

**EIMAC Spring 2008 Meeting  
E-Transcripts Concurrent Session  
Wednesday, April 23, 2008  
Presenters: Bob Beecham, NE; Bethann Canada, VA; Tom Olson, SC**

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In January, EIMAC convened an E-transcript Working Group to address the emerging state concerns regarding e-transcript vendors and implementation. As participants of that working group, this panel provided an overview of the group's discussion as well as details regarding current implementation efforts in their respective states.

Bob Beecham presented an overview of Nebraska's participation in the Midwestern Higher Education Consortium's (MHEC) contract with e-transcript vendor Docufide. Nebraska is using funds from their IES SLDS grant to initially fund this program but they have not yet secured funding to sustain the program so that it can continue to be free to participating districts. Currently, they have 100% of public institutions of higher education (IHE) and 60% of private IHEs participating in this program with 42% of the state's school districts. Highlights of the program include:

- The yearly cost is about \$300,000 per year and is based on the number of students in the state.
- Docufide is working closely with the districts that don't have the capacity to send transcripts electronically.
- The service is not used for sending transcripts between districts.
- Students receive immediate notification when the transcript is sent.
- The content of the transcript is chosen by the individual school district.
- Docufide can customize the appearance of the transcript at the request of the district.

During the discussion, a representative from Indiana mentioned that they use Docufide as well and while many schools use the Docufide print driver they can also export to XML; however, they have found that many IHE's can't accept the XML version.

Bethann Canada described Virginia's efforts to implement e-transcripts utilizing SIF's Student Record Exchange. They have contracted with the National Transcript Center to begin a pilot program with 10 districts and two public IHEs. The state will pay for the software and the districts will fund the hardware. She has found that IHE registrars and admissions officers are excited about the pilot because transcripts are the only remaining paper documents they receive with regard to student applications. As this project moves forward, she is concerned about the adoption of PESC standards, FERPA effects, sustainability issues, and the ability to transfer across state lines.

Tom Olson provided an overview of the E-transcript Working Group's meeting in January. Several state representatives gathered in Orlando to outline state concerns and to ask direct questions to the leading e-transcript vendors as well as SIFA and PESC regarding their current efforts to bring standards to this area; a meeting summary can be found at [www.ccsso.org/eimac](http://www.ccsso.org/eimac). The working group focused their discussion along the following topics: data transmission, security, pricing, and transcripts vs. student records.

He mentioned that many IHE's are using the EDI standard through the server at the University of Texas (UT) but the states are concerned because it is unclear what will happen if UT abandons this project. Once the states finished their initial discussions, representatives from SIFA and PESC joined them to discuss the work they're currently doing to better align standards across the P20 landscape and, specifically, to streamline the standards involved in e-transcripts. Laurie Collins, SIFA, provided an explanation of the SIF certification process and discussed their recent efforts to develop SIF state profiles and SIF functionality profiles. Similarly, Michael Sessa outlined PESC's Seal of Approval process and discussed how the two standards groups are working together. After lunch, representatives from the vendors joined the group to discuss their services and answer questions that were raised in the morning session.

After Tom's presentation, a participant asked if the panelists perceived any possible FERPA violations when implementing e-transcripts given that the contractual relationship is between the state and the third party vendor rather than the school and the vendor. Representatives from SC, NE, and IN all stated that while the contract and payment is at the state level, each participating district must have a service agreement in place with the vendor.