

What is Mass Address Validation and How Does It Help School Districts?

The cleaner the better.

There is perhaps no better mantra for every school district staff member who is involved with entering, managing and validating staff and student data accuracy for internal use, state reporting and federal grant funding opportunities.

For PowerSchool users who utilize Level Data, Inc. applications, the features of automated cleaning and easily-guided fixes in State Data Validation are widely known.

A newer opportunity has come along that Level Data calls “Mass Address Validation” or MAV. It’s so innovative, sweeping and fresh that such a user-friendly service is not being offered anywhere else in the ‘education space’ as of early 2021, to the extent that Level Data even had to create the name.

What is Mass Address Data Validation?

After all school district staff and student data has initially been cleaned and updated – a service also offered by Level Data called Bulk Address Validation – MAV is the next and most profound step.

Mass Address Validation provides **overnight validation of all addresses (1,000 per day) in PowerSchool SIS** that might have changed in the records of any student due to current student change of address, new students entering the district or other database and human error issues.

On an ongoing nightly basis, unvalidated addresses in the district’s PowerSchool SIS are validated and saved to the PowerSchool database. The process works as follows:

1. Each night, Level Data extracts address records (student, staff, contacts, etc.) and submits them to a CASS-certified address validation service. No Personally Identifiable Information (PII) is pulled, just plain addresses.
2. The validated data is loaded back into PowerSchool in a staging location.
3. District personnel can then accept or deny address validations within the Address Validation tab of the State Validation application.
4. In RealTime Validation, addresses show an indicator confirming validation status on Demographics screens and other locations in PowerSchool.
5. Any changes to student addresses will require revalidation by a school district staff member.

This original PowerSchool plug-in from Level Data provided ongoing validation of all addresses, visually confirms validation status, and helps districts achieve the highest data quality possible of any product on the market.

“If there is an address in a school district’s system that doesn’t comply with the U.S. Post Office standards, it’s going to be flagged by Level Data and district personnel will be notified that there is an issue that needs to be investigated,” said Matt Betts, president of Level Data. “There’s never been a good way to proactively manage district addresses on a daily basis, until now.”

Every night after the school day is completed, unvalidated addresses will be collected based on filtration through SmartyStreets, Level Data’s CASS Certified validation service that regularly cross-references U.S. Postal Service database.

Validations in MAV also cover much more than just student home addresses. Additionally, Level Data runs student mailing addresses, student Contact addresses and Staff – and associating all address records with Geocodes.

Those addresses that are flagged as inaccurate, to help draw the attention of your pre-designated school district staff member, who can then determine which address(es) to decline or accept into PowerSchool.

How to Use Mass Address Validation

The first natural step will be to click the ‘Fix’ button, which will next give the dedicated user the option of updating each record one at a time, or in segments of 10. Either way, the following four options will be next available:

- **No Action:** take no action at all and the record remains in the pending validation list.
- **Decline:** This will accept the current address as entered, if the staff is sure the current address is correct. Declining will remove the address from the pending validation list and transfer it to the declined validation list. Yet an added benefit for final confirmation is it will ID the user, in case follow up is needed on why the decision-maker declined.
- **Accept:** This action accepts the suggested validation and removes it from the “fix” list.
- **Accept All:** This will accept all records on the current page (with no action taken for records without a suggested validation) and all addresses on the current page are removed from the list.

There is also an additional option to click on an individual record, which will open to the appropriate page under a new tab. There you can see if they have been validated.

Why Mass Address Validation is Critical

A first realization is that having every single student and staff address up to date and fully accurate is making State Data Reporting go that much more smoothly.

And there are some obvious benefits, like efficiency and money savings from mailing home report cards or other school information to correct addresses – and now having geocodes to help the transportation department better locate and map out bus routes and stops.

Yet it also comes down to finding the money. Mass Address Validation in the end helps school district IT staff and district leadership with funding-related tasks like fully satisfying **Lunch Status Exceptions, P-EBT and IEPs** records and grant applications.

Geocoded Mapping Functionality

This final validation step in MAV provides geocodes for every address, allowing for a Level Data-created visual map of your district (through another plug-in called RealTime Reports) that can be categorized in multiple ways. Wouldn't it be great to see on a district map groupings and locations of students such as:

- Where all students with no Internet live
- Where your English as a second language students live
- Where are the Special Education students
- Where the suspended students live
- Where the loaned-out District-owned hot spots and Chromebooks ended up, complete with device serial codes.

In just one example of available **Federal Technology Funding** for underprivileged students, Internet service providers will continue to collaborate with schools to make sure every child has access, even in a new post-Covid-19 world.

Now, and the next few years to come, is more crucial than ever for school districts to know where their students live and have the ability to visualize that data readily and intuitively.