FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 13, 2009
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Public Comment Requested on IPEDS
Public Comment Period Now Open on
First Round of New IPEDS XML Upload Components

(Washington DC) - The Board of Directors of PESC – the Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council is pleased to announce that public comment period is now open for the first round of Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) XML Upload components.

“[NCES] would like to offer the IPEDS community an XML-based method of uploading data, and concurrently, we would like to have our XML schemas approved by PESC for use in the postsecondary community,” Elise Miller, IPEDS Program Director, National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, stated in communications with PESC. “While the IPEDS data collection currently encompasses eight survey components, our first mission will be to have PESC approved schemas for the student-based survey components: Fall Enrollment, Twelve Month Enrollment, Completions, Graduation Rates and Student Financial Aid,” Ms. Miller continued.

With the development work on Fall Enrollment (4-year institutions and less than 4-year institutions) recently completed and submitted to PESC, the IPEDS XML Upload specifications are now immediately ready for public comment period. The complete submission can be accessed at http://www.PESC.org. The public comment period begins today Monday April 13, 2009 and will expire at the close of business on Tuesday May 26, 2009.

All comments from the general public and PESC membership should be made in the form of an e-mail to the PESC Executive Director 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 to resolve 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 NCES 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 Thursday June 25, 2009 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 the IPEDS XML Upload specifications 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. PESC approved standards are freely accessible on the PESC website (http://www.PESC.org).

About IPEDS

Since its original development in the 1980s, the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) has collected institution-level data from all primary providers of postsecondary education to generate information on trends at the national, state, and institutional levels. IPEDS is the major postsecondary education data collection program within the U.S. Department of Education, and encompasses all postsecondary institutions and educational organizations, both public and private, that provide education as their primary purpose.

Sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), IPEDS was implemented to help NCES meet its mandate to report full and complete statistics on the condition of postsecondary education in the United States. IPEDS provides NCES with the basic data needed to describe the size of the postsecondary system in terms of students enrolled, staff employed, dollars expended, and degrees earned. As of the Fall of 2007, the IPEDS universe contained approximately 6,800 Title-IV participating institutions, and approximately 200 non-Title-IV institutions that participate voluntarily.

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1 From IPEDS “Letter of Intent” to PESC, April 29, 2008
In 2000, IPEDS was redesigned to provide for web-based transmission of information, completely replacing the paper-and-pencil administration that had been used for more than a decade. The IPEDS data collection runs year-round, with a total of eight different survey components being active at different times of the year. Institutions complete the surveys via the web-based data collection system, or they can upload flat/ascii data files to complete their data submission requirements. Alternatively, they can do some of each by manually completing some survey components while uploading data for other survey components. In some cases, state agencies provide some or all of the data for many institutions within their state using the file upload option.

More information about IPEDS can be found at http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds.

About PESC
Established in 1997 and located in Washington, D.C., the Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council (PESC) is a non-profit, community-based, umbrella association of colleges and universities; professional and commercial organizations; data, software and service providers; non-profit organizations and associations; and state and federal government agencies. PESC’s mission is to lead the alignment of data across disparate systems to improve performance and ensure cost-effective student progression along the higher education lifecycle.

PESC achieves its mission by: 1) Leading the establishment and facilitating the adoption and implementation of data exchange standards; 2) Highlighting and supporting best practices for data access and exchange; 3) Maintaining collaborative relationships with all public, private, governmental, and international stakeholders; 4) Serving as a standards-setting body; 5) Advocating for operational efficiencies and simplification in student data exchange from initial access of the student from high school into the college environment through successful completion of the education experience; 6) Promoting cost effectiveness of data alignment across disparate systems and across sectors that help mitigate costs for institutions struggling to keep up with the demands of technology and real-time data exchange while maintaining competitive tuition rates; 7) Building a core competency in XML architecture and data modeling.

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