What's New - Overview

This section provides an overview of all the improvements, enhancements, fixes, and changes that appear in v2.1 of the Ed-Fi Data Standard.

Data Model Improvements and Enhancements

Several changes to the data standard were made to improve and enhance capabilities for implementers. Significant changes include:

- Additions to the StaffCredential and Credential entities to model instructor qualifications
- A change to the natural key structure of the Section and RestraintEvent entities to remove volatility
- Changes to the Bell Schedule domain to support complex scheduling requirements and to fix an issue in the v2.0 model
- Additional support for modeling contact information for staff
- Removal of AssessmentFamily to reduce confusion, and simplification of the means to capture information on related assessments

Additional detail and rationale for the changes discussed can be found in the following sections of this documentation.

Continued CEDS Alignment

The Common Education Data Standards (CEDS) initiative is a collaborative effort between the U.S. Department of Education and other federal agencies, state education agencies, local education agencies, private foundations, and vendors. CEDS produces a common vocabulary for education data, thereby streamlining data exchange and facilitating comparison across institutions and sectors. The Ed-Fi Alliance has participated in the CEDS initiative since the Alliance's inception, and the Ed-Fi Data Model has contained CEDS-aligned elements since v1.1.

In July 2016, CEDS v6.0 was released. Several elements and concepts were adopted, and Ed-Fi enumeration sets (types) were realigned.

> (i) Alignment of Data Standard v2.1 with CEDS v7.0 is underway. A mapping will be published in Q3 2017.

Changes to the Ed-Fi Extension Framework

The Ed-Fi Extension Framework provides specific patterns implementers can use to customize the Ed-Fi Data Model while still retaining conformance to the Ed-Fi Data Standards. The Ed-Fi Data Standard v2.0 guidance allowed customizations in the field that proved problematic for implementers, particularly client systems. For example, v2.0 allowed required elements in the Ed-Fi Data Standard to be removed from an implementation. As another example, elements defined as optional could be changed to be required by an implementation.

The Ed-Fi Extension Framework guidance has been changed in v2.1 to remove a few problematic patterns such as the ones outlined above. Remaining patterns have not been changed. See the XML Schema - Extensions Framework Guide section of this documentation for the current patterns.