Workcred Voluntary Data Sharing Network

Thursday, February 13, 2020
1899 L St, NW, 11th floor
Washington, DC 20036
10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Meeting Summary

Welcome, Introductions, and Project Overview

Roy Swift, executive director of Workcred, and Karen Elzey, associate executive director, opened the meeting, facilitated attendee introductions, and set the context for the Voluntary Data Sharing Network. One of Workcred's main goals is to further integrate the certification community into the broader workforce development community. Toward that goal, Workcred received a grant from Lumina Foundation to create a network of credentialing bodies to discuss the value of sharing their data, so information on non-degree credentials and the value or return on investment (ROI) can be better understood. The purpose of this network is to learn more about the opportunities and challenges to sharing data so that individuals, employers, and policymakers can make more informed choices, help shape the conversation about the minimum data elements that should be collected by credentialing bodies, and identify the role certifications and assessment-based certificates have in signaling that individuals have the skills necessary for a role or occupation.

Over the next 18 months, until approximately July 2021, the network is expected to meet quarterly to:
- Identify what data is currently shared and why;
- Discuss the benefits and challenges to sharing data;
- Develop possible solutions to known data-sharing restrictions or regulations;
- Provide input to and help develop a minimum standard practice for data collection in order to participate in efforts such as those currently led by the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC);
- Co-design the value proposition for certification bodies to voluntarily share their data;
- Learn about and help define NSC's Industry Credentials and Education Performance Data System project; and
- Consider options to standardize internal data collection to enable participation in such efforts, though not obligated to do so.

The Industry Certification and Education Performance Data System

Vanessa Brown, managing director of strategic initiatives at NSC, provided attendees with further details on the Industry Credentials and Education Performance Data System, a pilot program of NSC, and its initial outcomes. While NSC primarily collects data on degree and enrollment for higher education, as more emphasis is being placed on the importance of data for non-degree credentials like industry-based certifications and certificates, NSC launched this pilot program to help provide transparency and information to better understand how non-degree credentials can lead to successful career pathways, as well as provide

evidence of new skills and competencies, and the value or ROI of these types of credentials. Data sharing is critical in understanding the related employment and wage outcomes, as compared to what is already collected and known for higher education-related credentials, and can even influence state policy and future educational funding decisions.

Ms. Brown explained that NSC is working to determine what type of non-degree data is currently being collected, what format it is in, the best way to integrate and synthesize the different types of credential data in a more meaningful way to multiple stakeholders and users, and what value proposition would better enable sharing of this data. Working with the U.S. Census Bureau, NSC is beginning to link non-degree credentials data, enrollment and degree data, and wage record data, and eventually will be able to report labor market outcomes in the aggregate. However, some obstacles are arising with non-degree credential data, including key data elements missing for matching, overall quality and format of the data, as well as gaining appropriate student consent to share the data. Other barriers include the numerous data privacy protection regulations that restrict how personal data, such as date of birth, can be stored, processed, and shared. These include the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which is a regulation in the European Union (EU) on data protection and privacy in the EU and the European Economic Area (EEA) as well as the transfer of personal data outside the EU and EEA areas, and the new California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA), which provides its citizens with GDPR-like protections including a requirement for companies to inform consumers about the data collected and shared, and gives them a right to access, delete, and opt-out. To help overcome these barriers, NSC currently has very well established internal data privacy and information security policies and procedures in place that will protect data that is collected. In addition, certification bodies that decide to share data with NSC can conduct on-site data audits with their chief information security officer.

Once particular concern that was raised by meeting attendees is the fact that it is often very costly to translate international transcripts and credentials. Ms. Brown commented that NSC is involved in convenings and organizations related to this type of international education data exchange, but is currently focusing its efforts on the United States, as there are many other challenges to integrating international data. Another concern involved understanding credential attainment for high school students that credentialing bodies often cannot track, and Ms. Brown confirmed that NSC can provide non-degree credential data for high school students, but it is not currently integrated into NSC's StudentTracker for High School® service, or as part of the industry credential reporting service. Adding that data is a planned future enhancement, Ms. Brown also shared that the NSC has a research center that is looking at data on more than 34 million people who have started college, but did not complete a degree. Additionally, Ms. Brown reported that NSC has recently gained approval from the Internal Revenue Service to begin integrating its employment and wage data with the U.S. Census Bureau data and the educational attainment data collected by NSC, ultimately contributing to more robust labor market information and a better understanding of career pathways.

Peer Example: Board of Certified Safety Professionals

Marya Ryan, program director with the Board of Certified Safety Professionals (BCSP), shared a presentation with attendees that highlighted benefits and challenges to data sharing for BCSP. Major benefits of sharing data with NSC include:

- Developing a more complete picture of a person's educational pathway;
- Helping in strategic planning;
- Identifying blind spots (e.g., target populations, program development);
- Recognizing trends in credential pathways;
- Identifying possible sources of new certificants (e.g., which degree programs provide logical pathways to BCSP credentials, where credential holders go after certification, etc.);
- Refining targeted outreach to existing and new markets;
- Answering question about student outcomes; and
- Providing aggregate employment data, such as industries that employ credential holders, salary and wage information, and job flows.

More specifically to BCSP, data from NSC could enhance and grow partnerships with universities for their [Qualified Academic Program](#) (QAP), which is an academic degree program in safety, health, and the environment whose required course curriculum has been found to be a substantial match to the Associate Safety Professional® examination blueprint, and enable a better understanding of QAP-related student outcomes.

Ms. Ryan also summarized the key challenges they face in sharing their data, including data integrity, data security, methods of integration with individual databases, data privacy regulations (e.g., GDPR is the basis for BCSP's current privacy policy), and various aspects of meeting and maintaining accreditation (e.g., accreditation under ISO IEC 17024 requires that certifying bodies keep confidential all information obtained during the certification process, unless individuals provide written consent for release of the information). Another issue that has arisen is the fact that under GDPR, a person can request to opt out or delete all information about themselves, which hinders a certifying body's ability to certify them or maintain their certification.

BCSP has entered into a pilot data-sharing program with NSC, built on the principles of ISO 27001, to begin developing solutions to and working through these challenges. During a recent on-site audit, BCSP met with the NSC cybersecurity team to observe and discuss their policies and procedures on data security. As the pilot is only in its initial stages, they are still developing the contract to govern the relationship and working out such details as ending participation (e.g., with 90 days' written notice), data breach procedures (e.g., time period to notify either side of a breach, timeframe allowed to resolve a breach, etc.), and the list of optional and required data elements. As such, no data has been shared yet.

Interactive Activity: What Type of Data Do Certification Bodies Collect?

Workcred's director of research, Isabel Cardenas-Navia, and Dr. Swift shared [results of the survey](#) that network members participated in prior to the meeting about data that certification bodies collect or do not collect. Not surprisingly, all survey respondents indicated that they collect the names and contact information (addresses and emails) on their certificants. Other data elements that were found to be collected by most certification bodies include date of birth (which, along with name, is critical for NSC data-matching capabilities) and some specific certification-related data (e.g., name of certification, award date).

However, many other data points varied in percentage of certification bodies collecting the information, including social security number (less than 10%), gender and race (about 50%), disability status (about 25%), and revocation status (about 70%).

During the discussion that ensued, attendees pointed out that most certification bodies have different data collection requirements related to different certifications, and data elements often change from what is collected during the initial application process to once the certification is awarded, so answering the survey was a challenging given these variables. There were also a number of data collection elements that were not included in the survey that certification bodies do routinely collect, including level of education, what is collected from the individual verses what is input by the certification body, test modality, and retirement/pause status. Some even suggested including additional data points, such as what standards are used or followed, and what data would be pertinent to someone who wants to know more about the certification. Participants were also unclear of the intent of the question on preparatory materials (e.g., sample test study guide, text blueprint) and curriculum (curriculum for degree attainment that may result in exam passage versus curriculum for the certification test preparation) and may not have accurately provided an answer. Therefore, in light of the limitations pointed out during this discussion, participants recommended issuing a revised survey to see if the information changed once the questions were clarified and additional data points were included. Workcred staff agreed to revise the survey and asked for a group of volunteers to provide further input and test the new version of the survey prior to sending it out to the entire network.

Discussion: Barriers, Opportunities, and Benefits to Sharing Data

During this part of the meeting, attendees discussed the internal and external barriers that may prevent certification bodies from sharing data, the opportunities that are available if certification bodies agreed to share their data, and the types of information that would be valuable and available to certification bodies when combining data on certifications with other data sets.

Main concerns (barriers) for the group related to a perceived increase in workload (i.e., staff capacity) and the accuracy of data (e.g., freely entered data versus a limited set of data to choose from, inaccuracies in self-reported data, etc.). Additionally, it was pointed out from the previous discussion that certifying bodies do not collect the same type of information, so it will be difficult to collate and compare the data unless collection is more standardized. Many certification bodies also voiced concerns over whether sharing data will put their certificants at risk – does the organization have the appropriate security, administrative, technical, and physical measures in place to share the data? Is there a contingency plan? How does the profession feel about data sharing? How does an organization comply with external laws as well as internal policies about data sharing? Do accreditation standards or any contractual obligations provide guidelines or pose any restrictions on data sharing? – were among the questions raised by attendees.

In order to answer these questions, and provide guidance for future non-degree data sharing, it was recommended that a checklist be developed that certification bodies can answer or work to satisfy before beginning to provide data to NSC. Additionally, there needs to be information (i.e., a value proposition) developed to better enable certificants to choose when and how their data is shared, as well as information

(i.e., ROI) for certification bodies about the value of participating in these efforts. Ms. Brown also requested that this group begin thinking about how to shape the participation agreement with NSC, to include best practices, which could be a focus of the next meeting.

Other opportunities and benefits to enabling data sharing that attendees identified include reaching more certificants/growing business; enhancing strategies to better market to underserved populations (e.g., women, immigrants); influencing policymakers, legislation, and state eligible training provider lists; countering negative thinking and false assumptions; enhancing workforce development measures; understanding the shifts in careers and pathways to success to better be able to predict or recreate them; closing gaps between educators and employers; identifying new opportunities and partnerships; demonstrating the value of certifications and related competencies to decrease the prevalence of employer-developed programs; and developing one, cohesive voice for credential terms, meanings, and data.

Next Steps

Workcred will work with a group of volunteers to revise the survey as discussed during the meeting and reissue it to network members. Additionally, the following items were discussed as future activities for the network:

- Develop a checklist to guide certification bodies' participation in data sharing efforts prior to committing;
- Provide input and develop the agreement with NSC;
- Determine best practices to data privacy/consent for certificants;
- Create, validate, and standardize the core, minimum data requirements; benchmark other data that should be collected/required in the future;
- Determine the value proposition for other non-degree granting organizations to participate;
- Consider developing a national survey to further validate the work of the network; and
- Consider developing an annual report that can be presented and used at relevant conferences and events (e.g., the Institute for Credentialing Excellence or Association of Test Publishers annual conferences).

Additionally, the following dates have been targeted for the next quarterly meetings of the network, and further details will be determined and shared as developed:
- May 14, 2020
- September 17, 2020
- December 3, 2020
- February 25, 2021
- May 13, 2021

Meeting Attendance

Network Member Organization Name	Representative First Name	Representative Last Name
American Board of Multiple Specialties in Podiatry	Stephen	Permison
American Council on Exercise	Todd	Galati
American Health Information Management Association	Amy	Mosser
American Roads and Transportation Builders Association	Beth	Stinson
American Society for Clinical Pathology Board of Certification	Patricia	Tanabe
American Translators Association	Caitilin	Walsh
Association for Supply Chain Management	Mark	Imfield
Board of Certified Safety Professionals	Marya	Ryan
Building Performance Institute, Inc.	Nancy	Kaplan
Certified Fund Raising Executive International	Jeff	Stanger
Commission for Case Manager Certification	Vivian	Campagna
Commission for Case Manager Certification	MaryBeth	Kurland
Commission for Case Manager Certification	Debby	Formica
CompTIA	Carl	Bowman
EC-Council	Wesley	Alvarez
Human Resource Certification Institute	Nella	Brown
Human Resource Certification Institute	Lisa	Seyfried
Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences	Heather	Trusty
Institute of Hazardous Materials Management	Gene	Guilford
International Association of Privacy Professionals	Caitlin	Fennessy
International Board of Heart Rhythm Examiners	Tracy	Lofty
International Board of Specialty Certification	David	Bump
NALA - The Paralegal Association	Vanessa	Finley
National Commission for the Certification of Crane Operators	Bob	Mahlman
National Environmental Health Association	Rance	Baker
National Healthcareer Association	Jessica	Langley-Loep
National Inspection Testing and Certification, Corp.	Laura	Braeunig
National Restaurant Association/National Registry of Food Safety Professionals	Larry	Lynch
National Retail Federation	Shana	Treger
Pharmacy Technician Certification Board	Bill	Schimmel
Project Management Institute	Ashley	Forsyth
Society for Human Resource Management	Nancy	Woolever
Society of Certified Senior Advisors	Ann	Witherspoon
Society of Certified Senior Advisors	Christine	Niero
Other Attendees		
George Washington Institute of Public Policy	Bob	Sheets
Institute of Credentialing Excellence	Denise	Roosendaal
Lumina Foundation	Holly	Zanville
Lumina Foundation	Frank	Essien
National Student Clearinghouse	Vanessa	Brown
Whiteford Taylor & Preston, LLP	Mark	Franco

Meeting Agenda
Voluntary Data Sharing Network

February 13, 2020
10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. ET

1899 L Street, NW, 11th Floor
Washington, DC 20036

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS (10:00-10:30 a.m.) Roy Swift will open the meeting, facilitate participant introductions, and set the context for the Voluntary Data Sharing Network.	**Roy Swift** Executive Director, Workcred
VOLUNTARY DATA SHARING PROJECT OVERVIEW (10:30-10:50 a.m.) Karen Elzey will discuss the purpose of creating the Voluntary Data Sharing Network and the network activities over the next 18 months.	**Karen Elzey** Associate Executive Director, Workcred
THE INDUSTRY CERTIFICATION AND EDUCATION PERFORMANCE DATA SYSTEM (10:50-11:20 a.m.) Vanessa Brown will share information on the Industry Certification and Education Performance Data System, a pilot program of the National Student Clearinghouse, and its initial outcomes.	**Vanessa Brown** Managing Director, Strategic Initiatives, National Student Clearinghouse
PEER EXAMPLE: BOARD OF CERTIFIED SAFETY PROFESSIONALS (11:20-11:50 a.m.) Christy Uden and Marya Ryan will highlight reasons why the Board of Certified Safety Professionals is exploring a data sharing relationship with the National Student Clearinghouse. The discussion will include topics such as benefits and risks to a certification body, data privacy, and accreditation.	**Christy Uden** Chief Operating Officer, Board of Certified Safety Professionals **Marya Ryan** Program Director, Board of Certified Safety Professionals
INTERACTIVE ACTIVITY: WHAT TYPE OF DATA DO CERTIFICATION BODIES COLLECT? (11:50 a.m.-12:30 p.m.) Isabel Cardenas-Navia and Roy Swift will share the results of the survey about data that certification bodies collect. Participants will discuss why certification bodies are collecting certain data points and why other pieces of data are not collected.	**Isabel Cardenas-Navia** Director of Research, Workcred **Roy Swift** Executive Director, Workcred All
BREAK AND LUNCH (12:30-1:15 p.m.)	
BARRIERS THAT EXIST TO SHARING DATA (1:15-1:45 p.m.)	**Karen Elzey** Associate Executive Director, Workcred

Karen Elzey will facilitate a discussion about the internal and external barriers that may prevent certification bodies from sharing data.	All
OPPORTUNITIES THAT EXIST TO SHARE DATA (1:45-2:15 p.m.) Isabel Cardenas-Navia will lead a discussion about the opportunities that are available if certification bodies agreed to share their data.	Isabel Cardenas-Navia Director of Research, Workcred All
BENEFITS FOR CERTIFICATION BODIES (2:15-2:45 p.m.) Vanessa Brown will facilitate a discussion with certification bodies about the type of information that would be valuable to certification bodies based on the opportunity to combine certification data with other data sets.	Vanessa Brown Managing Director, Strategic Initiatives, National Student Clearinghouse
NEXT STEPS (2:45-3:00 p.m.) Karen Elzey will wrap up the meeting and discuss the next steps and future activities of the Voluntary Data Sharing Network.	Karen Elzey Associate Executive Director, Workcred
ADJOURNMENT (3:00 p.m.)	Roy Swift