for scalability.

“IMS and SIF standards are enabling the beginning of the end of paper assessments which are inferior to electronic assessments with respect to cost, processing time and ability to personalize instruction and professional development,” said Rob Abel, Chief Executive Officer of IMS Global. “IMS is pleased for the support from the U.S. government via NCEES which will complement the strong supplier, state and district support from the IMS and SIF Association members.”

IMS Global and the SIF Association will provide further information regarding the Assessment Interoperability Framework in the coming months as the work progresses.

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#### **About the SIF Association**

The SIF Association is a unique, non-profit collaboration composed of over 3,200 schools, districts, 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>.

#### **About IMS Global Learning Consortium**

IMS Global Learning is a nonprofit member organization that strives to enable the growth and impact of learning technology in higher education, K-12, and corporate education worldwide. IMS GLC members are leading corporations, higher education institutions, school districts and government organizations worldwide that are enabling the future of education by collaborating on interoperability standards and major adoption projects for the digital support of education and learning. IMS GLC also sponsors Learning Impact: a global awards program and conference that recognizes the impact of innovative technology on educational access, affordability, and quality. For more information visit [www.imsglobal.org](http://www.imsglobal.org).