Public Comment Requested on CDS
PESC To Adopt Common Data Standards
Public Comment Period Now Open

(Washington DC) - The Board of Directors of PESC – the Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council is pleased to announce that a 30-day public comment period is now open on Common Data Standards. The public comment period begins today Tuesday July 6, 2010 and will expire at the close of business on Wednesday August 4, 2010.

The Common Data Standards (CDS) Initiative is a national, collaborative effort to develop voluntary, common data standards for a key subset of K12 (e.g., demographics, program participation, and course information) and K12-to-postsecondary education transition variables. Participants in the Initiative include representatives from states, districts, higher education organizations, and key non-profit organizations. The CDS Initiative's goal is to identify a list of key K12 and K12-to-postsecondary transition variables (expansion into PreK and the workforce will be considered in the future) and agree upon standard definitions, code sets, business rules, and technical specifications for those variables. This will increase data interoperability, portability, and comparability across states, districts, and higher education organizations.

“The PESC Board of Directors firmly believes that barriers to interoperability, especially ones in our control, should be addressed and eliminated,” states Michael Sessa, President & CEO of PESC and member of the CDS Technical Workgroup and CDS Consortium. “With CDS being released September 30, 2010, many in higher education are already wondering how PESC and CDS relate to one another. By adopting and aligning with CDS, that confusion is eliminated,” Mr. Sessa continues. “PESC and CDS share the same goals, objectives and mission; and PESC will continue to work with CDS to align any technical differences that may exist.”

The complete submission can be accessed at http://www.commondatastandards.org. All comments from the general public and PESC membership should be made in the
form of an e-mail to the PESC President & CEO at: Michael.Sessa@PESC.org. Public comments can address any and/or all part of the standard being proposed. The comment e-mail should clearly identify the:

1) Responder full name and appropriate contact information (phone, email, organization, etc);
2) Source of the comments, i.e., whether the comments are individual or originate from a group the responder represents;
3) Nature of the responder’s interest in the standard (what is the issue and why is it important?);
4) Element(s) of the proposed standard with which issue is taken;
5) Changes suggested resolving the issue(s).

The Process

Within 30 calendar days after the close of the public comment period, the Change Control Board (CCB) of PESC’s Standards Forum for Education will address and consider all public comments and make, in consultation with CDS any necessary revisions. All public comments will be posted to the PESC website during the review process. The CCB’s consideration/revision period expires on Friday September 3, 2010 unless extenuating circumstances exist which require further deliberation.

Once any changes resulting from the public comment period have been incorporated, the CCB will recommend to the Standards Forum’s Steering Committee and the PESC Board of Directors that CDS be submitted to a vote by the PESC members. The PESC office will issue electronic ballots to the official contacts of PESC member organizations. Completed ballots, including the reason(s) for any rejection, must be returned to the PESC office via e-mail attachment, fax, overnight delivery, or U.S. Postal Service within ten (10) business days. PESC staff is responsible for the tabulation of the ballots; acceptance of the specification as a standard requires an affirmative vote of at least 80% of all votes cast. Once the members accept and approve the specification, the PESC Board of Directors will within seven (7) calendar days ratify the vote or refer it back to the CCB with specific instructions for further work.

PESC staff will then publish/post all necessary documents and communications and implement version control on all documents, as needed. PESC approved standards are freely accessible on the PESC website (http://www.PESC.org).

For more information about CDS, please visit http://www.commondatastandards.org.
About PESC
Established in 1997 at the National Center for Higher Education and located in Washington, D.C., the Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council (PESC) is a non-profit, community-based, 501 (c)(3) umbrella association of colleges and universities; college and university systems; professional and commercial organizations; data, software and service providers; non-profit organizations and associations; and state and federal government agencies. Through open and transparent community participation, PESC enables cost-effective connectivity between data systems to accelerate performance and service, to simplify data access and research, and to improve data quality along the higher education lifecycle.

PESC envisions national and international interoperability, that is a trustworthy, interconnected environment built by and between communities of interest in which data flows seamlessly from one system to another and throughout the entire eco-system when and where needed without compatibility barriers but in a safe, secure, reliable, and efficient manner. To achieve the mission and the vision, PESC organizes activities to: accelerate performance and service, reduce cost, lead collaborative development, set and maintain common data standards, promote best practices, link public and private sectors, and serve as data experts.

While PESC promotes the implementation and usage of data exchange standards, PESC does not set (create or establish) policies related to privacy and security. Organizations and entities using PESC standards and services should ensure they comply with FERPA and all local, state, federal and international rules on privacy and security as applicable.

More information about PESC can be found at http://www.PESC.org.