



Access 4 Learning Community

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CONNECTING & SECURING EFFECTIVE LEARNING ECOSYSTEMS®

'Tis the Season!

by Larry Fruth II, PhD – Executive Director / CEO

We have all heard and used this phrase – probably repeatedly – in our numerous holiday season conversations. I think you would agree that, in reality, this year is NOT our typical holiday “season”!

We are all trying to address how this year our “season” is impacting our work and family gatherings. Take a deep breath and look back at all you and your organization has achieved in the past 9 months. As a school leader, you dealt with being thrown into the fire last spring and then shifted to address getting kids learning either online or safely in person this fall. As a marketplace provider, you quickly addressed the new needs of your customers. As a parent, you found out how vital teachers are for not only the learning but the emotional and social support of your kids, and the list goes on.

So, in reality, even if it feels like we all have been somewhat frozen in

place – a ton of work has been done!

We hope you take a few minutes and review the work done over the past 6 months in **your** A4L/SDPC Community! There is some market moving work being done in the from international technical standards development and adoption, a standardized and now nationally used data privacy agreement, partnerships developing tactical support for schools, and identification of what might be “next” for all of us while we *connect and secure effective learning ecosystems*. This edition just really only gives you a snapshot!

As we juggle our family and work schedules due to the pandemic, I pass along an often used line that I say to A4L Team, friends and family (you can ask them): “Take care of the important stuff!” Not “Tis the season” ...but it works for me!

NEWSLETTER

December 2020

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Global Community News



Cyber Security Special Interest Group

Recently the Community put out a questionnaire gathering member thoughts on a possible role for A4L/SDPC in supporting various cybersecurity aspects in “connecting and securing effective learning ecosystems”. The majority of the respondents indicated there should be a role (77%) and provided some suggestive deliverables for the group ranging from

aligning existing standards to gathering the various standards by jurisdiction.

While conversations within the leadership have just begun from that feedback, the initial thought is we might convene a new Special Interest Group, like the SDPC, under the non-profit A4L banner. Much like how the SDPC created common expectations around

privacy, a proposed **Education Cyber Security Collaborative (ECSC)** SIG will seek to establish common expectations around applicable Cyber Security Frameworks to protect education data and meet privacy requirements.

More to come...

Personal Privacy Obligations Document (P-POD): Update

The A4L Data Privacy Project Team continues work on the Personal Privacy Obligations Document (P-POD) which captures a person’s (student, teacher, staff, parent) privacy preferences.

The intent is that this object is sent between vendors, Departments / Districts etc and communicates:

- The person it applies to (student, teacher, parent, staff member etc)
- The dates it applies

- The locations it applies to (ie is this for the person’s relationship with a school, with the Department etc)
- A section on generic consent to share (share with whom, for what purpose, what types of data, permission to on-share)
- A section on specific consent (e.g. use internet, provide data for Uni X. research purposes, travel, incursions/excursions, use of photos for specific purposes, directory info etc)

- A section on who NOT to share data with (ie particular vendors, people etc)
- A list of applicable laws which apply to this person (eg GDPR etc)

Work is now underway to map the individual’s rights under GDPR to the P-POD.

If you would like to contribute, please join the [A4L Data Privacy Project Team](#)

Welcome new members!

STUDENT DATA PRIVACY CONSORTIUM (SDPC) MEMBERS:



Classify Learning



NSSEO



Snoqualmie Valley School District



VHS Learning

A4L COMMUNITY & SDPC MEMBER:



RallyReader

Come Join Us for 'Tactical' Interoperability & Privacy Conversations!

The Access 4 Learning (A4L) Community, and its Special Interest Group the Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC) is partnering with numerous other educational organizations to bring you and your organization a set of Symposium webinars that actually work in your calendar – no all-day blocks of time!

Connecting & Securing Effective Learning EcoSystems is a month of "tactical" data interoperability and privacy conversations with real-world strategies and examples to support the work of schools, states and marketplace providers. It makes sense since the A4L Community is the ONLY place where end users and providers are addressing BOTH interoperability and privacy of student data.

Put in your calendar today and plan on joining us for five informative, interactive 90-minute sessions to find out from your peers how to ensure and support your own 'connected & secure effective learning ecosystem'.

This is not your typical set of virtual webinars. You will receive "pre-session" resources, hear from practitioners in the field on what works and what challenges they have had in creating their ecosystems, how to use multiple standards together, effective privacy stewardship and even roll up your sleeves working sessions to create resources from the 3,000 member A4L collaborative. You will walk away from sessions with tools and practices to immediately use in your own institution.

Now that IS a different type of Meeting!

Draft Agenda:

February 3, 2021
12noon ET / 9am PT

Connecting and Securing - Setting the Stage

- ❖ Data Access is Easier Than Ever with More Data Each Day – Is That A Good Thing?
- ❖ School and State Leadership On A Local Control Issues

February 10, 2021
12noon ET / 9am PT

Foundations of "Connecting" Ecosystems in the Real World

- ❖ Setting the Course for Standardizing – Stopping the "Wheel Re-invention"
- ❖ Starting with the Data Dictionary and Maturing to Usage Tools All Under Local Control

February 17, 2021
12noon ET / 9am PT

Foundations of "Securing" Ecosystems Student Privacy

- ❖ Data Stewardship 101 – Setting Common Expectations Between Vendors and Customers
- ❖ The Securing Continuum: From Legislation to Ecosystem Implementation and All Steps In-Between

February 24, 2021
12noon ET / 9am PT

Connecting and Securing in the Real World:

The MA Data Hub Solution

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News from the Australian Community



Australian A4L Community announce 2020-2021 Leadership

NEWS: *Australian A4L Community announce 2020-2021 Leadership*

Washington, DC, 1 December 2020--- The Access 4 Learning (A4L) Community in Australia is proud to announce the AU Management and AU Technical Boards for 2020-2021. The Management Board brings a wealth of experience and knowledge in education, data management, technology and business acumen. The Board will oversee management of the SIF Specification and guide development of the A4L Community in Australia as well as contribute to the development of strategies for the global Community.

The following supplier members will join representatives from State and Territory Departments of Education and non-government school bodies on the A4L

AU Management Board during 2020-2021:

- Liam Pearce, Timetabling Solutions
- Rick Sharp, Education Horizons Group

The AU Community also elected supplier representatives for the AU Technical Board (known as the Data Standards Working Group (DSWG)), who provide technical oversight for the SIF Implementation Specification (Australia). The 2020-2021 supplier representatives are:

- Joerg Huber, Systemic Pty Ltd
- James Hamilton, Sentral
- David Jones, Semaphore Consulting Pty Ltd
- Mark Vanderkley, SIMON Schools

- James Overell, Education Horizons Group

Dave Burns, Chair of the A4L Community AU Management Board and Executive Director, Digital Solutions, at the Department of Education in Queensland commented that "We are very pleased to have strong industry leadership in the A4L AU Community as we accelerate the development of an effective and safe digital learning ecosystem for Australian schools. Collaboration between school systems and industry has never been more important as we meet the demand for data driven personalised learning within a digital classroom, and future schooling in a post-COVID world".

Australian A4L Community Day: Overview

The A4L AU Community meeting was held online on Thursday 26 November, with strong representation from both government jurisdictions and the vendor community, the meeting was a great success.

The first keynote presentation was delivered by Pip Cleaves, Deputy Principal Innovation for Kurri Kurri High School, Francis Greenway High School, Hunter Sports High School and Tomaree High School on "Learning Through Data Daily - How schools are contextualising data use to personalise learning for students in 2020". Pip's presentation examined the use of data to support learners at the State, school and classroom levels; and how teachers and

leaders can be empowered through the use of data to inform effective teaching and learning.

The second keynote presentation was delivered by Dr Jenny Donovan, Director of the National Evidence Institute. Jenny provided an overview of the newly established institute which aims to ensure all teachers, school leaders and policy makers have access to the best available evidence about effective practice in schools and early childhood settings.

The agenda also included an update on the Safer Technologies 4 Schools initiative with its nationally agreed framework and common process for assessing the privacy and security risks

associated with using online products and services in schools; as well as work undertaken through global collaboration for the SIF infrastructure and the SIF AU Data Model (SBP) to become available as a set of Open APIs.

The meeting concluded with the announcement of the 2021 SIF AU Management Board and Data Standard Working Group representatives. The NSIP team look forward to working with the new Board and Working Group in 2021.

Plans are now underway to hold a series of follow up online workshops. More information will be shared next year.

News from the New Zealand Community



SIF Data Model Specification (New Zealand) 3.1

The SIF Data Model Specification (New Zealand) 3.1 is now available from the [A4L website](#). Updates in this release provide more complete support for the Ministry of Education's Standardised Learning Support Register (sLSR) project and New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) update of processes for managing senior high school external assessments.

Changes to the model include:

- Master data on education providers held in the Provider data object is now more complete and matches the provider master data maintained by Ministry.
- Support for education providers that operate from more than one location; Provider references throughout the model can now indicate which of the Provider's locations the event being recorded takes place at.
- StaffPersonal and StudentPersonal email addresses gain a "SourceOrganisation" field, allowing staff and students to use different email addresses at each education provider they interact with. This hints at the need for complete "per-Provider" identity separation for staff and students, which will be implemented in a future release of SIF NZ Data Model.
- Support for New Zealand Qualification Authority (NZQA) processes that manages senior high school external assessments means that many NZQA fields have been added to StudentPersonal object and the Aromatawai/Assessment data domain.
- All data objects that record an association between a Student or Staff member and another entity gain a Status field.
- StaffAssignment record has been adjusted to manage a staff member's single role with a provider. Staff with multiple roles will have multiple StaffAssignment records
- Address structure has been flattened to make it easier to work with.

During 2021 we will continue to work with our community of Student Management System (SMS) vendors who will be implementing SIF API calls to exchange data with The Ministry's Te Rito data hub "powered by SIF"; with new releases of the SIF Data Model Specification (New Zealand) expected in early and again in mid-2021.



News from the North American Community



COVID-19 Response: Experts needed!

The North American Technical Board (NATB) has made their top priority to bring to Unity the reporting changes needed due to COVID-19. At their last meeting they recognized that there aren't really experts for the entirety of this activity, rather the community includes people involved in the various areas affected.

One area is tracking the form of instruction schools are providing and each student is receiving. This includes in-person instruction, remote instruction, and all the various hybrid possibilities in-between. We understand that some of our members are already making changes to track these options.

COVID-19 has also made the need for robust support of positive attendance acute. With positive attendance you don't mark students absent, rather they sign-in (usually digitally) when they arrive, resulting in being marked present. While Unity already partially supports this, with students signing-in to remote learning systems in greater numbers than ever, it is time to fill-out our capabilities.

Equity when learning remotely has also become an area of focus. From having a broadband connection to a decent place to sit and work, many concerns over broad-based remote learning being impacted by the student's situation

outside of school are more relevant than ever. Hopefully we can all work together to give each student the best shot possible.

It probably doesn't stop there; we are hearing of needs around medical data and even impacts to IEP systems. As you can now see, experts from the community who can assist with at least these first three areas will be crucial to producing our next, quality release, of Unity.

If you would be available for a consultation in any of these areas, please contact [John Lovell](#), Technology Director.

North American Contingent to Aid on Global Privacy Work

Fall is a time for fresh starts and inside the North American A4L Community this one has certainly been so. The North American Technical Board (NATB) are launching several new initiatives including one that leans heavily into privacy. New volunteers will be focusing on two sets of work, all focusing on enhancing the Global Education Privacy Standard's (GEPS) positive impacts in North America.

The first of these is to get the privacy fields that we have in the Privacy Obligation Document (POD) into CEDS. We already have existing alignments to CEDS and the GDPR identified and proposed names for new CEDS elements. However, we need to do the work to incorporate the context of the SIF Global Infrastructure fields into the

standalone definitions for each potential CEDS Element. These fuller definitions will then be available for enhancing our own global work.

The second brings a whole new level of privacy to our various specifications. The Personal POD (P-POD) proposes to bring Privacy Obligations about each individual into our data models around the globe. While we already have a proposed structure, we will be working to bring alignments and quality definitions to this

important piece of the privacy puzzle as well.

If you would like to contribute to this work locally or globally, please join the [A4L Data Privacy Project Team](#) or contact [John Lovell](#), Technology Director.



Greater State Support Expected in 2021

In 2020 we started convening state technical leaders in order to have conversations around state activities and potential opportunities to collaborate on similar projects.

For 2021 this vision of shared collaboration will be taken to another level. Members are invited to participate in a State Requests Project Team charged with turning needs into changes to Unity. This group will be meeting every other Monday at 3 PM Eastern

throughout 2021. Because of this ongoing activity, States Helping States is expected to become a group that meets quarterly to continue tackling broader conversations.

If you would like to participate in either of these groups, please contact [John Lovell](#), Technology Director.

Note: While regular participation in States Helping States requires representation of a state, membership is not a requirement.



Partner Update Data Standards United

The **Data Standards United** (DSU) collaborative, an informal gathering of other technical data standards organizations, continues to grow and add additional standards organizations and other entities impacted by their development and usage. This mission is to create a gathering for standards organizations to collaborate and align standards to support the global education and workforce digital ecosystem. Initial participants include A4L, ADL, CEDS, EdSpex, HR Open, MedBiquitous, PESCS, and other invited standards impacted groups. The only commitment is for organizations to agree with the established core values:

- 1) Free access to data standards.
- 2) Transparent, voluntary, consensus-based standards development, approval, and maintenance processes.
- 3) Public support of the Data Standards United collaborative and lifelong learning and employment standards.

Numerous additional partnership organizations, projects and collaboration opportunities are being identified – much more to come!

Connecting and Securing Effective Learning Ecosystems

A VIRTUAL ANNUAL MEETING THAT ACTUALLY WORKS WITH YOUR SCHEDULE!



Access 4 Learning Community
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Student Data Privacy Consortium

REGISTER

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FEBRUARY 24, 2021
Connecting and Securing in the Real World

- ❖ The MA Data Hub Solution

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News from the Student Data Privacy Consortium



SDPC announce 2020-2021 Leadership

NEWS: *The Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC) announces 2020-2021 Leadership*

Washington, DC, 13 October 2020— The Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC), a Special Interest Group of the non-profit Access 4 Learning (A4L) Community, is proud to announce the Management Board for 2020-2021. The SDPC Management Board will oversee day-to-day management of the SDPC, leading this Community of end users and marketplace provider stakeholders, approving projects and tools that have “on the ground and real-world” impact as well as contributing to the development of strategies for the global Community.

Community members elected to serve on the 2020-2021 Student Data Privacy Consortium Management Board are:

- Libbi Garrett, California IT in Education (CITE)
- Jessica Kallin, Utah State Board of Education
- Allen Miedema, Northshore School District
- Tyler Park, Future of Privacy Forum
- Steve Setzer, Kimono
- Steve Smith, Cambridge Public Schools

“I am thrilled to welcome this experienced and instrumental group of thought leaders actively involved in supporting student privacy practices to the SDPC Management Board for this coming term”, states Larry L Fruth II, Ph.D., Executive Director/CEO, A4L Community. “Their leadership, guidance

and overall dedication to the Community has proven critical to our collective successes, and they lead the education marketplace’s maturation into real world solutions for data privacy for schools and state data stewards as well as marketplace providers globally.

Subsequently, one of the first actions of the newly elected SDPC Management Board was to approve two new ‘Appointed’ positions... congratulations go to Andy Bloom, McGraw-Hill and Anthony Yaremenko, NSIP (AU) who have both accepted the nomination and will serve a 1-year term on the Management Board!

National Data Privacy Agreement (NDPA) Now In Use By State Alliances

NEWS: *National Data Privacy Agreement (NDPA) Now In Use By State Alliances*

Washington, DC, 11 November 2020 — The Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC), a special interest group of the non-profit Access 4 Learning (A4L) Community, is proud to announce the first multiple state usage of the **National Data Privacy Agreement (NDPA)** to streamline application contracting and set common expectations between schools/districts and marketplace providers.

Today, the SDPC state Alliances of California, Illinois, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Missouri and Utah are recommending usage of the NDPA in all their contracts with marketplace providers. The remaining 23 Alliances have processes underway to see how they may leverage this work and use the draft soon. While the NDPA

allows for any state specific legislative requirements, the majority of the privacy expectations are standardized and can be used by any entity.

“After more than two years of collaborative work between schools, states and marketplace providers to release the first NDPA, the next milestone the Community hit today is the usage of the same set of privacy clauses across numerous states” states Dr. Larry L Fruth II, the A4L/SDPC Executive Director and CEO. “It is a great representation of the goal of the Community to set common expectations between end users and marketplace providers regarding student data privacy”.

The NDPA has been developed with extensive review and comments from schools, districts, state organizations, marketplace providers and their legal representatives. It is designed to address common student data privacy concerns and streamline the educational application contracting processes for schools/districts who do not have the legal or fiscal resources and vendors who previously had to sign “one off” contracts with each of the over 13,000 US school districts.



SDPC Update, November 2020

“Moving the Educational Marketplace”

This was one of the first informal goals when the Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC) was established...

...[the] work continues with some exciting next streamlining steps outlined in this update edition. We also have decided to streamline the words used by the Community. Access 4 Learning and the SDPC is the **ONLY** organization addressing BOTH interoperability AND

privacy and has done now for some time. The new issue is there are so many organizations, consultants, etc. coming out of the woodwork in these two areas that their definitions are now fuzzy. That is why you will be hearing more on “*Connecting and Securing Effective Learning Systems*” – the REAL work you are all involved in.

The marketplace movement continues...

Check out the SDPC Update, November 2020 >>



NDPA Policy Procedure and Usage Project Team

There is a new SDPC Project Team in town!

The National Data Privacy Agreement (NDPA) Policy, Procedures and Usage Project Team has been approved and will kick off meetings this month. This group, led by Libbi Garrett from CITE, will bring together Alliance leaders to:

- To identify streamline opportunities for usage of the NDPA
- To continue to develop continuity in the NDPA usage across the Alliances/Country
- Identify, documenting and ideally collaborating to leverage Alliances to address non-responsive marketplace providers

- To establish clear, transparent, and open change management processes to the NDPA

As adoption of the NDPA grows, it is critical that we are all on the same page on its usage and maturation – and that is what this group will provide!

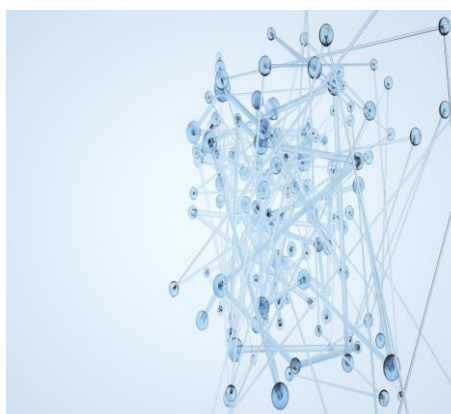
More information coming soon...

Research Data Sharing Agreement Project Team

Early in the development of the SDPC Special Interest Group, Community members were asked about their privacy “pain points” they address in their data stewardship roles as end users or marketplace providers. Tops on the list was privacy agreements and we are so proud of the work of the Community successfully delivering the NDPA. High on the list was the research organizations and their data requests requiring the signing of various data sharing agreements. Again, using the question we started with for the NDPA work, why does it have to be so hard?

The newest SDPC Project Team will take some great research data sharing agreements and attempt to deliver a standardized version for all to use. This group will include some “new” players to the SDPC table including those impacted

by its success – researchers, other non-profits, universities, foundations and various others. Ideally this will be a much more rapid delivery of an agreement that we call can use to help address this pain point. Watch for announcement of the first meetings of the group in January!



Vendor Value

The SDPC State Alliances, and the schools they represent, continue to grow and benefit from the collective work of the Community. Now it is time to have those marketplace providers, also benefitting the work and information access, to become active partners in the Community and share in the work.

The SDPC leadership is readying to rollout a new set of messages outlining the value of having vendors at the SDPC table and we are actively reaching out to them to get their ideas on benefits they would like to see. It's time we grow the Community on the vendor side so any suggestions, ideas, etc. you might have please [pass them along](#). There is so much value in membership – now to let the world know!

Community Meetings Schedule

<u>Day</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Group</u>	<u>Staff Liaison</u>
INTERNATIONAL			<i>meetings are based on US Eastern time zone</i>
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
Wednesday	Bi-weekly	Open Source Developers Network	John Lovell
Tuesday	4 th Tues, monthly	Policy & Procedures	John Lovell
Thursday	Every 4 weeks	International Technical Board	John Lovell
NORTH AMERICA			<i>meetings are based on US Eastern time zone</i>
Monday	Bi-weekly (Feb 1 onwards)	State Requests	John Lovell
Wednesday	4 th Wednesday, monthly	NA Management Board	Larry Fruth
Wednesday	Bi-weekly	NA Technical Board	John Lovell
TBD	Monthly	COVID-19 Response	John Lovell
STUDENT DATA PRIVACY CONSORTIUM			<i>meetings are based on US Eastern time zone</i>
Tuesday	3 rd Tues, monthly	Research Data Sharing Agreement	Larry Fruth
Wednesday	1 st Weds, monthly	SDPC Management Board	Larry Fruth
Wednesday	1 st Weds, Qtrly (2 nd month)	Consortium Updates	Larry Fruth
Wednesday	2 nd Weds, Qtrly (2 nd month)	Alliance Leadership	Larry Fruth
Thursday	Bi-weekly	NDPA Policy, Procedures & Usage	Larry Fruth
Thursday	1 st Thurs, Qtrly (1 st month)	Vendor Project Team	Larry Fruth
Thursday	1 st Thursday, Qtrly (2 nd month)	Legislative Activity Project Team	Larry Fruth

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

Connect with us!

Access 4 Learning (A4L) Community



Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC)



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. The Community is "Powered by SIF" as its major technical tool to help manage learning data simply, securely and in a scalable, standard way regardless of platform. The SDPC is designed to address the day-to-day, real-world multi-faceted issues faced when protecting learner information by setting common expectations between market providers and end users. The A4L Community has united these education technology end users and providers in an unprecedented effort "**connect and secure effective learning ecosystems**" to give teachers more time to do what they do best: teach. For further information, visit <https://www.A4L.org> and <https://privacy.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.

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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 49

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