Standardizing the IEP
Streamlining to Get to Usage
The Who....

✓ A 20 year old non-profit of over 3,000 schools, educational/government agencies and vendors

✓ 100% funded by membership – value add!

✓ Utilizing transparent processes, the Community collaboratively develops openly available technical standards – the most comprehensive K12 data model for data management, movement and usage

✓ Moving past technical standards to support other learning info needs identified by the Community – privacy, rostering..... and IEPs.
The Why....
Individualized Education Plans
A “101”
What is an IEP?

✓ It Means ‘Individualized Education Plan’

✓ Federal Mandate for Every Student Who Qualifies

✓ Documents Eligibility and Plans

✓ It is a Legal Contract
Why an IEP?

✓ “Children with disabilities have the same right to a free and appropriate public education as any other child... (that provides) services to meet their unique needs”

✓ **It’s the Law**: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, a 2008 amendment to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA).

✓ **ADA** covers certain accommodations in the classroom with what’s known as a 504 Plan.

✓ **IDEA** gives students with more significant disabilities the right to specialized instruction as outlined under the IEP.
IEP is a Formal Process

✓ A request is made
✓ An eligibility study is done
✓ A plan is developed
  ✓ A list of annual goals and a plan for achieving them and a plan for monitoring and reporting on progress
✓ The IEP Meeting Must Have in Attendance a Parent, Teacher, Psychologist, Special Educator, and School Administrator
✓ It is updated according to a strict schedule
✓ The goal is to provide an optimal educational outcome for every student
What is in an IEP

✓ The IEP Documents the Child’s

• Eligibility determination and details

• Current status
  • Academic assessment
  • Functional capabilities
  • Life goals

• Annual goals
  • Measurable objectives
  • Services to aid attainment
  • Reporting

• Administrative data
  • Name, address, parents, school
Why Standardize? Addressing on the Ground Challenges

✓ Students change schools often
  • Administrators and educators need info to help students with special needs

✓ Today’s paper IEP is hard to use
  • Often not available
  • Can’t move electronically
  • Doesn’t enter receiving school’s computer system

✓ Marketplace Choice
  • Districts can’t change vendors because data cannot move
The IEP Data Model

✓ Initial motivation is to provide data portability, ie, ability to transfer data from school to school

✓ Three use cases

✓ Day Zero - Information to help the person who welcomes a previously unknown student

✓ Ongoing IEP - Information to support educators adapting a plan to local resources and strategies

✓ State Reporting - Information to help districts meet reporting requirements and to claim resources
The Two Year Process

✓ Formed a team of technology and special education experts

✓ Identify constituencies and needs

✓ Determined a three part mission
  • Day zero, Ongoing IEP, State reporting

✓ Survey the state of the art in IEPs
  • Researched cross-state examples in the field and created an extensive analysis for a comprehensive list of fields and concepts and an organizing framework to cover both data categories both common to the various forms and geographically unique.

✓ Boil them into a single complete IEP data set design

✓ Review with experts
  • CEDS data definition and public review, Outreach, A4L Community Review

✓ Technical work for software development use (XSDs!)
Two Years of Teamwork

- Many presentations and review
  - CEDS stakeholder/public review process
  - State technical and management
  - XML technical
  - Special Education professional
  - North American Technical Board

- ~8000 lines of XML
  - ~4000 for the Plan section alone
  - Over 300 new CEDS definitions
  - All appropriate elements annotated with CEDS ID
  - Complex design and normalization
  - Venetian Blinds and more

- Presenting V3.5 - the IEP Release
But, There’s More...

• You can see the complexity
  • No point in showing every detail

• As complete as we can make it
  • First ever complete design documentation for IEP
  • Covers every single thing we could find

• Model for the future
  • No illusion it’s done
  • Law and practices change
  • Adapt to vendors’ needs

• A good start
Some of the Authors...
EasyIEP is a web-based special education case management tool used by districts spanning 30+ states to achieve and maintain federal/state compliance and improve processes and procedures in their special education programs.

The flexible, user-friendly design of EasyIEP makes it as easy to use as it is powerful:

- Dashboards customized to user roles give access to the exact data needed.
- EasyIEP is always on alert so you don’t have to be: Compliance alerts are embedded throughout the special education process, notifying users of key events and due dates that align with federal and state regulations.
- Complex special ed processes broken down into clear, manageable steps.
- Robust and flexible reporting options for actionable reporting at all levels.

One in five IEPs in the US are created using EasyIEP or one of PCG’s other IEP solutions, including IEP Online™ and GoalView
Linkages to the CEDS Data Model

The Common Education Data Standards (CEDS) project is a national collaborative effort to develop voluntary, common data standards for a key set of education data elements to streamline the exchange, comparison and understanding of data within and across P-20W institutions and sectors.

- CEDS stakeholder group reviewed IEP work from federal law requirements lens, categories of data guided by the regulations, what kinds of elements might be needed locally to best carry-out processes.
- Then defining standards (using what was already in CEDS when available and when not comparing to fields in A4L work and other sources), adapting definitions in law and other sources, then adding those definitions, option sets, DES context, and at-rest model to CEDS.
- A4L creating transport standards (serialization, API, etc...) based on the previous work and CEDS element definitions
A national collaborative effort to develop voluntary, common data standards for a key set of education data elements

- Streamline the exchange, comparison and understanding of data within and across P-20W institutions and sectors.

- CEDS stakeholder group reviewed data model
  - federal law requirements lens
  - regulations
  - local elements needed to carry-out processes.

- Define new standards where needed
  - definitions, option sets, DES context and at-rest model
  - create references where standards already exist
Some IEP Details

✓ Superset of state IEP plans
  • States view IEP many ways with different info

✓ Parental permissions are ubiquitous
  • Most details of assessment and plan can be signed

✓ Measurable objectives account for wide variation
  • Any goal, measurement strategy and service

✓ Standards references can be included
  • Achievement, assessment, goals, many others

✓ Personal goals and understandings are included
  • Life goals, self-assessment, parental views

✓ And a thousand other details...
  • Placement
  • Least restrictive environment
  • Amendments and more
What’s Next?

✓ Transport

✓ Certification Program

✓ Xpress Roster and Student Records Exchange Demonstration Using IEP (Developer Sandbox)

✓ SIF2x and 3x – “Unity”
A new workgroup has been established to define an encrypted container that can be distributed outside of a network.

**Business Process:**
- I give you my public key
- You use it to encrypt an IEP data object
- I use my private key to decrypt

*xTransferIep* represents an authoritative list of exactly what details comprise an IEP (Uses RSA Public Key Encryption: ANSI X9.31 and moved via email)
Public Key Cryptography

Needs IEP

Has IEP
Send Public Key to Friend

Needs IEP

Has IEP
Friend Writes Message (IEP)

Needs IEP

Has IEP
Encryption Makes It Secret

Needs IEP

Has IEP
Friend Sends Secret in Email

Needs IEP

Has IEP
Your Private Key Reveals Message!

Needs IEP

Has IEP
Take Action!

✓ Access 4 Learning Community
   www.a4l.org

✓ xPress IEP Site
   https://xpressapi.org/user-examples/xpress-IEP/

✓ The SIF North America Data Model v3.5 document page
   http://specification.sifassociation.org/Implementation/NA/3.5/contents.xhtml

✓ Standardized IEP RFP Wording
   http://www.a4l.org/resource/collection/7F785EA1-9AC7-4081-8DCC-3287AFA6675F/IEP_RFP_Language.pdf

✓ History of SpecEd/IEP:
  – Original presentation:
     http://cmerdc.org/iepInitialPresentation
  – Data inventory outline:
     http://cmerdc.org/iepInitialDataInventory
For Techies!

✓ The XSDs for programmers

✓ An hour-long, thorough explanation of the IEP data model
   http://static.cmerdc.org/iepOverview

✓ Technical explanation video
   http://cmerdc.org/iepOverview

✓ Technical structure explorer:
   http://cmerdc.org/iepExplorer
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