National Transcript Center

The National Transcript Center (NTC) is a secure national server that improves the efficiency, reliability, cost, and security of academic transcript exchange.

NTC member institutions log into a user friendly, browser-based application to send, receive, manage, track, print, and import their electronic transcripts.

Partnering with K-12 state education agencies and postsecondary institutions, the NTC network allows member institutions to communicate with the NTC server using the open national standard of its choice, such as XML, EDI, and SIF. With NTC's proprietary data translation engine, schools can expand their trading partner network to include schools using other major protocols.

NTC offers privacy and identity protection that far exceeds competitive offerings. NTC is an ideal solution for K-12 schools, colleges, universities, and education organizations seeking to comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

NTC solves major problems for education institutions:

▶ Helps paper-based institutions convert to an electronic process – easily, inexpensively, and quickly. The economic benefits are quantifiable and compelling.

▶ Allows any institution – regardless of the protocol that it uses (e.g., XML, EDI) – to send and receive with any other partner in the network. This is a breakthrough technology.

▶ Brings major improvements in transmission security and transcript fraud prevention. Institutions can attain peace of mind.

▶ Saves valuable time and money. Better, faster, AND cheaper.

▶ Improves the tracking and reporting of K-12 mobile students, dropouts, and migrant students. This helps improve data quality.

About the National Transcript Center (NTC)

The National Transcript Center is committed to OPEN STANDARDS. NTC does not endorse the use of a proprietary vendor standard for transcript exchange. As lifelong veterans of the education data community, we have spent our careers advocating the use of open national standards to facilitate more effective data exchange.

NTC actively participates or will participate with the following organizations in the electronic transcript community:

▶ American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO)

▶ American School Counselor Association (ASCA)

▶ National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP)

▶ National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)

▶ Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council (PESC)

▶ Schools Interoperability Framework Association (SIFA)

The National Transcript Center's parent, ESP Solutions Group, is the premier large-scale data system design and development organization for state education agencies. ESP's team is comprised of industry experts who pioneered the concept of "data-driven decision making" in the 1970's and now help optimize the management of state and local education agencies.

Beginning in 1989, ESP's Dr. Glynn Ligon and Dr. Barbara Clements served on the original SPEEDE/ExPRESS committee, the first authoritative body to create an electronic transcript standard. Barbara Andrepont, ESP's senior data management architect, serves as the chairperson of the SIF E-Transcript working group.

ESP personnel have advised all 52 education agencies as well as the U.S. Department of Education on the practice of K-12 school data management. Building electronic student exchange networks is one of ESP's core businesses and ESP is regarded as the top firm in the country for designing and deploying large-scale student record systems as well as translating/crosswalking education data formats.

Transcripts are a subset of the total student record. The principals at ESP and NTC understand the data, policy, and technical issues related to a student record exchange system and are highly qualified to administer the leading K-12 electronic transcript network.

How NTC Works

NTC provides five key solutions to academic institutions:

1. Web interface for managing digital document exchanges, which helps save tremendous time and money for registrars

2. Large network of institutions with whom to share records

3. Proprietary data translator technology that facilitates data exchange through disparate EDI, XML, and SIF based systems

4. Data mapping wizard to take the pain out of setting up a data exchange system

5. Ability to send paper transcripts at substantially reduced costs when target institutions cannot receive electronic transcripts

Technical Requirements for All Users
For all users, the NTC web application only requires users to use a standard web browser, specifically Microsoft Internet Explorer 4.0 or higher. No plug-ins are required for our system and our system is built to enable compatibility with future versions of Mozilla Firefox (especially as open source technologies become more pervasive in education institutions).

Additional Technical Requirement for K-12 School Districts Using the Schools Interoperability Framework (SIF)
For K-12 districts/campuses that choose to communicate with NTC using SIF, the student information system (SIS) in that district will need a certified SIF agent v1.5 or higher. NTC has the ability for districts that already have a student information system with a certified SIF agent to import their received records/transcripts directly into their student information systems.

The Business Case

Overview

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

The student transcript is by far the most valued and most frequently exchanged education record inside a state, across states, and from elementary/secondary education to postsecondary institutions. So much depends upon the integrity and timeliness of the student transcript, that a new electronic transcript exchange system can also help your institution with:

1. **Linking Individual Student Records Across Years:** Most states have a statewide student identifier and are collecting individual student records. Now you need to link those records across years and with annual assessment scores to facilitate meaningful longitudinal analysis and reporting.

2. **Improving Data Quality:** Districts and SEA have cited issues related to the quality of the data reported by SEA about their schools. We need to tighten up the standards for our data, train districts in those standards, and improve the use of business rules to ensure the integrity of the data collected and reported.

3. **Tracking Mobile Students:** Your state receives many 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 appropriate instructional and support services begin immediately upon enrollment, certifying the accuracy of education records sent from school to school, and maintaining the confidentiality of the contents of the student records are all crucial needs related to these students and their records.

4. **Reducing Cycle Time:** The cycle time 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. Including 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.

6. **Making More Efficient Use of Resources:** One leading state education agency calculated that they would reduce their expenses by sending electronic records/transcripts by 93%. This saved thousands of hours of staff time for other tasks and eliminated postage altogether.

The National Transcript Center invites you to consider a customized state e-transcript portal on our network.