FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Public Comment Requested on IPEDS
Public Comment Period Now Open on XML Upload Components for Graduation Rates

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

With the development work on Graduation Rates 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 Thursday December 3, 2009 and will expire at the close of business on Tuesday January 5, 2010.

All comments from the 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 February 4, 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 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.

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

1 From IPEDS “Letter of Intent” to PESC, April 29, 2008
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 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, inter-connected 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.

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