

Educational Stability

2023-2024 Homeless and Foster Care
Data Collection for District Staff

Why Data Collection?

Data can help us better understand student needs and impacts on student learning. In some cases, the needs and impacts can be anticipated.

Examples of needs and district supports include food pantries, supply closets, backpacks, tutoring and social emotional support.

Data has been used in the community/state to support children and youth who are homeless or in foster care.

Data Collection Requirements:

- USED requires homeless liaisons and foster care points of contact to report ***enrolled*** students who are:
 - **Identified as homeless**
 - their living arrangement at the time they are identified, and
 - whether they are unaccompanied
 - **In foster care**
- USED also requires reporting on the number of enrolled students in migratory and active military families.
- This is used for accountability and to determine funding.

When should students be reported?

- Students should be reported when they are **identified** including
 - at enrollment,
 - when district staff learn that an already enrolled student has become homeless or placed in foster care,
 - when Migrant Education Program (MMEP) screens as migratory, or
 - the parent voluntary self-reports as active military.
- **Only students *enrolled*** in the district should be entered

Do not enter a student who is sheltered/placed in the district and transported back to his/her school of origin in another district.

Massachusetts Migrant Education Program

- The use of **Migrant Screeners** at enrollment can increase identification.
- **MMEP Vendor does the data collection and reports to DESE**
- **Districts do not need to report this data** but should be aware of identified students to ensure their educational rights.
- **If migratory students are in homeless living arrangements, they must be reported as homeless.** MMEP is trained to identify homelessness and can provide verification.

Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission (MIC3)

Data Collection of students in active military families:

- **Parents must be provided with the opportunity to voluntarily self-identify as active military.**
- **Schools are required to collect data and report to DESE.**
- **DESE is required to report it to Federal Government.**
- **This data should be entered in the SIS and is transmitted to DESE via SIF.**

Data Communication

SIS

- Student Information System
- District
- All students enrolled and attending in a district
- Homeless/foster care flags

SIF

- Schools Interoperability Framework
- Takes the district data and transfer it to DESE
- Upload occurs every night!

Security Portal

- Homeless and Foster Care App
- DESE
- District assigns the Homeless and Foster Care Student App Role
- Edits and certification of data by District Designee

How to enter student data ?

- Your Student Information System (SIS) displays homeless and foster care flags. These flags should be selected whenever a student becomes homeless or enters foster care.
- **If a student becomes homeless**, select the homeless flag.
 - You will then be prompted to select the dwelling arrangement (***sheltered**, doubled-up, unsheltered, or hotel/motel *when first identified*). (*Traditional shelter versus emergency shelter expansion students.)
 - You will be further prompted to indicate whether the student is also unaccompanied (Yes, No).
- **If the student has been placed in foster care** (students in 24-hour, out-of-home care, away from parent/guardian, and for whom DCF has care and placement responsibility), select the foster care flag.
 - There are no further prompts.

New Emergency Shelter Expansion Sites

- The state has 80+ new emergency shelter expansion sites which include hotels and motels across the commonwealth to meet the demand for emergency assistance.
- Districts where these new emergency shelter expansion sites were opened are using a specific emergency shelter expansion flag to denote students located at these sites.
- This Emergency Shelter Expansion Flag must be entered manually in the portal. SIF does not transmit this data from SIS for this flag.

Eligible Students for New Flag

- ✓ Placed in an eligible emergency expansion shelter site in your community **and** enrolled in your district



Including students:

- ✓ who have since moved to another shelter placement, and who continue to be enrolled in your district
- ✓ who have moved to a consolidated emergency expansion shelter site and who enroll locally in your district

Non-Eligible Students for New Flag



Students experiencing homelessness who are **not eligible for this new flag** include students who are:

- Doubled up
- Placed in a **traditional** shelter
- Unsheltered (cars, parks, campgrounds, abandoned buildings, and substandard/inadequate housing)
- Hotels/motels (*that are not part of the state shelter system*)

**Do not check the “Emergency Shelter Expansion” check box for these students.*

What does the new flag look like?

Homeless

[Export Homeless Students to Excel](#)

First Name	Last Name	SASID	Grade	Dwelling Arrangement	Unaccompanied Youth	Date/Time Entered	Entered By	Emergency Shelter Expansion	Emergency Shelter Waitlist	Edit	Delete
			Pre-K	Shelters	N	11/28/2023 2:43:24 PM	sgoulet5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Edit	Delete
			Pre-K	Shelters	N	10/20/2023 9:35:40 AM	SIF	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Edit	Delete
			Pre-K	Shelters	N	10/27/2023 5:05:00 AM	SIF	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Edit	Delete
			Pre-K	Shelters	N	10/20/2023 4:36:34 PM	SIF	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Edit	Delete
			Pre-K	Shelters	N	11/9/2023 9:36:51 AM	SIF	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Edit	Delete
			Pre-K	Shelters	N	11/28/2023 2:44:27 PM	sgoulet5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Edit	Delete
			Kindergarten	Shelters	N	10/3/2023 1:00:33 PM	SIF	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Edit	Delete
			Kindergarten	Shelters	N	11/14/2023 9:28:46 AM	SIF	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Edit	Delete
			Kindergarten	Shelters	N	9/27/2023 11:06:22 AM	SIF	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Edit	Delete
			Kindergarten	Shelters	N	11/1/2023 1:12:58 PM	SIF	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Edit	Delete
			Kindergarten	Shelters	N	11/28/2023 2:48:36 PM	sgoulet5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Edit	Delete
			Kindergarten	Shelters	N	11/9/2023 9:36:50 AM	SIF	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Edit	Delete

AGAIN!

Do not check the “Emergency Shelter Expansion” box for the non-eligible students!

Most of you know who you are that need to check this box at this point anyway!

Data transmission to DESE

- The next time SIF runs, the data will be transferred to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) automatically.
- Keep your SIS current. Be sure to turn off the homeless/foster care flags when the student becomes housed or exits foster care. (Districts can turn off their flags in SIS when students exit status if SIF already pulled that information over to DESE.)
- SIF will not update DESE data once a student has been reported as homeless or in foster care. This allows the district/school to use the SIS to notate the student's most current status without impacting the data required by the US Department of Education (USED).
 - Remember a homeless student that becomes housed during the school year retains the right to enrollment and transportation for the remainder of the school year.

Existing homelessness or foster care?

- End-of-year certification will still need to be done in the security portal but all the district's/school's data should be entered and ready for a review.
- As long as the SIS is up-to-date by the end of July only those students who are still homeless or in foster care will be carried over to the next school year.
- This will **save data entry time** at the start of the school year!

Updating your Student Information System (SIS)

- If the district's **SIS is kept up-to-date with the student's current** status, they will be accurately reported for the year(s) in which they are homeless or in foster care.
- This data collection is cumulative and on-going for each school year. Though the data is not certified and submitted until the end of the school year (usually July), **it is important to have it up-to-date on October 1st.**

Legacy Districts and Schools

- For Districts *not* on SIF:
- Your students who are homeless and/or in foster care should be reported directly in the security portal. You will need their SASID and grade.
 - For students who are homeless enter the dwelling arrangement *when first identified* and select Y (yes) or N (no) for unaccompanied youth.
 - For students in foster care there no further data is needed.
- Please remember that it is important for the district's data to be up-to-date on October 1st.

Accessing the Homeless and Foster Care Student Application

- Homeless and foster care data is stored in the DESE security portal. As a homeless liaison or foster care point of contact you must have access to the security portal.
- You must be assigned the Homeless and Foster Care Student Application by the school district's Directory Administrator. See [Directory Administrator page](#) for further information.
- Once you are assigned the role as a user, Homeless and Foster Care Students will appear on your application list.

Data Entry

School Year 2023-2024 Homeless and Foster Care Student Data Collection

- On the first screen of the application scroll down and
 - select your organization or district from the dropdown menu,
 - select the school year and
 - click on Next.

Add/Update Screen

School Year 2023-2024 Homeless and Foster Care Student Data Collection – District (00000000)
[Return to Organization List](#)

Add/Update Homeless and Foster Care Students

- On this screen you will see a list of the district's students who are homeless followed by a list of students in foster care.
- **Note:** It is possible that a student was **both homeless and placed in foster care** during the school year. That student should be entered in both categories and will appear on both lists.

For students in foster care

1. Under “Add Student” select foster care
2. Enter the student's SASID number;
3. Select his/her grade; and
4. **Click on Add Foster Care Student.**

For students who are homeless

1. Under “Add Student” select Homeless
2. Enter the student's SASID number;
3. Select his/her grade;
4. Select the dwelling arrangement (Primary Nighttime Residence),
 - (Sheltered, Doubled-up, unsheltered, or hotel/motel *when first identified*)
5. Unaccompanied youth ? — click on Yes or No; and
6. **Click on Add Homeless Student**

Once a Student is Entered

- The student will appear on the list of reported students on your Add/Update screen after SIF has transmitted the data or you have entered the student directly.

A few tips:

- The **Edit** function is for correcting any data entry errors. For example, should numbers in the SASID be transposed.
- The dwelling arrangement should *not* be updated in the security portal unless it is *missing* or erroneous.
- The delete function is used *only* if a student is erroneously entered.
- **Do not delete or update students in the security portal if they become permanently housed or leave foster care.**
- This data collection is a **cumulative count** for the school year.

To Close Out the School Year

The Certify/Submit function

- is enabled when it is time to close out data entry for a school year; usually June through mid-July and
- allows districts to review and certify the accuracy of the data and finalize and submit it.

Homeless liaisons and foster care points of contact are reminded when this function is enabled (early June) and as the due date nears (mid-July).

Is Your Data Accurate?

1. Review the data as it appears on each list.

- a) Correct any **missing** or inaccurate data.
- b) Remember for students who are homeless the reported dwelling arrangement should be where the student was at the time they were first identified.

2. Click on the certify checkbox to confirm the data is accurate.

- a) You will not be able to complete this step if there is missing data.

Submitting the Data

- Click on the Submit button.
- Once the data has been certified/submitted, no more students can be entered. Should the Certify/Submit function be erroneously engaged, please contact us and we will manually reverse the designation.
- **A district that has not enrolled or identified any students who are homeless or in foster care must still Certify/Submit its data, and by doing so, certifies that no homeless or foster care students were enrolled.**

Next School Year

- Once the school year closes, data collection is ready for the new school year at the beginning of August.
- Assuming your SIS is up to date, only those students who remain homeless or in foster care will be carried over to the next year.
- The homeless and foster care lists are usually populated in the security portal by SIF around mid/end of August.

Resources:

- [Directory Administration Page](#)
- [Data Collection Guidance](#)
- For questions on submitting homeless or foster care student data, please contact Christine.H.Cowen@mass.gov

**Thank You for Joining the
Educational Stability Team today!**