Public Comments and Responses
High School XML Transcript
May 25, 2006

On January 23, 2006, the High School Transcript Workgroup, after having completed its development efforts, submitted its High School Transcript Schema and supporting documentation to PESC with the objective that it become an approved and recognized national education community standard.

On February 23, 2006, PESC posted the High School Transcript Schema and supporting documentation on its website, made all corresponding announcements and communications regarding this submission, and opened a 30-day public comment period so that the education community could review and publicly comment on the proposed High School Transcript standard.

During the public comment period, which expired on March 27, 2006, a number of public comments were received. Those public comments were routed to the High School Transcript Workgroup and the Standards Forum for Education’s Change Control Board (CCB). Both groups reviewed the public comments, discussed each thoroughly and meticulously, and on May 15, 2006 provide responses. All public comments and responses are provided below. This document listing all public comments and responses will be posted on the PESC website.

As public comment period has been successfully addressed, the High School XML Transcript is being presented to the PESC Members for a Vote of Approval on May 25, 2006. The voting period for PESC Members is 10 business days and expires on June 9, 2006.

Public Comment 1

Issue: A certain group is developing a pilot to obtain XML high school transcripts from one or two high schools to be sent to one university. If successful the extraction software can be made available to over eighty SASI school districts in Virginia. The load software can be made available to all Virginia colleges using PeopleSoft/Oracle student system. The issue is that some courses in the high school start in September and last until June. Other courses start in September and last until December. I assume that both are to be included under the fall session. If so, shouldn’t there be a value of FullYear associated with the course? For example: Student.AcademicRecord.AcademicSession.Course.CourseCreditUnits allows “Quarter”, “Trimester”, “Semester”, but not “FullYear”. "FullYear" is only permitted on the Student.AcademicRecord.AcademicSession.AcademicSessionDetail.SessionType.

Reason: This is important because SASI does not have a course begin date and end date. Therefore we lack a data option to distinguish between a semester-long course and a full-year course.
Proposed Solution: Add “FullYear” to the enumerated values for Student.AcademicRecord.AcademicSession.Course.CourseCreditUnits. Or add a new field such as: Student.AcademicRecord.AcademicSession.Course.CourseSessionType. If there is a better way to portray this data than I have suggested, please let me know (and clarify this in the implementation guide).

Response: From the PESC XML High School Transcript Workgroup on 4/27/06 and reconfirmed on 5/11/06:

It would be inappropriate to add a value of “full year” to the CourseCreditUnits data element since this data element describes the value of the course in units such as Carnegie Units of the course. A full year course might be worth one (or two or one-half) a Carnegie Unit just as a course that is offered in the fall semester might we worth one or (one-half) a Carnegie Unit.

One way to handle the problem presented by the commenter would be to include the full year course in the Academic Session. For example, a full year course that began in September 2004 and ended in May 2005 could be described as follows. For the AcademicSessionDetail, use the SessionDesignator as “200409”; SessionName as “Academic Year 2004-2005”; use SessionType as “FullYear”; use SessionSchoolYear as “2004-2005”; and not including the optional data elements SessionDesignatorSuffix, SessionBeginDate, SessionEndDate, and NoteMessage. Under the Course data element, use CourseCreditUnits with the value of “CarnegieUnits”.

Public Comment 2

Issue: AcRec:CourseType appears under AcRec:AcademicSessionType (where it should be) and also under AcRec:AcademicRecordType (where I don't think it belongs). It is shown this way in the proposed XML Standard, but not in the example data.

Reason:

Proposed Solution: Suggest that it just be under AcRec:AcademicSessionType.

Response: From the PESC XML High School Transcript Workgroup on 4/27/06 and reconfirmed on 5/11/06:

The recommended (and most common) place in the schema to include course information, as the commenter noted, would be under the AcademicSession. However, there are a few instances where this would not be easily done. For example, if a high school course were transferred in from a school outside the United States and used to satisfy a graduation requirement, but the high school did not choose to place it in the data base because of all the info required for a course offered by that school. Some schools may opt to simply list all courses transferred in from other school systems as credits awarded. Once this is
done, then information that would allow the courses to be placed in a session for inclusion in the XML format, would not be available.

We will add a stronger recommendation to the Implementation Guide to point out that the preferred place for a course is under the AcademicSession.

**Public Comment 3**

**Issue:** School name and address information is not at the AcRec:AcademicSessionType level, but instead at the AcRec:CourseType level. This may be fine, but it is not shown in your example data, so I wanted to make sure it was not omitted.

**Reason:**

**Proposed Solution:** Please clarify.

**Response:** From the PESC XML High School Transcript Workgroup on 4/27/06 and reconfirmed on 5/11/06:

We agree with the commenter that the one example in the appendix should be expanded to show several examples of methods of sending the XML data. The Implementation Guide should (and will) be improved to give a better recommendation of how to include information about the school that taught the course.

If a student record only includes courses taught at the school sending the student transcript, then all the information about the sending school should be included in the TransmissionData.Source area of the document. Then the optional data element “School” under “AcademicSession” would not be included in the document.

However, there are at least two circumstances where a course might be included on the student transcript that was not taught at the sending school:

- If the student was enrolled for an entire semester or school year at another school (other than the school sending the student transcript), then the recommended place to include the information about the other school would be to use another instance of the AcademicRecord and include the optional data element “School”. Include as much information as you have available about the other school, and include all the courses taught at the other school in this occurrence of the AcademicRecord.

- If the student was enrolled at the sending school for an entire session, but also took one or more courses during that same period at another school, then the information about the other school should be included under AcademicRecord.AcademicSession.Course.CourseOverrideSchool.
If the student was enrolled at the sending school for an entire session, but also took one or more courses during the same period, but the dates at the other school were known to be different, then another option exists in the schema to send information about the other school. It could be included under the same occurrence of AcademicRecord, but a new occurrence of AcademicSession and the inclusion of AcademicSession.School with as much information as is known about the other school.

Public Comment 4

**Issue:** AcRec:AcademicSummaryFType has ExitDateType but no EntryDateType, and no Status/Reason for Entry and Exit.

**Reason:**

**Proposed Solution:** Suggest adding EntryDateType, EntryStatusReasonType, and ExitStatusReasonType.

**Response:** From the PESC XML High School Transcript Workgroup on 4/27/06 and reconfirmed on 5/11/06:

The entry date is typically not a useful data element for the receiver of a student high school transcript. Likewise, an entry status has little or no value in the context of this document. It could be noted that enrollment status is planned for other schema to be developed by PESC. In the future, the Workgroup plans to discuss adding the ability to include values of “Eligible to Return” and “Not Eligible to Return” at some place in the schema.

Public Comment 5

**Issue:** AcRec:AcademicAwardType has no Academic Status (TS130 SST04 - Status Reason Code, Eligible to Return Code). This may not be the place for it, but didn't see it anywhere else either.

**Proposed Solution:** Suggest adding AcademicStatusType to AcRec:AcademicRecordType.
Response: From the PESC XML High School Transcript Workgroup on 4/27/06 and reconfirmed on 5/11/06:

The workgroup feels that including academic status under Academic Award is not appropriate. In the future, the Workgroup plans to consider adding the ability to include values of “Eligible to Return” and “Not Eligible to Return” at some place in the schema.

Public Comment 6

Issue: AcRec:K12PersonType has no Marital, Citizenship, and Residency, although these are all in Core:PersonType (which is not used).

Reason:

Proposed Solution: Suggest adding these three types to AcRec:K12PersonType (although not sure if you need Marital).

Response: From the PESC XML High School Transcript Workgroup on 4/27/06 and reconfirmed on 5/11/06:

Marital Status and Residency information would rarely be available in high school records so it is not available for inclusion on the high school transcript. Citizenship status, if available at all in high school records, would not normally be updated from the time the student was admitted to the district school system and therefore would not be very helpful information. Therefore, we do not recommend including these three data elements in the high school transcript.

Public Comment 7

Issue: The CourseSCEDCode under Course does not have the correct min/max length designators based on the latest proposal that was posted on the NCES web site.

Reason: At the time the proposed high school transcript schema was submitted for approval, the latest information the workgroup had was that the maximum length of a SCED Code was to be 13 characters. The latest (although still not officially approved by NCES) code set is now a min/max of 12/12 characters.

Proposed Solution: Change the min/max of the CourseSCEDCode to 12/12.
**Response**: From the PESC XML High School Transcript Workgroup on 4/27/06 and reconfirmed on 5/11/06:

We agree and recommend the change to the schema.

**Public Comment 8**

**Issue**: For those schools that do not intend to use the full SCED code to describe the content of a high school course, we need a new code that will at least describe the basic type of the course.

**Reason**: Some high schools may not choose to implement the entire 12 digit SCED Code, but might be willing to indicate the major area of the content of the high school course.

**Proposed Solution**: Create a new (sixth) data element in the choice set of (presently) 5 codes to describe the content of a course. This new data element would consist of word codes for the 23 existing 2 digit codes that are the first two digits of the 12 digit SCED codes.

**Response**: From the PESC XML High School Transcript Workgroup on 4/27/06 and reconfirmed on 5/11/06:

We agree and recommend the change to the schema. Proposed word codes to describe a high school course are

- EnglishLanguageLiterature
- Mathematics
- LifePhysicalSciences
- SocialSciencesHistory
- FinePerformingArts
- ForeignLanguageLiterature
- ReligiousEducationTheology
- PhysicalHealthSafetyEducation
- MilitaryScience
- ComputerInformationSciences
- CommunicationsAudioVisualTechnology
- BusinessMarketing
- Manufacturing
- HealthCareSciences
- PublicProtectiveGovernmentService
- HospitalityTourism
- ArchitectureConstruction
- AgricultureFoodNaturalResources
These XML word codes are intended to be kept in synch (by PESC) with the first two characters of the SCED codes for high school course content maintained by the US Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics.