



Fostering Collaborative Alaska State-Level Education and Workforce Database Development

Anchorage, Alaska – June 16 – 17, 2009

TENTATIVE AGENDA

June 16

12:00 – 1:15pm

Lunch – Welcome

Speaker:

Diane Barrans, *Executive Director, Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education*

Setting the Stage

David Longanecker's brief presentation will address the goals and agenda for the activities of the next day-and-a-half. He will discuss how inadequate data severely hinders our ability to answer legitimate public policy questions. He will also outline the serious impediments to constructing and using really robust data systems that could be instrumental in designing more effective public policies.

Speaker:

David A. Longanecker, *President, Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE)*

1:15 – 2:45pm

Mythbusting: Fact and Fiction in Legal Privacy Protections (WEBCAST)

Perhaps the largest barrier to the development of longitudinal data systems is perceived legal prohibitions, especially those based on interpretations of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). FERPA – and the way that it has been administered by the U.S. Department of Education – has had a significant chilling effect on the development and implementation of robust longitudinal data systems. A lack of common understanding of what is permissible under FERPA; a fear of non-compliance; and widely-varying state attorneys general opinions regarding FERPA in the aggregate have created a significant barrier to state-level sharing of student data for important and legitimate educational purposes. This session will feature an attorney who has taken the lead, working with the Data Quality Campaign, to provide reasonable interpretations of FERPA and dispel the mythology surrounding FERPA. He will discuss how to balance privacy and other educational concerns that require use of data, how to fashion a longitudinal data system that complies with FERPA, and the challenges that remain.

Speakers:

Steve Winnick, *Senior Counsel, EducationCounsel LLC*

Charles McGrew, *Director of P20 Initiatives, Data Quality Campaign*

2:45 – 3:00pm

Break

3:00 – 3:30pm

Tapping into Available Resources (WEBCAST)

The development of a longitudinal data system is sure to be costly, especially in the current economic climate. Fortunately, the federal government has a bountiful supply of funding available to states that can build a competitive case for spending that money effectively. Charles McGrew from the Data Quality Campaign has been tracking where those pots of money exist and how states can access those funding streams. He will also provide insights on how Alaska can make a strong case for itself in the competitive RFP process.

Speaker:

Charles McGrew, *Director of P20 Initiatives, Data Quality Campaign*

3:30 – 5:00pm

Facilitated Conversations

Participants are invited to gather in small groups to discuss the issues they face related to privacy and data governance. What was new information in Steve Winnick's presentation and what further questions regarding confidentiality need to be addressed? What are the key obstacles to sharing data?

5:00 – 6:00pm

Reception at AlaskAdvantage Success Center

June 17

8:30 – 9:30am

Continental Breakfast

9:30 – 10:30am

Harnessing Data for Improved Policy and Practice in Alaska

It makes no sense to expend the political capital, resources, and considerable effort it will take to build a data system that turns out to be of little use in leading to improved public policymaking or in creating more effective accountability systems. Peter Ewell will lead a session to address two key elements of data systems development: the elements that are necessary for an integrated education and workforce data system that can deliver on its promises and a discussion of good practice principles related to data governance/data sharing.

Speakers:

Peter Ewell, *Vice President, National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS)*

10:30 – 12:00pm

Facilitated Conversations

The goal of this session is to discuss how to progress this agenda, ultimately leading to a stronger sense of a set of agreed-upon needs of the state for an integrated database, an understanding of the impediments that must be overcome and to begin developing a strategy for moving forward and determining the timeline for action on the "next steps." What is currently being done to provide data that inform public policy and institutional practices? What is needed in Alaska before it can press forward toward building a longitudinal data system?

12:00 – 1:00pm

Lunch

1:00 – 2:30pm

What is Needed and What are Next Steps

With the group back together, this discussion will address what are the next steps each stakeholder is prepared to take toward realizing a linked longitudinal data system and for a competitive submission in response to the federal RFP. What does each stakeholder group or agency need to make the commitment to data sharing? What is the best structure for Alaska to pursue? The discussion will also consider what are next steps that:

- Can be done under existing governance structures and with existing resources (including both financial – possibly with federal stimulus money – and personnel).
- Will yield results (in terms of new and useful information) relatively quickly.
- Will help build momentum toward a more robust and integrated system.

2:30 – 2:45pm

Concluding Thoughts and Adjournment

Speakers:

David Longanecker

Peter Ewell