



Access 4 Learning Community

Powered by:  **SIF**

Simple. Secure. Scalable. Standard.

NEWSLETTER

March 2019

IT'S TIME TO FOCUS ON USING DATA TO IMPACT LEARNING...

IN THIS ISSUE

Time to celebrate!?

by Larry Fruth II, PhD – Executive Director / CEO

Maybe you have heard me tell the story in the past that I learned from a boss while leading the educational development in two massive science and technology centers or maybe not!

We were in meetings working on a project linking Senator John Glenn to students while he was travelling in his Space Shuttle mission, and I was told our Team just received a very substantial telecommunications grant to link kids nationally to the project. My boss was ecstatic and while congratulating me I brushed off his kudos and said, "ok what's next"? *He told me I need to take a breath and celebrate!* To hammer this through my head he sent me to a Disney Leadership Institute where I learned the great stories on how leaders should show others the need to take a breath and celebrate wins – big or small...

Well it's time for us to do the same!

We are excited about getting to celebrate a TON of hard work over the year, much of it highlighted in

these newsletter articles. The "Unity" Specification will move the usage of the SIF Specifications to a new level, the continued exponential growth of the Student Data Privacy Consortium membership, and the tools usage and adoption of the privacy contract clauses across the globe is exciting! While the work of the Community continues to move the needle in both interoperability AND privacy (sort of oxymoronic huh?), the A4L Community is the ONLY organization working in these two critical areas to connect the dots in a tangible and tactical way each day. It has been a ton of work done by dozens of volunteers and there is so much more we all want to do.

We hope you are going to be a part of the Annual Meetings. It is a great time to reflect and get updated on the work, identify the needs you have in the future work and share successes and challenges.

It's time to take a breath and celebrate!



Global Community News

COMMUNITY REVIEW: SIF Infrastructure Implementation Specification 3.3; PESC & A4L Community collaboration results in approval/release of PESC Compliant JSON; Project Unicorn Steering Committee update; 2019 Annual Meeting; and Welcome new members! [Page 2](#)

AU Community News

EduTECH 2019; SIF Data Model Implementation Specification (Australia) 3.4.4 published; and Timetabling Use Case Review [Page 4](#)

NA Community News

2019 Annual Meeting information; and **COMMUNITY REVIEW: Unity Specification** [Page 5](#)

Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC) News

Eight States now utilizing 'National Privacy Clause Set'; Welcome new members!; Student Privacy Boot Camp @ ISTE; and new SDPC Resource Registry goes live! [Page 6](#)

Global Community News



SIF Infrastructure Implementation Specification 3.3 enters Community Review



This may be our most impactful Infrastructure release since we switched to REST, due to the inclusion of components to express privacy controls over the wire, which even ensures the

latest set is known by the receiving system. This joint effort with the Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC), a Special Interest Group of the A4L Community, is just the biggest change in this landmark release.

Members are encouraged to review the proposed Specification release and help us get it right!

Current Scope for this release includes: Privacy Integration, Version Indication/Negotiation, PESC JSON

Adoption, Global Core Objects for Cloud/App integration, and clarifications* (not intended to change the meaning of the specification.)

The Community Review is currently slated to run from March 28 – April 14, 2019 (inclusive). Members are encouraged to provide their approval/feedback before COB on April 14 and will need to login to the website to access the survey. A link to the Specification documentation can be found via the survey [here](#).

PESC & A4L Community collaboration results in ‘Approval and Release of PESC Compliant JSON version 1.0’

Press Release: [PESC Compliant JSON version 1.0 Approved](#)

On March 8, the Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council (PESC) announced the Approval and Release of PESC Compliant JSON version 1.0. As a PESC Approved Standard, PESC Compliant JSON v 1.0 defines unified translation rules (used by developers and programmers) for data transformations between XML and JSON technologies.

Development of JSON was conducted and produced through the JSON Task Force, launched at PESC’s Spring 2017 Data Summit. In January 2018, PESC joined forces with the Access 4 Learning Community (previously the SIF Association), one of PESC’s long-time Partners in PK12 to adopt a unified, education-wide strategy on JSON.

“Over the past year, Members of the A4L Community, lead by A4L’s Technology Director John W. Lovell, and PESC have been productively working together on a joint approach through the JSON Task Force,” states Dr. Larry L Fruth II, A4L CEO. “PESC Compliant JSON v 1.0 will be referenced in the upcoming A4L Unity Technical Specifications as a data exchange option for SIF Specification users and is a model for collaborative open standards development between standards organizations,” Dr. Fruth concluded.

“PESC and the A4L Community working together on JSON is the perfect example of the power of collaboration between standards bodies and the value of providing a unified approach for

education,” adds Michael D. Sessa, PESC President & CEO. “As PESC Members are heavy users of XML, our highest priority was to provide a standardized migration, or mapping, strategy between XML & JSON to these users, many of whom were already experimenting with JSON. XML has proven very successful for efficient, business-to-business digital exchange and delivery of data. The addition of JSON enables standardized business-to-web delivery.”



UPDATE: Project Unicorn Steering Committee

The work of the [Project Unicorn](#) is moving ahead with new partners being identified each week – and you are represented!

Project Unicorn is an effort to improve data interoperability within K-12 education. The A4L Community is represented on the Project's Steering Committee and inserting the Community's more than 20 years experience in interoperability and huge demand for data privacy work. The Steering Community will guide the

Unicorn Team and help grow the collaborations and projects. There are great partners within the project and we expect some additional fruitful collaborations via the project in years to come.

One of the project deliverables is the [Interoperability Rubric](#) to evaluate tools about four key aspects of interoperability. The technical leadership of the Association has taken the rubric and overlaid the work of the Community that schools and vendors can address by

using the SIF Implementation technical blueprint. You can find the Rubric [here](#).



Check out the work at: <https://www.projunicorn.org/>

2019 Annual Meeting - truly an international meeting!



We are delighted with the number of registrations to-date for the 2019 A4L

Community & Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC) Annual Meeting! With participants from four countries, this should prove to be an interesting set of meetings with a truly global direction.

With both infrastructure and data model Specifications currently in Community Review, there are many exciting sessions from numerous members who are already understanding the benefits of what the new releases will bring to the

marketplace and are making their IT strategic plans to incorporate them!

Although online registration has officially closed, if you are planning on attending CoSN (April 1-3) in Portland, OR that week and can extend your stay, just [get in touch](#). We'd love to add another seat at the table!

To see the latest draft agenda, please click [here](#).

Welcome new members!

A4L Community member:



Lower Hudson Regional Information Center

A4L Community & Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC) members:



Riverdale Joint Unified School District



Shakopee Public Schools

TIME ZONE CHANGES...

North America: Clocks went **forward** on March 9, 2019
United Kingdom: Clocks go **forward** on March 30, 2019

Australia & New Zealand: Clocks go **backward** on April 6, 2019

News from the Australian Community



EduTECH 2019



NSIP will be exhibiting at the EduTECH conference in Sydney on the 6-7 June 2019.

We have several exciting opportunities that we're looking forward to over this

two day conference. Firstly, our annual Interoperability Challenge will be running. This year's theme is Trust, focusing on privacy and security. Successful applicants will be given the opportunity to present to the CIOs of the Departments of Education as well as other conference attendees on the Main Exhibition Stage.

If you would like to be contacted with further information on the challenge, please [email NSIP](#) directly.

Matt Farmer, NSIP Program Lead – Products and Market Engagement will

be presenting in the ICT Stream on Thursday 6th. Matt will be providing an update on the Learning Services Architecture, what it is, the benefits and national use cases.

We will also be holding a Vendors Forum Breakfast on the morning of Friday 7th.

If you're attending EduTECH, please be sure to pop by the NSIP stand and say hello to the staff.

SIF Implementation Data Model Specification (AU) 3.4.4 published

The SIF Implementation Data Model Specification (AU) 3.4.4 has now been published. This release contains the following significant updates and extensions to the SIF specification – new objects, new Types, new Codesets and Changes.

There are also many Elements of Type changed from Mandatory Repeating to Optional Repeating for use with NAPLAN 2019; additional changes to Codesets; and deletions.

To review the SIF Data Model Implementation Specification (Australia) 3.4.4, please [click here](#).



Timetabling Use Case Review

Members of the Australian Community are in the process of reviewing the use case for Timetable information exchange. Interested parties have met twice and are fleshing out the finer points of what needs to be done to provide extended support for the transfer of timetable related information between systems.

The changes are intended to support transfer of information about a cyclic timetable, location of teachers and students are at any point in the day,

timetable reporting in retrospect. Also supported are the query absence trends and identifying relationship between lessons delivered and teacher qualifications and preferences.

Watch this space for progress on how the comprehensive integration of timetable data better support learners, teachers, parents and administrators.

News from the North American Community



Update: 2019 Annual Meeting



We are delighted with the number of registrations to-date for the 2019 A4L Community & Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC) Annual Meeting! With participants from 4 countries, this should prove to be an interesting set of meetings with a truly global direction.

Although online registration has officially closed, if you are planning on attending CoSN (April 1-3) in Portland, OR that week and can extend your stay,

just get in touch. We'd love to add another seat at the table!

To see the latest draft agenda, please click [here](#).

Registered Delegates:

In case you have not already checked out the **2019 Annual Meeting** group area on the A4L Community Site, please do! A link can be found in your email confirmation. Start your networking early and post discussion items to the Forum area and connect with your peers!

Further information will be sent out via email ahead of the meetings.

Don't forget: In an effort to 'go green' we do not provide any printed materials at our events. All documents are available online.

Thank you to our Sponsors!

'Leader' Sponsor:



'Advocate' Sponsors:



'Unity' Specification enters Community Review



The Access 4 Learning (A4L) Community, is now proud to cause a new "buzz" – the best of the best from 20 years of interoperability specifications to address school needs and allow for states and vendors to implement the US Department of Education's Common Education Data Standards (CEDS). The

new Specification – code named "Unity" – is built using 20 years of experience by our more than 3,000 volunteer members developed using open, non-proprietary and transparent processes linked to a quality control Certification Program. It contains the most comprehensive K12 data model and modern transport technologies to securely move the data to provide it to the right person at the right time in the right way under local data privacy policies.

The North American Technical Board (NATB) has set out to provide the market with an incremental path forward... and the recipe is simple!. This draft

Specification includes data objects from the (NA) 2.8 Data Model; xPress Roster objects; IEP objects; Address and Student Program Association objects; Support of UUIDs and legacy GUIDs; Pluggable Code Sets & Extension Points throughout; and CEDS Mapping.

The Community Review is currently slated to run from March 28 – April 14, 2019 (inclusive). ALL North American Community Members are encouraged to provide their approval/feedback before COB on April 14 and will need to login to the website to access the survey [here](#).

News from the Student Data Privacy Consortium



Eight States Now Utilizing “National Privacy Clause Set” from the SDPC

PRESS RELEASE: Eight States Now Utilizing ‘National Privacy Clause Set’ from the Student Data Privacy Consortium

The Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC), a Special Interest Group of the Access 4 Learning (A4L) Community, is thrilled to announce that the Wisconsin Alliance has become the eighth state utilizing the collaboratively developed *SDPC National Clause Set* to set privacy expectations in contracts between schools/states and vendors.

The Clause Set contains 27 items that every educational institution and marketplace provider contract should contain to address their respective roles as effective stewards of student data. Wisconsin is added to those Alliances also utilizing this clause set in California, Maine, Massachusetts, Oregon, Texas, Vermont, and Washington.

“Bringing the SDPC to our state has led to coherence among our many school districts when working with vendors”, states Annette R. Smith, Director of Instructional Technology Services, WI Department of Public Instruction. “They have common language and support

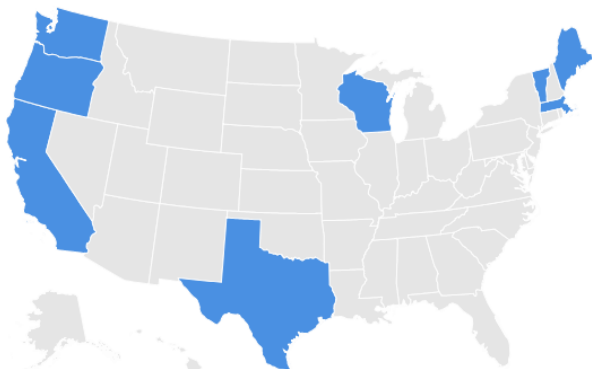
that streamlines the conversations. Many of our districts are very small and SDPC helps level the playing field with purchases and negotiations.”

The SDPC has been designed to address the day-to-day, real-world multi-faceted issues that schools, states, territories and vendors face when protecting learner information. The SDPC’s vision is to develop common activities, artifacts, templates, tools and effective practices that can be leveraged through a unique collaborative of end users and marketplace providers working together. “We applaud the Wisconsin Alliance’s work to evaluate and adopt the National Clause Set to streamline contracting for schools and vendors in their state”, touts Steve Smith, Cambridge Public School’s CIO. “We fully expect the majority of the 24 state Alliances in the SDPC will follow the lead of these eight states and adopt the privacy contract wording to clearly set expectations between end users and marketplace providers – in the place of the thousands of “one off” contracts done currently.”

To find out more about the projects of the SDPC, get involved in this growing Community and see the various contracts using the National Clause Set, please visit <https://privacy.A4L.org>



Eighth State now utilizing 'National Privacy Clause Set' from the SDPC



Welcome new members!



Classcraft



IXL Learning



Lucid for Education



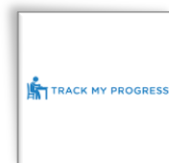
Managed Methods



Mehlville School District



Riverdale Joint Unified School District



TrueProgress

Student Privacy Boot Camp @ ISTE



Student Data Privacy Consortium

Join the Future of Privacy Forum and the Student Data Privacy Consortium as they provide a free 'Student Privacy Boot Camp' for districts.

Are you comfortable in all aspects of student privacy in your role in the classroom, overseeing data management, reporting and communications?

Need some immediate 'tactical' data privacy suggestions and/or tools that you can use immediately when you get back to your school?

This interactive event will outline the various privacy considerations for your role, privacy resources, and strategies that you could easily employ to protect students and link you to an international network of practitioners that are doing the same each day – just like you!

PLEASE NOTE: The Privacy Boot Camp is for non-SDPC members. All agenda sessions are introductory pieces and have already been provided to SDPC members via group meetings, introductory calls and training sessions.

REGISTER TODAY!

June 24, 2019

International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), Philadelphia, PA

[Register Here](#)

New SDPC Resource Registry goes LIVE!

The new SDPC Application/Resource Registry has launched. You can access the new site at <https://sdpc.a4l.org>. **Please make sure you update your bookmarks.**

A complete list of new enhancements is available [here](#), but highlights include:

- Website is responsive for all devices
- View signed DPAs for the whole state
- View New Requests and their progress statewide

- Users can have multiple roles and associations
- System has expanded to international searches and allows for other countries to join the SDPC
- Support section offer FAQs, alliance contact information, and pre-recorded training videos
- Ability to search alliance-wide by grade and content area and by company

- Displays vendor contact information on the Manage Agreement screen for each resource
- Expired contracts are displayed in red bold text
- Ability to access any alliance's website from any page in the system
- Forgot password request now sends an email which a unique link that then allows them to change their password. No passwords are shared via email now.
- Passwords in database are now encrypted.
- Forgot username functionality has been added.

As you use the new site, if you experience any glitches or issues, please notify [Lisa Waters](#).

SDPC Application Trainings for all Alliance and District Administrators were held in February. Both sessions were recorded, so if you missed one of these, or would like a recap, the videos are available from the [Resources](#) area on the SDPC website.



In The News

Eight States Now Utilizing 'National Privacy Clause Set' from the Student Data Privacy Consortium – [click here](#)

Ohio's Best Kept Student Data Privacy Secret... – [click here](#)

Student Data Privacy Consortium supports Chromebook App Hub providing transparency for developers - [click here](#)

The Forum Voice (NCES publication) – [click here](#)

A4L Community Functional Group Meeting Schedule

<u>Day</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Group</u>	<u>Staff Liaison</u>
INTERNATIONAL			<i>meetings are shown/based on US Eastern time zone</i>
Monday	1 st Mon, monthly	Open Source Developers Network	John Lovell
Tuesday	4 th Tues, quarterly	Association Board of Directors	Larry Fruth
Tuesday	2 nd Tues, monthly	Data Privacy	Penny Murray
Tuesday	Every 4 weeks	D3M	John Lovell
Wednesday	Bi-weekly	Infrastructure	John Lovell
Tuesday	1 st Tues, monthly	Policy & Procedures	John Lovell
Thursday	Every 4 weeks	International Technical Board	John Lovell
Thursday	(currently meeting bi-weekly)	Marketing	Penny Murray
NORTH AMERICA			<i>meetings are shown/based on US Eastern time zone</i>
Wednesday	2 nd Weds, quarterly	NA Management Board	Larry Fruth
Wednesday	Bi-weekly	NA Technical Board	John Lovell
STUDENT DATA PRIVACY CONSORTIUM			<i>meetings are shown/based on US Eastern time zone</i>
Wednesday	3 rd Weds, monthly	Project Updates	Larry Fruth
Wednesday	2 nd Weds, Qtrly (2 nd month)	Alliance Leadership	Larry Fruth
Wednesday	4 th Weds, Qtrly (3 rd month)	Governance	Larry Fruth
Wednesday	1 st Weds, Qtrly (1 st month)	Legal Task Force	Larry Fruth

A4L Community Members can find further information on each group on the collaboration area / A4L Community Site [here](#).
(member log in required)



Facebook



LinkedIn



YouTube



Twitter (NA)



Twitter (UK)



Twitter (AU)

About the Access 4 Learning Community

There is no other global community made up of educational policymakers, marketplace product and service providers and the customers they serve, collaborating daily to address real word learning information and resource issues.

The Access 4 Learning (A4L) Community, previously the SIF Association, is a unique, non-profit collaboration composed of schools, districts, local authorities, states, US and International Ministries of Education, software vendors and consultants who collectively address all aspects of learning information management and access to support learning. The A4L Community is "Powered by SIF" Specifications as its major technical tool to allow for this management and access simply, securely and in a scalable, standard way regardless of the platform hosting those applications. The Access 4 Learning Community 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 <https://www.A4L.org>

Contact Us

Larry Fruth II, PhD Executive Director/CEO

Provides direction and leadership toward the achievement of the organization's philosophy, mission, strategy, and its annual goals and objectives. Support includes; Board Administration and Support, Program and Service Delivery, Financial and Human Resource Management, Community Relations and Fundraising.

lfruth@A4L.org

John Lovell Technology Director

Responsible for the support and the extension of functionality for the SIF Test Harness. He is the lead software developer for the Association and supports the on-going use of the Test Harness by developers of agents, adapters, ZISes and middleware.

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Penny Murray Community Director

Provides membership services, develops communications, supports member working activities including particular SIF implementations, organizational meetings and strategic partnerships to ensure initiative success.

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NEWSLETTER

Issue 42

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