



A Guide to A4L Community Project Teams



www.A4L.org

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About the Access 4 Learning Community

The Access 4 Learning (A4L) Community, and its Special Interest Group the Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC), 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 strives for these educational stakeholders to establish common expectations in the connecting and securing effective learning ecosystems 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.

Education is a complex activity that is part science and part art.... With this in mind, education, parents, and school administrators must have access to state-of-the-art tools populated with up-to-date information in order to make effective use of a myriad of diverse resources. These resources, when combined effectively produce an effective learning environment for all students. Seamless integration of a broad a spectrum of instructional, administrative and communication tools is an essential foundation for an environment that addresses the needs of all learners. Students, teachers, and institutions have different needs, requiring solutions to be customizable and scalable.

Adoption of new processes and technologies driven by these solutions must accommodate existing procedures and infrastructure. Long term, sustainable change is systemic in nature and involves consecutive successful steps designed and implemented through collaboration between public and private sector stakeholders.

Vision: Learners will be supported by technology that allows for their successful information ownership and usage based on their specific needs.

Mission and Values: To develop a 'Learner Centric Model for Data Management' to provide learners and practitioners the flexibility to choose student administration and learning tools that work seamlessly while ensuring data integrity, security and privacy.

Connecting and Securing Effective Learning Ecosystems TM

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

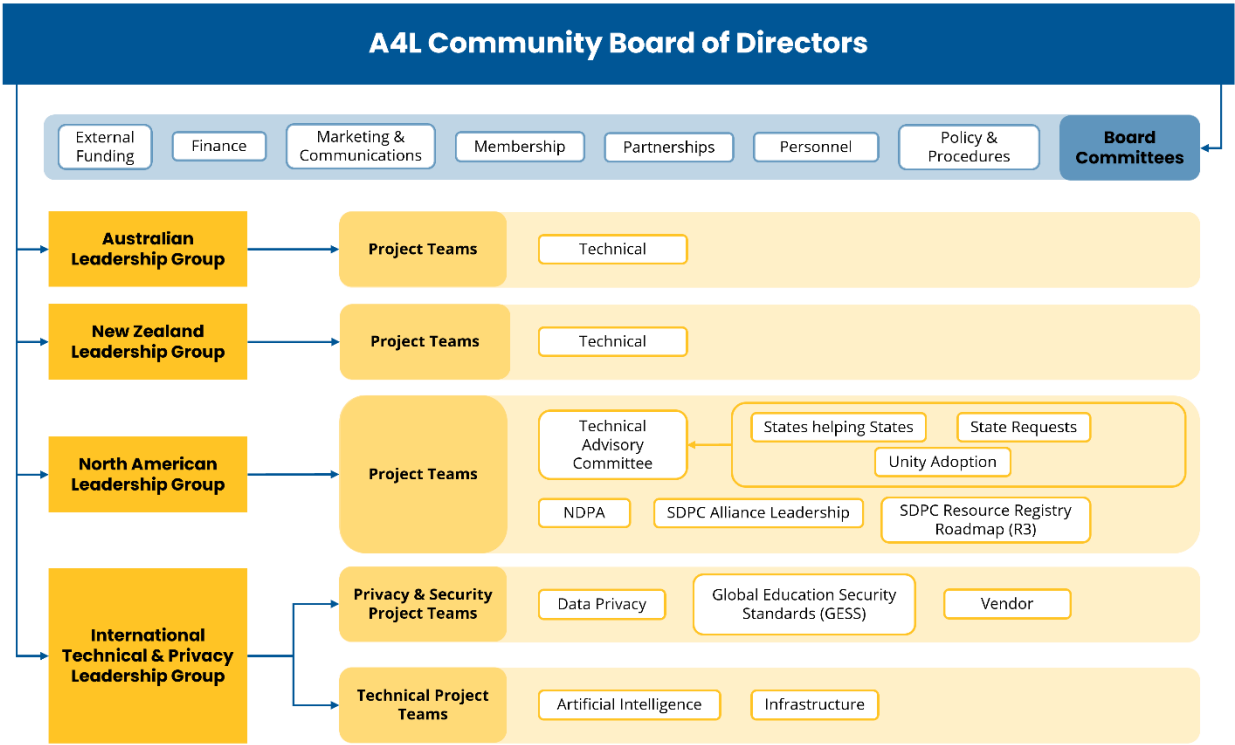
The Access 4 Learning Community is governed on both global and local levels. Although the Global Association Management Board of Directors is responsible for the overall direction and strategy, each locale is responsible for day-to-day management and running of locale activities focused on address locale-specific needs. To view our current structure, please see below.

Background Information and International History

In response to demand from educators, a series of meetings began in July 1998 between Microsoft Corporation in partnership with 18 other companies, on the topic of interoperability between education applications. Their primary conclusion was that the best solution was for interested parties to collectively define standards that all software vendors could adopt. These standards would define common data formats, naming conventions, and rules of interaction between applications.

The SIF Association (now the Access 4 Learning Community) was initiated with a set of data, infrastructure and support working groups which have evolved over time, but which generally correspond to application verticals within the education sector. Today, the Access 4 Learning Community is global in nature, with an additional focus on data privacy and is made up of established and recognized communities in Australia, United Kingdom, New Zealand and North America. Each entity maintains its own leadership and Project Groups, all under the general guidance of the Access 4 Learning Community Board of Directors.

Should you wish to get involved with any of the Project Teams listed within this document, please contact the Staff Liaison who will be happy to provide you with the relevant details.



ASSOCIATION

The overarching governance of the Access 4 Learning Community is led by the Association Board of Directors. There are several Committees under the leadership direction of the Community Board. The following are permanent Committees designed to fulfill and oversee specific areas of the A4L Community to ensure global harmony and strategic direction.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mission: The Association Board of Directors shall have general control over all officers and activities that impact the global functioning and brand (Trademark) of the Association and shall have full power and authority to do any and all things that are proper to be done by the Corporation, except as otherwise provided in the Bylaws.

Participants: APPOINTED MEMBERS ONLY

Meeting: Monthly, 2nd Wednesday

Staff Liaison: Steve Smith

EXTERNAL FUNDING

Mission: The External Funding Committee of Access 4 Learning is dedicated to securing and managing resources that enable our organization to achieve its mission of providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all. We identify, pursue, and steward external funding sources that align with our organization's values and goals, ensuring sustainable support for innovative programs and initiatives.

Participants: Association Board of Director members

Staff Liaison: Steve Smith

FINANCE

Mission: The Finance Committee is dedicated to ensuring the financial health and sustainability of the organization. We commit to providing transparent, accurate, and timely financial reporting and oversight. Our mission is to responsibly manage resources, optimize financial performance, and support strategic initiatives that align with Access 4 Learning's goals of expanding educational access and equity. We strive to uphold the highest standards of fiscal integrity, accountability, and stewardship, enabling the organization to achieve its mission of transforming lives through education.

Participants: Association Board of Director members

Staff Liaison: Steve Smith

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Mission: The Marketing and Communications Committee is dedicated to advancing the A4L community's mission by promoting effective data management and student privacy practices across the education sector. We strive to amplify A4L's initiatives, resources, and best practices through strategic communications, innovative marketing efforts, and stakeholder engagement. Our goal is to foster a connected, informed, and empowered community that supports the responsible use of educational data to enhance learning outcomes while safeguarding student privacy.

Participants: Association Board of Director members

Meeting: **Every 2 weeks, Thursdays at 4pm ET**

Staff Liaison: Penny Murray

MEMEBERSHIP

Mission: To expand and strengthen our community by increasing membership, actively engaging individuals and organizations committed to advancing data privacy and interoperability, fostering collaboration and driving impactful initiatives that protect data and enhance seamless information exchange across sectors.

Through these efforts, we aim to create a supportive and dynamic environment that promotes educational opportunities, leadership development, and collaborative success.

Participants: Association Board of Director members

Meeting: **2nd Wednesday. monthly at 11am ET**

Staff Liaison: Penny Murray

PARTNERSHIPS

Mission: The Partnership Committee is dedicated to fostering strategic collaborations that enhance the quality and reach of educational data and technology solutions. We strive to build and sustain meaningful partnerships with stakeholders across the education sector, including professional organizations, non-profit service agencies, technology providers, policymakers, and advocacy groups. Our mission is to support and empower our partners by promoting interoperability, data privacy, and equitable access to learning opportunities for all students.

Through these efforts, we aim to create a more connected and inclusive educational ecosystem that drives innovation and improves outcomes for learners globally.

Participants: Association Board of Director members

Meeting: **2nd Thursday, monthly at 4pm ET**

Staff Liaison: Steve Smith

PERSONNEL

Mission: The mission of the Access 4 Learning (A4L) Personnel Committee is to ensure the organization attracts, retains, and supports a diverse, talented, and committed workforce. We are dedicated to fostering a positive and inclusive work environment where all employees, contractors and volunteers feel valued and empowered.

Our committee strives to develop and implement fair and equitable policies, support professional growth and development, and promote a culture of collaboration and respect. Through these efforts, we aim to advance A4L's mission of developing a "Learner Centric Model for Data Management" to provide learners and practitioners the flexibility to choose student administration and learning tools that work seamlessly while ensuring data integrity, security and privacy.

Participants: Association Board of Director members

Meeting: 1st Tuesday, monthly at 5.30pm ET

Staff Liaison: Steve Smith

POLICY & PROCEDURES

Mission: The P&P Committee is dedicated to creating a secure and legally compliant environment for educational ecosystem data management and data privacy to support lifelong learning.

Participants: A4L Community Members

Meeting: 4th Tuesday, monthly at 3pm ET

URL: <https://community.a4l.org/comm-ab-policy-procedures/>

Staff Liaison: Penny Murray

INTERNATIONAL

INTERNATIONAL TECHNICAL & PRIVACY LEADERSHIP GROUP

Mission: Working with the Association Executive Director/CEO, the International Technical and Privacy Leadership Group (ITPLG) has the responsibility of directing and overseeing the International Project Teams of the Corporation. The main purpose of the International Technical and Privacy Leadership Group is to support the Technical and Privacy & Security Project Teams to enable the development of high quality and consistent SIF Specifications, supporting projects and activities, and direct the International Project Teams.

Participants: 1 Association Participant Lead from each International Project Teams, 1-2 representatives from each Locale Leadership Group, and up to a maximum of 4 elected 'At-Large' seats.

Meeting: **Every 4 weeks, Thursdays at 6pm ET**

URL: <https://community.a4l.org/lg-international-tp/>

Staff Liaison: John Lovell

INTERNATIONAL TECHNICAL PROJECT TEAMS

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

Mission: Our mission is to act as an advocate and analyst for the use of artificial intelligence in the context of education, especially related to data and data standards. We will provide a resource for information, discussion and use of AI in two ways:

We will use AI to solve problems, streamline processes, improve efficiency, and drive the highest levels of accuracy and reliability in the A4L Community.

We will also act as an enthusiastic knowledge resource for the Community by providing an active discussion forum both within the group and other Community contexts. Our goal is to help A4L be seen as a leader in understanding the implications of AI for education.

Participants: A4L Community Members

Meeting: **Wednesdays, every 2 weeks at 10.30pm GMT/UTC**

URL: <https://community.a4l.org/pt-ntp-artificial-intelligence/>

Staff Liaison: John Lovell

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mission: The Infrastructure Project Team is dedicated to advancing the Global SIF Infrastructure, which serves as a dynamic conduit for data movement across networks. Grounded in a REST-based approach, our mission encompasses modernizing data exchange methods by defining, coordinating, and standardizing the interaction between multiple RESTful clients and services. While originally defined to move the SIF Data Models great effort has been made to

ensure any data payload can be moved including end-to-end encrypted exchanges and privacy metadata.

Participants: A4L Community Members

Meeting: Every 2 weeks, Wednesdays at 10pm GMT

URL: <https://community.a4l.org/pt-ntp-infrastructure/>

Staff Liaison: John Lovell

INTERNATIONAL PRIVACY & SECURITY PROJECT TEAMS

DATA PRIVACY

Mission: To safeguard privacy in education by addressing pertinent issues and incidents, ensuring coordination and collaboration on international platforms, and advocating for robust representation of privacy stakeholders. We strive to foster dialogue on privacy concerns affecting education, coordinate global efforts on the Privacy Obligation Document (POD), facilitate synergy between the Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC) and contributors to the SIF Standards. We also ensure comprehensive representation at the International Technical & Privacy Leadership Group (ITP-LG). Through these endeavors, we aim to uphold the highest standards of privacy protection, thereby promoting trust, integrity, and innovation in educational data management worldwide.

Participants: A4L Community Members

Meeting: 2nd Tuesday, monthly at 4pm ET

URL: <https://community.a4l.org/pt-ntp-data-privacy/>

Staff Liaison: John Lovell

GLOBAL EDUCATION SECURITY STANDARDS (GESS)

Mission: The GESS mission is to ensure the safety, security, and privacy of educational data worldwide through the development and implementation of rigorous, universally accepted security standards. We aim to empower educational institutions and marketplace providers to protect student information and foster trust within the global education community. By collaborating with stakeholders, leveraging cutting-edge technologies, and adhering to best practices, we strive to enable secure digital learning environments that supports and enhances educational outcomes for all.

Participants: A4L Community Members

Meeting: 3rd Thursday, monthly at 5pm ET

URL: <https://community.a4l.org/pt-ntp-gess/>

Staff Liaison: Steve Smith

VENDOR

Mission: To provide a collaborative space for Vendor Members to discuss any items relating to the A4L Community and/or Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC), and to inform and be informed of any changes or updates in the educational marketplace sector that may affect them or their organization.

To provide a forum where Vendor Members may raise any issues or topics that they wish to discuss with their peers (in a 'closed' environment).

Participants: A4L Community Vendor Members only

Meeting: **2nd Thursday, every 2 months at 11am ET**

URL: <https://community.a4l.org/pt-ntp-vendor/>

Staff Liaison: Penny Murray

AUSTRALIA

The A4L Community in Australia consists of the AU Leadership Group (AU-LG) and the AU Technical Project Team (AU-Tech).

AU LEADERSHIP GROUP (AU-LG)

Mission: The purpose of the A4L Community AU Leadership Group (AU-LG) is to manage and promote the A4L Community AU on behalf of Education Services Australia (ESA); the National Schools Interoperability Program (NSIP) Steering Group and the international A4L Community.

The Leadership Groups have the responsibility of directing and overseeing the locale activities of the Corporation. The Leadership Group shall review projects and programs for the benefit of their Association Participants and make recommendations to the Association Board of Directors.

Participants: ELECTED AND APPOINTED MEMBERS ONLY

Meeting: To be confirmed

Staff Liaison: Steve Smith, Stuart Mitchell (ESA)

AU TECHNICAL (AU-TECH)

Mission: TO BE CONFIRMED

Participants: A4L Community Members (Australia)

Meeting: To be confirmed

Staff Liaison: John Lovell

NEW ZEALAND

The A4L Community in New Zealand consists of the NZ Leadership Group (NZ-LG) and the NZ Technical Project Team (NZ-Tech).

NZ LEADERSHIP GROUP (NZ-LG)

Mission: The Leadership Groups have the responsibility of directing and overseeing the locale activities of the Corporation. The Leadership Group shall review projects and programs for the benefit of their Association Participants and make recommendations to the Association Board of Directors.

Participants: ELECTED AND APPOINTED MEMBERS ONLY

Meeting: To be confirmed

Staff Liaison: Steve Smith, Martin Rothbaum (New Zealand Ministry of Education)

NZ TECHNICAL (NZ-TECH)

Mission: TO BE CONFIRMED

Participants: A4L Community Members (New Zealand)

Meeting: To be confirmed

Staff Liaison: John Lovell

NORTH AMERICA

The A4L Community in North America consists of the NA Management Board and NA Technical Board, as well as a series of Project Teams.

NA LEADERSHIP GROUP (NA-LG)

Mission: The Leadership Group shall have general control over the Project Teams and shall have full power and authority to do any and all things that are proper to be done by the local community groupings, except as otherwise provided in the Articles or the Bylaws.

Participants: ELECTED AND APPOINTED MEMBERS ONLY

Meeting: 4th Wednesday, monthly at 2pm ET

Staff Liaison: Steve Smith

NA TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (NA-TAC)

Mission: Working with the respective Leadership Group, the locale Technical Project Teams (alternatively referred to as a Technical Advisory Committee) shall make recommendations on all technical projects and programs, for the benefit of the Association Members, to the locale Leadership Group, and based upon their current charter.

Participants: A4L Community Members (North America)

Meeting: Every 2 weeks, Thursdays at 3pm ET

URL: <https://community.a4l.org/pt-na-tac/>

Staff Liaison: John Lovell

NDPA

Mission: The National Data Privacy Agreement (NDPA) Project Team is dedicated to advancing the protection of student data through collaborative efforts to standardize privacy practices. By managing the NDPA change process with transparency, rigor, and a commitment to stakeholders, we aim to provide clear, adaptable, and legally sound guidelines that empower schools, districts, and technology providers to safeguard student information responsibly. Our mission is to foster trust, enable secure educational innovation, and ensure compliance with evolving data privacy standards, enhancing the educational experience for all.

Participants: Nominated A4L Members only

Meeting: Every 2 weeks, Thursdays at 1pm ET

Staff Liaison: Steve Smith

SDPC ALLIANCE LEADERSHIP

Mission: The mission of this Project Team is to create a collaborative space for Alliance Admins within the A4L Community/Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC). We aim to facilitate discussions on relevant topics, keep members informed about changes in the educational marketplace, and provide a supportive environment for sharing strategies and information. Our ultimate goal is to enhance the SDPC Resource Registry, ensuring it remains the best platform for our Community. In addition, this group will endeavor to coordinate DPA negotiations for multiple States when needed, and assist with mentoring of new/struggling Alliances with the relevant Alliance Leads.

Participants: SDPC Alliance Leaders only

Meeting: Every 2 weeks, Thursdays at 12noon ET

URL: <https://community.a4l.org/pt-na-alliance-leadership/>

Staff Liaison: Penny Murray

SDPC RESOURCE REGISTRY ROADMAP (R3)

Mission: TO BE CONFIRMED - This group is charged with reviewing all enhancement requests for the SDPC Resource Registry as well as establishing a long-term vision for the SDPC Resource Registry including features, functionalities, operations, funding and priorities for change requests.

Participants: A4L Community Members (North America)

Meeting: 1st Tuesday, monthly at 1pm ET

URL: <https://community.a4l.org/pt-na-sdpc-r3/>

Staff Liaison: Penny Murray

STATES HELPING STATES

Mission: To be confirmed

Participants: A4L Community Members (North America)

Meeting: To be confirmed

URL: <https://community.a4l.org/pt-na-states-helping-states/>

Staff Liaison: John Lovell

STATE REQUESTS

Mission: The mission of this project team is to identify and close the gaps between data standards and the Unity Specification, as-well-as update the Unity Specification to best reflect the needs of states while maintaining alignment with EDFacts through leveraging the Common Education Data Standards (CEDS).

Participants: A4L Community Members (North America)

Meeting: **1st Monday, monthly at 3PM ET**

URL: <https://community.a4l.org/pt-na-state-requests/>

Staff Liaison: John Lovell

UNITY ADOPTION

Mission: This Project Team will focus on key areas including Unity Data Model, Unity Infrastructure, Technical Handbook, Implementation Considerations, Java, .Net, Use Cases, even Quality Control and Marketing options.

Participants: A4L Community Members (North America)

Meeting: **Every 1st & 3rd Tuesday, monthly at 2pm ET**

URL: <https://community.a4l.org/pt-na-unity-adoption/>

Staff Liaison: John Lovell

CONTACT DETAILS

Steve Smith **Executive Director/CEO**

ssmith@A4L.org

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.

John Lovell **Technology Director**

jlovell@A4L.org

Provides technical leadership and as the primary resource for all things technical – from internal IT support to driving the global community efforts statewide, nationally and internationally focused on both technical specification development and privacy support.

Penny Murray **Community Director**

pmurray@A4L.org

Provides leadership and ownership over providing “value-add” for members and potential members of the Association. This position gauges all aspects of member services including communications, marketing, support member working activities, organizational meetings and strategic partnerships to ensure initiative success.

David Sallay **Director of Data Privacy**

dsallay@A4L.org

Provides advice on the implications of student privacy regulations to schools and vendors, identifying emerging trends, and managing and expanding the SDPC's data privacy agreements; contributes to the sustainability of the A4L community, building relationships with school districts, technology providers, and policymakers to strengthen and promote A4L and SDPC's privacy initiatives.