



Access 4 Learning Community

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NEWSLETTER

September 2018

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

IN THIS ISSUE

What REAL partnerships are about...

by Larry Fruth II, PhD – Executive Director / CEO

Over my time in the Community, and the time spent in thousands of meetings from local schools to federal agencies, I always wished that I could interrupt the meeting and dive deeper when they mention “partnerships”.

I do understand the concept and the continuum partnerships can exist, such as everything from “we like each other” to “a formal and legalized agreement”. But what can you really call a “partnership”? I believe that actions, both good and bad, define partnerships. You can learn about partnerships when you get to hear one of the partners talking about the arrangement separate from the other, AND an analysis of actions of the partnership.

In this newsletter version you will read about real partnerships with real deliverables:

- The Post-Secondary Electronic Standards Council (PESC) and A4L working together to develop instructions for implementers how to interpret the XML Schema as a data model for JSON exchanges ([page 3](#))
- The Global Education Privacy Standard (GEPS) Project bringing

together the leaders of the Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC) and the A4L Privacy Task Force to connect privacy contractual obligations to technical benchmarks for common understanding and expectations around how privacy obligations are being met in real-world technology solutions ([page 5](#))

- The xPress Individualized Education Plan (xPress IEP) collaboration between the Common Education Data Standards (CEDSD) team and the A4L working group led by TQ White. This ideal partnership has resulted in a standardized IEP that has garnered great interest by schools, states and even vendors. The momentum continues as the work now moves into enabling the secure transport and access to IEP information ([page 8](#))

There are many more in the making – but we won't call them “partnerships” yet!

Partnerships need to mean more than a public relations fodder. As President Kennedy famously stated, **“A partnership is not a posture but a process”**, but you be the judge when you hear about “partnerships”...



Global Community News

Website updates – projects/solutions and A4L & SDPC Vendor Marketplace; update on Joint JSON Task Force; Student Data Privacy Consortium update; introducing GEPS; and welcome new SDPC & A4L Community members! [Page 2](#)

AU Community News

2018-2019 Elections announcement; and Save the Dates! [Page 6](#)

NA Community News

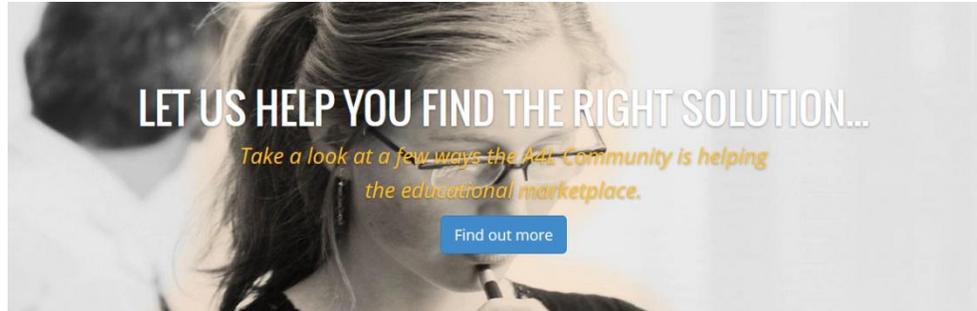
2019 Annual Meeting (NA) update; FBI Public Service Announcement; Why put Students in harms way – twice?!?; and Individualized Education Plans (IEP) continued work... [Page 7](#)

Global Community News



Have you seen the latest website updates?

by Penny Murray, Community Director



Projects/Solutions

Following discussions during the North American 2018 Annual Meeting, we have been working hard to gather information and update the website – providing visitors with information on current projects and details about a few of the great SIF implementations and solutions currently being utilized in the marketplace. There is more to come, and we would welcome any A4L

Member to get in touch so that we can promote your hard work! Initial project pages include:

- Application Vetting and Contracting;
- A Digital EcoSystem Decision Support Tool;
- Connect the 'Last Mile' of Application to the local digital ecosystem;
- K12 Community Developed Rostering Solution; and

A4L & SDPC Vendor Marketplace

As you may have read in our last Newsletter, we have been working on a 'Vendor Marketplace' to showcase the many SIF Certified products developed by our Members and also those members committed to student data privacy who have joined the Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC).

I am delighted to say that this is now live and available from the website: <https://marketplace.a4l.org/A4LDirectory/>

All website visitors are now more easily able to connect with companies committed to interoperability and

privacy. The marketplace gives us a strong foundation on which to build additional features some of you have already asked us for. Those who are the primary contact for a Marketplace Provider should make sure your Community profile is up to date, in

- Setting Expectations on Individual Education Plan (IEP) Development.

Success stories / examples on implementations include:

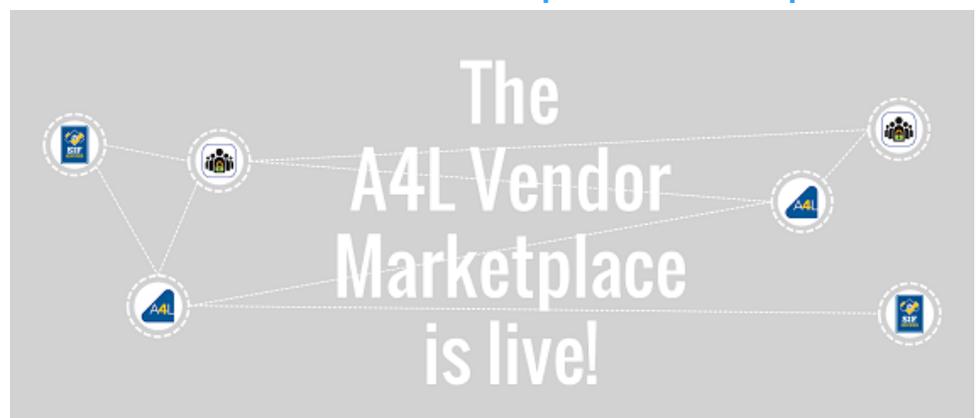
- State Reporting: The importance of data automation and real time data, an overview of the Oklahoma, The Wave & SIF provided by CPSI Ltd;
- Reducing the time teachers spend entering data and allowing them to teach – Nebo School Districts use of gradebook pass-back, provided by Kimono;
- plus a selection of PDFs on secure & efficient Student Record Exchange; upcycling existing technologies; and getting started with xPress Roster.

[Find out more...](#)

order to put your best foot forward.

If you have any queries relating to your current listing in the Vendor Marketplace, please contact [Penny Murray](#)

[Explore the Marketplace...](#)



Update: PESC/JSON Joint Task Force

by John Lovell, Technology Director

The Joint JSON Task Force's first deliverable navigates two organizations' approval processes.

It has been about 6 months since Access 4 Learning (A4L) and the Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council (PESC) joined forces in an effort to bring the traditional XML standards world a JSON representation that is truly programmer friendly. The group has worked diligently to draft JSON generation rules based on the existing XML Schemas both groups currently use to define their on-the-wire data models. Through real world testing and

reviewer feedback we have a solid technical document with the potential to standardize JSON throughout our communities.

The A4L International Technical Board (ITB) has agreed to pursue approval of this standard. This includes directing the Infrastructure team to take steps to ensure clear delineation between this approach and our current approach to JSON. Once formally recommended by the ITB, the Association Board of Directors is expected to accept their recommendation and release it to the public.

PESC uses a different process. They intend to present the proposed standard at their Fall 2018 Data Summit then open it up to the public for direct feedback. This represents two unique opportunities to those reading this, the first is to attend the PESC meeting and get brought up to speed on this technology. The second is early access (especially for non-A4L members) to this group's work.

[Standards Development Page >>](#)
[PESC 2018 Data Summit >>](#)

Update: Global A4L Data Privacy Task Force

POD Invasion...

The PODs are coming! Work has almost completed across the global A4L Data Privacy Task Force team to define the Privacy Obligation Documents (PODs) to ensure data transfers are kept private, and data recipients are well aware of their obligations when handling data.

Infrastructure changes to support private on the wire transfers are also underway. In parallel, work has commenced on the next phase of protecting privacy - Personal Privacy Obligation Documents (P-PODs). These support the capture of an individual's consent across a number of business

cases (consent to share and publish photos, data sharing across specific domains e.g. academic, medical) and provide a granular way for students, parents, teachers to control what they are (and aren't!) happy to share.

Don't forget...



North America: Apart from Arizona, Hawaii, some areas of British Columbia and East Kootenays, and most of Saskatchewan (where daylight savings time is not observed), daylight savings time ends on **4 November 2018** – clocks move **BACK** one hour.

United Kingdom: Daylight savings time ends on **28 October 2018** – clocks move **BACK** one hour.



Australia: Daylight saving varies from state to state and is used only in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory. All A4L meetings are currently scheduled in AU Eastern time zone. For the south-eastern states and the Australian Capital Territory, daylight savings time begins on **7 October 2018** – clocks move **FORWARD** one hour.

New Zealand: All of New Zealand, including Auckland, Christchurch, and Wellington, start Daylight Savings Time one week earlier than Australia on **30 September 2018** – clocks move **FORWARD** one hour.

Welcome new members!

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



A4L Community members:



Student Data Privacy
Consortium (SDPC) members:



Where is A4L...?

It's been a very busy year so far... but we are not done yet!! Here is a list of all the events we (A4L Staff and/or Community Members) are planning to attend for the remainder of the year:

SEPTEMBER

23-26 FL Association of Ed Data Systems (FAEDS) Orlando, FL [more information](#)

OCTOBER

1-2 EIMAC Fall Meeting Denver, CO

2-4 EdSurge Fusion Burlingame, CA

9-12 Ed-Fi Summit & Bootcamp Austin, TX

11-12 ACTEM Augusta, ME

21-24 iNACOL Blended & Online Symposium Nashville, TN

NOVEMBER

4-7 SETDA Leadership Summit Arlington, VA

6-7 UT Department of Education (privacy) UT

13-16 CETPA Sacramento, CA

14 AU A4L Community Meetings Melbourne, Australia

DECEMBER

8-11 TIES Minneapolis, MN

Student Data Privacy Consortium: Update

The Alliance growth continues like gang busters (see [membership](#))! The developing Global Education Privacy Standard (GEPS) is gathering steam and hands helping in the work (see [below](#)). The Consortium's support to the FBI in the student data public service announcement and how the Consortium is THE place to help parents, families and schools access privacy effective practices (see [announcement](#)).

Just three of the many "factoids" to show that the SDPC is moving ahead successfully and providing the community, tools, partners and resources they need to address "tactical" student data privacy issues. Stay tuned as soon we will be identifying an additional set of marketplace service providers who will be helping these Alliances continue to grow and address their current and future privacy needs whether it be

legal, operational, training, or other community-identified needed areas of support.



The Global Education Privacy Standard (GEPS)

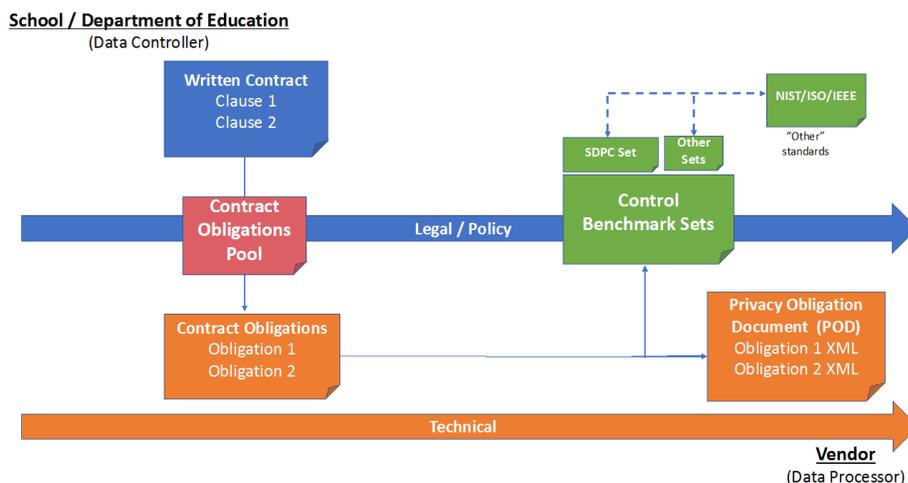
OK the contract is all signed between marketplace provider and customer, the deliverables are clearly outlined and everything is outlined in the roles and responsibilities of each party.

Ready to go, right? No.

In most cases the next call between the two parties to answer the question "How do you want us to deliver on X, Y and Z?". This is especially true when it comes to student data privacy issues which usually outlines the need for vendors to use "industry established best practices/standards". The issue is that for the education vertical, no practices or standards exist.

The Global Education Privacy Standard, GEPS, is a PK-20 global set of data privacy obligations (obligations) that can be aligned to contractual clauses as well as technical control benchmarks. GEPS includes open XML code (PODS) to transfer privacy obligations between controllers and processors to bridge the gap in understand of education data protection expectations. GEPS allows for organizations to choose the SDPC standard suggestions or use other existing standards, (i.e. IEEE, NIST, ISO, etc.) to set their own expectations between vendors and customers on managing student data.

Global Education Privacy Standard (GEPS)



We suggest if you are an end user OR marketplace provider, that you get involved proactively in this work to assure your needs are met. With the growth of the Alliance, and demands for better data privacy oversight, this work will be the foundation of how all products will validate their controls over student data.

To find out more information, please go to:

<https://privacy.A4L.org/privacy-connect>

News from the Australian Community



Announcement: 2018-2019 Elections

Blog: 2018-2019 Australian A4L Community Election



The Access 4 Learning (A4L) AU Community has had some wonderful leadership and guidance from their SIF AU Management Board (SIFAAMB) and the Data Standards Working Group (DSWG – Technical Board) to ensure a successful 2018. We would like to thank them for their involvement throughout the year.

The time has come to start preparing

for the 2018-2019 elections. Nominations for SIFAAMB and the DSWG will be open from **1 October – 22 October 2018** (inclusive).

The dates for the 2018-2019 A4L AU Community Annual Election process are:

- **1 October 2018:** Nominations open
- **22 October 2018:** Nominations close
- **25 October 2018:** Voting for SIFAAMB / DSWG Vendor Members (by vendor members) opens
- **12 November 2018:** Voting for SIFAAMB / DSWG Vendor Members

closes at 5pm (EST)

- **13 November 2018:** Election outcomes ratified by Chair and A4L, Announcement made
- **14 November 2018:** NSIP A4L Community Day & Annual Meeting held in Melbourne

Any queries regarding the elections policies & procedures, please contact [Larry Fruth](#).

[Read the full blog entry...](#)

SAVE THE DATES!

A4L Community Day & Annual Meeting 2018

Wednesday 14 November

Where: Melbourne

Time: 9:45am - 4.30pm

Cost: Free

The Community Day is a great opportunity to learning about current jurisdictional projects that may affect you in the market place and network will stakeholders from across the public and private sector. Further information on the agenda for Community Day will be uploaded closer to the date.

To register your interest, please email info@nsip.edu.au by **Monday 5 November 2018**.

SIF 3 Technical Training

Thurs 15 & Fri 16 November 2018

Where: Melbourne

Time:

Day 1: 9am - 4.30pm

Day 2: 9am - 3pm

Cost: Free

This is a great opportunity to build on your current level of knowledge and/or refresh your memory on what you have previously learnt.

The training will cater to all levels of experience, from beginner up to more advanced training. (Please indicate when registering if you require intermediate or advanced training). No prior knowledge of SIF is required. Attendees will also learn

about open source tools to assist with interoperability.

A draft agenda can be found [here](#) (*the draft agenda will be revised to meet the requirements of those attending*).

For more information on the training or to register, please email info@nsip.edu.au. (Places are limited places so register ASAP. Must bring your own device)



News from the North American Community



2019 Annual Meeting (NA)

With all that is going on and the increased diversity of the Community's work, we are thinking "outside the box" on our traditional Annual Meeting planning. Typically we all gather for 2 1/2 days and discuss all that is on the table across the Community's work. Well, that will not work anymore...

Our new idea is to have smaller, more targeted gatherings to address critical topics that are best served through face to face activities. Stay tuned for upcoming dates and locations but expect:

- **SDPC:** we are partnering (again that word) with the [Future of Privacy Forum](#) (FPF) to hold quarterly "privacy boot camps" focused on local schools/districts student privacy issues.
- **A4L Leadership:** will be held in conjunction with the [Annual CoSN Conference in Portland](#) on April 1-4, 2019. (Plan to stay on for the full week and attend both!)
- **A4L Technical:** The NA Technical Board has also agreed to meet in April 2019.

If you have any suggestions for the 2019 Annual Meeting agenda, please contact [Penny Murray](#).

We know travel is tough and expensive and we want to partner with other meetings to make sure it makes getting approval an easier task for you and your organization. We do need you there as we embark on the newest specification and the growing privacy work.

More details coming soon...

Why Put Students in Harm's Way - Twice?!?

Blog (North America): [Why Put Students in Harm's Way - Twice?!?](#)

One of my most memorable professional moments occurred years ago in DC education meetings when a large room of teachers and policy makers were discussing the concept of "at risk" learners and the various educational strategies that can be employed to address this "subset" of kids. One educator stood up in front of the room and stated, "I just want you to know that our school recently found out that all kids are "at risk" - I teach at Columbine High School". Yes this was 1999.

We all know very clearly now that our definitions of "at risk" has changed to not only mean academic oriented activities but now must include physical and emotional wellbeing. Some of these are under their control and some aren't. Take for an example last year's hurricane Category 5 hurricane Irma, the most powerful ever to hit the Atlantic, which devastated most of the Caribbean including plunging more

than 1 million citizens of Puerto Rico into darkness. This put all Puerto Rican learners "at risk" and many families fled the islands for the US mainland.

One of the major landing point, due to many familial cultural and established networks were the states of Texas, Florida.... and Massachusetts! These learners entered into established local and state educational institutions - many of which were not ready to address this influx in numbers and needs for these new learners. An example of one state who utilized K12 community built open standards for data management was the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and their use of the Schools Interoperability Framework (SIF) Specifications built by the Access 4 Learning (A4L) Community.

"This year, our statewide usage of the SIF standard has been so valuable in



our ability to track and budget for Puerto Rican migration as a result of Hurricane Irma", states Rob Curtin, Associate Commissioner Data & Accountability, MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. "We have had over 3000 students arrive in our state and we have used our real-time SIF reporting capabilities to provide weekly updates to the Governor's office. This was critical information for policymakers in how best to support the schools receiving and educating these new students."

So add "environmental incidents" to the list creating "at risk" learners for all of our schools!

[Read the full blog...](#)

Federal Bureau of Investigation releases Public Service Announcement recommending engagement with consortiums

News: Federal Bureau of Investigation releases PSA recommending engagement with consortiums

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has taken a leadership position in the area of student privacy in its Public Service Announcement (PSA) entitled **Education Technologies: Data Collection And Unsecured Systems Could Pose Risks To Students**. This guidance document outlines cybersecurity issues as *'the US school systems' rapid growth of education technologies (EdTech) and widespread collection of student data, could have privacy and safety implications if compromised or exploited'*. It provides a series of recommendations based on their research which included engaging A4L's Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC) leadership.

The major FBI recommendation is *"For districts seeking assistance, there are numerous online resources, consortiums, and organizations available that can provide support on data protection matters and cybersecurity best practices."*

With half of the country with statewide Alliances, the Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC) is an unique collaborative of schools, districts,

regional, territories and state agencies, policy makers, trade organizations and marketplace providers addressing real-world, adaptable, and implementable solutions to growing data privacy concerns. The Consortium also leverages work done by numerous partner organizations but focuses on issues being faced by "on-the-ground" practitioners. Some of the FBI recommendations - which the SDPC are directly addressing - include schools, parents and families to;

- Research existing student and child privacy protections of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), and state laws as they apply to EdTech services.
- Discuss with their local districts about what and how EdTech technologies and programs are used in their schools including the types of data that are collected including, but are not limited to:

- personally identifiable information (PII);
- biometric data;
- academic progress;
- behavioral, disciplinary, and medical information;
- Web browsing history;
- students' geolocation;
- IP addresses used by students; and
- classroom activities.

- Conduct research on parent coalition and information-sharing organizations which are available online for those looking for support and additional resources.
- Research school-related cyber breaches which can further inform families of student data vulnerabilities.

[Read the full press release...](#)

[Read the PSA...](#)

Individual Education Plans (IEP) Continued Work

There is growing interest in the previous years of IEP work done as part of the [xPress API](#) line to support learners of all skill-sets. Currently the Task Force is working with multiple states to have vendors align their work to the IEP work incorporated into the Common Education Data Standards (CEDS) work. The CEDS team and NCES were vital partners (again that word) in

the entire IEP development project. The IEP work is moving into phase 2 which will/may include:

- **Transport:** A new object, xTransferlep, which will represent an authoritative list of exactly what details comprise an IEP (Uses RSA Public Key Encryption: ANSI X9.31 and moved via email)

- **Certification Program:** A quality control component linking IEP data work to Common Education Data Standards work
- xPress Roster and Student Records Exchange Demonstration Using IEP (Developer Sandbox)
- Bringing all changes in the SIF2x and 3x Specification merger activities

Get involved! [Contact us...](#)



In The News

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) releases Public Service Announcement (PSA) recommending engagement with consortiums – [click here](#)

A4L Community joins Project Unicorn Steering Committee – [click here](#)

A4L Community Site: Changes to virtual meeting process – [click here](#)

Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC): June Update – [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
Monday	3 rd Mon, monthly	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
Ad-hoc	(currently meeting weekly)	Marketing	Penny Murray
NORTH AMERICA			<i>meetings are shown/based on US Eastern time zone</i>
Monday	3 rd Mon, monthly	NA Management Board	Larry Fruth
Wednesday	Bi-weekly	NA Technical Board	John Lovell
UNITED KINGDOM			<i>meetings are shown/based on UK GMT</i>
Tuesday	2 nd Tues, monthly	UK Management Board	Larry Fruth / Penny Murray
Thursday	2 nd Thurs, monthly	UK Technical Board	Penny Murray

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



Facebook



LinkedIn



Google+



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.

jlovell@A4L.org

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.

pmurray@A4L.org

NEWSLETTER

Issue 40

1090 Vermont Ave NW, Sixth Floor
Washington, DC 20005, USA

☎ 202-621-0547

✉ staff@A4L.org

www.A4L.org

