

# The Standard

Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council

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news and commentary on technology and standards in postsecondary education

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Volume 4 ~ Issue 2 ~ February 2008



**"What a terrific conference, again."**

**"This was the most interesting and useful conference I've ever attended."**

The Consumer Bankers Association (CBA), the Education Finance Council (EFC), the National Council of Higher Education Loan Programs (NCHELP), and the Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council (PESC) are pleased to announce the 5th Annual Conference on Technology and Standards in Higher Education to be held April 28 - 30, 2008 in Washington, D.C.

Members and Affiliates from any of the four associations are eligible for the discounted registration rate of \$500. The non-Membership rate is \$750. Hotel reservations can be made now by contacting the Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill directly at 202-737-1234 or online at [www.Hyatt.com](http://www.Hyatt.com). The Hyatt Regency Washington is located at 400 New Jersey Avenue NW, Washington, D.C., 20001. A conference rate of \$189 has been reserved for single/double hotel rooms. If calling for reservations, the group name is "PESC". The cut-off date to receive this discounted hotel rate is March 31, 2008. Conference registration is also available online at [www.PESC.org](http://www.PESC.org).

The conference begins at 8:30am on Monday April 28, 2008, includes six general sessions that will feature prominent speakers, eighteen concurrent sessions, and concludes by noon on Wednesday April 30, 2008. With this conference, the four associations continue to focus on technological issues important to their respective memberships under one efficient venue. The conference is targeted

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Celebrating Our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2007



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The Standard is the electronic newsletter published monthly by The Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council (PESC). The Standard covers news and events that impact information technology and data exchange, and promotes PESC's goals of improving service, controlling costs, and attaining interoperability within higher education. For information about subscriptions, advertising, and article submissions, please visit [www.PESC.org](http://www.PESC.org).  
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# Yes, Virginia. Attributes Are Allowed in PESC Schemas

BY MARK BOLEMBACH,  
PRINCIPAL ANALYST, SUNGARD HIGHER EDUCATION AND PESC  
TECHNICAL ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER

"We thought about using an attribute here, but it's against PESC guidelines." I heard this statement-or something very close to it-at the PESC Fall 2007 Summit in Montreal last fall, and I cringed. "Have we really communicated that poorly," I wondered; knowing that the use of attributes in XML Schema data modeling was not taboo, but, in fact, condoned by the PESC Guidelines for XML Architecture and Data Modeling. "Maybe they just never read Version 3," I mused.

While a few of us TAB members spoke up at the meeting and attempted to correct the misperception, we realized that some reeducation of the entire PESC community was needed; and where better to start than with an article in

The Standard!

The information in this article draws heavily from section 3.5 of the PESC Guidelines for XML Architecture and Data Modeling, entitled Use of Elements vs. Attributes. The original intent of the section was to provide guidance regarding when to use attributes and when to use elements in modeling data with XML Schema. That's the intent here, but in summary form. Please refer to the Guidelines document for further information and XML Schema examples.

## A Challenging Choice

XML Schema provides two basic mechanisms for modeling data: elements and attributes. Deciding whether to model information using one or the other can be difficult. No universal rules exist and the choice can be debated on a

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## Conference, from Page 2

toward technical staff and upper management responsible for technology decisions. Once again, this conference includes the full support and participation of the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) and the US Department of Education's Office of Federal Student Aid (FSA).

We thank GOLD Sponsors American Student Assistance, Great Lakes Education Loan Services Inc, and TG; BRONZE Sponsor USA Funds.

Additional sponsorship opportunities are still available. Please contact Jennifer Kim at [Jennifer.Kim@PESC.org](mailto:Jennifer.Kim@PESC.org) or at 202-261-6514 for more information on sponsorship opportunities of the 5th Annual Conference on Technology & Standards.



[www.amsa.com](http://www.amsa.com)



## Schemas, from Page 2

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number of levels.

Still, attributes and elements have distinct characteristics which make them more or less appropriate for modeling different kinds and uses of data. Let's take a look at these characteristics and their implications for data modeling.

### Characteristics of Elements & Attributes

The first distinction that should be made is that, unlike elements, attributes cannot contain complex structures. The attribute of a parent element must always be a simple type. As a result, if a child data item needs to be broken down into more atomic components, it should be modeled using an element instead of an attribute.

Related to the maxim above, attributes are not extendable; meaning additional components cannot be added to them over time. Consequently, if a child data item ever does need to be expanded, having modeled the data as an element provides greater flexibility than if the data were modeled as an attribute.

Another fundamental difference between attributes and elements is that attributes cannot be repeated. If the data under an element needs to repeat, such as address lines under a street address, an attribute cannot be used.

Finally, attributes can only be declared as required or optional. Elements not only can be declared as required or optional, they can also be part of more expressive constructs. For example, they can be given cardinality constraints (minOccurs and maxOccurs), be part of a choice group, or be part of a substitution group.

### Attributes Can Be Valuable

Given all these restrictions, one might conclude that elements should be used exclusively over attributes. This, however, is not the case. While elements should be the primary structure used in the design of PESC schemas, attributes are useful and can be used in a number of circumstances.

One prime use of attributes is for the capture of metadata

as opposed to element content. Metadata is information that describes the element and its child content while content is the information that makes up the element.

As an example, consider an Address element. The content of the Address element would be child elements like Address1, Address2, Address3, Municipality, Region, and PostalCode—all the data required to actually define or constitute an address. Metadata about the Address could be attributes like validFrom, validTo, type, etc. These attributes qualify an address and may impact the way in which an Address element is processed.

Another prime use of attributes is for the capture of processing information as opposed to domain information. In the example above, the child elements define the Address; collectively, they are the Address. The attributes, however, can be used by systems to determine whether or not an Address should be used, but they could be ignored as well. For example, an Address with attributes type=SummerMailing, validFrom= 2008-06-10, and validTo=2008-08-31 might be of interest during the summer months, but could be ignored in the Fall or Winter of 2008.

### The Bottom Line

The main point in all of this is that attributes are a valid modeling device for PESC XML Schemas, specifically when trying to capture metadata or processing data. Don't rule them out categorically. And if you need help in determining when or if they should be used in a particular situation, call the TAB!

## New PESC Website

PESC is pleased to announce the launch of its new website. With simplified navigation, eye-catching colors, and a cozier look and feel, we hope you find the new website a great resource and tool. We apologize for the few days during the transition when some information was unavailable. Should you have questions or concerns about the new website or if you're interested in having PESC post certain materials, please contact Michael Sessa at [Michael.Sessa@PESC.org](mailto:Michael.Sessa@PESC.org).

## PESC Board of Director Elections

Please be advised that nominations for the PESC Board of Directors will open on Wednesday March 19, 2008. Representatives from MEMBER organizations (with dues paid current) are eligible to serve on the Board of Directors. The term of service is two years and runs July 1, 2008 - June 30, 2010. As terms of service are staggered on the Board of Directors, elections will be for six seats (total number of seats is 12). Nominations should be made via the Board Nomination Form located at [http://www.pesc.org/interior.php?page\\_id=93](http://www.pesc.org/interior.php?page_id=93) and submitted to Michael Sessa at [Michael.Sessa@PESC.org](mailto:Michael.Sessa@PESC.org). Duties of Board members are outlined in the Manual of Roles and Responsibilities also located on the same web page. When nominating, please ensure that the nominee is aware that a nomination is being made.

Elections will be held during PESC's 10th Annual Membership Meeting scheduled for Monday April 28, 2008 from 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm EDT at the Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill (400 New Jersey Avenue NW, Washington DC, 20001). Membership meetings are open to all PESC Members and Affiliates, and with prior notification, other interested parties.

The schedule for elections will be as follows:

<b>Wednesday March 19, 2008</b>	Nominations Open
<b>Wednesday April 9, 2008</b>	Nominations Close
<b>Thursday April 10, 2008</b>	Proxy Ballots issued.
<b>Thursday April 24, 2008</b>	If not attending the Membership Meeting in person, this is the date by which Proxy Ballots must be received in PESC's offices
<b>Monday April 28, 2008</b>	Elections held ~ 5:00pm EDT

NOTE: If attending the 10th Annual Membership Meeting in person, Proxy ballots can still be submitted and then can either be replaced with an official vote on Monday April 28, 2008 or remain as the official vote. We recommend that every member organization submit a Proxy Ballot so that if any last minute emergencies occur (weather, delays, etc), an official ballot is on file for that member organization.

## COD Common Record XML Schema Version 3.0a

PUBLISHED FEBRUARY 20, 2008 BY FSA

In June 2008, we will implement Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) System functionality that will support the processing of Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant awards for the 2008-2009 and subsequent award years. As explained in Dear Colleague Letter GEN-08-01 posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site, this new grant program was established by the College Cost Reduction and Access Act (the CCRAA), Pub. L. 110-84, and is effective July 1, 2008.

We previously informed the financial aid community that we will post numerous communications about the operational implementation of the TEACH Grant Program over the next several months. This communication focuses on the implementation of a new version of the COD Common Record Extensible Markup Language (XML) Schema. The new version - 3.0a - of the COD Common Record XML Schema incorporates 1) a new block for TEACH Grant awards and 2) other changes throughout the schema to comply with standards established by the Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council (PESC).

In short, we are phasing in required use of COD Common Record Schema Version 3.0a. As you will read in more detail below, use of the new schema version for the 2008-2009 Award Year will be required only for TEACH Grant Common Record documents. Use of the new schema version for all Common Record documents will be required beginning with the 2009-2010 Award Year.

In this announcement, we cover information in the following order:

- Updating to COD Common Record XML Schema V. 3.0a
- Files and 2008-2009 COD Technical Reference Information
- Contact Information
- Attachments/Enclosures

### **Updating to COD Common Record XML Schema Version 3.0a**

To determine a plan for updating to COD Common Record XML Schema Version 3.0a, a school or third party software provider should consider the following information:

#### **Effective after COD System implementation for TEACH Grant scheduled for June 28, 2008 and before COD System implementation for 2009-2010 Award Year-**

- All 2008-2009 Common Record documents that contain TEACH Grant origination and disbursement information must be sent by schools and will be acknowledged by the COD System using COD Common Record XML Schema Version 3.0a.
- A school that begins to use COD Common Record XML Schema Version 3.0a on or after June 28, 2008 will need to take action regarding unsolicited system-generated responses.

The school will receive unsolicited system-generated responses for the TEACH Grant Program from the COD System in schema version 3.0a. However, the school will have the option to receive unsolicited system-generated responses for all other programs from the COD System in either schema version 3.0a or schema version 2.0e. To set this option, the school will enter its schema version preference for each program via the COD Web Site's School Options Update screen. We will provide detailed instructions on how to set this option in forthcoming communications about the June 28, 2008 implementation.

- A school that does not begin to use the COD Common Record XML Schema Version 3.0a on or after June 28, 2008 will need to take no action regarding unsolicited system-generated responses. In this case, unsolicited system-generated responses will continue to be sent by the COD System using schema version 2.0e.
- All available school reports, including data requests, will continue to be sent in formats other than XML. Unsolicited system-generated responses are listed in the table on the following page.



<b>ACG National SMART Grant</b>	COD Web Activity
<b>Pell Grant</b>	COD Web Activity Negative Disbursement
<b>TEACH Grant</b>	Agreement to Serve (ATS) Response Booking Notification COD Web Activity
<b>Direct Loan</b>	Booking Notification COD Web Activity Credit Decision Override MPN Response Payment to Servicing

## **COD**, from Page 5

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### **Effective after COD System implementation for 2009-2010 Award Year scheduled for March 2009-**

- All Common Record documents that contain Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG), National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National SMART Grant), Federal Pell Grant (Pell Grant), TEACH Grant, and William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) origination and disbursement information must be sent by schools and will be acknowledged by the COD System using COD Common Record XML Schema Version 3.0a.
- All unsolicited system-generated responses will be sent by the COD System using COD Common Record XML Schema Version 3.0a.
- All available school reports, including data requests, will continue to be sent in formats other than XML.

Note: We strongly encourage all schools and third party software providers to update to COD Common Record XML Schema Version 3.0a for all programs as soon as possible after the June 28, 2008 implementation. However, the COD System will continue to process, except as noted above, using the current version of the COD Common Record XML Schema (2.0e) until the March 2009 implementation of the COD System for the 2009-2010 Award Year.

### **Files and 2008-2009 COD Technical Reference Information**

Files that schools and third party software providers will need to update to COD Common Record XML Schema Version 3.0a will be posted to 2008-2009 COD Technical Reference on the IFAP website. One of the postings is a change log that identifies the changes made to the current version of the COD Common Record XML Schema (2.0e).

### **Contact Information**

If you have any questions, contact the COD School Relations Center at 800/4PGRANT (800/474-7268) for Grants or 800/848-0978 for Direct Loans. You may also e-mail [CODSupport@acs-inc.com](mailto:CODSupport@acs-inc.com).

# Technology Tidbits

## and Standards Snippets

■ **Federal Student Aid posted the final version of the Specifications for Software Developers for the 2008-2009 cycle.** No substantive changes have been made to the specifications since the last posting and no further updates are planned for this document. The specifications are available on the IFAP website, <http://ifap.ed.gov>, the specifications are also available at <http://fsadownload.ed.gov>.

■ **XML's future lies with the Web, and more specifically with Web publishing.** The last three years have seen an explosion of interest in Web applications that go far beyond traditional Web sites. So now you know how you'll write XML in 2008 (Word or OpenOffice), and you know how you'll send it to the server (APP - Atom Publishing Protocol). The last question is where to put all this wonderful XML...Visit, <http://www.ibm.com/developerworks/library/x-xml2008prevw.html>.

■ **Ten years ago, on 10 February 1998, W3C published the "Extensible Markup Language (XML) 1.0" specification** as a W3C Recommendation. W3C is marking the ten-year anniversary of XML by celebrating "XML10". The success of XML is a strong indicator of how dedicated individuals, working within the W3C Process, can engage with a larger community to produce industry-changing results. For more information, visit [www.w3.org/](http://www.w3.org/)

2008/xml10/xml10-pressrelease.

■ **Patrick Gannon resigns as OASIS President and CEO.**

After leading the consortium for more than six years, Gannon announced his resignation in early February. Prior to joining the OASIS staff in 2001, Gannon served as chairman of the OASIS Board of Directors. His contributions and commitment to the consortium are gratefully recognized by the members, staff, and fellow Board directors. In accordance with the consortium's bylaws, the current chairman of the OASIS Board, Eduardo Gutentag of Sun Microsystems, will serve as interim president. A Board search committee has been formed to identify candidates; interested parties are asked to contact [jobs@oasis-open.org](mailto:jobs@oasis-open.org).

### UT Austin Internet Server 'SPEEDEs' Along

January 2008 volume included:

Total transcripts for date range:  
85,059  
Total acknowledgements for date  
range: 69,499  
Total for code 138: 16,741  
Total for code 146: 32,359  
Total for code 147: 9,465  
Total for code 189: 116,801  
Total for code 997: 26,679  
Total transaction sets for date  
range: 356,603



## **FFEL Business Process and Data Standardization - Project Background**

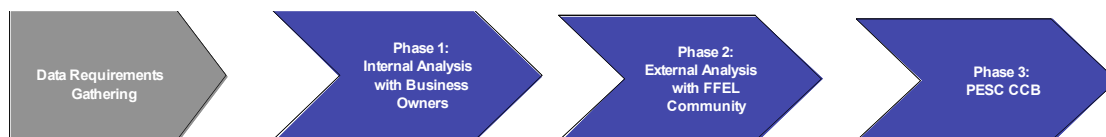
**02/01/2008**

### **Project Goal:**

As Federal Student Aid continues to work towards its vision for modernizing and integrating its business processes and systems, a thorough analysis of current data collection to support the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) program is ongoing in conjunction with the FFEL community. The goal of the FFEL Business Process and Data Standardization Project is to discuss FFEL process improvement recommendations and define the data standards that will be exchanged between Federal Student Aid and its partners throughout the entire life-cycle of FFEL Program loans - from inception to closure and for all loan and organization level reporting requirements.

### **Project Phases:**

FFEL Data Standardization is a three-phased project during which Federal Student Aid will create, modify and vet current and future FFEL business processes and FFEL data standards with internal stakeholders, external stakeholders and the Postsecondary Education Standards Council (PESC) Change Control Board (CCB). Figure 1 presents the three project phases.



**Figure 1: FFEL Business Process and Data Standardization Project Phases**

- Phase 1 - Internal analysis with Federal Student Aid and Department of Education business owners to document FFEL business processes and data element requirements exchanged currently to be exchanged in the future between Federal Student Aid partners in support of the FFEL Program.
- Phase 2 - External analysis with the FFEL community of interest to analyze process improvements, data standards and data definitions needed to support the FFEL Program reporting requirements.
- Phase 3 – PESC CCB review and approval of new and updated data elements provided by the FFEL Data Standards Workgroup.



**Current Status:**

Federal Student Aid has completed Phase 1. Federal Student Aid conducted sessions with internal stakeholders to document future FFEL business processes and data element requirements to be standardized for future exchanges with Federal Student Aid partners. This has resulted in approximately 200 data elements to be reviewed and accepted by the Phase 2 FFEL Data Standards Workgroup.

These data requirements are intended to meet the needs for all FFEL reporting, which includes: the exchanges currently conducted with the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS), the debt assignment processes with the Debt Collection Management System (DCMS) and the Conditional Disability Discharge Tracking System (CDDTS), loan consolidation into either the FFEL or Federal Direct Loan programs, financial reporting to the Financial Management System (FMS), and business needs for program management, oversight, and budgeting for the FFEL program.

**Phase 2 Mission:**

During Phase 2, Federal Student Aid has teamed up with members of the external community to review and discuss data elements exchanged between Federal Student Aid and its partners during the execution of FFEL business processes. Participants with non-FFEL interests are also included in the workgroup to ensure there is cross program parity in data requirements. The workgroup participant list is provided below under Reference Materials.

The Phase 2 workgroup conducted a kickoff meeting in conjunction with the Federal Student Aid conference in San Diego. The workgroup began meeting regularly via conference calls on January 7 and plans to meet on a weekly basis to review and discuss FFEL data standards.

**Phase 2 Communications and Progress Reporting:**

To ensure that workgroup progress and decisions are communicated effectively to the entire FFEL community - including schools, lenders, servicers, guarantors, and other service providers - a new link has been added to the Financial Partners Portal ([www.fp.ed.gov](http://www.fp.ed.gov)) under the heading "FFEL Data Standards Project" for monthly updates on project progress. Community organizations such as NCHELP, NASFAA, and COHEAO will make announcements through their daily communication to their constituents when an update is available on the FP Portal.

In addition, an email address has been established for community questions, comments, and inquiries regarding the FFEL Business Process and Data Standardization project. The email address is provided below under Comments and Responses.

**Reviewed by:**

All external communication has been reviewed by the communication subgroup of the FFEL Data Standards Workgroup:

Member	Organization
Ron Bennett	Federal Student Aid
Jonathan Way	Federal Student Aid Contractor
Mark Putman	NCHELP
Mike Balogh	NCHELP
Justin Draeger	NASFAA

### **Reference Materials:**

Workgroup participant list

FFEL Data Standards  
Workgroup\_v1.0.doc

### **Comments and responses:**

Questions regarding this report or companion documents referenced above can be directed to [DataStrategy@ed.gov](mailto:DataStrategy@ed.gov).

### **Revision History:**

Created: February 1, 2008

**Federal Student Aid FFEL Data Standards  
Workgroup Representatives**

<b>Business Process Representative</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Nora Corralez	ACS
Adele Marsh	AES
Lloyd Robertson	Chase Education
Gail McIntyre	Citigroup
Dana Purdy	GLHEC
Kristi Blabaum	GLHEC
Don Dugan	HESC
Beth Wicks	HESC
Gene Hutchins	HESSA
David Bailey	KHEAA
Justin Draeger	NASFAA
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Mike Balogh	NCHELP
Sandra Masur	Nelnet
Cheryl Cox	SLMA
Julie Nevitt	SLMA
Susan High	TG
Ron Stroud	TG
Jackie Ito-Woo	University of CA
Dan Davenport	University of Idaho
Lisa Oldre	Xpress Student Loan Servicing
Ron Bennett	Federal Student Aid
Angela Roca-Baker	Federal Student Aid
Adele Gabrielli	Federal Student Aid
Holly Hyland	Federal Student Aid
Lisa Elliott	Federal Student Aid
Zachary Vroman	Federal Student Aid
Jonathan Way	Federal Student Aid Contractor Support
Himanshu Verma	Federal Student Aid Contractor Support



For Immediate Release

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## **The Schools Interoperability Framework Association (SIFA)<sup>®</sup> Releases New Product Standards to the SIF<sup>®</sup> Certification Program**

*Washington, DC, February 7, 2008*---The Schools Interoperability Framework Association (SIFA) today launched new product standards in its SIF Certification Program, including initiating the Zone Integration Server (ZIS) product standard.

For the first time, vendors have the ability to test the mandatory features of a Zone Integration Server as defined in the SIF Implementation Specification and to document support for any optional/conditional features in the associated conformance statement. Mark Reichert, SIFA's Chief Technology Officer, explains, "The new Zone Integration Server 2.0r1 product standard enables Zone Integration Servers to be tested in a manner similar to SIF-enabled Applications. Certified Zone Integration Servers will contribute to greater out-of-the-box interoperability in SIF implementations."

The new SIF 2 Certification product standard is intended for SIF-enabled applications that send data per a given SIF Implementation Specification in the SIF 2 lifecycle. This currently relates to the recent version of the SIF Implementation Specification 2.0r1. This new program will support the processing of events, requests and responses from any future SIF Implementation Specification release cycle in the SIF 2 release cycle. This maximizes interoperability as SIFA continues to follow its membership-driven six-month release cycle for the specification.

"We are very proud of our members and the evolution of the SIF Certification Program. Expanding our current certification program to include Zone Integration Server certification better meets the needs of schools, districts and states in ensuring products are developed to and follow the SIF Specification," stated Dr. Larry Fruth, Executive Director.

There are currently over 86 products that are SIF Certified. For more information about the Certification Program, please visit <http://certification.sifinfo.org/>.

### **About The Schools Interoperability Framework Association (SIFA)**

SIFA is a unique, non-profit collaboration composed of over 1600 schools, districts, states, U.S. and International Departments of Education, software vendors and consultants who collectively define the rules and regulations for educational software data interoperability. The SIF Implementation Specification enables diverse applications to interact and share data efficiently, reliably, and securely regardless of the platform hosting those applications. SIFA has united these education technology end users and providers in an unprecedented effort to give teachers more time to do what they do best: teach. For further information, visit <http://www.sifinfo.org>.

###



For Immediate Release

For Additional Information,  
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jabbott@sifinfo.org  
202.491.8214

## **National Organizations Hold Successful Data and Learning Summit for State Departments of Education**

*Washington, DC, February 13, 2008* – The Schools Interoperability Framework Association (SIFA), Consortium for School Networking (CoSN), Data Quality Campaign, International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), State Educational Technology Directors Association (SETDA), the United States Department of Education, Pearson, Edustructures and Microsoft hosted its first *Data and Learning Summit: Collaboration, Assimilation and Connection – Planning for Systemic Integration* January 16-18 in Washington, DC. The summit brought together teams from state departments of education across the country to engage in structured conversations around the systemic, statewide use of data, infrastructure, curriculum, assessment, educational technology and PK20 in order to improve teaching and learning.

State teams, including a local education authority (LEA) representative, spent time learning from other states, discussing what other “department silos” focus on in regards to data and planning for systemic implementation and data use. Panels of experts from states and industry provide success stories, barriers, challenges and strategies. Don Knezek, CEO for ISTE, states, “The Summit, planned and delivered by a team of national organizations, once again proved to be successful in fostering open communication among state and district leaders. This event provided an opportunity for leaders at all levels to move toward developing a shared vision for infusing data into the teaching and learning process.”

Prior to attending the Data and Learning Summit, states attended a pre-summit meeting. During the Summit, the state teams worked on developing an action plan for the systemic use of data. A portion of that action plan will include a replication of the Summit with the LEAs within their state. Finally, post-summit meetings will focus on topics desired for further discussion, information and depth. “The rare time for state teams to discuss these difficult issues was invaluable to the conversation,” explains Jill Abbott, Learning Strategist for SIFA. “The vital connection between the various forms of data collected by a state and LEA, including assessment, accountability, perceptual and demographic data, must be made in order to improve teaching and learning for every student and teacher. Providing deliberate strategies of involving LEAs and time to continue the dialogue is an important piece of systemic improvement.”

The discussions generated solid dialogue from SEAs, LEAs and national experts garnering solutions and ideas on the statewide use of data for transformation, curriculum, assessment, educational technology and PK20. Each discussion began with expert panels and ensued with dialogue amongst the state team. Irene Spero, COO for CoSN, asserts, “The Data and Learning Summit was an excellent opportunity to identify ways for school districts to collaborate, connect and plan for the effective utilization of data. CoSN is pleased to have been part of this effort and to highlight the work of its Data-driven Decision Making Initiative. Both Sharnell Jackson, Chief eLearning Officer, Chicago Public Schools and Bob Moore, Executive Director of IT Service, Blue

Valley USD #229, Kansas, illustrated the many powerful ways in which school districts can be data focused and achieve significant results in improving the academic performance of students."

Overall, the Summit provided professional development time between co-workers to develop a common mission and vision, shared best practices between states, developed strategies for effective statewide data utilization and provided ongoing mechanisms for best practice sharing and follow-up. "Getting useful data into the classrooms where it can personalize instruction for all children is key," said Mary Ann Wolf, SETDA's Executive Director. "The group approach offered state teams an opportunity to put the data into a context of teaching and learning. This was an exciting step toward using data to transform the way teachers teach."

**For More Information and Presentations from the Data and Learning Summit, please visit <http://www.sifinfo.org/presentations.asp>.**

**The Schools Interoperability Framework Association (SIFA)** is a unique, non-profit collaboration composed of over 1500 schools, districts, states, US and International Departments of Education, software vendors and consultants who collectively define the rules and regulations for educational software data interoperability. Learn more at [www.sifinfo.org](http://www.sifinfo.org).

**The Consortium for School Networking (CoSN)** is the country's premier voice in education technology leadership, serving K-12 technology leaders who through their strategic use of technology, improve teaching and learning. For further information, visit [www.cosn.org](http://www.cosn.org).

**The Data Quality Campaign (DQC)** is a national, collaborative effort by national organizations to encourage and support state policymakers to improve the collection, availability and use of high-quality education data and to implement state longitudinal data systems to improve student achievement. For additional information, visit [www.dataqualitycampaign.org](http://www.dataqualitycampaign.org).

**The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE)** is the premier membership association for educators and education leaders engaged in improving teaching and learning by advancing the effective use of technology in PK-12 and teacher education. Home of NETS and NECC, ISTE represents more than 85,000 education professionals worldwide. Learn more at [www.iste.org](http://www.iste.org).

**The State Educational Technology Directors Association (SETDA)** is the principal association for state directors of technology and their staff members providing professional development and leadership around the effective use of technology in education to enhance competitiveness in the global workforce. For more information, visit [www.setda.org](http://www.setda.org).

**Pearson**, educating 100 million people worldwide, is the global leader in educational publishing, assessment, information and services, helping people of all ages to learn at their own pace, in their own way. More information about Pearson can be found at <http://www.pearsonschool.com>.

**Edustructures** is the recognized leader in SIF integration solutions for the PK-12 education market, making it possible for market-leading Student Information, Library, Transportation, Cafeteria and Directory solutions to reliably and securely share data in real-time. For more information about Edustructures, please visit <http://www.edustrucures.com>.

**Microsoft** was founded in 1975, Microsoft is the worldwide leader in software, services and solutions that help people and businesses realize their full potential. For additional information about Microsoft, visit <http://www.microsoft.com>.

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# 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on Technology & Standards

**April 28 – 30, 2008**  
**Hyatt Regency Washington**  
**on Capitol Hill**  
**[www.PESC.org](http://www.PESC.org)**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **CBA, EFC, NCHELP, and PESC Announce 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on Technology & Standards in Higher Education**

*Washington DC* – The Consumer Bankers Association (CBA), the Education Finance Council (EFC), the National Council of Higher Education Loan Programs (NCHELP), and the Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council (PESC) are pleased to announce the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on Technology and Standards in Higher Education to be held April 28 – 30, 2008 in Washington, D.C.

Members and Affiliates from any of the four associations are eligible for the discounted registration rate of \$500. The non-Membership rate is \$750. Hotel reservations can be made now by contacting the Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill directly at 202-737-1234 or online at [www.Hyatt.com](http://www.Hyatt.com). The Hyatt Regency Washington is located at 400 New Jersey Avenue NW, Washington, D.C., 20001. A conference rate of \$189 has been reserved for single/double hotel rooms. If calling for reservations, the group name is "PESC". The cut-off date to receive this discounted hotel rate is March 31, 2008. Conference registration is also available online at [www.PESC.org](http://www.PESC.org).

The conference begins at 8:30am on Monday April 28, 2008, includes six general sessions that will feature prominent speakers, eighteen concurrent sessions, and concludes by noon on Wednesday April 30, 2008. With this conference, the four associations continue to focus on technological issues important to their respective memberships under one efficient venue. The conference is targeted toward technical staff and upper management responsible for technology decisions. Once again, this conference includes the full support and participation of the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) and the US Department of Education's Office of Federal Student Aid (FSA). The program for the conference includes:

Time/Date	Monday April 28, 2008	Tuesday April 29, 2008	Wednesday April 30, 2008
7:30am – 9:00am	Registration & Continental Breakfast	Registration & Continental Breakfast	Registration & Continental Breakfast
8:30am – 9:00am	<b>Welcome, Opening Remarks, &amp; Awards</b> <u>Speaker:</u> <b>Michael Sessa</b> Executive Director, PESC		
9:00am – 10:15am	<b>A Roundtable Discussion on the Impact of Politics on Higher Education</b>  <u>Speakers:</u> <b>Brett Lief</b> President, National Council of Higher Education Loan Programs (NCHELP)	<b>PK – 20 Data Systems Alignment: Perspective from the U.S. Department of Education</b>  <u>Speakers:</u> <b>Holly Hyland</b> Management Analyst, Integration Team, Federal Student Aid, U.S. Department of Education	<b>Legislative and Regulatory Impacts on Technology and Standards – Part 1</b>  <u>Speakers:</u> <b>Kathleen Smith</b> President, EFC <b>Wanda Hall</b>
<b>General Session</b>			

	<b>Kathleen Smith</b> President, Education Finance Council (EFC) <b>Harrison Wadsworth</b> Principal, Washington Partners	<b>Ross Santy</b> Deputy Assistant Secretary for Data and Information; Office of Planning, Evaluation, & Policy Development; U.S. Department of Education	Vice President of Operations and Director of Compliance and Quality Assurance, Edfinancial Services
10:15am – 10:30am <b>Break</b>			
10:30am – 11:45am  <b>General Session</b>	<b>A Community Vision of Interoperability: FFELP Data Standardization</b> Speakers: <b>Ron Bennett</b> Federal Student Aid, U.S. Department of Education <b>Kristi Blabaum</b> Systems Integration Analyst Great Lakes Educational Loan Services, Inc. <b>Justin Draeger</b> National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA)	<b>State-Based Student Unit Records</b>  Speaker: <b>Peter Ewell</b> Vice President, National Council of Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS)	<b>Legislative and Regulatory Impacts on Technology and Standards – Part 2</b> Speakers: <b>Kathleen Smith</b> President, EFC <b>Wanda Hall</b> Vice President of Operations and Director of Compliance and Quality Assurance, Edfinancial Services
11:45am – 1:15pm <b>Lunch</b>			Adjourn
1:15pm – 2:15pm  <b>Concurrent Sessions</b>	<b>Common Record: CommonLine (CRC) Implementation</b> Speakers: <b>Brian Allison</b> Vice President of Technology and Industry Initiatives, USA Funds and Co-Chair of the Electronic Standards Committee (ESC), National Council of Higher Education Loan Programs (NCHELP) <b>Robert King</b> Director of Industry Initiatives, Citibank - The Student Loan Corporation and Co-Chair of the Electronic Standards Committee (ESC), National Council of Higher Education Loan Programs (NCHELP)  <b>Global Authentication: Liberty Alliance Identity Assurance Framework</b> Speaker: <b>Brett McDowell</b> Executive Director, Liberty Alliance  <b>Emergency Security Systems &amp; Technology</b> Speaker(s): TBD	<b>PESC Best Practices Award Winners 2007</b> Speaker(s): To Be Announced  <b>Web Tools to Improve Customer Service Part 1</b> Speaker: <b>Tim Bornholtz</b> President, The Bornholtz Group  <b>Value of SIFA in PK – 12 Interoperability</b> Speaker(s): TBD	
2:15pm – 2:30pm <b>Break</b>			
2:30pm – 3:30pm  <b>Concurrent Sessions</b>	<b>Recommendations from PESC's EA2 Task Force</b>  Speaker(s): TBD	<b>Emerging Standardization Efforts and Trends from the Vendor Perspective</b> Speakers: <b>Craig Powell</b> President, ConnectEdu, Inc.	

	<p><b>Considerations for Future XML Development Methodologies</b>  <u>Speaker:</u>  <b>Steve Margenau</b>  Systems Analyst, Great Lakes Educational Loan Services, Inc. and Chair of the Technical Advisory Board (TAB) of PESC's Standards Forum for Education</p> <p><b>Business Intelligence and Benchmarking</b>  <u>Speaker(s):</u>  TBD</p>	<p><b>John O'Connell</b>  Senior Vice President of Business Development, Docufide  <b>Mark Johnson</b>  President, National Transcript Center  <b>J. Michael Thompson</b>  CEO, XAP Corporation</p> <p><b>Web Tools to Improve Customer Service Part 2</b>  <u>Speaker:</u>  <b>Tim Bornholtz</b>  President, The Bornholtz Group</p> <p><b>Real ID</b>  <u>Speaker(s):</u>  TBD</p>	
3:30pm - 3:45pm <b>Break</b>			
3:45pm - 4:45pm <b>Concurrent Sessions</b>	<p><b>European Initiatives and Impacts on the U.S.</b>  <u>Speaker:</u>  <b>Jim Farmer</b>  Georgetown University</p> <p><b>Predictive Analytics</b>  <u>Speaker(s):</u>  TBD</p> <p><b>Standards in Development</b>  <u>Speaker(s):</u>  TBD</p>	<p><b>Briefing on the Data Quality Campaign: 2008 and Beyond</b>  <u>Speaker:</u>  <b>Aimee Guidera</b>  Executive Director, Data Quality Campaign</p> <p><b>Internet2</b>  <u>Speaker(s):</u>  TBD</p> <p><b>Customer Relationship Management</b>  <u>Speaker(s):</u>  TBD</p>	
5:00pm - 6:00pm	<b>PESC 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting</b>		
6:00pm - 7:00pm		<b>Conference Reception</b>	

A joint program committee with representatives from all four partner organizations has been formed to finalize all concurrent sessions and speakers. If you have any questions or wish to sponsor the 5th Annual Conference on Technology and Standards, please contact Michael Sessa, PESC Executive Director, at 202-261-6516 or at [Michael.Sessa@PESC.org](mailto:Michael.Sessa@PESC.org).



#### About CBA

The Consumer Bankers Association is the recognized voice on retail banking issues in the nation's capital. Member institutions are the leaders in consumer financial services, including auto finance, home equity lending, card products, education loans, small business services, community development, investments, deposits and delivery. CBA was founded in 1919 and provides leadership, education, research and federal representation on retail banking issues such as privacy,

fair lending, and consumer protection legislation/regulation. CBA members include most of the nation's largest bank holding companies as well as regional and super community banks that collectively hold two-thirds of the industry's total assets. CBA's Education Funding Committee is the public policy voice for private-market capital to fund loans supporting America's students. Its member banks provide the loans to students and parents that make higher education possible for millions of Americans every year.



#### **About EFC** EDUCATION FINANCE COUNCIL

The mission of the Education Finance Council (EFC) is making college more affordable. Together with its members, EFC works to expand access to higher education by ensuring the availability of student loan funds while striving to make paying for college easier and less expensive for all students and families. EFC represents not for profit and state based student loan secondary markets that participate in the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP) as well as affiliated entities including guaranty agencies, lenders, rating agencies, insurers and investment bankers. EFC members are constantly seeking and implementing new technologies to ensure innovation and improvement in the financing of postsecondary education, and in their management of outreach programs and borrower services, including financial literacy education. In existence for more than 40 years, the FFELP has provided more than \$500 billion in loans for students and families.



#### **About NCHELP**

The National Council of Higher Education Loan Programs, Inc. (NCHELP) represents a nationwide network of guaranty agencies, secondary markets, lenders, loan servicers, collectors, schools and other organizations that provide financial assistance to millions of American students and their families each year. Based in Washington, D.C., NCHELP advocates on behalf of its members on public policy and regulatory issues with the legislative and executive branches of the federal government. NCHELP members promote student access and choice for postsecondary education and training.

A key objective for NCHELP is to inform the public about the availability of the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP) and private education loans as a method to ensure open access to postsecondary education. Postsecondary education institutions face significant operational challenges associated with providing financial assistance to their students each year. NCHELP is committed to helping its members and educational institutions achieve efficiencies through the work of the Electronic Standards Committee by facilitating and promoting a coordinated and proactive approach to electronic standardization efforts.



#### **About PESC**

Established in 1997 and located in Washington, D.C., the Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council (PESC) is a non-profit, community-based, umbrella association of colleges and universities; professional and commercial organizations; data, software and service providers; and state and federal government agencies. PESC's mission is to lead the establishment and adoption of data exchange standards in education. The goals of the mission are to enable the improvement of institutional performance and foster collaboration across educational communities in order to lower costs, improve service, and attain system interoperability.