



Access 4 Learning Community

Powered by:  **SIF**

Simple. Secure. Scalable. Standard.

CONNECTING & SECURING EFFECTIVE LEARNING ECOSYSTEMS®

NEWSLETTER

December 2021

IN THIS ISSUE

2022 Community Predictions!

by Larry Fruth II, PhD—Exec Director/ CEO, A4L Community & SDPC

While I do not EVER contend to be able to predict the future, I can confidently present some of the following “bets” for the Community in 2022. These are for entertainment purposes only – no betting is encouraged!

- The new A4L [Membership structure](#) will not only clarify and align our two “sides”, specifications and privacy, it will drive additional members to the Community
- The new “[Data Hub](#)” pilot will be a HUGE hit and begin replication across the country streamlining how applications enter into the school ecosystem in a safe and secure manner – no matter what standard is used!
- A version 2 of the [National Data Privacy Agreement](#) will be delivered and adopted by the majority of the Alliances
- We will get a chance to once again meet face to face and share our successes, challenges and priorities for the work of the Community

- There will be a new “Quality Control” program for the Community that add additional clarity on marketplace product claims replacing our current Certification Program
- Some new and very interesting partnership will emerge that expands the impact of the community globally including additional support and sharing for all 4 international communities.
- The SDPC Resource Registry will continue its exponential growth while improving speed and functionality for users.
- Much like during election season with those always enjoyable ads for your vote, you will be inundated with the marketing pitch and associated changes for “Connecting and Securing Effective Learning Ecosystems”®

And this is just the start.....

Lots to do so get rested over the holidays and let's hit the ground running in 2022! Happy Holidays!

Global Community News

SIF Infrastructure Specification (global) 3.4 release —what it REALLY shows; User Profile changes coming in 2022; Welcome new members!; System Maintenance Notice; Holiday Office closures; You spoke. We Listened—new membership structure, improvements forthcoming; Infrastructure looking for expertise...; SAVE THE DATES: Privacy & Interoperability Symposium 2022; and Project Team updates

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Student Data Privacy Consortium

Global Community News



The SIF Infrastructure Specification (global) 3.4 release... What It REALLY Shows

by Larry Fruth II, PhD—Exec Director/ CEO, A4L Community & SDPC

In the [September Newsletter](#), the International Technical Board announced the soon-to-be-released SIF Infrastructure Specification (Global) 3.4. The piece included a list of the technical “advances” in the new release ranging from better API documentation, Open-API files, as well as inclusion of additional data controls for messaging and privacy. All of these additions are design to support the adoption and implementation by advanced districts and marketplace providers. While we wrap the Community comment and voting period for the V3.4 release, part of the impact of this deliverable is not technical in nature - it’s about Community.

While the SIF Infrastructure Specification (Global) 3.4 release leverages the real strength of SIF (Unity), a decoupled infrastructure working with locale specific data models, it is a true Interna-

tional release. Our global Community leverages the strengths across the various local Communities to bring out the “best of the best” solutions. While the development and approval process may seem slow – it is critical that we have buy-in from all of our Communities especially with the global infrastructure release. The A4L Community is the MOST collaborative organization addressing real world global pain points in education – globally! One of the biggest challenge, of course, is time zone conversions for meetings and votes!

The Community’s work, both the SIF data and SDPC privacy, is a model for other volunteer driven organizations. While the A4L Team might be putting the pen to paper, the Community shares ideas, thoughts and effective practices that end up the foundation of

all deliverables. The v3.4 is a great example of that and linking a technical blueprint to privacy controls to deliver on “connected and secure effective learning ecosystems®”.

The SIF Infrastructure Specification (global) 3.4 release is currently in final review stages with the International Technical Board, and then will go to the Association Board of Directors for final release approval. It is expected to be published in January 2022.



User Profile changes coming in 2022...

In line with our current plans to reorganize and update our membership structure, we are planning on making a subtle change to the login information on the A4L-SDPC Community Site and the SDPC Resource Registry.

From January 4, 2022, we will be updating all login usernames to be an email address. Please ensure you take a couple of minutes BEFORE end 2021 to review and update your User Profiles. Please ensure that the email address associated with your employer/member organization is used, no personal email addresses will be permitted. If you need to make changes but are unable to make them online, please email [Penny Murray](#) with the information **by December 23, 2021**.

- Log in to your A4L-SDPC Community Site User Profile here: <https://www.a4l.org/login.aspx>
- Log in to your SDPC Resource Registry User Profile here: <https://sdpc.a4l.org/login.php>

We are hopeful that this change will provide an easier user experience on both A4L-SDPC Community site and the SDPC Resource Registry, and ultimately provide us with the opportunity to integrate these systems at some point in the future.

Welcome new members!

A4L & SDPC Community Members



Arkansas Department of Education



Elevation Education Solutions, LLC



MSD of Warren Township, IN

A4L-SDPC Partner Member

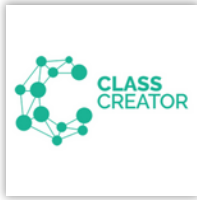


School Photographers of America

SDPC Community Members



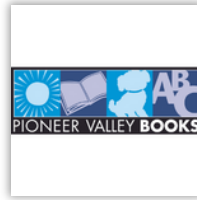
Alegra Learning, Inc.



Class Creator



essaypop



Pioneer Valley Books



Lake Washington School District



The International School Nido de Aguilas, Chile

System Maintenance Notice

We will be performing maintenance on all our servers this weekend. Starting on Friday, December 17, 2021 at 5 PM Eastern the following services will go offline for a time: marketplace, compliance, test harness. At 8 PM Eastern we will start the process on the SDPC Resource Registry. All systems are expected to back by Sunday evening.

Holiday Office closures

To give all Staff time to rest and recharge, the A4L Offices will be closed from December, 24, 2021—Monday, January 3, 2022 (inclusive).

The Community is gearing up for a very exciting 2022, and we look forward to reconnecting with all our Community Members when we return.

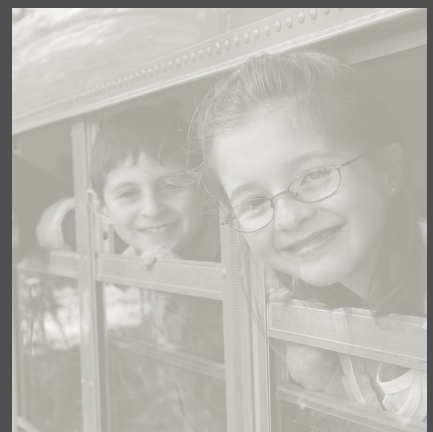
Wishing you and your families a happy & safe holiday break!

SAVE THE DATES!

FIND OUT MORE ON PAGE 6 >>>

Privacy & Interoperability Symposium

APRIL 25-27, 2022
WASHINGTON, DC





You spoke. We listened.

New membership structure, improvements forthcoming

Throughout the past few months the A4L Community has proactively sought input on how to best serve members and better leverage our resources.

Based on results from a survey sent to all members earlier this year, as well as a deeper dive conducted by our contracted marketing firm through one-to-one interviews, we are pleased to announce a number of changes will be implemented during first quarter 2022 and beyond.

“Nearly 100% of our resources are supported solely by membership dues,” Larry Fruth, Executive Director/CEO, notes. “That we’ve been able to sustain A4L for more than 25 years validates the strength of what we have to offer, yet we knew improvements were needed.

“With limited resources, however, in certain areas we were falling short with meeting member needs and reflecting innovation in our brand,” states Larry. “Therefore, it’s time for change and

embracing a new approach.”

As a result, the Board recently approved the following:

- Combining both interoperability (A4L) and privacy work (SDPC) vs. splitting our energy and resources. As part of refocusing our efforts and offering one, collective Community, members will have the flexibility of choosing a membership level that best meets their needs.
- Reducing the amount of complimentary support we offer non-members; by providing free accessibility, we actively dissuade more vendors and end-users from becoming members.

The first of several changes being made is set to occur January 1: implementing a new membership structure.

For some members, dues will decrease – such as if they hold dual memberships for both A4L and SDPC. For others, dues may increase – for instance, if

they choose value-added subscription services for a premium membership. New membership levels and associated benefits for each are noted on the following page.

While the new structure goes into effect January 1, 2022, membership dues will not increase until a member’s next renewal date. In continuing our renewal notifications 60 days in advance of membership expiration, those members who already have received their notice will remain on the current (2021) pricing structure.

NON-MEMBER ACCESS

- Limited SDPC Resource Registry view & search –
 - ◊ View: All Statistics / Alliance List / Participating Districts / Alliance Model DPAs (if posted)
 - ◊ Search: Individual district DPAs (one district at a time) / Vendor Member DPAs
- Access to openly developed interoperable, with privacy on the wire, technical Specification
- Effective practices documentation support for application integration
- Access to Vendor Marketplace information
- Access to view SIF Certification Registry
- Newsletters
- White Papers

“Nearly 100% of our resources are supported solely by membership dues. That we’ve been able to sustain A4L for more than 25 years validates the strength of what we have to offer... Moving forward, we are rededicating our commitment to our stakeholders...”

Larry Fruth II, PhD., Executive Director/CEO
A4L Community

You spoke. We listened.

Continued from previous page...

Additional changes set to occur during first quarter 2022 include refreshing our brand, which will change the look of our materials, as well as updating our website so it's more engaging and content easier to access.

"Moving forward, we are rededicating our commitment to our stakeholders and appreciate all of the honest feedback we received," Larry emphasizes. "I'm confident these changes—supported by our leaders and the

Board—will help to not only sustain our initiative for many more years, but also renew our position as the premier Community for learners."

Please watch for many more details in the coming weeks.

BASIC MEMBERSHIP

- All Non-Member features PLUS:
- Basic SDPC Resource Registry view & search -
 - ◊ View: Secured DPAs
 - ◊ Search: Entire Registry across all Alliances and Countries
- Application Registry Management
- Organizational privacy workflow tool
- Use of NDPA and Badges
- Developer Sandbox Access
- Interoperability and Privacy Guidance
- Access and networking opportunities to other global Community Members
- Standards Use Case and Privacy Resource Library
- Members Identified on Resource Registry Searches
- Organization highlighted on Vendor Marketplace
- Access to Community Site collaboration area
- Be a part of Community Project Teams/deliverables - Developing technical standards, National Data Privacy Agreement, etc.
- Access to Staff & Community expertise to resolve privacy and data exchange issues
- Ability to run for leadership positions and an equal voice 'at the table' (no matter how large or small your organization)
- Community Updates and Reminders

PREMIUM MEMBERSHIP

- All Non-Member & 'Basic' Membership features PLUS:
- Advanced SDPC Resource Registry Functionality
 - ◊ State Alliances NDPA Comparison
 - ◊ Automated POD Creation via the Registry's GEPS Manager
 - ◊ Promotion of Resources when Alliance DPA Signed
 - ◊ Resource Registry API Access
- Premium Member Badge for use plus Premium Member recognition at all events
- Host Marketplace providers 'Showcase' webinars
- Access to SIF Test Harness for quality control support & testing
- Unlimited API Management Testing
- Complimentary Certification Program Utilization
- 15% off Community Meetings Registration Fees

Infrastructure looking for expertise...

With SIF Infrastructure 3.4 coming in early 2022 with new features and clearer documentation, what is next for this centerpiece of educational interoperability around the globe? From our short list of ideas, one is seeing demand in both Australian and the United States, so we are going to prioritize

it. We have known that at some point we'd have to consider Asynchronous Providers. That time is now! So, if you are an asynchronous REST maestro representing an A4L member, please contact [John Lovell](#) and get plugged into the global Infrastructure Project Team today!



****SAVE THE DATES****MORE INFORMATION
COMING SOON!

PRESENTS

Privacy & Interoperability Symposium

The Access 4 Learning (A4L) community, with several strategic partners, is proud to host three days of “tactical” data interoperability (via SIF Specifications) and privacy (via the Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC)) conversations with real-world work products.

While many are focused on managing the interoperability and privacy of student data, only A4L is addressing both in the same place at the same time.

Sessions on privacy complexities; setting a foundation for interoperability; working ‘Strategies’ session; an overview of Massachusetts ‘Data Hub’; as well as valuable takeaways for participants to implement in their own institutions!

AUDIENCE :

This event will be of interest to any/all School District and State Leaders committed to data privacy and data exchange.

MORE INFORMATION :

Monday, April 25 -
Wednesday, April 27, 2022



The Churchill Hotel
(near Embassy Row)
Washington DC

For More Info +202-621-0547
Visit www.A4L.org

**REGISTRATION
OPENING SOON!**

Project Team Updates

GLOBAL

International Technical Board (ITB):

The ITB's has just directed the Infrastructure Project Team to peruse Asynchronous Providers for the 3.5 release of the Global SIF Infrastructure. For more information see ["Infrastructure Looking for Expertise"](#).

Infrastructure: The Infrastructure Project Team is very excited to be publishing in early 2022, version 3.4 featuring inversion of control through Admin. Directives and clearer documentation. For more information see [page 2](#) or the ["Updated Infrastructure Specification documentation coming soon..."](#) article from September's newsletter.

Data Model, Mapping & Migration (D3M):

The D3M is currently considering international cooperation around modeling reporting fields and looking to take on standards-based grading and the related competencies and credentials.

A4L Data Privacy: The A4L Data Privacy Project Team are currently discussing various items around NIST, ISO and other standards. If you are interested in joining these discussions, please feel free to drop in.

Open Source Developers Network (OSDN):

This group is primarily fostering the creations of scripts to better manage the specification build process and more quickly share changes in our agreed upon international formats.

AUSTRALIA

AU Management Board (AUMB/SIFAAMB):

The AU Management Board will be meeting next month and discussing updates on AU activities and also electing a new Board Chair for 2022.

AU Technical Board (AUTB/DSWG):

The AU Technical Board will meet again in the new year to continue their discussions on enhancements and updates to the SIF Specification (Australia).

NORTH AMERICA

North American (NA) Management Board:

The current focus for the NA Board is on strategic direction setting for the continued development and delivery of marketing plan. This includes organizational mission/vision statements and the development of a proposal that will streamline and simplify member rates and value adds.

North American (NA) Technical Board:

This board is looking to expand the areas of the data model being modernized for Unity. For more information see ["What's next for Unity...?"](#) on [page 9](#).

Unity Adoption:

Having shared its Grade Pass Back exchange choreography requirements with the Infrastructure Team this group is working on

related data model enhancements include some to better support standards-based grading in Unity.

CEDS Alignment: This group has started working with Common Education Data Standards (CEDS) staff to create a Privacy Domain starting with a refined version of the Privacy Obligations Document (POD) that the group developed.

Details of each Project Team mission, objective and meeting information can be found in the [Guide to A4L & SDPC Project Teams](#) (PDF)



News from the Australian Community



AU Community Day Overview

The A4L AU Community meeting was held online on Thursday 2 December. With strong representation from both government jurisdictions and the vendor community, the meeting was a great success.

The keynote presentation was delivered by Aimee Phillips, Rel. Principal Education Officer, Digital Support Team at the NSW Department of Education on the "Rural Access Gap Program". Aimee's presentation discussed how the gap program aimed to close the divide in relative and absolute performance between metropolitan and re-

gional schools through improved access to digital teaching and learning aids and collaboration tools.

The agenda also included:

- an update on the Safer Technologies 4 Schools initiative and addition of the Readiness Check, an online self-assessment tool for vendors to use to gauge whether they are ready for the full assessment;
- an update from the NSW Department of Education on their Open API specification work
- Changes to the SIF Specification (Australia) in 2021

- An update on the Learning Services Architecture and some of the priorities and issues facing the jurisdictions
- Jurisdiction updates from the Queensland Department of Education; the Catholic Education Melbourne Office and the New Zealand Ministry of Education.

The meeting concluded with the announcement of the 2022 AU Management Board and Data Standard Working Group representatives. The NSIP team look forward to working with the new Board and Working Group in 2022.

AU Community announce 2022 Leadership

PRESS RELEASE: Australian A4L Community announce 2021-2022 leadership

The Access 4 Learning (A4L) Community in Australia is proud to announce the AU Management and AU Technical Boards for 2021-2022. 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 2021-2022:

- Dr Kiki Tanousis, Semaphore Consulting Group
- Antony Mawer, Sentral Education

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:

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



News from the New Zealand Community



Community Update

We continue to learn from implementations of the Te Rito data hub, which implements SIF Data Model Specification (New Zealand), and make minor adjustments to the 3.2 data model.

We will be embarking on consultation and design work for 3.3 early in 2022; with focus being on updating the data model structures to support new privacy requirements when Staff & Students wish to adopt a new identity, as they transition between schools. (e.g. Trans people switching name and gender)

For more information on the Te Rito Project, please contact [Stuart McGri-gor](#), Solution Architect, Infrastructure & digital, Ministry of Education, New Zealand.



A Deeper Dive into the Delta...

Data Model changes in 3.2 (release candidate 9):

- We have added support for Kura Kaupapa Māori (Māori medium schools) that follow the Maramataka, Māori lunar calendar. For these schools, the school year begins each Matariki in mid-July, and finishes in late June, whereas English medium schools have school years that run from late January to mid-December
- NZCodeSetsECEServiceProviderOwnership has been updated with new value 18003 - Incorporated Society - to match data maintained in Ministry master data repository.
- LearningStandardObjectReference has been removed, and references to learning standards are simple ObjectReference
- AttendanceCode "?" has been removed
- Email.SourceOrganisation fields have been removed from StudentPersonal, StaffPersonal and StudentContactPersonal;
- Field SubjectAreaList.NCEASubjectArea added to TeachingGroup data object; allowing schools to nominate either Ministry or NZQA subject codes when describing teaching group subjects.
- All fields of type OrganisationObjectReference have validation rule whereby either RefId or LocalId are required.
- For NBO (National Body & Organisation) type organisation relationships, the source organisation is the National Body NAB and the member provider organisation is a National Body Member NBM
- We now limit the set of StaffRoles

that can be used in various objects. The complete list will still be defined in StaffRoles; but we have added the following subsets:

- ◇ StaffOrganisationRoles - 1001 - Principal, 1002 - Deputy Principal, 1205 - Classroom Teacher, 1303 - Learning Support Coordinator, 1306 - SENCO
- ◇ StaffTeachingGroupRoles - All the subject and classroom teacher variations in the 12xx series
- ◇ APIClientRoles - All the API client roles in 25xx series

All required string fields have gained regex pattern `^\S(.*)$` - indicating that the field must hold a non-space value; and be without leading or trailing spaces.

Added a read-only code AUTO to StudentProviderEnrolment.Exit.Reason - allowing Te Rito platform to automatically terminate an enrolment, when that enrolment is missing from Sync batch.

The valid range for YearLevel fields is 0 - 13; Students who commence school at age 5 in the second half of the school year are placed in level 0, and progress to Year Level 1 at the beginning of the next school year. Fields affected are:

- StudentProviderEnrolment.SchoolEnrolment.YearLevel
- TeachingGroup.YearLevelList.YearLevel
- Organisation.SchoolService.SchoolYearList.SchoolYear.YearLevel
- StudentObjectReference.YearLevel

News from the North American Community



What's next for Unity?

Ready to consider modernizing more content areas based on your needs? So are we!

The North American Technical Board (NATB) has started their conversation around the next release of the Unity Specification. This release will be different, as we have moved past the transition to Unity and on to modernizing our data model based on community needs. We already have use cases: grade pass-back, state requests, Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC), and greater privacy support.

If you are interested in any of these areas, here is how you can get involved:

Grade PassBack: This project team is currently convening under the Unity Adoption group, who meets on the 1st & 3rd Tuesday every month. Visit the [Group Page](#) to get involved.

State Requests: These are currently being gathered through the State Re-

quests group. Any State member who would like to get involved should contact [John Lovell](#).

CRDC: The NATB is consistently being informed that this could be a valuable asset to the Unity Specification, so they are taking initial discussions to further their understanding. If you would be interested in getting involved in a Project Team around this area of work, please contact [John Lovell](#) to find out more.

Privacy: A4L continues to build privacy both from the top down through the

SDPC and from the bottom up with our SIF efforts. We are working to refine both, mostly by bringing them together in the real world. If you would like to help with any piece of this effort, please contact Community Director [Penny Murray](#) and she will connect you where your interests lie.

If you have other areas you would like to see worked on, members can send [John Lovell](#) a [SIF Data Model Specification Extension Proposal Template](#) and we will look into it.



SIF Certification News

The A4L Community is seeing an uptick in SIF Unity adoption and a drive towards integrated privacy. As a result, we are being asked to provide Unity and Privacy Certifications for the first time! The initial step for us is to support our members in testing their software's adherence to Unity. To do this best, we are looking for a few key application vendors to help us assess the

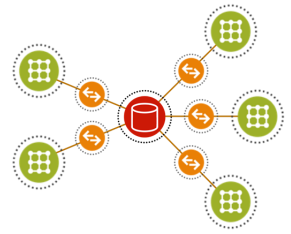
testing software while it is under development. Although this will mean a lot of time from someone on your team, it also means a lot of individual attention. So if you are dedicated to implementing Unity, let's do it together.

To apply as a Certification Tester, please contact [John Lovell](#), Technology Director.



Understanding the Data Hub Ecosystem

A SIF Unity Adoption Blueprint for States



In North America, the Unity Specification is being successfully used to build a bridge between, and gradually move to, modern REST integrations. This is being accomplished through a common set of steps, empowered by key aspects of Unity. We often refer to an integration of this topology as a Data Hub because it creates a place to put data so that it can be queried using the Data Hub as the source of truth. Let's take a look...

Modernize state systems to the Global SIF Infrastructure

Good, bad, or somewhere in-between all state education agencies have a data integration. At a minimum, some state systems talk to each other, and state reporting is happening, somehow. Here - where you have the most control - is where you should start your modernization.

The Global SIF Infrastructure and the integrators that support it have your back. The Global SIF Infrastructure is data model independent, incredibly scalable, and modular so moving what you have now over REST is not just possible, it is efficient and effective. Better yet, our integrators aren't coming to this blind. They know how to mix, match, and move your data to all the right places.

For those coming from existing SIF integration things are even easier. Great care has been taken to maximize the backwards compatibility of the data model. So, if you're updating your SIF ecosystem, moving that data to newer systems couldn't be easier.

Convert Data Sources to Unity within the State Enterprise

You are going to want to remove the bottlenecks that naturally come with conversion. Ideally each of your vendors will provide you with Unity adaptors for your products and you can start to enjoy a homogeneous, standards-based, state-level integration. Unity's underlying infrastructure simplifies this conversion through the use of modern tools and streamlined connectivity. Nonetheless, we must face the reality that this may not happen overnight. Modernize what you can and have your integrator bridge what you cannot. As we all move forward, some applications will take longer to catch-up.

Create native Unity Data Collection Endpoint for State Reporting and Beyond

It is time to empower timely data exchanges where they count the most, with data exchanges outside of your own systems. Once you can support Unity and everything you can has been moved to natively interoperating with Unity, you should make it a state reporting option for your districts. Better yet, offer that data back to your districts, even provide them with their own Data Hub. Whether they just use it to confirm the data they have sent you or to empower their own horizontal ecosystem, with a little effort you can spread the success.

This is where another key aspect of Unity comes into play, which is often misunderstood, you should know that data can be provided into the ecosystem with just the states endpoints. Help your vendors and districts alike by providing the serves and security centrally, letting them focus on great administrative and educational experiences.

Pilot District(s) Integrate & Report with Unity

If you are going to realize all the benefits of Unity, you need your districts on-board. There is no better way to help them than to start with one, take notes, and share how to do it. Districts can greatly benefit from their own horizontal integration along with helping to meet your mutual state and federal reporting needs.

Don't Forget the Win-Win

You are about to engage your districts. Instead of asking, "How can I get them to go along with the great modernization?" Ask, "How can I be their hero?" At least one state is answering that question by working with districts by helping them modernize their integration along with them. Districts are often interested in integrating their library, lunch, transportation systems beyond what you are asking for reporting. Don't be afraid to offer a brighter future!

A Data Hub is a proven way to find the win-win. The RICs in New York blazed the trail with xPress Roster and [The Massachusetts Data Hub](#) is becoming the example for full state wide SIF Unity. It is amazing what you can do by making it simple for data to flow in both directions.

All Districts Integrate & Report with Unity

Unite your districts! Share the benefits of Unity throughout your state. You'll run into software, from the biggest SIS to the smallest app, so think about how your integrator can help spread the success and build from your SIF Unity foundation.

If you would like to discuss your Unity integration further, please contact [John Lovell](#), Technology Director.

News from the Student Data Privacy Consortium



SDPC announce 2021 Leadership

BLOG: The Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC) Announces 2021-2022 Leadership

Washington, DC, 2 November 2021— 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 2021-2022. 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 SDPC Management Board for a two-year term are:

- Andy Bloom, McGraw-Hill Education
- Tom Ingram, Escambia County School District
- Josh Olstad, Oyster River Cooperative School District

These newly elected members join the following SDPC Management Board members starting their second-year term:

- Libbi Garrett, CITE
- Allen Miedema, Northshore School District
- Steve Setzer, Kimono
- Jim Siegl, Future of Privacy Forum
- Steve Smith, Cambridge Public Schools



“I am thrilled to welcome these prominent 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 will prove critical to our collective successes as 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.”

User Profile changes coming in 2022...

In line with our current plans to reorganize and update our membership structure, we are planning on making a subtle change to the login information on the A4L-SDPC Community Site and the SDPC Resource Registry.

From January 4, 2022, we will be updating all login usernames to be an email address. Please ensure you take a couple of minutes BEFORE end 2021 to review and update your User Profiles. Please ensure that the email address associated with your employer/member organization is used, no personal email addresses will be permitted. If you need to make changes but are unable to make them online, please email [Penny Murray](mailto:Penny.Murray@A4L.org) with the information **by December 23, 2021**.

- Log in to your A4L-SDPC Community Site User Profile here: <https://www.a4l.org/login.aspx>
- Log in to your SDPC Resource Registry User Profile here: <https://sdpc.a4l.org/login.php>

We are hopeful that this change will provide an easier user experience on both A4L-SDPC Community site and the SDPC Resource Registry, and ultimately provide us with the opportunity to integrate these systems at some point in the future.

National Research Data Privacy Agreement (NRDPA) published

BLOG: The Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC) Announces The Release Of The National Research Data Privacy Agreement (NRDPA)

The Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC), led by the Research Data Sharing Project Team, is proud to announce the release of the National Research Data Privacy Agreement (NRDPA). This great resource has been Community developed with extensive review and comment from schools, districts, state and government organizations, marketplace providers, researchers, universities, and their legal representatives. The NRDPA is designed to address the federal, state, and local student data sharing requirements and best practices between schools and research organizations. Currently these agreements have been 'one-offs' between these organizations requiring substantial work in establishing – if addressed at all.

The NRDPA follows the format of the successful SDPC National Data Privacy Agreement (NDPA) currently being used by thousands of schools and marketplace providers. Unlike the NDPA, the NRDPA has been designed for schools and researchers to use to share student data under FERPA's

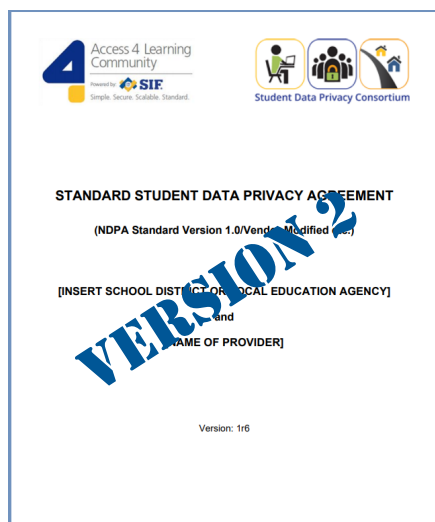
"Studies" exception allowing researchers to conduct studies for, or on behalf of, schools or districts to improve instruction as well as administer student aid for developing, validating, or administering predictive tests. SDPC Community Members have developed this resource to continue towards its overarching goal of streamlining student data sharing, protecting privacy, and to set common expectations between

schools/districts, marketplace providers and now, researchers.

The draft NRDPA can be found on the [SDPC website](#) with permissible usage rights for SDPC Members. The draft includes a companion document that covers NRDPA usage and guidance on FERPA's Studies exception.



Coming soon...



The Student Data Privacy Consortium (SDPC) is proud of the collaborative development and widespread usage of the National Data Privacy Agreement (NDPA) streamlining application contracting and setting common expectations between schools/districts and marketplace providers. Simply go to <https://privacy.A4L.org> and check out the "By the Numbers" impact that deliverable and the Community has made in 5 short years!

Well, it is time... The NDPA Policy, Procedures and Usage Project Team will embark on a version 2 of the NDPA after collecting a great amount of com-

ments and suggested changes from schools, states, and marketplace providers. All the suggested "red line" drafts, accepted or not, have been collected for review and discussion for inclusion into version 2 of the NDPA. This then will be passed to the Legal Project Team to do their work in finalizing a draft for Community Review and ideally a successful vote of the SDPC membership.

So, stay tuned in 2022 as this work starts and we hope you will provide your thoughts, suggestions and ideas. We all have greater passion when we participate!

Curious About Linking Privacy to Security Common Frameworks?

As the SDPC continues to expand its coverage, both in the U.S. and abroad, the next issue that arises has to do with the ability to audit and/or certify that providers, and schools, are meeting their obligations to safeguard data.

Currently, there are no mandated U.S. federal requirements for providers to adhere to specific security benchmarks even though some states have legislated their own set of security requirements. In the absence of any framework or identified benchmarks to audit providers against, it is impossible to certify any application in the U.S. as meeting their U.S. privacy and security obligations.

Within Australia, the Safer Technologies for Schools (ST4S) initiative (www.st4s.edu.au) has been established and has developed a national benchmark of security and privacy controls. Providers seeking to supply services to Australian schools are required to undergo an ST4S assessment and achieve a compliant outcome. To date over 200 assessments have been completed including international vendors such as Google, Microsoft, Apple, Adobe and Zoom. The ST4S controls currently only make reference to the Australian Information Security Manual (ISM). ST4S is managed by the NSIP team at Education Services Australia. NSIP is a long term member of the A4L



Community. There is interest in expanding this work inside of the SDPC.

The Community recently held a webinar on December 14, 2021 to further showcase this work and highlight how we make this 'common expectations' work global in nature.

The recording will be made available shortly from the [Presentation Archive](#).

SAVE THE DATES!

Privacy & Interoperability Symposium | April 25-27, 2022 | Washington, DC
For more information see [Page 6](#)

Project Team Updates

SDPC Management Board: This group is currently addressing, with the NA Management Board, strategic direction and alignment with SIF Unity work of ONE organization. Ongoing conversations around Alliance support and greater marketplace engagement including potential partner projects.

SDPC Alliance Leadership: This group is currently convening through the NDPA PPU group every other week.

NDPA Policy, Procedures & Usage (PPU): The NDPA PPU group continue to review redline documentation and address any issues that State Alliances are experiencing. If you are a SDPC Alliance Leader, feel free to drop in and meet your peers!

Legislative Activity: This group is currently placed on 'pause'.

Research Data Sharing Agreement: This group is in "on hold" notice collecting feedback from the recently re-

leased National Research Data Privacy Agreement (NRDPA). The group will reconvene early in 2022 to look at usage and feedback issues.

Resource Registry Roadmap (R3): This group continues to review SDPC Resource Registry performance and enhancement issues. A link to the summary of all SDPC Resource Registry enhancements can be found on the [SDPC group page](#).

SDPC Vendor: This group currently meets once per quarter and is a great place for Vendors to convene and discuss any issues they are dealing with relating to data privacy, the NDPA and redlines. Topics are identified at the end of each call for the next gathering.

Details of each Project Team mission, objective and meeting information can be found in the [Guide to A4L & SDPC Project Teams](#) (PDF)



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	TBD	Association Board of Directors	Larry Fruth
Tuesday	2 nd Tues, monthly	Data Privacy	Penny Murray
Tuesday	4 th Tues, monthly	D3M	John Lovell
Tuesday	4 th Tues, monthly	Policy & Procedures	John Lovell
Wednesday	Bi-weekly	Infrastructure	John Lovell
Thursday	Bi-weekly	Open Source Developers Network	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	State Requests	John Lovell
Tuesday	1 st & 3 rd Tues, monthly	Unity Adoption	John Lovell
Wednesday	4 th Weds, monthly	NA Management Board	Larry Fruth
Thursday	1 st & 3 rd Thurs, monthly	CEDS Alignment	John Lovell
Thursday	2 nd & 4 th Thurs, monthly	NA Technical Board	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
Tuesday	1 st Tues, Qrtly (3rd month)	SDPC Resource Registry Roadmap (R3) Project Team	Larry Fruth
Tuesday	4 th Tues, monthly	SDPC Management Board	Larry Fruth
Wednesday	1 st Weds, Qrtly (2 nd month)	Consortium Updates	Larry Fruth
Thursday	Bi-weekly	Alliance Leadership (NDPA Policy, Procedures & Usage)	Larry Fruth
Thursday	1 st Thurs, Qrtly (1 st month)	Vendor Project Team	Larry Fruth

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 to **“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.

lfruth@A4L.org

John Lovell Technology Director

Provides technical leadership and as the primary resource for all things encompassing areas from internal IT support to driving the global community statewide, national and international efforts focused on both technical specification development but privacy support.

jllovell@A4L.org

Penny Murray Community Director

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.

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NEWSLETTER

Issue 53

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Access 4 Learning Community

Powered by:  **SIF**

Simple. Secure. Scalable. Standard.