



MDREN Pilot

Quilt/InCommon Workshop

Winter 2014

La Jolla

Guy Jones, MDREN

InCommon[®]

Pilot Overview

Pilot goal is to quickly enable some key services in the state, including the launching of a partnership with Coursera evaluating this platform for support of remedial and wide-scale education. The two key goals of our plan are to

- 1) Leverage existing standards in higher education – these include InCommon, and
- 2) Developing a partnership with a commercial provider, Fischer International.

Pilot Description - details

Target constituents and scope

Ten institutions in the USM are participating in the study, including research universities, regional comprehensives, metropolitan institutions, and HBCUs. These span the state of Maryland, including institutions serving urban populations, the Eastern Shore, the mountainous western part of the state, and suburbs of Baltimore and Washington D.C. While all are public institutions, they cover a very wide range of institutional types.

Federation model selected

The partnership with Fischer International leverages the very aggressive pricing Fischer International is offering higher education and builds on a relationship that Fischer has developed with Coppin State University. Our plan is to provide consulting services to members of MDREN that would help them adopt the Fischer offerings.

Targeted applications or services

Last year the University System of Maryland (USM) and Ithaka began an initiative to test a variety of interactive online learning platforms, with the broad aim of learning how emerging technologies could be used to improve outcomes and reduce costs for students enrolled in traditional institutions. Coursera became an early collaborator in this effort through its interest in understanding better how students learn from MOOCs and what benefits MOOCs might offer when embedded in hybrid courses.. This study is supported by a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Pilot Description - details

InCommon Affiliate assistance/role in pilot

MDREN worked with the institutions to coordinate the deployment of Shibboleth through various means and the exchange of Metadata with Coursera.

Initial Goals

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 - Setting up Shibboleth at participating campuses
 - Establishing either InCommon or Bi-lateral exchange of MetaData
 - Explore federation models
- Value-proposition(s) for Participants, Regional State wide authentication structure
 - Easier access to new services

Challenges

Challenges encountered and how they were addressed

Each school had a different support structure of deploying Shibboleth – contracts that had been negotiated to assist deployment were not used.

Unanticipated Issues

Coursera did not have expertise in setting up Shibboleth data exchange – it was a learning experience for all of us.

Successes and Lessons Learned

Successes

Were able to move several schools to Shibboleth – having a defined service was the driver

We have been able to use the Pilot as an example during established on-going discussions with other groups in the state; K12, Libraries, State Agencies

Unanticipated Benefits

Interest by MSDE and the county LEA's in state K12 authentication structure supporting state wide testing

Status and Path Forward

- Where things are now

The Coursea pilot will be able to contribute some real evidence to discussions about the significance of MOOCs for higher education. We expect the results of these tests to be available in spring of 2014. Coursea provided a real need for Shibboleth deployment and those deployments continue.

- Plans for scaling beyond current scope (Post-Pilot Goals)

The evaluation effort of the pilot will focus on whether the InCommon structure can develop a cost-effective and flexible strategy that provides value for all members of MDREN. We are also looking at other federation models to serve the state of Maryland.

K 12 interest in developing a test environment to support mandated Race to the Top and other state wide tests. We are working with our LEAs and Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to explore options to include authentication / trust structures based on our experience.

Status and Path Forward

- Next Steps – Address multiple layers with multiple partners
 - Technical – InCommon, Fischer, Maryland DoIT
 - Process – InCommon, MSDE
 - Political – County / LEA CIOs, Supervisors, State committees – HB 607
 - Sustainability / Financial – Key services

Questions?