



Learning and Performance Standards Repository

Learning and performance¹ standards also known as academic content or curriculum standards drive everything that occurs in pK-12 education. These standards are developed by each state department of education, resulting in 52 different state standards. These standards reflect the various academic content areas determined by each state department of education. Some states have as few as six learning standards while others have as many as twenty. In addition, national content organizations develop their own learning and performance standards. Some states utilize these as a basis for developing their own, by modifying them to address local and state needs. In order to ensure that their products address these standards, vendors typically create proprietary standards repositories. This often causes inconsistencies between representations of the same state learning and performance standard from one vendor to the next.

One of the most challenging aspects of the way in which curriculum standards are utilized is the correlation between curriculum and instructional resources to the learning standards. This correlation is often done via an intermediary, which is essentially a “connecting table” that links instructional resources with relevant curriculum standards. For the purposes of the proposed Learning and Performance Standards Repository, incorporating an intermediary and enabling correlation is out of scope for this project.

Why a Learning and Performance Standards Repository?

- Eliminates the duplication of repositories. Currently vendors or other educational entities create their own learning and performance standards repositories or purchase an existing one.
- Increases the accuracy of the representation of each state’s standards. These repositories are created by subjectively parsing the curriculum standards from a document format into a database format. Although subject matter experts typically do this parsing process, these staff don’t necessarily have the same interpretation of the standards as the authors, and may not represent them in the manner in which the authors intended.
- Incorporating learning and performance standards into products to allow user analysis and reporting becomes easier.
- Centralized authority provides learning and performance standards users’ timely, correct information.
- Adds efficiency to agency process of managing standards information.
- Long-term reduction in costs for participating vendor organizations as a result of pooling resources to maintain the repository.
- Presents architecture for the learning standards repository in a uniform electronic format providing ease of data storage, analysis by users and a standard way to describe learning standards.

An Educational Community Collaborative

A vision for the various roles of the key stakeholders that need to be involved in the collaborative are described below. Given that no one entity can generate and support a national learning and performance standards repository, each organization would need to provide expertise and support. This expertise and support would come in a variety of forms including an advisory committee to provide input into needs and direction for desired features and functionalities of the repository.

SIFA

SIFA, as a neutral non-profit organization, proposes to lead the development of the XML Learning and Performance Standards Repository. The long-term vision is for states to play an increasingly active role in the repository to ensure that their standards are accurately represented in a standard XML format.

State Departments of Education

Initially, State Departments of Education would authorize the final XML version of the standards, to ensure that the repository would contain the official sources of the learning and performance standards. Over time, the state departments of education would increasingly manage and update their standards in XML as new versions are adopted. In addition, it would be requested for some of the state departments of education to sit on the advisory committee.

National Associations

As national associations generate national standards, they will also authorize the final XML version of the standards, ensuring that the repository would contain the official sources of the learning and performance standards. Over time, these national associations would increasingly manage and update their standards in XML as new versions are adopted. In addition, it would be requested for some of the national associations to sit on the advisory committee.

Vendors

Participating vendors would have access the authoritative Learning and Performance Standards XML Repository. There would be a nominal fee for the use of the repository in order to make this a self-sustaining initiative. In addition, it would be requested for some vendors to sit on the advisory committee.

The National Cooperative

In order to make the Learning and Performance Standards XML Repository a self-sustaining initiative, it is proposed that it be managed by a national cooperative. Those organizations desiring to utilize the Learning and Performance Standards Repository would pay a nominal fee per year. This money would be used to build features and functionalities for the repository and update and maintain the standards as new ones are adopted.

To provide oversight of the cooperative, an advisory committee consisting of representatives from the state departments of education, national organizations, and the participating vendors would be formed. This committee would to identify and define the needs of the states and associations, and drive the adoption and implementation of consistent, authoritative learning and performance standards.