

Last Updated Date: 07/18/2019

Roster, Session Name and Local Course Code Best Practices

Target Audience:

SIS Vendors

LEA - Roster Subject Matter Experts

Our goal is to eliminate/reduce the occurrence of duplicated sections that are really the same logical class. For 2017 through 2019, DPI requested and processed Section data at the lowest level possible. That means that it is at a lower level than is needed or makes sense at the state level. In particular, DPI does not need to know about the scheduling of a Section - i.e., what classrooms are used or on what days the class meets. This creates a lot of duplicate data that is not needed for state or federal reporting.

Starting with 2020, DPI will collect Section records at what we're calling the "logical class" level. This means essentially what most people mean when they refer to a class. If I say "I am taking a history class" what I'm really saying is, I am enrolled in [one of] my school's History Section[s]. That is, a specific class (course) during a school year, for a specific term in that school year, at a specific school, and identified by a local course code.

In the V3 2019-20 Ed-Fi structure 'Session Name' and 'Local Course Code' are strings and both are part of the compound primary key on Section, which in turn affects studentSectionAssociations and staffSectionAssociations endpoints. Because these two data elements are freeform - districts can submit any text string - we need to be careful not to re-introduce scheduling (or other extraneous) elements back into the Section key. First, this structure allows multiple sessions for the same term within a single school. It is also possible to send a Section for every Session which creates multiple Sections for a single logical class because of a change in session. Second, if either session name or local course code are encoded with extraneous information (such as room number or days of the week, etc.), then the risk of duplicating the Section, creating multiple Section records for a logical class, is introduced.

DPI recommendation for Session Name best practice:

We recommend the use of the unduplicated 'Term Descriptor' as defined by DPI for 'Session Name'. This term should match the term supplied within the Session Name resource.

If implementation of this request is not possible, then develop a standard for 'Session Name' which is used by all schools within the district which will prevent duplication of sections, i.e. creation of logical classes.

Please consider adopting the following practices for 'Session Name':

- For consistency, include term, code or description, from DPI list for [Term descriptor](#). This term should match the term supplied within the Session Name resource.
Example : Term Descriptor is '1st Quarter'
Session Name is '1st Quarter'
- Inclusion of school year is not suggested. We don't recommend but if district choose to use school year in session name then use a consistent separator, specifically a semicolon, between elements of the Session Name. We suggest the use of a semicolon as the separator.
Example: Session Name is 1st Quarter;2019-2020
- Inclusion of building designation is not suggested. If building designation within a single school code is required, then use a standard code for the building, not the building name.
Example : Session Name is BLDG01;1st Quarter
- Do not include schedule references such as A Day versus B Day or Regular Session vs Early Release.
- Do not include any reference to class period or class location.

DPI recommendation for Local Course Code best practice:

- Inclusion of building designation is not suggested. If building designation within a single school code is required, then use a standard code for the building, not the building name.
- Do not include schedule references such as A Day versus B Day or Regular Session vs Early Release.
- Do not include any reference to class period or class location.

Usecases:

In the 2018-19 Ed-Fi structure DPI has:

- 1) noticed the scenario where multiple sections for the same set of students have been submitted because of change in Local Course Code and
- 2) identified usecases where individual schools have many 'Session Names' associated to a single term.

Based on these and other observations, DPI is providing usecases to assist with understanding and avoiding these scenarios in WISEdata.

Usecase 1: Multiple sections for the same set of students have been submitted because of change in Local Course Code

Below example of a problematic data submission appears like the same student is sitting in two different sections offered in the same term with no difference in course offered (DPI course code), class period or location. That is because districts have put schedule references in the local course code. As local course code is part of compound primary key we see two different sections instead of one logical section.

This problematic example is based on 18-19 API structure

Student USI	School id	School Year	Begin date	Unique section code	Local course code	Local course title	Classroom identifica tion code	Class Period Name	Term Descriptor	Sequen ce of course
123	6	2019	2018-09-05	1	027_2 019_3 8131W	ART 1	027-25 8	11	Quar ter 1	1
123	6	2019	2018-09-05	1	027_2 019_3 8131T	ART 1	027-25 8	11	Quar ter1	1

The best practice in this example is to remove schedule reference from local course code which will remove the duplicate section record. Below is the example for local course code best practice

Best Practice Example:

Student USI	School id	School Year	Begin date	Unique section code	Local course code	Local course title	Classroom identification code	Class Period Name	Term Descriptor	Sequen ce of course
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123	6	2019	2018-09-05	1	027_2 019_3 8131	ART 1	027-258	11	Quarter 1	1
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Usecase 2: Course offering and Section has Session reference in V3 API structure. Schools have only one Session in a particular term. 'Session Name' submitted is same for two different term descriptors.

This is a problematic example :

Session Name	begin date	End date	Term descriptor	Total instructional days	schoolid	schoolyear
200_S7100	2018-09-04	2018-11-25	Quarter 1	43	6	2019
200_s7100	2018-09-10	2018-11-30	Quarter 2	43	6	2019

DPI recommends districts to use unduplicated 'Term Descriptor' as defined by DPI for 'Session Name'. This term should match the term supplied within the Session Name resource.

Best Practice Example:

Session Name	begin date	End date	Term descriptor	Total instructional days	schoolid	schoolyear
Quarter1	2018-09-04	2018-11-25	Quarter 1	43	6	2019
Quarter2	2018-09-10	2018-11-30	Quarter 2	43	6	2019

Usecase 3: Course offering and Section has Session reference in V3 API structure. So, if individual schools have many 'Session Names' associated to a single term then

change in session name creates multiple sections for the same course offered in the same term.

some districts have mirror school scenarios or have more than one schedule within a term for a single course. In those scenarios it is ok to have multiple session names within the same term. Please follow DPI recommendation for Session Name best practice. If building designation within a single school code is required, then use a standard code for the building, not the building name.

Best Practice Example:

Session Name	begin date	End date	Term descriptor	Total instructional days	schoolid	schoolyear
BG01;Q1	2018-09-04	2018-11-25	Quarter 1	43	6	2019
BG02;Q1	2018-09-10	2018 -11-30	Quarter 1	43	6	2019

Usecase 3 : Multiple sections for the same set of students have been submitted because of change in Session Name.

In the below problematic data example it appears like districts are offering Hospitality and Tourism-Other course (DPI code 4917) in Quarter 1 but the district has two different schedules within Quarter 1 and students in one schedule are repeated in other schedule within the same term.

Session:

Session Name	begin date	End date	Term descriptor	Total instructional days	schoolid	schoolyear
BG01;Quarter1	2018-09-04	2018-11-25	Quarter 1	43	6	2019

BG02;Quarter1	2018-09-10	2018 -11-30	Quarter 1	43	6	2019
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Student Section Association (problematic example):

Student USI	School id	School Year	Begin date	Session name	Section Identifier	Local course code	Local course title
123	6	2019	2018-09-05	BG01;Quarter1	1	027_2019_38131	ART 1
123	6	2019	2018-09-10	BG02;Quarter1	1	027_2019_38131	ART 1
124	6	2019	2018-09-10	BG02;Quarter1	1	027_2019_38131	ART 1

The best practice in this example is to make sure that Students in one schedule are not repeated in other schedule within the same term. DPI also recommends to follow the best practice guidelines for Session name.

Best Practice Example:

Student USI	School id	School Year	Begin date	Session name	Section Identifier	Local course code	Local course title
123	6	2019	2018-09-05	BG01; Quarter 1	1	027_2019_38131	ART 1
124	6	2019	2018-09-10	BG02; Quarter 1	1	027_2019_38131	ART 1