Data Quality Campaign Awarded 1st Place in PESC Annual Best Practices Competition

The Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council (PESC) announced the Data Quality Campaign Winner of the 2006 PESC Best Practices Competition at the 4th Annual Conference on Technology and Standards held April 23 - 25, 2007 in Washington, D.C. The Best Practices Competition, now in its 8th year, is held by PESC to promote innovation and ingenuity in the application of standards for business needs.

Launched on November 17, 2005 at the Data Summit sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), the Data Quality Campaign (DQC) was developed as a national, collaborative effort to encourage, support, and ensure that state policymakers and other education stakeholders understand not only the benefits of matching individual student records over time and across databases, but also the importance of developing these systems on common standards to ensure their use and applicability are not limited.

The campaign aims to provide tools and resources that will assist state development of quality longitudinal data systems, while providing a national forum for reducing duplication of effort and promoting greater coordination and consensus among the organizations focusing on improving data quality, access and use. The goals of the DQC are to have longitudinal education data systems in 50 states by 2009; increased understanding by policymakers and educators of how to use longitudinal and financial data in their efforts to improve student achievement, and; promotion of data standards and efficient data transfer and exchange.

The presentation made by the Data Quality Campaign along with all past winners of Best Practices is available at http://www.PESC.org/Events/Best-Practices.asp.
AACRAO and Jim Farmer Honored with Distinguished Service Awards

PESC is pleased to announce AACRAO and Jim Farmer as recipients of this year’s Distinguished Service Awards.

AACRAO served for a number of years as secretariat to PESC providing a variety of services including office space and telephone, network, and human resources support. Executive Director Jerome Sullivan received the award at the opening general session of the 4th Annual Conference on Technology and Standards on behalf of AACRAO.

All past recipients of PESC’s Distinguished Service Awards are available at http://www.PESC.org/About/Service-Awards.asp.

All awards were presented during the Opening Session of the 4th Annual Conference on Technology and Standards, held April 23 - 25, 2007 in Washington, D.C.

Presentations are now Available for the 4th Annual Conference on Technology and Standards

For those that attended the 4th Annual Conference on Technology and Standards last week here in Washington, D.C., thank you for helping make that conference enjoyable, successful, and informative!

Presentations made during the 4th Annual Conference are now available on the PESC website at http://www.PESC.org/Events/TechStandards/Fourth/.

We thank all of our featured and concurrent speakers for providing timely and enlightening sessions. We thank our sponsors too (NASLA, ConnectEdu, AES, Regent Education, SIFA, SLSA, and USA Funds) who help make the 4th Annual Conference possible.

For those that didn’t have a chance to complete evaluations, evaluations are now available online at http://www.PESC.org/Events/TechStandards/Fourth/ and attached beginning on page 6 of this edition of The Standard.

Completed evaluations will be accepted through May 31, 2007 and can be emailed back to Michael Sessa at Sessa@PESC.org, faxed at 202-872-8857 or mailed to PESC, One Dupont Circle NW, Suite 520, Washington, DC 20036.
Online Loan Counseling Specification Approved by PESC Members As Education Community Standard

The Board of Directors and Steering Committee of the Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council (PESC) are pleased to announce the release of the XML Online Loan Counseling Standard as a PESC Member-Approved National Education Community Standard. Version 1.0 and all supporting documentation are available at www.PESC.org. This effort marks a significant milestone and achievement for the education community, Mapping Your Future, and for PESC.

Loan counseling is required under the Higher Education Act of 1965 for all students receiving federal student aid. Counseling is administered by an institution (or the institution’s service provider) and occurs twice, when the student initially receives aid (called “entrance counseling”) and then before the student graduates (called “exit counseling”). With advancements in technology, counseling can be conducted online and a number of service providers provide online loan counseling products to institutions and borrowers. Currently, these providers use proprietary file layouts. Institutions, guarantors, lenders, servicers, and others retrieve or receive loan counseling records from these service providers. If these entities are using multiple providers though, identification and matching of data elements and records and data integrity in general become significant challenges. In addition, the ability to upload files to financial aid management system (FAMS) is complicated, as the layouts don’t follow industry standards.

“The higher education community will truly benefit from online loan counseling data exchange standards,” states Carianne Behr of Mapping Your Future and Chair of the Online Loan Counseling Workgroup. “Entities receiving counseling data will be able to identify elements, regardless of the loan counseling provider. These same entities will be able to more easily upload data into their systems.”

The Online Loan Counseling Standard is programmed in eXtensible Mark-Up Language (XML), the widely adopted programming language that has enabled safe and reliable, real-time messaging and data exchange.

For any organization looking to communicate their specific use and adoption of the Online Loan Counseling Standard, please contact Michael Sessa or Jennifer Kim directly at Sessa@PESC.org 202-293-7383 or Jennifer.Kim@PESC.org 202-263-0296 respectively. For more information on PESC or the Online Loan Counseling Standard, please visit www.PESC.org.

PESC Members that approved the Online Loan Counseling Specification as a National Education Community Standard include:

- AcademyOne
- American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO)
- AES
- Citibank
- The College Board
- Consumer Bankers Association (CBA)
- Datatel
- Georgetown University
- Georgia Board of Regents
- Iowa State University
- National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA)
- National Association of Student Loan Administrators (NASLA)
- National Council of Higher Education Loan Programs (NCHELP)
- National Student Clearinghouse
- National Transcript Center
- Nelnet
- Oracle Corporation
- SunGard Higher Education
- University of Denver
- University of Illinois at Chicago
- University of Illinois Student Financial Services
- University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign
- University of Northern Iowa
- University of Oklahoma
- USA Funds
- U.S. Department of Education
Members of the OASIS consortium have formed a new committee to advance the WS-Federation specification through the international standards process. WS-Federation aims to extend the scope of identity management, enabling federations of trust. Version 1.1 of the specification, which was created by a cooperative of eight companies, will be contributed to the new OASIS WS-Federation Technical Committee for advancement and input from the broader community. The OASIS WS-Federation Technical Committee will work to simplify interactions between the participants of a federation. The group will advance capabilities for structuring and acquiring federation metadata, sign-out notifications, and the use of pseudonym and identity mapping and attribute services. In addition, the Committee will enable brokered trust relationships and distributed authentication and authorization to be used in browser-based scenarios.

Researchers at the University of Tokyo sent data to Chicago, Amsterdam, Seattle, and back again on Abilene, Internet2’s high-speed research network, at an unprecedented rate of 7.67 gigabits per second. The following day the researchers outdid themselves, upping the data-transfer rate to 9.08 gigabits per second. That figure comes pretty close to Abilene’s theoretical limit of 10 gigabits per second, according to the Associated Press.

PESC Fall 2007 Summit at the Ritz-Carlton Montreal

Please make plans to attend the 5th Annual Conference on Technology and Standards to be held April 28 - 30, 2008 at the Hyatt Regency on Capital Hill.

PESC’s next event is our Fall 2007 Summit to be held October 15 - 17, 2007 at the Ritz-Carlton Montreal. As a passport is now required for air travel to Canada, we recommend applying for or renewing your passport now. For more information on the Fall 2007 Summit and for passport information visit, http://www.pesc.org/events/wgsummit/fall2007/PESC%20Fall%202007%20Summit%20Flyer.pdf.
Almost a year ago two consortia that run high-speed computer networks for researchers mixed plans to merge, announcing that they were unable to come to an agreement on organizational issues. But now the two groups -- Internet2 and National LambdaRail -- say the merger is back on. The governing boards of both groups agreed earlier this month to a complete a "definitive agreement to merge," according to a statement signed by Jeffrey S. Lehman, the chair of Internet2, and Tracy Futhey, the chair of LambdaRail and reported in the Chronicle of Higher Education.

The EDUCAUSE Annual Policy Conference takes place Wednesday-Thursday, May 16-17, at the Hilton Crystal City near National Airport in Alexandria, VA. Highlights include, Bruce Lehman (author of the DMCA) and Larry Jacobson (CEO of CDigix) on future business models for music distribution. Jim Harper (Cato Institute) on how "identity" is overused and misunderstood. "Kaz" Kazenske (Microsoft) on patent reform. Chris Libertellii (Skype), John Windhausen (Telepoly), and Richard Whitt (Google) on Network Neutrality, John Muleta (CEO of M2Z), Mike Cook (Hughes Network Systems), and Sam Spencer (Editor of "BPL Today") on ubiquitous broadband. Jim Dempsey (Center for Democracy and Technology) and Kate Dean (USISPA) on the Internet as a Law Enforcement tool. For more details and registration information, see http://www.educause.edu/POL07.

### UT Austin Internet Server

‘SPEEDEs’ Along

March 2007 volume included:

- 42,658 TS130 transcripts
- 44,835 TS131 acknowledgements
- 13,531 TS997 Functional acknowledgements
- 52,658 TS189 Admission Applications
- 10,009 TS138 test score reports
- 178,566 total transactions for March 2007
Please complete this Evaluation Form with as much information as possible.
Your feedback helps us plan future conferences and your opinion on topics and speakers ensures the success of future sessions.
Thank you for your continued support!

Session Name: ____________________________________________

Session Speaker(s): ________________________________________

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Comments and Suggestions:______________________________

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Comments and Suggestions:

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Linking Teacher & Student Data to Improve Teaching Quality —
Excerpt from March Quarterly Issue Brief

Ensuring that every student is taught by a highly qualified teacher is increasingly becoming a national priority, and collecting and using longitudinal data must be an integral part of this effort. The ability to connect teacher preparation, training and practices with student success will focus the conversation on strategies that have been proven to increase student achievement.

As part of its efforts to encourage state policymakers to support and develop state longitudinal data systems, the Data Quality Campaign promotes the development and use of a teacher ID with the ability to match teachers to students. The unique teacher ID is permanently attached to each individual and is used throughout the data system.

Many states collect data on teacher education and certification, but matching teachers to students by classroom and subject is critical to understanding the connection between teacher training and qualifications and student academic growth. However, according to NCEA’s 2006 Survey of State Data Collection Issues Related to Longitudinal Analysis, only 15 states report being able to connect student and teacher data, and the extent of the analyses that can be performed with this information varies greatly, depending on the sophistication and breadth of the data on teachers and courses taught. Moreover, seven states do not have unique statewide IDs for their teachers, meaning that if teachers move to another district, their records do not automatically follow, which results in incomplete and redundant information at the state level.

With a teacher ID and the ability to connect teacher, student and school data, policymakers and educators will know:
- which teacher preparation programs produce graduates whose students have the strongest academic growth;
- how school working conditions can affect the impact that teacher education has on P–12 student achievement;
- how the experience levels of the teachers in the district’s high-poverty schools compare with those of teachers in the schools serving affluent students, and how these experience levels are related to the academic growth of the students in their classrooms; and
- the relationship between the performance of the district’s low-income students on statewide assessments and teacher preparation in the tested subject(s).

New policy questions and accountability demands require better data on teachers and the universities that prepare them, so additional investments are needed to gather, house and analyze data in new ways that inform policy and practice. Fortunately, many states are providing clear roadmaps to build these longitudinal teacher data systems that are connected to student information and are illustrating the benefits of these analyses to improve teacher and teaching quality.

This issue brief was released in conjunction with the DQC Quarterly Issue Meeting held in March 2007 on the same topic. Please visit the DQC Web site at www.DataQualityCampaign.org to view the video of that meeting and materials.
Campaign Activities

**DQC wins 8th Annual Best Practices Competition sponsored by Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council (www.pesc.org)**

**April 23-25**
**PESC**
Annual Conference on Technology & Standards, Washington, DC

**April 30-May 2**
**CCSSO, EIMAC meetings, Arlington, VA**

**May 7-9**
**APQC**
Knowledge Management Conference & Training, Houston, TX

**May 7-9**
**SIFA**
End User & Developers Meetings, St. Louis, MO

**June 22-27**
**SETDA**
Emerging Technologies Forum, Atlanta, GA

**July 10-13**
**Education Commission of the States,**
National Forum on Educational Policy Philadelphia, PA

Recent Research from RAND:

*Making Sense of Data-Driven Decision Making in Education*

Data-driven decision making (DDDM), applied to student achievement testing data, is a central focus of many school and district reform efforts, in part because of federal and state test-based accountability policies. A new publication released by the RAND Corporation, “Making Sense of Data-Driven Decision Making in Education: Evidence from Recent RAND Research,” draws on several studies to show how schools and districts are analyzing achievement test results and other types of data to make decisions to improve student success. It examines DDDM policies and suggests future research in the field. A conceptual framework, adapted from the literature and used to organize the discussion, recognizes that multiple data types (input, outcome, process, and satisfaction data) can inform decisions, and that the presence of raw data does not ensure its effective use.

Research questions addressed are: what types of data are administrators and teachers using, and how are they using them; what support is available to help with the use of the data; and what factors influence the use of data for decision making? RAND research suggests that most educators find data useful for informing aspects of their work and that they use data to improve teaching and learning. The first implication of this work is that DDDM does not guarantee effective decision making: having data does not mean that it will be used appropriately or lead to improvements. Second, practitioners and policymakers should promote the use of various data types collected at multiple points in time. Third, equal attention needs to be paid to analyzing data and taking action based on data. Capacity-building efforts may be needed to achieve this goal. Fourth, RAND research raises concerns about the consequences of high-stakes testing and excessive reliance on test data. Fifth, attaching stakes to data such as local progress tests can lead to the same negative practices that appear in high-stakes testing systems. Finally, policymakers seeking to promote educators’ data use should consider giving teachers flexibility to alter instruction based on data analyses. More research is needed on the effects of DDDM on instruction, student achievement, and other outcomes; how the focus on state test results affects the validity of those tests; and the quality of data being examined, the analyses educators are undertaking, and the decisions they are making.

The full publication can be accessed at [http://www.rand.org/pubs/occasional_papers/OP170/](http://www.rand.org/pubs/occasional_papers/OP170/)
On February 13, 2007, the Commission on No Child Left Behind released its final report and recommendations on Capitol Hill in Washington DC. The Commission, a bipartisan, independent effort to improve the No Child Left Behind Act, spent the last year traveling across the country, listening to the experiences of students, educators, parents, administrators, state and district officials, experts and policymakers. Their report is the product of this information gathering and outlines specific and actionable recommendations for establishing a high-achieving education system. The Commission was co-chaired by former Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson and former Georgia Governor Roy Barnes.

The Commission’s major recommendations include:

- Ensuring teachers and principals are effective at improving student achievement
- Accelerating progress through accurate and fair accountability measures
- Effective school improvement and quality student options
- Rigorous standards tied to college and workplace readiness
- Strengthening and reforming high

In order to implement the recommendations in the report, the commission calls for the federal government and states to “partner to create more sophisticated data systems that can track individual student achievement over time and provide critical information to parents, teachers, and school administrators.” The report acknowledges that states have already begun to develop such systems, but need to continue the work to ensure that needed information is collected and available. The data-specific recommendations include:

- All states to design and implement a high-quality longitudinal data system within no more than four years of the enactment of a reauthorized NCLB
- States to provide professional development for all individuals who use and maintain these systems
- The federal government to provide an additional $100 million a year for four years, under a formula grant program, to assist states in the development and implementation of sufficient data systems
- States, upon the complete development and implementation of their data systems, submit an audit report by an independent entity that certifies these systems meet the requirements contained in the recommendations of the NCLB Commission

The report lists and specifically recommends that states use the Data Quality Campaign’s 10 Essential Elements as the building blocks of their data systems, and affirms that effective P-12 data systems must, at minimum, include these elements. The commission also suggests that states consider capabilities such as tracking students through postsecondary education and initial employment, matching student records between P–12 and postsecondary education and student college-readiness test scores.

To view the full report, please visit www.nclbcommission.org.

Executive Summary: http://www.aspeninstitute.org/atf/cf/%7BDEB6F227-659B-4EC8-8F84-8DF23CA704F5%7D/NCLB_ExSum.pdf
Endorsing Partners - non-Managing partner organizations which are also committed to promoting longitudinal data systems

American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) - http://www.aacte.org
AACTE is a national voluntary association of higher education institutions and other organizations, and is dedicated to ensuring the highest quality preparation and continuing professional development for teachers and school leaders in order to enhance PK-12 student learning.

American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) - http://www.aascu.org
Members of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities work to extend higher education to all citizens. By Delivering America’s Promise, these institutions fulfill the expectations of a public university by working for the public good. AASCU represents more than 400 public colleges, universities and systems of higher education throughout the United States.

College Summit, Inc. - http://www.collegesummit.org
Rising college enrollment rates reveal what high schools are doing right for their students. College Summit arm educators with resources to increase the college-going rate of all seniors, partners with school leadership to create a community-wide college-going culture of high expectations, and provides ongoing student data and technology to allow schools to measurably and affordably increase their college-going rate.

College Summit arms college-experienced educators with resources to increase the college-going rate of all seniors, partners with school leadership to create a community-wide college-going culture of high expectations, and provides ongoing student data and technology to allow schools to measurably and affordably increase their college-going rate.

Learning Point Associates - http://www.learningpt.org
Learning Point Associates is a nonprofit education organization with more than 20 years of experience working with educators and policymakers to transform student learning. Committed to high-quality evaluation, policy, professional development, and research services, we work to build the capacity of our clients to be good consumers, practitioners, and advocates for educational excellence.

National Alliance for Public Charter Schools - http://www.publiccharters.org
The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools develops policies that support high-quality public education options for families who need them the most. Key priorities include lifting "caps" on charter growth, closing the charter school finance gap, and updating the federal Charter Schools Program to spur growth and achievement.

National Education Knowledge Industry Association (NEKIA) - http://www.nekia.org
Founded in 1997 as a non-profit, non-partisan trade organization, NEKIA is a strong and dynamic community of highly successful education organizations and agencies, whose common cause is to actively promote and advocate for the expanded use of knowledge-based solutions in K-12 education. NEKIA is constantly looking for new and better ways to support high-quality education research, dissemination, technical assistance and evaluation at the federal, regional, state, tribal, and local levels.

Pathways to College Network - http://www.pathwaystocollege.net
The Pathways to College Network is an alliance of over 30 national organizations and funders committed to using data and research to improve college access and success outcomes for underserved students. The Pathways Network connects research with policy and practice in focus areas - Academic Preparation, Access & Information, Financial Aid, and College Success - by continually creating and disseminating knowledge about what research shows is most effective in helping students and their families who need them the most. TERI (The Education Resources Institute) is the Network's managing partner.

Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) - http://www.sreb.org
The Southern Regional Education Board, a nonprofit and nonpartisan organization based in Atlanta, Georgia, advises state education leaders on ways to improve education. SREB was created in 1948 by Southern governors and legislators to help leaders in education and government work cooperatively to advance education and improve the social and economic life of the region. SREB has 16 member states: AL, AR, DE, FL, GA, KY, LA, MD, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, VA and WV. Each is represented by its governor and four gubernatorial appointees.

About the DQC
The Data Quality Campaign is a national, collaborative effort to encourage and support state policymakers to improve the collection, availability, and use of high-quality education data, and to implement state longitudinal data systems to improve student achievement. The campaign aims to provide tools and resources that will assist state development of quality longitudinal data systems, while also providing a national forum for reducing duplication of effort and promoting greater coordination and consensus among the organizations focusing on improving data quality, access and use.

The DQC is supported by The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.