*Common Education Data Standards (CEDS) is being voluntarily adopted in the field, with stakeholders across the states and education sectors engaging in conversations around the standards, aligning data systems to the standards, and putting the standards to use to support the exchange and application of the data. This **CEDS in the Field** case study focuses on the early work of Washington, which was the first state to engage P-20W (early learning through workforce) stakeholders to develop a statewide plan to align with CEDS. It walks step-by-step through the process the state took to convene key stakeholders and design a plan to align the state's data systems with CEDS, offering tips along the way.*

Background

Bill Huennekens, Data Governance and EdFacts Coordinator at the Washington Office of The Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), wanted to bring together a group of stakeholders from across the state to learn about CEDS and the ways in which Washington could use it to further its longitudinal data system efforts. While a few OSPI staff had learned about CEDS at national conferences and workshops, Mr. Huennekens wanted to introduce CEDS to a broader range of staff from OSPI and across Washington's P-20W environment.

Step 1: Organize Workshop

As a first step, Mr. Huennekens reached out to CEDS and National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) staff to propose the workshop idea, and was met with enthusiasm. With the CEDS team on board, he then contacted Melissa Beard, P-20W Data Governance Coordinator of Washington State's Education Research and Data Center (ERDC), to see if her team would like to participate. Seeing mapping to CEDS as the foundational activity of the P-20W Data Governance Committee, Ms. Beard was immediately interested.

In agreement, the two then sent out invitations via the organizations' listservs to colleagues in partner organizations: other state agencies, districts, early learning and postsecondary organizations, neighboring state education agencies, vendors, foundation partners, and colleagues within OSPI and ERDC (see Appendix A for text of the invitation and a full list of invitees).

Step 2: Convene Stakeholders

On the morning of March 14, 2012, the Washington CEDS Workshop kicked off. Filling the room were representatives from across the region, as well as national partners: OSPI, ERDC, State Board of Community and Technical Colleges, community colleges, Washington State University, University of Washington, State Institute for Public Policy, Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee, Department of Social and Health Services, Department of Enterprise Services, Department of Early Learning, Governor's Office of Accountability, North Shore School District, Washington School Information Processing Cooperative (WSIPC), and vendors, as well as Oregon's Chief Information Officer and Idaho's IT Project Manager.

WA CEDS Workshop Agenda

1. **Welcome & Introductions**
2. **CEDS 101**
   2.1 What is CEDS?
   2.2 How is it developed?
   2.3 Who is involved?
3. **CEDS 201**
   3.1 CEDS Data Model
   3.2 CEDS Align Tool
   3.3 CEDS Connect Tool
4. **Open Discussion–What Could Be**
   4.1 What opportunities might CEDS create for the education data objectives in WA?
5. **Practical Discussion–What Should Be**
   5.1. Reality and prioritization discussion around possible opportunities that might be embraced now
6. **Next Steps–What Will Be**
   6.1. Action item and resource identification
7. **Wrap Up**

CEDS project representatives presented on the CEDS project in general, outlining the need for and benefits of CEDS, as well as the data model and tools that have been developed to help the stakeholder community effectively leverage CEDS. Participants were also given the chance to ask questions about CEDS and make suggestions to improve the Align and Connect tools.

Step 3: Identify the Value and Potential Uses of Alignment with CEDS

Next, the presenters shifted gears to facilitate a discussion about "what could be." That is, what opportunities might CEDS create for the state's education data efforts? The group was led through a discussion to identify specific ways in which CEDS was relevant to and could be used to benefit Washington's unique P-20W environment. This customized dialogue covered the practical ways in which the state could leverage the standards and CEDS tools to gain greater clarity on the content of the state's existing source systems, and the degree of alignment across individual systems. This effort would benefit the state's P-20W efforts in many ways, including providing insight into the state's ongoing metadata collection, informing data governance discussions about integrating data from multiple state agencies, and effectively using the information to get answers to key policy questions. As part of the session, the group brainstormed all of the source systems that could potentially be aligned with CEDS, beginning with early learning systems and making their way through the rest of the P-20W spectrum.

"The introduction to CEDS was great, and the fact that we were all in the same room together strategizing how this would work is what made the whole day worthwhile. Right now, we are all getting CEDS intros within our domain, but this was the first time we were all in the same room together understanding what it could mean across the education system. We had great representation from a variety of sectors. This was very helpful!"
—Melissa Beard, Washington

Step 4: Prioritize Practical Opportunities for Alignment with CEDS

Once buy-in was firmly established, the group again shifted gears to a practical discussion about "what should be." They considered the real opportunities that might be embraced now, as well as how those opportunities should be prioritized.

Then came decision time. The group determined that all source systems that will feed the P-20W statewide longitudinal data system (SLDS), with the exception of workforce data systems, should be mapped to CEDS as the initial step of the P-20W Data Governance Committee (DGC). This would provide the DGC a tangible starting point to (1) detail the universe of data available from all the P-20W source systems, and (2) allow the DGC to identify the degree of alignment among the source systems for elements collected by more than one agency. This information will help facilitate decisions regarding which source system will be the system of record for common elements. Each agency's/program's data steward will be responsible for the mapping of his or her system(s) (see Appendix B for full list of Washington P-20W source systems to be mapped to CEDS).

Step 5: Next Steps

Next, the group considered the question of "what will be?" and identified some next steps to move the state toward that vision. Action items and resources were identified and all participants were given tasks to accomplish over the coming weeks and months. A meeting of the P-20W Data Governance Committee was scheduled for the following month. By that meeting, each data steward agreed to begin the process of mapping his/her organization's data dictionary to CEDS using the Align tool and have a timeline along which the remainder of their mapping work would be completed.

Update

Since the workshop, the K12 Data Governance Group accepted a proposal by Mr. Huennekens to make a recommendation to the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The language would lay out a strategy to implement CEDS in Washington, and describe what adoption of CEDS means in Washington K12. With the group's approval, Mr. Huennekens drafted language for review by the group during its May 2012 meeting, suggesting that OSPI should pursue this work to support collaboration with the ERDC on the P-20W data warehouse effort; help it align with other states; and, through use of the forthcoming CEDS Connect tool (currently in development), allow the state to identify use cases and other practical applications of its CEDS-aligned data (see Appendix C for full text of this proposal).

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[1]For more information on the CEDS Align and Connect tools, visit https://ceds.ed.gov.

About the Common Education Data Standards

CEDS is a national, collaborative effort to develop voluntary data standards for a key set of education data elements to streamline the exchange, comparison, and understanding of data within and across P-20 (early learning through postsecondary education) institutions and sectors.

Appendix A: Workshop Invitation Language and Invitees

Invitation to the Washington CEDS Workshop

The following message was sent via listserv to invite to representatives from the partner organizations listed in the next section.

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P-20W Data Governance

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), Education Research
and Data Center (ERDC), U.S. Department of Education and Statewide Longitudinal
Data Systems (SLDS) State Support Team would like to invite you to participate
in a workshop on Version 2 of the Common Education Data Standards (CEDS) that
were released by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in January.

The CEDS project is a national, collaborative effort to develop voluntary data
standards to streamline the exchange, comparison, and understanding of data
within and across P-20 (early learning through postsecondary all the way to
workforce) institutions and sectors. CEDS Version 2 includes a broad scope of
elements spanning much of the P-20 spectrum and provides greater context for un-
derstanding the standards' interrelationships and practical utility. Specifi-
cally, Version 2 of CEDS focuses on elements and modeling in the Early Learning,
K12, and Postsecondary sectors and includes domains, entities, elements, options
sets, and related use cases. Version 2 of CEDS can be found at the CEDS website:
(http://ceds.ed.gov).

The workshop will take place on March 14 from 9 am to 3 pm at the WIIN Center in
Tacoma, 6501 N. 23rd St. We have arranged for lunch to be provided on site so
that we take the most advantage of our time together.

If you can participate in the workshop, please go here to register by Thursday,
March 8. If you have colleagues or staff who you would like to attend the work-
shop, please forward this to them so they can register as well. Please note if
you do not register you will not be included in the count for the lunch order.
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Invitees

Invited by Mr. Huennekens: OSPI staff, vendors (Choice Solutions, Washington State SIS Vendors), WSIPC, K12 Data Governance Group, legislative staff, Gates Foundation, K12 colleagues in Oregon and Idaho

Invited by Ms. Beard: Representatives from Education Data & Research Center (P-20), Governor's staff, Department of Early Learning, Higher Education Coordinating Board, Council of Presidents, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, Institutional Researchers at State Universities and Community Colleges

Appendix B: Washington P-20W Source Systems to be Aligned with CEDS

During the workshop, the following list of Washington P-20W source systems were selected for mapping to CEDS. Each agency's/program's data steward will be responsible for the mapping of his or her system(s).

Early Learning

- Merit (professional development system)
- Famlink (childcare)
- Birth-3
- State-funded preschool
- Early learning staff registry

K12

- CEDARS (OSPI student data system)
- K12 student data, across OSPI data systems
- CSRS (OSPI legacy student data system)
- Teacher certification system
- K12 finance
- S275 (K12 staff collection)
- MSDR (K12 migrant and bilingual system)
- K12 attendance and weapons
- Assessment systems
- EDTEC

Postsecondary

- State Board of Community and Technical Colleges data system[2]
- PCHEES (public four-year colleges)
- HECB (postsecondary financial aid system)[3]

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[2] Both current system, and future system, once ready

[3] HECB representatives did not participate in the workshop and have not agreed to contribute data to the P-20W SLDS. However, the system's data will be mapped by other state staff.

Washington State CEDS Adoption Policy Recommendation by the Data Governance Group

May 24, 2012

The Data Governance Group recommends that OSPI accept the CEDS data definitions, terminology, relationships, and code sets for a core subset of data elements commonly used by and among state/district/postsecondary institution student information systems.

Mapping CEDS data elements to Washington State K12 data shall be done at the direction of student, educator, fiscal and directory data owners with the collaboration of data stewards. The goal is to move from level 2 to 3 adoption of CEDS as outlined below.
- Any time an alignment is determined to be "Related only at a concept level, with differences in the intent" with the CEDS model, that difference shall be documented and communicated via the comments options on the CEDS web-site.

Mapping work shall be done in the Troux Enterprise Architecture and Metadata tool.
- The Data Governance Coordinator and Enterprise Architect are to support this effort.
- Data Management Committee meetings shall be used to facilitate this effort.

Mapping of CEDS data elements shall be done as resources are available.
- If funding from NCES or another source becomes available, OSPI shall seek to utilize the funding to further the CEDS adoption effort.
- When undertaking project work with data systems, mapping to CEDS shall be a work product.

When undertaking project work with data systems, any work that redefines or combines data elements shall attempt to align with CEDS data elements as closely as practicable.

In exploring the collection of any new data elements, every practicable effort shall be made to ensure that the definition of new elements aligns with CEDS.

Levels of CEDS Adoption (Source: CEDS presentation at http://nces.ed.gov/whatsnew/conferences/statsdc/2011/presentations/VI_E.pdf)

Level 1 – Acknowledgement & Recognition: The organization has analyzed and acknowledges that the CEDS is vital to optimizing the ability for state/district/postsecondary institution student information systems to share, compare, and analyze these elements. However, there are legislative or other barriers that need to be overcome in order to make the formal decision to accept the data definitions, terminology, relationships, and code sets for a core subset of data elements.

Level 2 – Agreement and Acceptance: The organization has made a formal decision to accept the data definitions, terminology, relationships, and code sets for a core subset of data elements commonly used by and among state/district/postsecondary institution student information systems. This acceptance will be reflected by either adoption of or mapping to the CEDS. The subset of data elements will vary based on the data being shared, compared, and/or analyzed in Level 5.

Level 3 – Technically Documented: The organization has mapped to and can publish technical documents with metadata that includes, the data definitions, terminology and code sets for a core subset of data elements commonly used by states in their P-20 SLDSs. The subset of data elements will vary based on the data being shared, compared, and/or analyzed in Level 5.

Level 4 – Ready to Exchange: Has stored and/or has the capability to represent, the data definitions, terminology, relationships, and code sets for a core subset of data elements commonly used by state/district/postsecondary institution student information systems and enables these systems to share, compare, and analyze these elements.

Level 5 – Operational: The organization is operationally sharing, comparing, and analyzing data with at least one stakeholder partner using CEDS.