Midwest Credential Transparency Alliance (MCTA)

November 17, 2022
2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. CT

Table of Contents

Agenda - November 17, 2022
All times are listed in Central Time.

2:00 - 2:05 p.m.
Welcome
- Jeff Grann, Solutions Lead, Credential Engine

2:05 - 2:20 p.m.
MCTA Convening Reports
- Annika Many, Principal, edBridge Partners, LLC/ MHEC Consultant; and Rachel Vilsack, Director of State Partnerships, Credential Engine

2:20 p.m. – 2:50 p.m.
Credential As You Go
- Nan Travers, Director of the Center for Leadership in Credentialing Learning, SUNY Empire State College

Credential As You Go is an initiative calling for a nationally recognized incremental credentialing system to capture and validate uncounted learning that enables individuals to be recognized for what they know and can do. An incremental system recognizes that many types of credentials (e.g., degrees, certificates, industry certifications, licenses, badges, microcredentials) may document an individual's learning, and that credentials are awarded by many types of providers including community and technical colleges, four-year colleges and universities, third-party organizations, employers, military, and state licensing boards.

Although incremental credentialing is not new, it is not the design of the U.S. learn-and-work system. There are increasing calls to link the array of credentials of value —degree and non-degree — into an understandable, coherent system. This requires a redesign of credentialing systems across states, higher education institutions, and other credentialing organizations to reduce confusion, increase learning recognition, and integrate what people know and can do.

In this session Nan will discuss the role of technology in supporting incremental credentialing practices.

2:50 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Pathways Action Team: Consistent Technical and Business Requirements
- Jeff Grann, Solutions Lead, Credential Engine

3:00 p.m. – 3:25 p.m.
State Sharing - Breakout Sessions

3:25 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Wrap Up

Presenters

Jeff Grann, Credential Engine
Jeff Grann is the credential solutions lead for Credential Engine, where he advances systems of trust that incent adult development and empower learners to reach their potential. He currently works with the higher education industry to advance the goal of publishing to the registry, setting standards, improving data integration and interoperability, and realizing use cases that improve credential decision making. Previously, Jeff worked at Capella University on a synergistic mix of academic and technical projects related to competency-based education. From 2005 to 2018, he defined and led the implementation of Capella University's fully-embedded assessment system and its competency map, and most recently served as Academic Director of Assessment and Learning Analytics. He also has several years of teaching experience with traditional college students, adult learners, and higher education professionals. Jeff holds a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from the University of Minnesota, and works remotely for Credential Engine from White Bear Lake, Minnesota.

Annika Many, edBridge Partners, LLC
Annika Many is a Co-Founder and Principal of edBridge Partners, a mission-driven women-owned management consultancy founded in 2013, committed to helping education institutions, membership organizations and philanthropies transform their organizations. She has a career-long commitment to the education field, working in both higher education and K-12. As a Principal of the firm, she serves a national client base of colleges, university systems, membership organizations, and nonprofits with services that include realignment and organizational effectiveness, academic innovation, policy and advocacy, program development and management, strategic partnerships, and leadership counsel and strategy.

Prior to joining edBridge, Annika spent over nine years at the College Board, where she held senior positions in the Advocacy and Policy Center, the Office of Strategy Management, and the College Board Schools initiative. Annika holds a MA in education and politics from Teachers College, Columbia University, a MPA in nonprofit management from Pace University, and a BA in psychology Phi Beta Kappa from Carnegie Mellon University. She is a certified Project Management Professional (PMP).

Nan Travers, SUNY Empire State College
Nan Travers is Director of the Center for Leadership in Credentialing Learning at SUNY Empire State College. She has served as PI for two Lumina Foundation grants which explored the learn-work ecosystem and impact of evaluating work-based learning and incremental credentialing on the future of higher education. She led the development of the Global Learning Qualifications Framework to assess college-level learning, serves on the board for the Prior Learning International Research Consortium, is a lead contributor to the Learning Recognition Collaborative in conjunction with the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA), and co-edits the journal: PLA Inside Out (www.plaio.org). She served as PI for Credential As You Go Phase 1 (planning grant) funded by Lumina Foundation and serves as the PI for Phase 2 (implementation grant) funded by Institute for Educational Sciences, US Department of Education.

Rachel Vilsack, Credential Engine
Rachel Vilsack is the Director of State Partnerships for Credential Engine. In this capacity, she works to connect credential transparency with other state and national initiatives, projects, and policies.

Prior to joining Credential Engine, Rachel was a Senior Fellow at National Skills Coalition where she served as the organization's expert on federal and state workforce data policy development and implementation. She also worked at the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development and has a 20-year track record in labor market analysis, federal and state workforce program reporting and evaluation, and leadership in cross-agency data system governance and use. Rachel is passionate about data transparency and data-informed policy development that lead to better and more equitable outcomes for workers, businesses, and communities.

Rachel holds a bachelor's degree in economics from the College of St. Benedict (Minnesota) and a master's degree in economics from Miami University (Ohio). She is based in Minnesota.

Additional Team Members & Organization Info

Sara Appel, MHEC
Sara Appel is the director of the Midwestern Regional State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (M-SARA). Sara develops, implements, manages, and supervises M-SARA, which enables states in the MHEC region to enter into a voluntary reciprocity agreement for the purpose of authorizing colleges and universities to provide online and other distance-based courses and programs to students living in other states. She began working with SARA in its infancy as it developed into what is now the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA). Sara began working for the Compact in January 2016 as the coordinator for the Multi-State Collaborative on Military Credit. She has been advocating for military-connected students and adult learners in higher education for over 20 years and has experience in grant writing, program management, and policy analysis. Prior to her working for the Compact, Sara was the academic programs manager at the Indiana Commission for Higher Education. She has an undergraduate degree in Secondary Education and a master's degree in History with an emphasis on Research. Both degrees are from Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau.

Jennifer Briones, Credential Engine
Jennifer Briones is the Project Manager for Credential Engine where she manages state and regional scale-up projects, explores expansion opportunities, and supports program and partnership development. Before joining Credential Engine, she was a Policy and Advocacy Associate at the Data Quality Campaign (DQC)–a nonprofit organization that works to ensure students, parents, educators, and policymakers have the right information to make decisions. Jennifer holds a Bachelor's degree from Loyola University Maryland in Political Science and Writing and a Master of Public Policy degree from the George Washington University, where she co-founded the Women's Leadership Fellows program.

About MHEC

MHEC brings together Midwestern states to develop and support best practices, collaborative efforts, and cost-sharing opportunities. Through these efforts it works to ensure strong, equitable postsecondary educational opportunities and outcomes for all.

MHEC is comprised of member states from the Midwestern United States. MHEC works with and for a variety of stakeholders within and across member states, including higher education system leaders, state policymakers, legislators, and institutional leaders, while always maintaining a focus on students and their success. MHEC is a 501(c)3 entity statutorily-created in each of its member states which include: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. MHEC's office is headquartered in Minneapolis.
https://www.mhec.org

About Credential Engine

Credential Engine is a non-profit whose mission is mapping the credential landscape with clear and consistent information to fuel the creation of resources that make it easy for people to find the pathways that are best for them.
https://credentialengine.org

MCTA Participants

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Resources

MCTA Pathways Action Team: A Brief

As more Americans pursue multiple types of credentials to advance their careers, they need quality information about career pathways. This new brief provides a model to improve and better support pathways in the Midwest. READ THE BRIEF.

Credential Transparency: An Essential Part of Attaining State Goals

This brief outlines the actions state policymakers can take to make credential transparency part of their state's education, workforce, and economic development strategies. It showcases the ways credential transparency connects to and augments current state policy priorities; provides examples of specific state policies that support credential transparency; highlights opportunities and actions state leaders can take; and suggests actions and funding streams to support credential transparency. READ THE BRIEF.

MCTA Charter

This document lays out the purpose of the Midwestern Credential Transparency Alliance, and includes information about why it's needed, who it serves, and how it's intended to work. DOWNLOAD THE CHARTER.

Join the conversation on social media using the official hashtag: #MidwestCTA!
MHEC: @mhec12
Credential Engine @credengine

Midwestern Higher Education Compact and Credential Engine would like to thank Ascendium Education Group for their generous support of the Midwestern Credential Transparency Alliance.