Public Comment Requested on IPEDS

Public Comment Period Open on XML Upload of Student Financial Aid

The Board of Directors of PESC – the Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council is pleased to announce that public comment period is now open on the Student Financial Aid XML components for the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) XML Upload component.

With the development work on Student Financial Aid 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 began July 13, 2010 and expires at the close of business on Wednesday August 11, 2010. Please remember too that public comment period on Common Data Standards (CDS) expires at the close of business on Wednesday August 4, 2010. (continued on page 2)

SHEEO and CCSSO Hold First-Ever Joint Meeting

Before a standing-room only crowd at the first-ever joint meeting of the association members of The State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan called the meeting “groundbreaking.” Secretary Duncan focused on the importance of rigorous standards, principal and teacher preparation and professional development, and robust, cradle to career data systems that protect privacy, specifically mentioning state-based data systems. In reference to the historic meeting, Secretary Duncan spoke to the “wisdom in collaboration” and on the impact collaboration can have on key successful outcomes, like completion rates. On data systems, Secretary Duncan emphasized the need for interoperability, that state systems must be able to communicate with each other.
THE PESC STANDARD
A LOGICAL GROUPING OF DATA

PESC — The Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council — has brought the higher education community together and facilitated the creation of open, comprehensive standards for data systems and data exchange that are transforming the higher education landscape.

The PESC standard, a best practices model enabling the efficient exchange of higher education student data between trading partners, streamlines the administration and management of data saving time and money. With PESC, once student data is entered, administrators can rely on the accuracy and quality of that data without having to enter it again or develop additional interfaces.

PESC standards, embedded in software applications that generate the transactions needed to communicate and integrate the student into the campus system include: the high school transcript, college transcript, education test score report, admissions application, federal student loans and grants, and reporting for IPEDS — the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System. The transactions are based in eXtensible Mark-Up Language (XML) — the latest technology.

With standard methods of communicating and transporting data, all software applications and systems can be synchronized efficiently and harmoniously while data quality improves.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT
OUR MUTUAL GOAL!

Students, parents, and high school and college officials, and state administrators are focused on the success of the student and use of the PESC Standard allows just that. By eliminating barriers, bridging data gaps in the student lifecycle, and enabling efficient data exchange, the PESC community has made student success our #1 priority! With students learning, graduating, and well prepared for the workforce, we all win.

IMPROVED INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE
ENABLING BETTER ACCESS AND SERVICE

With the PESC standard, gone are the days of inefficient data management and exchange and closed proprietary systems. Now more than ever, mechanisms that provide significant control over process, customer service, accountability, data integrity, and cost containment can be readily at hand.

Architects and IT executives can make sound technology decisions and rely on a proven return on investment. Administrators in admission offices, registrars, business officers, financial aid officers, and states can depend on the accuracy and quality of student data and reporting. Data, software and systems providers can work efficiently to meet the needs of students, states, and colleges and universities without the burden of multiple, various proprietary formats and methods.

TRANSPARENT COLLABORATION
OUR CORNERSTONE PRINCIPLE

Transparent community collaboration is our cornerstone principle. Open participation, the sharing of ideas, maximizing each other’s strengths, and best practices remind us that while we work in a competitive environment, as stakeholders we must also cooperate and work together for the greater common good.

That greater common good is ensuring student progression and achievement along the higher education lifecycle and fostering a successful learning experience. With its founding at the National Center for Higher Education in 1997 by leaders in higher education, the PESC community has accepted that duty and is dedicated to achieving its mission.

The SIF Association, the U.S. Department of Education, the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO), the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), and the Data Quality Campaign also support this mission and PESC has formed strong partnerships with these organizations.

Our collective effort to bridge business interoperability with technical interoperability combined with unprecedented political will, has created an historic awareness about the importance of common data standards and systems, and the need for data-driven decision-making.

ACTIVATING INTEROPERABILITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Established in 1997 at the National Center for Higher Education and located in Washington, D.C., PESC is a non-profit 501(c)(3), community-based, 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. For up-to-date information on current meetings, events, new development efforts, and how to join, visit www.PESC.org or call +1.202.261.6516. © 2010. PESC. All rights reserved.
Public Comment Requested on IPEDS

All comments from the general public and PESC membership on IPEDS 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 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 Friday September 10, 2010 unless extenuating circumstances exist.

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 at http://www.PESC.org.

Need for Improvement Identified on Data Standards Alignment within U.S. Department of Education

See attached letter to Secretary of Education Arne Duncan from PESC President & CEO Michael Sessa.

EdUnify In-Person Meeting

9:00am Tuesday August 31, 2010 through noon Wednesday September 1, 2010
Renaissance Washington DC
999 Ninth Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20001
1.800.228.9290
“PESC” Group Name
$199 single/double + tax
Cut-Off Monday August 9, 2010

In order to move to beta in time for the Educause conference in October (PESC and Emory University have been approved for an EdUnify presentation at Educause and plan to announce a beta release), we need an in-person meeting to ensure sufficient progress beforehand. After a quick survey of primary EdUnify participants, we confirmed the best available dates. Please use the attached Registration Form and indicate if you are able to attend on both days or just Tuesday or just Wednesday. The draft agenda includes:

- Introduction
- Current Status and Review
- Services - How to Post and Why
- Requirements/Priorities (Beta, R1, R2)
- PR Campaign
- Business Model and Requirements
- Detail Requirements from Priorities
- Assignments and Follow Up Actions
July 22, 2010

Honorable Arne Duncan  
Secretary of Education  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Ave SW  
Washington, D.C. 20024

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Thank you for your thoughtful response to my question raised to you last Friday in Minneapolis at the joint meeting of the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). The meeting was of thoroughly high quality and the foundation you provided specifically on data systems and standards was solid and very much appreciated.

As you may know, one of the fundamental characteristics of any data system is the ability to connect or interoperate with other systems. Interoperability is most effectively and efficiently achieved through use of common, technical data standards; and, PESC – the Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council is working cooperatively with the Data Quality Campaign (DQC), SHEEO, CCSSO and the SIF Association to align data standards across the entire education landscape thereby linking PK12 and higher education communities to each other and to the labor and workforce communities. Along with resources from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and the Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development (OPEPD), our collective goal is to enable more efficient, cost-effective data management, reporting, and usage.

Our ability to fully align though is inhibited by one major factor, which was the basis for my question to you: there is a lack of internal alignment from one Department of Education agency that uses and requires its own proprietary data standards (data definitions, code sets, business rules, and technical specifications) to another Department of Education agency that uses and requires its own different and proprietary data standards. For example, data standards that states, local education agencies, schools, providers, and/or institutions are required to follow under EDFacts may not be the same as the data standards required under Federal Student Aid (FSA), or the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), or even other reporting through the Education Data Exchange Network (EDEN).

This lack of alignment within the U.S. Department of Education increases costs for all stakeholders and maintains a certain level of confusion in the market. While
programs and services within the Department most likely grew organically, the results sometimes include
unintended consequences and additional burdens for administrators and for those required to implement
and use non-common data standards on a serial basis.

I understand that most reporting requirements and timelines are mandated, through statute or
regulation, and the U.S. Department of Education thereby sometimes has limited flexibility on certain
operations or compliance factors. One factor though is within the Department’s control, and that is
coordination and alignment of technical data standards that impact stakeholders interacting with the U.S.
Department of Education and its many agencies. With an unprecedented awareness on data systems and
data standards and ever-increasing development, we must tackle this issue of cost now and set a
sustainable, long term solution for the future. We have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to all work
openly, collaboratively, and transparently on this one solution and together we can achieve it.

In order to be truly interoperable, the education network must include the U.S. Department of Education
as a stakeholder in community-based standards-setting. I also understand that alignment while a simple
concept on the surface, quickly becomes complicated due to the number of stakeholders involved and the
various local, state, regional, federal, and international interests. Yet other communities and networks\(^1\)
have achieved the full vision of interoperability while protecting privacy, and working together,
stakeholders in Education can achieve that vision together as well.

To enable and inform recommendations for consideration, PESC proposes the following three actions and
activities be performed:

**Adopt a mission to align data standards within the U.S. Department of Education and with the
stakeholder communities.** Both PESC – the Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council in higher
education and SIFA – the SIF Association in PK12 have worked to align stakeholders in their
respective sectors while leveraging joint opportunities to bring a more common solution network-
wide. Bolstered by the awareness and level of discussion created by the DQC, SHEEO, and CCSSO
and now with the support of NCES, we must ensure that important, cost-effective solutions like
data standards remain as much a part of policy discussion as the technology one.

**Establish a sole agency to which all Department agencies are accountable to in the setting of
data standards.** This sole agency should monitor and require participation in collaborative
standards-setting activities. As implementation to common data standards may occur in phases
over years, this sole agency should work with any other Department agency on setting migration
plans and required timelines. A Department-wide schedule to set and migrate to common data
standards should be produced within one year of being established and must include open and
transparent community participation.

**Authorize an independent team to identify, analyze, and report on all agencies within the
Department that require data standards for data collection from local, state, and federal
agencies and schools and institutions.** An analysis from this perspective is not available; yet such
an audit will help create and inform longer-lasting, sustainable, solutions. Analyses should include

\(^1\) The Mortgage Industry Standards Maintenance Organization (MISMO) for the mortgage community and network, the E-ZPass Interagency Group for
the Inter-State toll both network, and inter-bank networks like PLUS, Cirrus, STAR and LINK associated with the ATM network, credit cards, and the PCI
Data Security Standards Council.
development and maintenance costs of non-common standards; any other burdens or hardships local, state, and federal agencies, and schools and institutions may incur by adhering to changing non-common data standards; and disclosure of compliance activities under any existing law or statute similar to Section 143 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 or Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-119.

The members of PESC led by a team from the University of Mississippi worked throughout 2008 to develop and produce an analysis of data exchange along the student lifecycle\(^2\). This analysis clearly shows the hundreds, if not thousands, of separate input and output events whereby data is exchanged within an institution. Maintaining such a production cycle with so many exchanges and moving parts while ensuring its success, requires precision, skill, management and governance, and teamwork among many stakeholders. PESC believes that while we build and expand upon these achievements, we must also take advantage of cost-effective, proven solutions that foster return on investment.

Pockets of success already exist within the Department. PESC worked with the Office of Federal Student Aid (FSA), a founding PESC member, over a number of years to strategize, manage, and migrate from silo-based, stovepipe systems to modern, re-engineered systems for the future. The table below illustrates that with a modernized common and origination and disbursement (COD) system that incorporated all necessary functionality, the disparate and costly Pell, Direct Lending, and Campus-Based systems were retired. At the same time, efficiencies were gained in overall data management and data quality was significantly improved. The financial aid community is now very well versed in XML and PESC continues to work with FSA to align any new and remaining data standards.

![Diagram of data exchange along the student lifecycle](image)

**Table 1.** Migrating every college and university in the country to an XML-based common record was no small task. In working with PESC and the community, FSA established a phased-in approach that was very well received as it allowed colleges and universities ample time to prepare for migration but did not hold back those that were ready or able to participate already.

\(^2\) See attached.
PESC stands firmly with SHEEO, CCSSO, SIFA and the DQC in the need to align toward common data standards. Together we are prepared to work with you and the U.S. Department of Education in any way we can in implementing these solutions or developing new ones in support of our common goal of interoperability.

With deep respect, I thank you for taking the time to reach out to me and the community and look forward to working with you and the U.S. Department of Education on common solutions.

Best Regards

Michael D. Sessa
President & CEO

cc: Honorable Martha Kanter, Under Secretary of Education
PESC Board of Directors
PESC Members
SHEEO
CCSSO
SIFA
DQC

Unlocking the Power of Data!
May 13, 2010

Michael D. Sessa
Executive Director
Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council (PESC)
1250 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Suite 200
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Mr. Sessa:

I am very happy to write in support of the EdUnify project proposed by PESC (Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council) to develop the proof of concept for an innovative directory service model that will connect our global community of students, advisors, faculty, researchers, and administrators with essential information - no matter where it resides - to enable better decision making toward academic success.

Academy One, Inc. is an active member in the PESC community putting aside competitive self-interests and working across the diverse members including institutions, government agencies, associations, and industry developing community shared specifications to foster data, process and information standards. Our work has led to improved student success through the application of information technology and practices moving away from standalone, disparate and proprietary data management. Yet, we have so much more to accomplish. In our work with postsecondary institutions, government agencies, associations and industry, AcademyOne clearly recognizes the vital importance in developing new information technologies to support student mobility and the currency of learning. We need to dedicate resources to improve how credentials and recognition seamlessly follow learners as they move and aspire to complete degrees. In doing so, we need a means to work better together - in an online consumer centric world - complementing the localized and self contained traditional student experiences that most institutional systems support well. Working with PESC to develop EdUnify will afford the broader educational community the opportunity to combine efforts, leverage reuse and improve transparency of information services in order to benefit learners of all types. I strongly support the EdUnify project and will devote our effort and resources to support this worthy project adding to our commitment to adopt the PESC standards already in progress.

Sincerely,

David K. Moldoff
Founder and CEO
Michael D. Sessa  
Executive Director  
PESC - Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council  
1250 Connecticut Avenue, NW  
Suite 200  
Washington, D.C. 20036  

May 27, 2010

Dear Mr. Sessa:

I am very happy to write in support of the EdUnify project proposed by PESC (Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council) to develop the proof of concept for an innovative directory service model. EdUnify will connect our global community of students, advisors, faculty, researchers, and administrators with essential information – no matter where the information resides – to enable better decision-making toward academic success.

The California Community Colleges is an active member in the PESC community putting aside competitive self interests and working across the diverse members including institutions, government agencies, associations, and industry developing community shared specifications to foster data, process and information standards. Our work has led to improved student success through the application of information technology and practices moving away from standalone, disparate and proprietary data management. Yet, we have so much more to accomplish.

In our work with postsecondary institutions, government agencies, associations and industry, The California Community Colleges Technology Center clearly recognizes the vital importance in developing new information technologies to support student mobility and the currency of learning. We need to dedicate resources to improve how credentials and recognition seamlessly follow learners as they move and aspire to complete degrees. In doing so, we need a means to work better together - in an online consumer centric world – complementing the localized and self contained traditional student experiences that most institutional systems support well.

Working with PESC to develop EdUnify will afford the broader educational community the opportunity to combine efforts, leverage reuse and improve transparency of information services in order to benefit learners of all types. I strongly support the EdUnify project and will devote our effort and resources to support this worthy project adding to our commitment to adopt the PESC standards already in progress.

Sincerely,

Tim Calhoon, Director  
California Community Colleges Technology Center
Michael D. Sessa  
Executive Director  
PESC - Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council  
1250 Connecticut Avenue, NW  
Suite 200  
Washington, D.C. 20036  

Dear Mr. Sessa:  

We are very happy to write in support of the EdUnify project proposed by PESC (Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council) to develop the proof of concept for an innovative directory service model. EdUnify will connect our global community of students, advisors, faculty, researchers, and administrators with essential information—no matter where the information resides—to enable better decision-making to drive student success.

ConnectEDU is an active member in the PESC community. ConnectEDU is excited by the prospect of the open exchange of education data that EdUnify represents. In our work with postsecondary institutions, government agencies, associations and industry partners, ConnectEDU clearly recognizes the vital importance in developing new information technologies to support student mobility and the currency of learning. We need to dedicate resources to improve how credentials and recognition seamlessly follow learners as they move and aspire to complete degrees. In doing so, we need a means to better work together—in a student centered world—complementing the localized and self contained traditional student experiences that most institutional systems support well.

Working with PESC to develop EdUnify will afford the broader educational community the opportunity to combine efforts, leverage reuse and improve transparency of information services in order to benefit learners of all types. We strongly support the EdUnify project and will devote our efforts and resources to support this worthy project adding to our commitment to adopt the PESC standards already in progress.

Sincerely,

A. Craig Powell  
Chief Executive Officer

Jeffrey Alderson  
Director, Technical Sales  
*PESC Board of Directors
June 10, 2010

Michael D. Sessa
Executive Director
PESC - Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council
1250 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Suite 200
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Mr. Sessa:

This letter is to convey Datatel's support of the EdUnify project proposed by PESC (Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council) to develop the proof of concept for an innovative directory service model. We support the goal of EdUnify to connect our global community of students, advisors, faculty, researchers, and administrators with essential information—no matter where the information resides—to enable better decision-making, driving academic success.

Datatel continues to serve as an active member in the PESC community, putting aside competitive self-interests and working across the diverse members including institutions, government agencies, associations, and industry developing community shared specifications to foster data, process and information standards. Our work has led to improved student success through the application of information technology and practices moving away from standalone, disparate and proprietary data management. Yet, we have so much more to accomplish.

Datatel has exclusively served higher education clients, and surpassed their expectations for more than 30 years. This dedication has enabled us to develop a deep knowledge of higher education, and in the process we have built a strong reputation for leadership in product and service excellence. Datatel has a long track record of supporting standards to accelerate the development of new information technologies to support student mobility and the currency of learning. We support standards that will empower institutions to focus their efforts on student outcomes, overcoming technology barriers in the process. Enabling students to pursue their educational goals, while seamlessly having their credentials and recognition attributes persist throughout their learning journey, will provide inherent efficiencies to higher education. We fully support the end goal of EdUnify.

Datatel looks forward to our continued collaboration with PESC and the EdUnify Task Force to develop and implement the bridging of systems and technologies to benefit the higher education community and learners of all types. Please know that PESC has Datatel's full support of the EdUnify project.

Sincerely,

Nelio Loudeimare
Vice President, Product Management
Datatel, Inc.
Michael D. Sessa
Executive Director
PESC - Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council
1250 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Suite 200
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Mr. Sessa:

I am very happy to write in support of the EdUnify project proposed by PESC (Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council) to develop the proof of concept for an innovative directory service model. EdUnify will connect our global community of students, advisors, faculty, researchers, and administrators with essential information – no matter where the information resides – to enable better decision-making toward academic success.

Decision Academic is an active member in the PESC community, putting aside competitive self interests and working across the diverse members including institutions, government agencies, associations, and industry developing community shared specifications to foster data, process and information standards. Our work has led to improved student success through the application of information technology and practices moving away from standalone, disparate and proprietary data management. Yet, we have so much more to accomplish.

In our work with postsecondary institutions, government agencies, associations and industry, Decision Academic clearly recognizes the vital importance in developing new information technologies to support student mobility and the currency of learning. We need to dedicate resources to improve how credentials and recognition seamlessly follow learners as they move and aspire to complete degrees. In doing so, we need a means to work better together - in an online consumer centric world – complementing the localized and self contained traditional student experiences that most institutional systems support well.

Working with PESC to develop EdUnify will afford the broader educational community the opportunity to combine efforts, leverage reuse and improve transparency of information services in order to benefit learners of all types. I strongly support the EdUnify project and will devote our effort and resources to support this worthy project adding to our commitment to adopt the PESC standards already in progress.

Sincerely,

Leslie Kaufman
Executive Vice President
June 8, 2010

Michael D. Sessa
Executive Director
PESC - Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council
1250 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Suite 200
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Mr. Sessa:

I am very happy to write in support of the EdUnify project proposed by PESC (Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council) to develop the proof of concept for an innovative directory service model. EdUnify will connect our global community of students, advisors, faculty, researchers, and administrators with essential information – no matter where the information resides – to enable better decision-making toward academic success.

Emory University is an active member in the PESC community putting aside competitive self interests and working across the diverse members including institutions, government agencies, associations, and industry developing community shared specifications to foster data, process and information standards. Our work has led to improved student success through the application of information technology and practices moving away from standalone, disparate and proprietary data management. Yet, we have so much more to accomplish.

In our work with postsecondary institutions, government agencies, associations and industry, Emory University clearly recognizes the vital importance in developing new information technologies to support student mobility and the currency of learning. We need to dedicate resources to improve how credentials and recognition seamlessly follow learners as they move and aspire to complete degrees. In doing so, we need a means to work better together - in an online consumer centric world – complementing the localized and self contained traditional student experiences that most institutional systems support well.
Working with PESC to develop *EdUnify* will afford the broader educational community the opportunity to combine efforts, leverage reuse and improve transparency of information services in order to benefit learners of all types. I strongly support the *EdUnify* project and will devote our effort and resources to support this worthy project adding to our commitment to adopt the PESC standards already in progress.

Sincerely,

Richard A. Mendola, Ph.D.
Vice President of Information Technology and CIO
Emory University
Email: rich.mendola@emory.edu
Phone: 404.727.7879
June 2, 2010

Michael D. Sessa
Executive Director
PESC – Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council
1250 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Suite 200
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Mr. Sessa:

I am writing to show our enthusiasm and support for the EdUnify project. This project will prove that an entirely standards based approach can support large scale enterprise integration across the education industry. EdUnify fills a need for a standards based directory service that can support the scalable and open nature of the PESC architecture.

eScholar has been involved in education data standards since our inception thirteen years ago. Data and data integration standards are not just important to eScholar, they are essential to our business model and even to the very existence of a company like ours. Our business depends on being able to collect, integrate, cleanse and provide data from many systems and for many uses. Data standards, including those driven by the National Center for Education Statistics have enabled us to provide solutions that work regardless of the brand of operational system an Education Agency uses.

EdUnify will take open standards to a new level, by providing a key building block to enable real time data integration that can be implemented inexpensively and still scale to the enterprise level. In today's world, the enterprise is increasingly becoming the collection of all of the agencies that provide educational services from early childhood through the workforce.

Based on our experience across these agencies, we are convinced that PESC/EdUnify represent the best approach for deploying real-time data integration on the scale our customers demand.

Michael, as you know, we will do whatever we can to help move this important project forward.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me directly.

Sincerely,

Shawn Bay
Founder/CEO
eScholar LLC.
222 Bloomingdale Rd.
White Plains, NY 10605
June 1, 2010

Michael D. Sessa
Executive Director
PESC - Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council
1250 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Suite 200
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Mr. Sessa:

I am very happy to write in support of the EdUnify project proposed by PESC (Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council) to develop the proof of concept for an innovative directory service model. EdUnify will connect our global community of students, advisors, faculty, researchers, and administrators with essential information – no matter where the information resides – to enable better decision-making toward academic success.

Georgetown University is an active member in the PESC community putting aside competitive self interests and working across the diverse members including institutions, government agencies, associations, and industry developing community shared specifications to foster data, process and information standards. Our work has led to improved student success through the application of information technology and practices moving away from standalone, disparate and proprietary data management. Yet, we have so much more to accomplish.

In our work with postsecondary institutions, government agencies, associations and industry, Georgetown University clearly recognizes the vital importance in developing new information technologies to support student mobility and the currency of learning. We need to dedicate resources to improve how credentials and recognition seamlessly follow learners as they move and aspire to complete degrees. In doing so, we need a means to work better together - in an online consumer centric world – complementing the localized and self contained traditional student experiences that most institutional systems support well.

Working with PESC to develop EdUnify will afford the broader educational community the opportunity to combine efforts, leverage reuse and improve transparency of information services in order to benefit learners of all types. I strongly support the EdUnify project and will devote our effort and resources to support this worthy project adding to our commitment to adopt the PESC standards already in progress.

Sincerely,

Charles F. Leonhardt
Principal Technologist
June 3, 2010

Michael D. Sessa
Executive Director
Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council (PESC)
1250 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Suite 200
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Mr. Sessa:

It is with great pleasure that I write you in support of the EdUnify project proposed by Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council (PESC) to develop the proof of concept for an innovative directory service model that will connect our global community of students, advisors, faculty, researchers, and administrators with essential information – no matter where it resides – to enable better decision making toward academic success.

The Indiana Commission for Higher Education – and more broadly, the State of Indiana, through funding from the General Assembly and participation of its colleges, universities, and high schools – has invested immeasurable time, energy, and resources to using technology to advance our P-20 system of education and to provide more educational opportunities to students. Our statewide e-transcript and transfer of credit systems are good examples in this regard. Furthermore, the Commission has worked with other states – either formally, through the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC), or informally by networking with states using similar technologies and vendors – to advance the use of e-transcripts and transfer of credit technology systems and to work on common problems, especially those dealing with interoperability, such as obstacles that prevent technology systems from interacting and exchanging information with one another.

The Commission has found PESC to be an incredibly valuable asset in helping our state advance its technology- and data-related goals, and has been quick to respond to PESC initiatives. In fact, I believe Indiana was the first state to embrace the PESC electronic schema for high school transcripts. We believe that the EdUnify project proposed by PESC has the potential of dramatically improving the ability of software systems to talk with one another, thus allowing truly statewide, regional, and even national, information exchange technologies to develop.

For these reasons, the Indiana Commission for Higher Education enthusiastically supports the PESC EdUnify project and stands ready to help in any way we can to assist this effort.

Sincerely,

Ken Sauer, Ph.D.
Senior Associate Commissioner for Research and Academic Affairs
Dear Mr. Sessa:

I am very happy to write in support of the EdUnify project proposed by PESC (Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council) to develop the proof of concept for a directory service model. In supporting this effort, we would hope to come closer connecting our students, advisors, faculty, researchers, and administrators with essential information – no matter where the information resides – to enable better decision-making toward academic success.

The Kuali Foundation is an active member in the PESC community. The Kuali Foundation supports PESC due to its diverse members including institutions, government agencies, associations, and industry who endeavor to develop community shared specifications to foster data, process and information standards. PESC’s effort has led to improved student success through the application of information technology and practices moving away from standalone, disparate and proprietary data management.

The Kuali Foundation has thrown its support of PESC and EdUnify along with postsecondary institutions, government agencies, associations and industry, for Kuali clearly recognizes the vital importance of developing new information technologies to support student mobility and the currency of learning. As models of education administration have evolved the need to improve how credentials and recognition seamlessly follow learners as they move and aspire to complete degrees only increases. In doing so, we need a means to work better together - in an online consumer centric world – complementing the localized and self contained traditional student experiences that most institutional systems support well.

Working with PESC to develop EdUnify will afford the broader educational community the opportunity to combine efforts, leverage reuse and improve transparency of information services in order to benefit learners of all types. I strongly support the EdUnify project and will devote our effort and resources to support this worthy project adding to our commitment to adopt the PESC standards already in progress.

Sincerely,

Matthew A. Coombs

Kuali Foundation Representative
Dear Mr. Sessa:

I am very happy to write in support of the EdUnify project proposed by PESC (Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council) to develop the proof of concept for an innovative directory service model. EdUnify will connect our global community of students, advisors, faculty, researchers, and administrators with essential information—no matter where the information resides—to enable better decision-making toward academic success.

Oracle is an active member in the PESC community putting aside competitive self interests and working across the diverse members including institutions, government agencies, associations, and industry developing community shared specifications to foster data, process and information standards. Our work has led to improved student success through the application of information technology and practices moving away from standalone, disparate and proprietary data management. Yet, we have so much more to accomplish.

In our work with postsecondary institutions, government agencies, associations and industry, Oracle clearly recognizes the vital importance in developing new information technologies to support student mobility and the currency of learning. We need to dedicate resources to improve how credentials and recognition seamlessly follow learners as they move and aspire to complete degrees. In doing so, we need a means to work better together—in an online consumer centric world—complementing the localized and self contained traditional student experiences that most institutional systems support well.

Working with PESC to develop EdUnify will afford the broader educational community the opportunity to combine efforts, leverage reuse and improve transparency of information services in order to benefit learners of all types. I strongly support the EdUnify project and will continue to devote the efforts and resources of our team to support this worthy project; adding to our ongoing commitment to foster and adopt the PESC standards already in progress.

Sincerely,

Andrew Wood

Senior Director, Higher Education Product Development, Oracle
Dear Mr. Sessa:

I am very happy to write in support of the EdUnify project proposed by PESC (Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council) to develop the proof of concept for an innovative directory service model. EdUnify will connect our global community of students, advisors, faculty, researchers, and administrators with essential information – no matter where the information resides – to enable better decision-making toward academic success.

RS3G (Rome Student Systems and Standards Group) is an established group of software implementers and stakeholders in the European Higher Education domain, which is focused on contributing to the definition and adoption of standards and procedures for the exchange of data to facilitate student mobility and lifelong learning. RS3G facilitates student mobility and lifelong learning by:

• Building community to share news and experience in student systems
• Identifying and sharing opportunities to establish interoperability
• Providing expertise to the development of business cases driving specifications
• Contributing to, endorsing and facilitating uniform adoption towards standards
• Fostering contacts with formal entities such as EC, EUA, ENQA, CEN
• Liaise with communities of interest like EAIE, EUNIS, TERENA
• Showcasing outcomes of RS3G activities

In our work with European Higher Education Institutions, formal EU government bodies, associations and industry, RS3G clearly recognizes the vital importance in developing new information technologies to support student mobility and the currency of learning. We need to dedicate resources to improve how credentials and recognition seamlessly follow learners as they move and aspire to complete degrees. In doing so, we need a means to work better together - in an online consumer centric world – complementing the localized and self contained traditional student experiences that most institutional systems support well.

Working with PESC to develop EdUnify will afford the broader educational community the opportunity to combine efforts, leverage reuse and improve transparency of information services in order to benefit learners of all types. I strongly support the EdUnify project and will devote our effort and resources to support this worthy project adding to our commitment to adopt the PESC standards already in progress.

Sincerely,

Simone Ravaioli, Co-Founder
RS3G
May 7, 2010

Michael D. Sessa  
Executive Director  
Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council (PESC)  
1250 Connecticut Avenue, NW  
Suite 200  
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Mr. Sessa:

I am very happy to write in support of the EdUnify project proposed by PESC (Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council) to develop the proof of concept for an innovative directory service model that will connect our global community of students, advisors, faculty, researchers, and administrators with essential information – no matter where it resides – to enable better decision making toward academic success.

SCRIP-SAFE International is an active member in the PESC community putting aside competitive self interests and working across the diverse members including institutions, government agencies, associations, and industry developing community shared specifications to foster data, process and information standards. Our work has led to improved student success through the application of information technology and practices moving away from standalone, disparate and proprietary data management. Yet, we have so much more to accomplish.

In our work with postsecondary institutions, government agencies, associations and industry, SCRIPSAFE clearly recognizes the vital importance in developing new information technologies to support student mobility and the currency of learning. We need to dedicate resources to improve how credentials and recognition seamlessly follow learners as they move and aspire to complete degrees. In doing so, we need a means to work better together - in an online consumer centric world – complementing the localized and self contained traditional student experiences that most institutional systems support well. Working with PESC to develop EdUnify will afford the broader educational community the opportunity to combine efforts, leverage reuse and improve transparency of information services in order to benefit learners of all types. I strongly support the EdUnify project and will devote our effort and resources to support this worthy project adding to our commitment to adopt the PESC standards already in progress.

Sincerely,

Joseph E. Orndorff  
President and CEO
Michael D. Sessa  
Executive Director  
PESC - Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council  
1250 Connecticut Avenue, NW  
Suite 200  
Washington, D.C. 20036  

Dear Mr. Sessa:

I am very happy to write in support of the EdUnify project proposed by PESC (Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council) to develop the proof of concept for an innovative directory service model. EdUnify will connect our global community of students, advisors, faculty, researchers, and administrators with essential information – no matter where the information resides – to enable better decision-making toward academic success.

SunGard Higher Education is an active member in the PESC community putting aside competitive self interests and working across the diverse members including institutions, government agencies, associations, and industry developing community shared specifications to foster data, process and information standards. Our work has led to improved student success through the application of information technology and practices moving away from standalone, disparate and proprietary data management. Yet, we have so much more to accomplish.

In our work with postsecondary institutions, government agencies, associations and industry, SunGard Higher Education clearly recognizes the vital importance in developing new information technologies to support student mobility and the currency of learning. We need to dedicate resources to improve how credentials and recognition seamlessly follow learners as they move and aspire to complete degrees. In doing so, we need a means to work better together - in an online consumer centric world – complementing the localized and self contained traditional student experiences that most institutional systems support well.

Working with PESC to develop EdUnify will afford the broader educational community the opportunity to combine efforts, leverage reuse and improve transparency of information services in order to benefit learners of all types. I strongly support the EdUnify project and will devote our effort and resources to support this worthy project adding to our commitment to adopt the PESC standards already in progress.

Sincerely,

Renee Pacini  
Vice President, Product Management & Strategy, Student Services  
SunGard Higher Education
Michael D. Sessa  
Executive Director  
PESC - Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council  
1250 Connecticut Avenue, NW  
Suite 200  
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Mr. Sessa:

I am very happy to write in support of the EdUnify project proposed by PESC (Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council) to develop the proof of concept for an innovative directory service model. EdUnify will connect the global community of students, advisors, faculty, researchers, and administrators with essential information – no matter where the information resides – to enable better decision-making toward academic success.

The Virginia Department of Education, as an active member of the SIF Association, supports the work of PESC, working across the diverse members including institutions, government agencies, associations, and industry developing community shared specifications to foster data, process and information standards.

In our work with K-12 schools, government agencies, associations and industry, the Virginia Department of Education clearly recognizes the vital importance in developing new information technologies to support student mobility and the currency of learning. We need to dedicate resources to improve how credentials and recognition seamlessly follow learners as they move and aspire to complete their education. In doing so, we need a means to work better together - in an online consumer centric world.

Following EdUnify closely will help us understand how a similar concept would apply to K-12 education. I applaud your work to combine efforts, leverage reuse and improve transparency of information services in order to benefit learners of all types. I strongly support the EdUnify project and wish you continued success.

Sincerely,

Bethann Canada,  
Director of Educational Information Management  
Virginia Department of Education
**Academic E-Portfolio Workgroup**

**Next Meeting**

Please be advised that the next meeting of the Academic E-Portfolio Workgroup will be held on Tuesday August 10, 2010 from Noon - 1:30 EDT. A more detailed agenda may be provided prior to the call, but attendees can expect discussion on:

- the regular monthly meeting schedule going forward
- roles and responsibilities of workgroup members
- outreach/alignment with other e-portfolio initiatives
- and development of a straw man model.

There is no need to RSVP and feel free to circulate this message to others within the PESC membership so that all are aware of the opportunity to participate. Also there is no limit to the number of representatives an organization can have participating. Going forward communications may only be issued through PESC’s AcademicEPortfolio list. For anyone looking to be added to the list, please contact Jennifer Kim at Jennifer.Kim@PESC.org or 202.261.6514 or Michael Sessa at Michael.Sessa@PESC.org or 202.261.6516.

**Academic E-Portfolio Workgroup Conference Call**

**Tuesday August 10, 2010**  
Noon - 1:30 EDT  
712.775.7000, 269525#

Also a pre-call planning meeting will be held the week before on Tuesday August 3, 2010 at Noon, 712.775.7000, 269525#. The purpose of this meeting is to plan for the following week’s meeting, to reach out to others as much as possible and prepare for any items that need to be addressed. Again, there is no need to RSVP...please join this call too to ensure our workgroup is prepared and proceeds smoothly and effectively.

**Public Comment Requested on Common Data Standards**

A reminder that the public comment period on Common Data Standards (CDS), which began Tuesday July 6, 2010, expires 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.

The complete submission can be accessed at [http://www.commondatastandards.org](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. Comment e-mails 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).

**New Co-Chair Appointed for Education Record User Group**

Bob Hewett of Edustructures/Pearson Appointed Co-Chair of PESC’s ERUG Joins Co-Chair Tuan An Do of San Francisco State University

PESC is pleased to announce the appointment of Bob Hewett, Principal Software Engineer at Edustructures/Pearson, as Co-Chair of PESC's Education Record User Group (ERUG). PESC's ERUG is a permanent, standing committee housed under the Standards Forum for Education. The Standards Forum is the development arm of PESC and includes multiple workgroups (e.g. Recruitment and Enrollment, Course Inventory, Academic Progress, Academic e-Portfolio, etc.), the Change Control Board (CCB) which ultimately recommends to the PESC membership and community
what becomes a PESC approved standard, and the TAB which is responsible for updating and maintaining all technical specifications and for providing guidance on technical and architectural issues.

Specifically the ERUG governs all enhancements and maintenance of the high school, college, XML and EDI transcripts and all their supporting transaction standards (eg. request, response, etc.). User Groups serve as the development vehicles for future releases once a standard (v 1.0) has been established. For anyone looking to join the ERUG list, please email Jennifer Kim at jennifer.kim@pesc.org or call 202.261.6514 to be added.

As a benefit of membership there is no separate fee for ERUG participation and there is also no limit to the number of representatives a PESC member can have on the ERUG. ERUG meetings are held weekly on Tuesdays at noon EDT.

Public Comment Requested on XML Functional Acknowledgement

Public Comment Period Now Open

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 the XML Functional Acknowledgement. The public comment period begins today Wednesday July 21, 2010 and will expire at the close of business on Thursday August 19, 2010.

The purpose of the XML Functional Acknowledgement is to provide a confirmation to a sending organization that a record originally sent was successfully delivered to and received by the intended recipient. Regardless of the document type exchanged (transcript, education test score report, admissions application, etc.) recipients must respond in some way to alert the sender if the data was received successfully or not.

The complete submission is posted at http://www.pesc.org/interior.php?page_id=190. All comments from the general public and PESC membership should be made in the form of an e-mail to 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 the XML Functional Acknowledgement Workgroup 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 17, 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 XML Functional Acknowledgement 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.

Many 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).
PESC Leadership Team

PESC’s cornerstone principle, transparent and direct community participation, is never more apparent when the entire list of PESC’s leadership team is viewed. We thank all representatives and organizations that help lead the PESC Community:

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

William Hollowsky, SunGard Higher Education, Chair
Francisco Valines, Florida International University, Vice Chair
David Moldoff, AcademyOne, Treasurer
Rick Skeel, University of Oklahoma, representing AACRAO, Secretary
Jeffrey Alderson, ConnectEdu, Inc.
Brian Allison, USA Funds, representing NCHELP
Russell Buyse, Edustructures/Pearson
Judy Chappellear, Xap Corporation
Matthew Coombs, San Joaquin Delta College District, representing the Kuali Foundation
Russell Judd, Great Lakes Educational Loan Services, representing NASLA
Michael Sessa, PESC
Andrew Wood, Oracle Corporation

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Change Control Board (CCB) Chair
Kristi Blabaum, NASLA

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Gideon Sanstra, SunGard Higher Education

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Bob Hewett, Edustructures/Pearson

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Academic Progress Co-Chairs
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Monterey Sims, University of Phoenix

IPEDS Chair
Christine Rasmussen, IPEDS

PDF Transcript Co-Chairs
Jim Bouse, University of Oregon
Chris Kaschmitter, Avow Systems

Recruitment & Enrollment Co-Chairs
Jeff Alderson, ConnectEdu
Joshua Aversa, SunGard Higher Education

TASK FORCES

Electronic Authentication/Authorization (EA2) Co-Chairs
Doug Falk, National Student Clearinghouse
Charlie Leonhardt, Georgetown University

EdUnify Co-Chairs
Stephen Wheat, Emory University
Jim Wager, SCRIP-SAFE International

INFO YOU SHOULDN’T MISS

EdWeek Article: “Common Standards Judged Better Than Most States”
http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2010/07/21/37fordham_h29.html?tkn=PQUFIVKVaW3Jly1uGcqFxFxNeNRaKJHe1SwGF&cmp=clp-edweek

New York Times Section: “Will National Standards Improve Education?”

College Board Reports:
http://completionagenda.collegeboard.org/reports
Federal Student Aid Conference

Registration for the 2010 Federal Student Aid Conference is now open at http://fsaconferences.ed.gov. The Federal Student Aid Conference is an event like no other because we offer premiere financial aid training, expert presenters and valuable networking opportunities for you and other financial aid professionals around the nation. You can learn about legislative policies and procedural changes, which affect your job, and in the end, our training can help you better serve your students. The Conference program and session content will be posted in the coming weeks.

The date of the Federal Student Aid Conference is November 30 - December 3, 2010 and will be held at:

Walt Disney World Swan & Dolphin
1500 Epcot Resorts Boulevard
Lake Buena Vista, FL 32830

For further information regarding our upcoming 2010 Federal Student Aid Conference, please visit our Web site at http://fsaconferences.ed.gov. Registration and room blocks are open, so register early and secure lodging now!

SAVE THE DATE
SHEEO/NCES Conference & IPEDS Workshop
May 3 – 6, 2011
Fisherman’s Wharf
San Francisco CA

Feds to create an Online Learning Registry
ED will create an online database of primary-source materials to help rural schools in particular
By Maya T. Prabhu, Assistant Editor, eSchool News

In a move to help rural schools keep pace with more developed districts, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) said it will create an Online Learning Registry that will provide access to historical, artistic, and scientific primary-source materials. Education Secretary Arne Duncan made the announcement July 21 at the National Rural Education Technology Summit held at the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI).

*Knowledge knows no boundaries, and we cannot allow distance to stand between students, education, and opportunity,* Duncan said. “We have the hardware, the latest software, and huge investments are being made in the build-out of the National Broadband Plan to connect us as never before.”

The registry is one of the recommendations the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) made in its National Broadband Plan to give more students and teachers access to high-quality digital content that the federal government owns.

“No technological innovation in our lifetime has greater potential to transform education than high-speed internet,” said FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski. “The National Broadband Plan recommended that the federal government increase the pool of high-quality digital resources that educators can easily find, access, and combine with other content to help their students learn. I am very pleased to see this recommendation being adopted.”

Many of the resources that will appear in the Online Learning Registry have associated educational materials that have been created by education professionals, and some of those educational resources are available online. However, currently it is difficult to find these many resources, because they are available across numerous agencies.

During his remarks to the more than 150 rural education stakeholders and technology experts, Duncan described digital artifacts from the first moon landing as an example of why the registry is needed. He said the artifacts, which include things such as weather records and recordings of conversations, are currently spread across three agencies.

“Right now, frankly, they’re not organized in a way that makes them easy to access. This registry will make it easy for teachers and students to find the variety of resources available,” he said.

And the collections, especially those at the Smithsonian Institution, belong to all Americans—including those who live in rural areas, said Smithsonian Secretary G. Wayne Clough.

“We have ambitious plans to use new technologies to reach new audiences. ... We have much to offer students and teachers in art, science, history, education, and culture. We want to give learners of all ages access to
America’s treasures and our creative experts who bring them to life,” he said.

**EDUCAUSE to Lead Next Gen Learning Challenges**

A philanthropic initiative to improve college readiness and completion

EDUCAUSE will lead a new effort funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation -- Next Gen Learning Challenges -- an effort to identify and scale technology-enabled approaches that dramatically improve college readiness and completion, particularly for low-income young adults. The program will provide grants, build evidence, and develop an active community committed to addressing these persistent educational challenges.

In preparation for this fall’s formal grant program we ask you to share your knowledge and to comment on key questions before the program is finalized. Although EDUCAUSE is leading the effort, we seek participation from other organizations. We hope you will share your expertise and perspectives. The program is open to schools, colleges, universities, corporations, and consortia. We encourage comment by educators, innovators, entrepreneurs, and the public.

The first four challenges NGLC will solicit grant proposals for are:

- Deploying open core courseware
- Deepening learner engagement through interactive, online technologies
- Scaling blended learning
- Mobilizing learning analytics

**Get Engaged**

Over the next several weeks, we hope you will join the conversation on these challenges. We invite you to:

- Visit the Next Gen Learning Challenges website to learn about college readiness and completion in the United States
- Contribute research, resources, and perspectives on the four challenges
- Engage in discussion forums targeting key questions

**The Challenge**

Only half of high school graduates leave school prepared to succeed in college. For those who do enroll in postsecondary education, a little over half of them will actually earn a degree. Positions requiring postsecondary education or training will make up 64 percent of all job openings by 2018. Today it is virtually impossible to reach the middle class, and stay there, with only a high school diploma. By age 30, fewer than half of all Americans have earned a college degree. America must improve college readiness and completion—our society and our economy depend on it. Technology can be a key tool for making learning more flexible, engaging, and affordable—important elements in helping today’s high school and college students achieve academic success.

**The Community’s Role**

EDUCAUSE is well-suited to lead this challenge due to our community’s unique role in, and the association’s long-standing commitment to, advancing higher education through the application of information technology. Because the program encompasses high school as well as two-year and four-year institutions, EDUCAUSE will partner with the League for Innovation in the Community College, the International Association for K-12 Online Learning, and the Council of Chief State School Officers; these organizations will provide specific outreach to the institutions they serve.

We hope you will encourage your members to contribute to this important initiative. For more information, visit the EDUCAUSE website at http://www.educause.edu/nglc or the NGLC website at www.nextgenlearning.com.

**Paperwork Burden Prevents Some Applicants for Student Aid From Getting It**

By Beckie Supiano

Advocates for college access have long argued that the application students must file to receive federal financial aid is too complicated. But simplifying the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or Fafsa, might not be enough to ensure access.
Less attention has been paid to the additional paperwork many students must complete to receive aid, but that burden, too, can prevent otherwise-eligible students from getting the money they need to pay for college, according to a new report from the Institute for College Access & Success. The report, which tracks students who applied for aid to attend 13 California community colleges, found that on average about a third of those applicants who appeared to be eligible for federal Pell Grants did not receive them.

One of the main hurdles is a process called verification, in which the Education Department flags applications and then colleges collect documentation to confirm that the information on them is correct.

The report is timely. The department is seeking public comment on a proposed rule that would eliminate a cap on the share of applications that colleges must verify, a step that the institute argues would magnify the problem. Currently, colleges do not have to check more than 30 percent of their aid applications, even if the department flags a greater share for verification.

Hurtig Pell-Eligible Students
The Institute for College Access & Success looked at the financial-aid process that applicants went through after completing their applications and found that, among applicants who appeared to be Pell-eligible, those who were selected for verification were 7 percent less likely to receive the grants. While other factors may be at play, the finding suggests that the process itself hinders many applicants. Meanwhile, only about 2 percent of those who completed the verification process became ineligible for Pell Grants as a result.

The report, "After the FAFSA: How Red Tape Can Prevent Eligible Students From Receiving Aid," recommends, among other things, that colleges:

- **Reconsider requiring additional documents.** Some colleges ask applicants for information, like copies of drivers' licenses, not required by the federal government. The report suggests such additional requirements may do more harm than good.
- **Do not verify more students than necessary.** Unless colleges have a reason for suspecting students' applications routinely contain errors, the report suggests they not go beyond the level of verification the department requires.

**Make communication more student-friendly.** Ensure reminders and notices sent to students are in plain language and are distributed through multiple channels.

**Provide adequate funds for financial-aid offices.** Aid administrators will need time, training, and support to improve the verification process. The report also recommends that the Education Department:

- **Keep the cap on the share of applicants colleges must verify.** The report suggests that removing the cap would place unnecessary hurdles before needy students.
- **Allow all applicants to preset their federal student-aid forms with their own tax data.** The Education Department and the Internal Revenue Service have begun a pilot program to allow some aid applicants to electronically transfer tax information from their 1040 forms to their federal aid applications, and the proposed rules would let colleges accept the information in place of a tax form. But not all low-income students have to file taxes, leaving them out of this simplified process. The report suggests letting students use data from W-2 forms to "pre-populate" the aid form.
## Driving Data Systems Alignment

### A National Campaign Enabling the Interoperable Exchange of Education Data

**Sponsored by the Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council**

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### Activating Interoperability in Higher Education

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<tr>
<th>Driving Data Systems Alignment</th>
<th>Improving Performance</th>
<th>Collaborating for Success</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PESC - The Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council is working to become the voice for standardizing student data from initial access of the student from high school into the college environment through to successful completion of the education experience. The proprietary and disjointed approach higher education has historically taken toward entry and retrieval of student data has produced an unwieldy and costly system. PESC drives the elimination of incompatible interfaces and processes that present barriers to students, including adult learners, and that inflate costs for colleges and universities. PESC standards enable efficiency, improved data quality, and faster real-time services as once student data is entered, trading partners can rely on the accuracy and quality of that data without re-entering it or developing additional interfaces. PESC envisions an interoperable environment that enables students to smoothly transition from high school to college and between colleges. The goal of seamless interoperability is achievable. We have the ability, we’ve identified what needs to be done, and we know how to do it.</td>
<td>Now more than ever, data mechanisms that provide significant control over process, customer service, cost containment, data integrity, and accountability are available. Software applications generate the transactions that are needed to integrate the student into the campus system. These transactions are based in the latest technology – eXtensible Mark-Up Language (XML). With standard methods of communicating and transporting data, all software applications can be synchronized harmoniously. Architects and IT directors can make sound technology decisions and rely on a proven return on investment. Administrators in admission offices, registrars, business and financial aid officers, and states can depend on the accuracy and quality of student data. Data and software providers can work efficiently to meet the needs of the community without having to worry about multiple methods and proprietary formats. By eliminating barriers, simplifying access, improving data quality, reducing cost, and bridging data gaps in student lifecycles, a new level of efficiency emerges.</td>
<td>Collaboration is our cornerstone principle. The sharing of ideas and best practices reminds us that while we work in a competitive environment, as stakeholders we must also cooperate and work together for the greater common good. That greater common good is ensuring student achievement and progression along the education lifecycle and fostering a successful learning experience. With its founding in 1997 by leaders in higher education, the PESC community has taken on that responsibility and is dedicated to achieving its mission. Together, PESC has facilitated the creation of a comprehensive, open standard for technology and data exchange, a &quot;best practices&quot; model that is transforming the education landscape. The U.S. Department of Education, the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO), the SIF Association, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), and the Data Quality Campaign (DQC) all support this mission and together with PESC, we are bringing efficiency and interoperability to all of education on a scale never before seen.</td>
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Summary of Meetings and Conference Calls of the AACRAO SPEEDE Committee
Months of May and June 2010

This is an update for interested members of the AACRAO membership about the ongoing activities of the Standardization of Postsecondary Education Electronic Data Exchange (SPEEDE) Committee of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO). AACRAO SPEEDE is a committee that is more active year round than many of the other AACRAO standing committees. The AACRAO SPEEDE committee reports to the AACRAO Vice President for Information Technology (Group VI), Jeff von Munkwitz-Smith.

Face to Face Meetings Held: None

AACRAO SPEEDE Committee conference calls held (with number of participants):
05/6/10 (8), 05/13/10 (6), 05/20/10 (6), 06/3/10 (6), and 06/24/10 (5). Average call participation was six or 69%.

Activities Related to PESC: AACRAO is a founding member and an active supporter of, and participant in, the Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council. PESC is the standards setting organization for the electronic exchange of student records in higher education in North America.

- Rick Skeel represents AACRAO on the PESC Board of Directors.
- Tuan Anh Do and Tom Stewart serve on the Change Control Board (CCB).
- Tuan Anh Do also serves on the Technical Advisory Board.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approved PESC Standards of Interest to AACRAO Members Include:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Schema</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Transcript</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Transcript</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Application for Admission</td>
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</tbody>
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<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Test Score Reporting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcript Acknowledgment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Record Batch Submittal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Request for Student Transcript</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response to Request for Student Transcript</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is recommended that all users update to the latest version of each schema. All users who have updated to the latest version can accept all documents created with all earlier versions as long as the first digit of the Version is the same. All users of an earlier version can also receive documents created in later versions as long as the first digit of the Version is the same, provided that no data were included that use the new data elements, or new values of old data elements.

PESC Workgroups of Interest to AACRAO Members include:

**Standardization of PDF Education Documents:** A workgroup was formed to deal with the issue of standardization of PDF documents and their electronic transmission. Jim Bouse of the AACRAO SPEEDE Committee is currently a co-chair this group, along with Chris Kaschmitter from Avow Systems. It now holds regular conference calls and welcomes the participation of anyone whose school or company is a member of PESC.

**XML Functional Acknowledgment of XML Instance Documents:** Another workgroup was formed to create the XML equivalent of the EDI TS997. Rob Moore from Edustructures/Pearson and Monterey Sims from the AACRAO SPEEDE Committee are the co-chairs of this workgroup. It held regular conference calls and the schema was approved by the PESC Change Control Board. It now awaits posting on the PESC web site for a 30 day comment period.
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**Academic Progress (formerly Degree Audit):** Clare Smith-Larson from the AACRAO SPEEDE Committee co-chairs this group with Dave Moldoff from AcademyOne. New participants, whose school or company are members of PESC, are welcome.

**IPEDS Reporting Schemas:** The US Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) is in the process of creating PESC XML Schemas to give schools an option of using an XML standard for reporting IPEDS data to NCES. The schemas for reporting enrollment data have been approved by PESC. The schemas for reporting graduation rates have been approved by the PESC Change Control Board (CCB) and are awaiting the approvals by the PESC membership and Board. The remaining IPEDS schemas for financial aid reporting are in the final stages of approval of the PESC CCB.

**Recruitment and Enrollment:** This group is creating an XML schema for use in transmitting recruiting info to interested and participating schools. It also welcomes new participants whose school or company are members of PESC.

**EdUnify**: This group has recently been launched to automate electronic lookup, reporting and exchange, PK12 and workforce linkages, and transfer of credit.

**Education Record User Group (ERUG) for Approved XML and EDI Standards:** PESC formed a user group that deals with maintenance of all of the approved XML schemas in the student records area, as well as all of the ANSI ASC X12 EDI Standards for the admissions and student records area.

Tuan Anh Do of the AACRAO SPEEDE Committee currently chairs the User Group. Participants, whose schools or companies are members of PESC, are welcome to join ERUG.

ERUG currently holds hourly conference calls on Tuesdays at noon Eastern Time whenever there are agenda items to discuss.

**Current Activities of the AACRAO SPEEDE Committee:**

**AACRAO Technology Conference in Kansas City:** The AACRAO SPEEDE Committee will present one workshop and seven program sessions at the tech conference.

**Workshop in Missouri:** Clare Smith-Larson of the AACRAO SPEEDE Committee recently participated in a meeting that is planning a statewide implementation of the electronic exchange of student transcripts.
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Presentation at NASDTEC Conference in Indiana: Jeanenne Rothenberger, former member of the AACRAO SPEEDE Committee, made a presentation on the electronic exchange of student records at the June 2010 conference in Indianapolis of the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification.

Crosswalks for EDI Transaction Sets to PESC XML Schemas, and vice-versa: Although most schools that are just beginning to implement the electronic data exchange of postsecondary student transcripts are expected to implement the XML format, almost all of the current exchange via the University of Texas SPEEDE Server is using the EDI format. To allow new users access to the established EDI exchanges, and to allow established EDI users to exchange with the new XML users, crosswalks are being developed from one format to the other.

These rules for crosswalks were developed by the AACRAO SPEEDE Committee and approved by the PESC ERUG and have now been posted (or soon will be posted) with the associated XML schemas on the PESC.org web site. Those approved to date are

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>From Version</th>
<th>To Version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College Transcript</td>
<td>PESC XML Version 1.0.0</td>
<td>EDI TS130 Version 4010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EDI TS130 Version 4010</td>
<td>PESC XML Version 1.0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PESC XML Version 1.1.0</td>
<td>EDI TS130 Version 4010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Transcript</td>
<td>PESC XML Version 1.0.0</td>
<td>EDI TS130 Version 4010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcript Acknowledgment</td>
<td>PESC XML Version 1.0.0</td>
<td>EDI TS131 Version 4010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EDI TS131 Version 4010</td>
<td>PESC XML Version 1.0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Looking for New AACRAO SPEEDE Committee Member: We are currently looking for one new member for the AACRAO SPEEDE Committee. Anyone whose member school is an AACRAO member would be eligible for consideration. Once selected, that person would have to be listed as an AACRAO member from his or her school. Special consideration would be given to someone with at least one of the following attributes: from a member school in the northeastern US; with experience in XML or EDI or in the exchange of electronic student records using XML, EDI or PDF; experience in or an interest in marketing. We hope to make a recommendation for the new committee member

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shortly after the Tech Conference in Kansas City. Anyone interested should contact the AACRAO SPEEDE Committee chair, Tuan Anh Do at doey@sfsu.edu.

State and Province Electronic Transmission Initiatives and Mandates: The AACRAO SPEEDE Committee now updates, approximately every three months, a spreadsheet of all the activities, mandates and initiatives of which we are aware in each US State and Canadian Province. We encourage you to review the spreadsheet to insure it is up to date for your state or province.

We know there is a great deal of activity among AACRAO members in the secure exchange of PDF Student Transcripts. Since a large portion of these PDF documents do not go to postsecondary schools, we need you to report this PDF activity so it can be included in this document on the AACRAO web site.

Please send updates and corrections to stewartj@aol.com. It is now posted on the SPEEDE page on the AACRAO web site at http://www.aacrao.org/speede/statestat.cfm.

State EDI, XML, and PDF Contacts: The AACRAO SPEEDE Committee also recently updated the contacts list. It is now posted on the AACRAO web site at http://www.aacrao.org/speede/statecont.cfm. Please send updates and corrections to cssmith@iastate.edu.

Crosswalks: Work is in progress for these sets of crosswalk rules:

High School Transcript - EDI TS 130 Version 4010 to PESC Version 1.0.0;

(Negative) Response to a Request for a Student Transcript - XML Version 1.0.0 to EDI TS 147 (and vice versa);

College Transcript - EDI TS 130 Version 4010 to XML Versions 1.1.0 and 1.2.0 to EDI TS 130 Version 4010.

The translation program from the XML College Transcript Version 1.0.0 to the TS130 EDI Transcript has been completed for the University of Texas Internet SPEEDE Server and is now being tested with a group of pilot schools. This will allow schools using the Texas Server to receive EDI College Transcripts from schools who are sending XML College Transcripts Version 1.0.
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**University of Texas at Austin SPEEDE Internet Server:** Shelby Stanfield, University Registrar at UT Austin has provided us with the following information about the use of the Server. Cumulative yearly stats are as of the end of June 2010:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Last Year</th>
<th>This Year</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of TS130 Transcripts for June</td>
<td>158,576</td>
<td>125,019</td>
<td>-21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of TS130 Transcripts for past 12 months</td>
<td>961,795</td>
<td>1,111,281</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of TS131 Transcript Acknowledgments for June</td>
<td>134,114</td>
<td>115,902</td>
<td>-14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of TS131 Transcript Acknowledgments for past 12 months</td>
<td>779,336</td>
<td>993,594</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of TS189 Applications for Admission for June</td>
<td>58,856</td>
<td>66,799</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of TS189 Applications for Admission for past 12 months</td>
<td>994,957</td>
<td>1,190,266</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Total Transactions for June **</td>
<td>416,412</td>
<td>358,117</td>
<td>-14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Total Transactions for past 12 months **</td>
<td>3,662,221</td>
<td>4,563,117</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of TS130 Sending Schools in June ***</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Number of TS130 Sending Schools per month for past 12 months ***</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of TS130 Receiving Schools in June ***</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>-4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Number of TS130 Receiving Schools per month for past 12 months ***</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Total Transactions include TS130 Transcripts, TS131 Acknowledgments, TS997 Functional Acknowledgments, TS 189 Applications for Admission, and TS138 Test Scores.

*** In addition to this number of schools, there are other entities that distribute transcripts through the Server on behalf of multiple schools, such as Docufide, Florida K-12, Florida Postsecondary, Edustructures/Pearson, Texas Education Agency, Triand, and Xap Corporation.
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And, 26 PESC XML Student Transcripts were exchanged among postsecondary schools and other entities through the Texas SPEEDE Server in June. It is unknown if any of these were true production exchanges. Initiating these exchanges were XAP Corporation in California, Georgia, Maryland and EduStructures/Pearson in Texas.

Other Electronic Transmission Activity Not Using the Texas Server: One school district in North Carolina is sending PESC XML High School Transcripts (Version 1.0.0) using web services via the statewide college access web portal, CFNC.org. In June 2010, a total of 77,835 electronic high school transcripts were sent from high school districts to the statewide database. These transcripts were then available for all public high schools and postsecondary schools in the state. This is the largest monthly volume of electronic high school transcripts in the history of the state.

It is unknown if other entities or states are exchanging XML transcripts without the use of the Texas Server.

Translation Software: Once the Texas Internet SPEEDE Server has thoroughly tested the translation software to convert PESC XML Version 1.0 College Transcripts to EDI TS130 transcripts, the next translation product they are considering offering is the conversion of the EDI TS131 Transcript Acknowledgment to the PESC XML Transcript Acknowledgment Version 1.0.

Future Meetings: The following are future events at which the AACRAO SPEEDE Committee plans to participate:

AACRAO Technology Conference July 18-20, 2010 (Sunday through Tuesday) in Kansas City, MO at the Westin Hotel. For info, see www.aacrao.org/tech10.

PESC Fall Summit October 2010 with a probable location somewhere on the west coast of the US.

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AACRAO SPEEDE Committee Members for 2010-2011:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position and Affiliation</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barry Billing</td>
<td>Acting Associate Registrar, Fanshawe College (Ontario), and representative to the AACRAO SPEEDE committee from the Association of Registrars of the Universities and Colleges of Canada (ARUCC)</td>
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</tr>
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<td>SPEEDE/Project EASIER Coordinator, Iowa State University</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td><a href="mailto:stewartj@aol.com">stewartj@aol.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tim Tashjian</td>
<td>Associate Director, Student Information Systems, Office of the Registrar, University of Texas at Austin</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tim.tashjian@austin.utexas.edu">tim.tashjian@austin.utexas.edu</a></td>
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And that’s the update for the past two months from the AACRAO SPEEDE Committee.