CEDS Shining Stars
Idaho Department of Labor

The Challenge

The Idaho Department of Labor (DOL) needed to consume key sets of data from the Idaho State Board of Education (SBOE) for the purpose of complying with federal reporting requirements such as Eligible Training Provider under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and conducting numerous research projects related to education and labor. With any project that involves transferring data, the primary challenges are always determining how to move the data and mapping the elements and definitions of the source and destination systems to ensure understanding, reliability, and consistency.

CEDS Can Help

The Idaho SBOE suggested using the Common Education Data Standards (CEDS) as the standard for each agency. As the Idaho DOL investigated CEDS, not only did they decide to use the standard, but they also decided to use the CEDS Normalized Data Schema (NDS) to solve the issue of transporting the data from one system to another. Both the Department of Labor and the Board of Education have the CEDS NDS installed on their respective systems. The project is in its final testing stage and the plan is to move data from one NDS to the other through a secure transfer beginning in fall 2016.

SBOE will load their NDS with data requested by DOL for reporting or research purposes. Loading the data will trigger DOL's NDS to extract the data out of the SBOE's NDS and into DOL's NDS. Data used for federal reporting will be housed longitudinally in DOL's system, while data used for specific research projects will be deleted at the conclusion of the project.

Why CEDS

Idaho selected CEDS because it is a recognized national standard of data elements and definitions. When two agencies decide to share data, they must decide first whether to create a new standard or adopt an already existing standard. DOL and SBOE agreed that CEDS was the best standard for their project. Using CEDS as the standard would result in nearly identical implementations of the same solution, allowing for that solution to extend to multiple agencies for future projects. In addition, the CEDS NDS supplied a technical data model standard for storing and retrieving data, which provided a resource that could be used long term for multiple projects. Each agency simply maps to the CEDS standard and loads the required data into the NDS. Data is then shared from NDS to NDS.

Future Plans

As the Idaho DOL looks to future plans, there is discussion related to building dimensional tables that would exist on top of the NDS for easier reporting of data. They have also expressed interest in having CEDS develop an API that would allow states to use web services when moving data from one CEDS structured data store to another.

For More Information

For more information on CEDS, visit https://ceds.ed.gov

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