

The Optimal Reference Guide:
**Electronic Student Records and Transcripts:
The SEA Imperative**

Extraordinary insight into today's education topics

Glynn D. Ligon, Ph.D., ESP Solutions Group
Barbara S. Clements, Ph.D., ESP Solutions Group

With a foreword by Glynn D. Ligon



ESP Solutions Group

Foreword

By Glynn D. Ligon, Ph.D.

State Education Agencies (SEAs) have an opportunity to do something extraordinary for their schools and districts. Supporting the electronic exchange of student records and transcripts can give them both the boost and the guidance they need to automate now—and do it right.

Why would an SEA get involved in exchanging these essential records between elementary and secondary (PK-12) schools and with postsecondary institutions? The answer is that an SEA can't afford to stand by and watch individual schools and districts adopt non-standard ways to package and send such crucial data. Why not? Local schools and districts are over-burdened with multiple reporting standards. The SEA expects its districts to report standard, quality, timely data. The standards for these data come from the feds, your own state funding formulas, and other mandates that can't be easily budged. If schools and districts are not led to adopt those same standards for all of their local data, the applications that manage them, and the data to be sent to the SEA, then the quality and timeliness of both local and state data will suffer.

Schools and districts have only so much energy for data matters. If they can do everything once, in a standard way, then everyone wins. If they independently commit to applications that use different data standards, they increase the burden they face to collect, store, crosswalk, transform, and report their data to different masters.

Remember SPEEDE/ExPRESS? In the 90's, this standard for electronic records transfer promised to automate all records exchanges for mobile students and college applicants. SPEEDE/ExPRESS failed to become the universal solution because it requires an expensive EDI (ANSI X12) translator. Most educators don't even know what one of those is. In many industries, EDI translations and exchanges are common, but they are rare in education. School districts just did not accept the burden and cost of buying an EDI translator, configuring it, and subscribing to a private value-added network to send transcripts. Some postsecondary institutions did—successfully.

The indisputable value that SPEEDE/ExPRESS contributed to PK-12 was the definition of standard contents and formats for an academic record. Those definitions and codes have been aligned with NCES data handbooks, state information systems, PESC formats, and SIF objects over the last decade.

SPEEDE/ExPRESS also taught us that there will not be a single standard for electronic student records in the foreseeable future.

The opportunity to graduate from mailing paper records to secure, confidential electronic file exchanges depends in a large part on the ease with which schools and districts can change their processes. Only a state education agency is in the position to establish a statewide standard for education data records—mandatory or voluntary. Only a state education agency can facilitate interstate alignments of electronic record contents.

I am personally committed to open technology standards and common data standards across all levels of the education enterprise. Why? Because the quality and timeliness of our data depend upon schools and districts being able to handle all their data demands well. The more they can satisfy multiple demands with the same effort, the better the data will be for everyone. If schools and districts adopt inconsistent and proprietary standards for their electronic records exchanges, they will be burdened to comply with both those standards and the ones set by their SEA for state reporting.

This ESP Solutions Group Optimal Reference Guide, "Electronic Student Records and Transcripts: The SEA Imperative," provides insight into several key issues:

1. Responses to 17 challenges the critics of electronic records exchange pose
2. Alternatives for an SEA's support for schools and districts
3. What to demand from a vendor providing electronic records exchange services
4. Requirements to include in a request for proposals for electronic records exchange services

I see the tipping point for finally moving from mailing paper records to electronic records exchange is here. The technology exists. The data standards are maturing. The big question confronting us is how to get it done. I trust this white paper will help focus your state's efforts in the direction that best suits your vision and realities.

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Individual states can build the capacity of their districts to submit electronic records for state funding formulas, federal programs, grants, and research by supporting their efforts to create and exchange electronic student transcripts. The Texas Education Agency published a study that estimated a 92.3% reduction in costs to exchange electronic transcripts compared to paper transcripts. This would net an annual savings in a typical state of over \$7 million. Beyond the dollars, it is important to reduce the time required for a new school to receive records and to begin delivery of appropriate educational services. Building the capacity to exchange records and transcripts across states also provides the opportunity to improve the continuity of services to mobile students and the standardization of the information within these records.


State Education Agencies (SEAs) across the nation are facing data needs like never before. In addition to continuing needs for state reporting related to foundation funding for schools and districts, there are extensive requirements for accountability and federal program reporting, such as the requirements for No Child Left Behind. These data needs have led to the development by SEAs of more sophisticated data systems that allow for the maintenance of longitudinal student records.


These requirements have been pushed down to the district and school levels as well. Whereas in "olden times" student records were kept in paper files in metal filing cabinets, now nearly all districts have automated student records; indeed, they must have some way to submit student records to the state electronically.

Student transcripts are the quintessential longitudinal student record. The most significant impact a state education agency can have on the quality of the state's longitudinal education records is to ensure that schools have the capacity to create and exchange correct, certified, and timely student records.

Despite recent accomplishments with building infrastructure for managing student records, there are crucial needs associated with implementation of a comprehensive information system from the school to the district to the state level that must be addressed by a state education agency.

1. **Linking individual student records across years:** Most states now have a statewide student identifier and are collecting individual student records. Now there is a need to link those records across years and with annual assessment scores to facilitate meaningful longitudinal analysis and reporting.
2. **Data quality:** Districts and state education agencies have struggled with issues related to the quality of the data reported about schools. We need to tighten up the standards for the data, train districts in those standards, and improve the use of business rules to ensure the integrity of the data collected and reported.
3. **Mobile students:** Most states receive numerous students from other states annually in addition to those that are mobile within the state and within districts. Documenting transfers who are not dropouts, ensuring that appropriate instructional and support services begin immediately upon enrollment, certifying the accuracy of education records sent from school to

 **ESP Insight**
"Transcript" refers to a subset of a student's comprehensive academic record selected to be provided to another education agency (typically a postsecondary institution).

 **ESP Insight**
"Student Record" refers to an official comprehensive record containing individually identifiable information about a student, much of which is considered confidential.

- school, and maintaining the confidentiality of the contents of the student records are all crucial needs related to these students and their records.
4. **Cycle time:** The cycle time needed to collect, analyze, and report the data is too long. We need more automation at the school and district levels to shorten this cycle time.
 5. **Elementary and middle school longitudinal records:** High schools understand the requirements for official transcripts, but elementary and middle schools operate more on an annual basis. The sending of complete educational records from elementary school to elementary school is inconsistent and impacts the timely delivery of services to new students. This effort to build and exchange electronic records will include the elementary and middle schools as well.

Clearly there is a need for state education agencies to build the capacity of school districts to meet the challenges of reporting electronic data. But also SEAs should help build the capacity of districts to send electronic student records to other appropriate education entities, including those to whom a student is transferring or applying.

This paper tackles directly the issue of why SEAs should be involved in electronic student records exchanges. The content is divided into six basic sections:

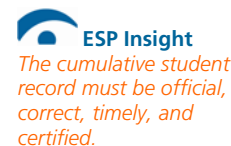
1. The importance of standards-based electronic student records
2. Reasons an SEA should be involved in electronic records exchange
3. Challenges to electronic records exchange
4. Qualifications that providers of electronic records exchange services must possess
5. Requirements for an effective electronic records exchange system
6. Steps for implementing a statewide electronic records exchange standard or system

The Importance of Standards-Based Electronic Student Records

The case for the significance of the longitudinal student record or transcript is easily made by describing the contents of a typical cumulative student record:

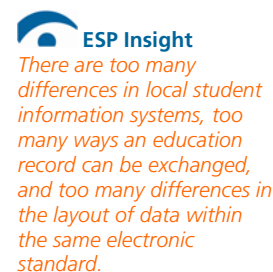
- Historical dates of enrollment, grade levels assigned, and attendance
- Longitudinal history of course or subject completion
- Cumulative summary of credits earned or grade levels completed
- Certification of diplomas and degrees awarded
- Annual performance on local and state assessments
- Flags or alerts to receiving schools of family, health, or learning conditions that must be accommodated upon enrollment
- Academic program participation information
- Additional data as recorded by the school (e.g., awards, activities, etc.)

Whether in one place or many, whether on paper or in data files, whether containing only required contents or everything imaginable, the cumulative student record documents a student's official accomplishments for current and future institutions that make decisions about the student's enrollment, graduation, certification, employment, or advancement. The record must be official, correct, timely, and certified. Registrars take these records very seriously. Receiving institutions trust them very extensively. Students seldom realize how much these records are relied upon—similar to credit reports in the financial arena.



Time is crucial in the sending of student records. Institutions of higher education need to have student transcripts at a particular time during the school year in order to make acceptance decisions. Schools and districts that receive transferring students must have access to the student's record as soon as possible in order to ensure the student is accurately placed into classes and receives any assistance that is needed. The receipt of an electronic record enables institutions to make more immediate decisions and allows for the downloading of information into the local system with little re-keying and thus better quality.

Schools and districts cannot build an intrastate or interstate process for exchanging electronic student records on their own. There are too many differences in local student information systems, too many ways an education record can be exchanged (e.g. paper, fax, PDF, ASCII files, ANSI EDI X12 SPEEDE/ExPRESS, PESC XML, FASTER, SIF, etc.), and too many differences in the layout of data within the same electronic standard. A school or district today must choose among these standards and unfortunately defer to paper for the majority of the transcripts they send and receive.



State education agencies need to redirect the tremendous effort now going to producing and sending paper transcripts, and keying in the data on paper transcripts received, into effort devoted to the quality of the data in a student's record and the capacity of schools and districts to link those records across years. Building the capacity to exchange records and transcripts across states also provides the opportunity to improve the continuity of services to mobile students and the standardization of the information within these records.

Reasons a State Education Agency Should be Involved in Electronic Records Exchange

Leaving this process to the discretion of local control leaves open the door for continuing the confusion and ambiguities encountered whenever one school receives a record from another. *Is all the information there? What does this term mean? Are these course numbers the same as on another record I got from that school last month? How was GPA calculated? Are electives counted in the graduation credits shown?*



The SEA must step up and oversee, manage, control, standardize the process for electronic exchange of student records/transcripts.

The SEA must step up and oversee, manage, control, standardize the process for electronic exchange of student records/transcripts because...

- Individual districts are actively looking for a solution and will make different choices from among the alternatives emerging in the market place. They need guidance to make a good choice. They need a broader entity to vet the choices within the context of their own state reporting standards.
- Only the SEA can establish or facilitate the adoption of mandatory or voluntary standards with the clout to be embraced statewide. Standards are required to ensure that when a record is received, the new school interprets the information correctly for the student.
- Postsecondary institutions don't need as much information as elementary and secondary (K-12) schools do, so their standards and formats never provide the comprehensive record K-12 needs.
- Vendors need to be motivated to provide a comprehensive solution, an open standard solution, one that communicates with schools outside their own customer base.
- Academic records exchange is an interstate activity. A state-level agency is in the best position to negotiate and establish the translation, crosswalk, and exchange processes with schools in other states.

State education agencies are in an excellent position to build on the efforts and best practices of other states. A number of national efforts can help SEAs work with their districts to develop a system that meets all of their data exchange needs.

- The National Center for Education Statistics has developed a course classification system called the *School Codes for the Exchange of Data (SCED)* that can be used for crosswalks among individual state and local course numbering systems. This will help receiving districts or postsecondary institutions better evaluate the courses taken by students.
- The Schools Interoperability Framework Association (SIFA) provides formats for standard data exchanges among data systems and technology links across school districts and states.
- The U.S. Department of Education has built an electronic data collection and reporting tool called *EDFacts* which relies upon standards mapped from individual student records to school, district, and state aggregate statistics.

Challenges to Electronic Records Exchange

There are a million arguments why electronic records exchange can't be done, not the least of which is lack of interest. But the world we live in is changing rapidly, and the old ways of doing things often seem antiquated.

What follows is a list of hesitations that may be felt by state education agencies along with answers and a discussion of realities.

Hesitation	Answer	Today's Reality
We don't have authority over student records.	Facilitate voluntary adoption of a standard format as a minimum.	Providing guidance and facilitating a standard for the state requires leadership more than authority.
Not all statewide standards are in place.	Continue using any standards already in place.	Schools and districts are already sending records in their own formats. That can continue without delaying moving to electronic records exchange.
The political leadership/buy-in does not exist.	Call upon ESP Solutions Group and other entities that can present the business case.	When presented the opportunity, policy leaders become enthusiastic supporters. Forums exist for presentations, e.g., conferences, meetings.
This is not the responsibility of the state education agency.	Consider this either an explicit or implicit responsibility. Either way, there are compelling reasons for the state education agency to be involved.	See above discussion of why a state education agency should be involved in electronic records exchange.
Let the colleges work it all out and tell K-12 how to send the records.	Avoid finding out that a postsecondary solution does not include as much information as K-12 needs.	Mobile students have needs that are not described in the type of transcripts that go to postsecondary institutions.
Let the schools and districts work it out on their own.	Reduce the time required for schools and districts with scarce time and dollars to work out a solution that may not be accepted across the state and by other states.	Fortunately, there are standards that have been developed with extensive district and school input that can be used to begin the process of designing a state solution.
Let some other states lead the way and ours will pick the best solution after they all sort themselves out.	Remember that your state is unique.	Perhaps this is a way to work with other states to come up with a solution that meets all of your needs.

Hesitation	Answer	Today's Reality
There is uncertainty about where to begin.	Read this paper for a good start.	See the chart "Steps for Implementing a Statewide Electronic Records Exchange Standard or System" on page 15.
The schools are not ready yet to produce and send electronic records.	Look again. Yes, they are.	Student information system software can provide extracts containing the data elements needed.
There are not enough schools and colleges able to receive electronic records.	Find a solution that includes both electronic and paper processes. Today, it is true that not all entities can receive electronic records.	A comprehensive system should accommodate exchanges that must still be on paper, by fax, or merely as PDFs.
We are so far from everyone being able to handle electronic records that it is just extra work to do both paper and electronic.	Find a solution that can handle both.	In most states, districts have had to meet state electronic reporting requirements for individual student data, so they have electronic exchange experience that can be leveraged.
The technology is not ready yet.	Look again - it is.	Bank accounts and bill payments are managed on-line these days. Legal documents are accepted in electronic formats. The same technology is available to manage confidential academic records.
Let the vendors work it all out and tell K-12 how to do it.	Avoid adopting a vendor's product that meets only the requirements they already know and understand. Each state has unique needs.	There are vendors who are willing to work with states to ensure that a system meets those unique needs. Look for a solution that is comprehensive and functional for your schools.
The electronic records standards, e.g., SPEEDE/ExPRESS, SIF E-Transcript, PESC XML, are not ready for full use yet.	Use what they offer now and work with them to continue expanding. Each is in a different state of maturity, but one or more can be used right now.	Most of the companies in the vendor community are committed to making standard electronic student records a reality.
We don't have the money in our state budget.	Continue to rely upon schools and districts can pay on a per record basis as they do now.	Schools and districts are already paying their own freight on records exchange. The savings in time and dollars will be theirs anyway. Continuing to have the costs spread across all districts is reasonable.

Hesitation	Answer	Today's Reality
There are no resources to organize the state or to manage the process	Rely upon a vendor or vendors.	With some state guidance, the vendor community will be very willing to step forward and provide tools and services. The crucial factor is for the state to oversee that process and provide guidance to schools and districts.
This is a postsecondary issue. They are the ones who benefit while the high schools do the extra work.	Discover that even though the greatest gains are from receiving an electronic record, quantifiable savings are achieved from sending as well.	A system for electronic student records can be established fairly easily in such a way that a high school counselor spends almost no time sending transcripts, and can devote time to other needs.

Qualifications That Providers of Electronic Records Exchange Services Must Possess

There are many vendors interested in working with school districts or state education agencies on electronic transcripts. Evaluation of potential solutions must start by a careful review of vendor qualifications. Companies proposing to provide a statewide electronic records solution for the elementary/secondary community must have the following qualifications.

 **ESP Insight**
Make sure that the electronic records exchange vendor you select meets all of the requirements listed at the right.

1. Direct experience accessing data or supporting schools to access data from their information systems that manage student academic records; knowledge about how they are configured; how they store data; how they extract data; and the multitude of issues schools encounter when accessing their data for records exchange.
2. Direct experience, membership in, and active participation in the work of institutions that develop standards for electronic records exchange (e.g., SPEEDE/ExPRESS, Schools Interoperability Framework Association, Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council).
3. Experience in the design, development, and implementation of statewide systems that exchange secure, confidential, and official student records between schools and districts and the state education agency.
4. Major business focus in K-12 education with successful projects at the district and state levels.
5. Demonstrated understanding and use of open standards and reporting standards for EDEN and statewide data submission systems.
6. Project management experience with successful statewide technology implementations.
7. Demonstrated understanding and compliance with FERPA and state-specific confidentiality laws and policies.

Requirements for an Effective Statewide Electronic Records System Exchange

State-Specific Requirements

These requirements expand those above to be functional within your state. Each is optional dependent upon the standards adopted by your state.

1. (State name)'s adopted metadata standards for our (name of state education agency's individual student record collection system or process) must be accommodated.
2. (Name of state education agency)'s adopted template and requirements for an official education record or transcript are attached.
3. The processes required of schools and districts within (name of state) must follow as closely as possible the processes established by the (name of state education agency) and followed by the local school systems, their service providers, and vendors in complying with the (name of state education agency's individual student record collection system).
4. All (name of state)'s applicable laws, policies, and regulations and any relevant federal laws and regulations related to the management of student academic records and the personally identifiable and confidential data within them must be understood and followed.
5. The course classification and numbering system adopted by the (name of state education agency) must be crosswalked with the following classification systems. (List here any that apply, e.g., NCES.....) The (name of state education agency) will provide the crosswalk tables and updates in electronic form as they are available.
6. The proposed system must allow users to enter through the (name of state education agency)'s single-sign-on portal, with all identifications, authorizations, and permissions passed through without re-keying.
7. The proposed system must provide (name of state education agency) scheduled and on-demand audit reports describing the nature and volume of activity through the system.
8. The proposed system must provide (name of state education agency) data files of the records exchanged for use in determining eligibility for state scholarships.
9. The proposed system must be capable, if requested by the (name of state education agency), to provide actual records for research or accountability purposes. For this requirement, users of the system who provide the records must certify that appropriate documents and permissions are on file locally.

Following is a list of recommended requirements and the issues related to them.

Requirement	Issue
<p>1. The system's primary format must accommodate the sending and receiving of a real electronic record (data files). Although they may be accommodated as alternatives for schools not yet converted to electronic exchanges, an image, fax, PDF, paper, or other format that does not provide an actual data file will not qualify as an electronic record.</p>	<p>A PDF, fax, or other image cannot be edited and imported directly into a student information system. Importing saves keying in data, avoids making manual translations of codes, and maintains data quality.</p>
<p>2. The system must exchange records between all types of trading partners, e.g., K-12 schools, postsecondary institutions, scholarship organizations, certification agencies, and employers. Therefore, the system must handle all record types that a school or district may send or receive. These must include PDF, images, paper, and fax.</p>	<p>If only "high school to postsecondary" transcripts are handled, the school is left managing the old process for mobile students. If electronic records can only go to recipients accepting electronic records, then the old system has to be used for everyone else.</p>
<p>3. The system must provide a directory for ALL potential trading partners. Each trading partner must be able to update its own profile describing its contact information and its preferences for standards, processes, etc.</p>	<p>A truly national directory of trading institutions is required to send to any recipient and to receive verified records from any sender.</p>
<p>4a. The system must allow each participating agency to select one standard for both sending and receiving records. The system must translate that standard to all others selected by trading partners. 4b. The standards can be limited to national standards set by open-membership organizations, state education agencies, and vendors that have established a single standard with crosswalks to national open standards. 4c. The system developer may establish a generic standard that a participant can use if they choose not to adopt an open standard.</p>	<p>No single standard exists, so your standard must be one that can be translated to all the other standards in use.</p>
<p>5. To prevent fraud, authentication of trading partners must be included.</p>	<p>You must be sure that the persons or institutions sending you an official record are who they say they are and that they have the authority from both the student/parent and their agency to send a record. You must also be sure that the electronic record you send goes to the right institution.</p>

Requirement	Issue
6. Records while in the possession of the system must be kept confidential, that is protected from unauthorized access.	The solution must be FERPA compliant and flexible for state and local rules.
7. Records while in the possession of the system must be kept secure; that is, maintained in a computer environment with safeguards to prevent compromise or destruction.	The hardware, software, network, cables, peripheral equipment, data, procedures, and all technology resources and functions must be designed with the highest levels of security in mind.
8. The user interface and processes required of participants must reduce the burden of sending and receiving records rather than add a new, time-demanding process.	Electronic transcripts must save time and effort, not just add another process to the paper process.
9. The formats and standards for exchange must represent a true PK-12 solution, not just a high school to postsecondary specification of content.	The standard must be one developed for PK-12, not just for high school to postsecondary.
10. Non-academic institutions must be allowed to participate.	To achieve maximum benefit, the system must handle all trading partners. Non-academic institutions require official records/transcripts for scholarships, certification programs, employment, etc.
11. An alternative for archiving data or the provision of an off-site store should be available for disaster recovery.	In the event of a disaster that prevents the school or agency from sending a record, an off-site facility should be available to receive requests and send official records to ensure that a displaced student's services can be continued in a new location.
12. The system should provide for logging of transactions, status, and history.	Paperwork reduction, responding if a student needs to verify that a record has been sent or received, tracking postsecondary institutions that have received a student's transcript, and documenting all actions taken with a student's record for FERPA and for local use are all satisfied by a logging system.
13. The system should be aligned with state, vendor, national, and other metadata standards to avoid multiple format burden.	Schools cannot handle the burden of creating a student record in all of the standard and proprietary formats that exist. The school should adopt a single standard for sending and receiving, and the service should translate into and out of that format for all trading partners.

Requirement	Issue
14. User profiles should be communicated to all trading partners.	Each agency should be able to specify its own preferences and requirements for record formats, how long a record can be kept available before it is accepted by a receiving agency, content that will be sent or accepted, etc.
15. The system must have student information system vendor cooperation.	The service must be able to interface with all vendors through multiple open standards or individual vendor agreements.

Development of a Request for Proposals

Appendix A organizes the information in this white paper into a starting point for a request for proposals. Each state will need to make appropriate customizations; however, this core text should be a great template from which to begin.

Steps for Implementing a Statewide Electronic Records Exchange Standard or System

There are numerous steps you will need to take if you decide to design such a system in-house. If you choose to develop a Request for Proposals to obtain outside assistance, you can rely upon the respondents' proposals to fill in the details. However, there are several steps a state education agency should take up front.

Step	Action Required
1. Secure policy and administrative support.	Review current policies and laws to determine state enhancements to FERPA and other mandates. Present the business case to policy and administrative leaders.
2. Determine the level of state support and funding to be provided.	What level of funding will be sought and made available? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fully or partially funded by the state <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Statewide infrastructure for electronic records exchange b. Fees for transactions or statewide license for all use c. ETL from local SISs or establishment of a statewide standard for SISs to meet d. Statewide standard for format and content e. Statewide course classification system f. State funding for training and support 2. Fully or partially funded by schools and districts <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Internet connectivity for electronic records exchange b. Fees for transactions or district-wide license for all use c. ETL from local SIS d. Crosswalk of local courses to state (or national) course classification system(s) e. Vendor provided training and support
3. Establish the process for oversight and user advice.	Create an oversight/governance group and a user group, or expand the role of existing groups to include electronic records exchange.
4. Determine the level of specification that the SEA will mandate.	a. Allow each LEA to select from among approved standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPEEDE/ExPRESS EDI • SIF

Step	Action Required
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PESC HS XML • SEA standard b. SEA standard recommended c. SEA standard mandated
5. Determine the content specifications.	a. SEA state reporting metadata dictionary standard b. Course classification system c. State graduation standards d. State assessment standards e. State class rank and/or grade point average standards
6. Determine the level of integration to be established with the SEA's data collection processes.	a. Same metadata standards as state's funding and accountability reporting system. b. State collection of data to produce full student records and transcripts.
4. Pursue the appropriate procurement process for the services to be provided.	Each state's procurement process is unique and must be followed to ensure a successful procurement and implementation.

Infrastructure

At the highest level, the components that are required for electronic records exchange are straightforward.

Summary

Student records and transcripts receive the ultimate attention by schools, IT professionals, students, and parents. Everything that goes into a student record/transcript must be standardized, authenticated, kept confidential, exchanged securely, and processed in a timely manner. The production and exchange of a student record/transcript requires the creation and maintenance of longitudinal records within school and district information systems. State education agencies realize that by supporting schools and districts in the creation and exchange of electronic transcripts within the state, across states, and from secondary to postsecondary institutions, the SEA addresses its own need to improve the quality and timeliness of the education data collected for state funding formulas, public reports, No Child Left Behind's adequate yearly progress determinations, and submissions to the U.S. Department of Education.

The main message in this white paper is: **The SEA should take the lead in supporting and establishing processes for electronic record/transcript exchange for K-12 schools.**

The experts at ESP Solutions Group have been involved in all aspects of education records creation, exchange, and use. We are ready to assist your state in the next move to statewide and national electronic records/transcript exchange.

Appendix A: Provision for a System for the Exchange of Electronic Student Records and Transcripts

This text has been drafted as a starting point for state education agencies that wish to pursue procurement of a statewide electronic records exchange system. The requirements presented are generic enough to provide the state with language that can be customized to your agency's requirements. The requirements stated here are not intended to describe a single product or service, but to specify the features and functions that a fully functional student records exchange system must have. Please, use this document as a starting point from which to create the request for proposals that best meets the needs of your state and agency.

Purpose

This request for proposals seeks the implementation in the state of (name of the state) of a system that manages the exchange of official student academic records. Currently, most records are sent from one school or school system to another or from high schools to postsecondary institutions on paper or by fax. The (name of the state education agency) wishes to facilitate the conversion of these exchanges from paper to secure, confidential, timely, and authenticated data files. The solution proposed must be based upon open standards that allow participation by all schools regardless of their adopted information system vendors. Exchanges must be possible not only within the State but also with schools and postsecondary institutions in other states. When fully implemented, the solution must ...

FROM HERE ON WOULD REPEAT THE REQUIREMENTS ABOVE.

Qualifications of Proposers

Proposed System Requirements

The system proposed must meet these requirements.



About ESP Solutions Group

ESP Solutions Group provides its clients with *Extraordinary Insight™* into K-12 education data systems and psychometrics. Our team is comprised of industry experts who pioneered the concept of “data driven decision making” and now help optimize the management of our clients’ state and local education agencies.

ESP personnel have advised school districts, all 52 state education agencies, and the U.S. Department of Education on the practice of K-12 school data management. We are regarded as leading experts in understanding the data and technology implications of the **No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)**, **Education Data Exchange Network (EDEN)**, and the Schools **Interoperability Framework (SIF)**.

Dozens of education agencies have hired ESP to design and build their student record collection systems, federal reporting systems, student identifier systems, data dictionaries, evaluation/assessment programs and data management/analysis systems.

To learn how ESP can give your agency *Extraordinary Insight™* into your K-12 education data, contact Greg Nadeau at (781) 370-1017 or gnadeau@espsg.com.

This document is part of *The Optimal Reference Guide Series*, designed to help education data decision makers analyze, manage, and share data in the 21st Century.

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ESP Solutions Group

(512) 458-8364

www.espsolutionsgroup.com

Austin • Boston • Washington DC