



IMS Global Announces K-12 Open EdTech Ecosystem Initiative

Leading U.S. K-12 Technology Suppliers and School Districts Pledge to Support and Promote an Interoperable Ecosystem of Educational Apps, Digital Resources and Learning Systems

Lake Mary, Florida, USA – May 5, 2015 – IMS Global Learning Consortium (IMS Global / IMS) today announced the formation of a new initiative aimed at communicating the benefits and availability of open interoperability to school leaders. Incorporation of IMS standards at leading school districts such as Gwinnett County, Georgia, Houston Independent School District, Texas, and Orange County, Florida have significantly improved the access to digital learning resources for teachers and students. A group of IMS members, led by the IMS Board of Directors, believes that it is time to expand the reach of the open architecture and its benefits to a majority of U.S. school districts.

K-12 organization membership in IMS Global, the global leader in education technology interoperability and impact, today accounts for 45% of the total membership and will likely pass 50% by the end of 2015. The IMS K-12 Open EdTech Ecosystem Initiative will be led by the [IMS K-12 leadership council](#) (known as the I3LC). The initiative will also include new technical collaboration to speed adoption of open standards such as sharing of code that provides integration into legacy systems.

“School leaders need to know that they can trust that an ecosystem of interoperable digital curriculum, tools, apps and learning platforms that enables a more personalized student experience based on open standards is taking shape rapidly and that their districts can begin implementation with a few simple steps,” said Dr. Rob Abel, Chief Executive Officer of IMS Global. “The purpose of the IMS K-12 Open EdTech Ecosystem is to get a majority of U.S. districts on a road that will provide them many options for innovation and protection of their technology and curriculum investments into the future.”

[Gwinnett County Public Schools](#)

“As a current board member of the IMS Global Learning Consortium, Gwinnett County Public Schools (GCPS) committed over a year ago to support, make use of, and implement the IMS Global standards for interaction between learning systems. The delivery of conformance certified LTI 1.0 capability into the GCPS portal environment is an important first step in the drive toward easier, lower-cost, and deep integration with our learning content. This work supports the promise of access to learning environments and learning content from anywhere inside or outside the enterprise and achievement of the district’s digital transformation initiative. In addition, the Gwinnett County Public School System recently became the first K-12 school system to have an LTI conformance certified environment with IMS Global.” – Dr. Steve Flynt, Chief Strategy and Performance Officer

[Houston Independent School District](#)

"The IMS Global Learning Tools Interoperability standards are a critical component of Houston ISD's *digital transformation*. Through LTI®, Common Cartridge® and Thin Common Cartridge®, HISD is making high quality content from multiple vendors available for searching by topics, concepts and TEKS (education standards) inside the district's learning platform. In addition, thanks to meta-tagging specs, the platform can provide a *formative assessment* function by recommending content for mastery of learning, based on individual answers to specific assessment questions. All this is done by logging into one platform. Not only do IMS Global standards create a more effective teaching and learning environment, they also provide effective and economic solutions. Historically, HISD has built customized rostering integrations to suit each learning tool vendor's individual needs, an extremely expensive, time-consuming and resource-intensive approach. Now that we have adopted IMS Global's OneRoster standard, we anticipate reducing requirements gathering and development time by 75% - 95% for new rostering integration requests." - Lenny Schad, Chief Technology Information Officer

[Orange County Public Schools](#)

"As school districts move towards personalized learning one of the areas often overlooked that ironically stands as one of the most critical areas of attention is the ease of access to their digital core curricular materials. While strides have been made to address the lack of digital access overall, each ecosystem brings its own silo of information and data that a school system desperately needs use. The IMS Global K-12 Open EdTech Ecosystem Initiative allows districts to have a common voice in their push to have publishers and content providers give district access to content in ways that are helpful and useful to them. Personalized learning is becomes an almost insurmountable mountain if content and data integration is not available and standards across systems. IMS Global is laying the foundation to make sure that the steep mountain becomes a gentle slope for school systems." - Maurice Draggon, Director, Instructional Management System

[Florida Virtual School](#)

"Florida Virtual School has been a strong supporter of IMS Global's work to lead the way in educational technology interoperability. Open standards have allowed us to reduce internal costs through a reduction of proprietary integrations. Interoperability standards have also allowed us to easily support the needs of our FLVS Global clients by quickly integrating our content with many learning management systems. We look forward to the IMS K-12 Open EdTech Ecosystem Initiative paving the way for other schools to embrace open standards." - Jodi Marshall, Executive Vice President, Business & School Solutions

[Escambia County School District](#)

"Personalized learning requires adequate resources from which students should choose the most appropriate to meet their learning needs and interests. Use of open, interoperable systems is the best way for districts to provide the depth of resources to make a personalized learning environment a reality." - Tom Ingram, Director of Information Technology

[Fulton County Schools](#)

"We rely on IMS-Global to set the standards for how content and data work with our critical district systems and ensure efficiency and longevity of our investment. At this point we are requiring all relevant vendors to be compliant." - Serena E Sacks, Chief Information Officer

[Poway Unified School District](#)

"My Superintendent laid out a vision at the beginning of this school year that we will be a personalized learning district in five years at all our schools. This is only possible with the promise of an Open EdTech Ecosystem." - Robert J. Gravina, Chief Technology Officer

[School District of Pickens County](#)

"In the School District of Pickens County, our goal is to provide students and teachers with a digital ecosystem that meets the teaching and learning demands of the 21st Century. For us this means a robust infrastructure that supports interoperable digital resources that work on any end-user device. We are committed to giving our teachers and students a central hub with single sign-on access to their digital resources. With digital curriculum, tools, apps and learning platforms working together seamlessly, we enable our teachers to personalize learning experiences for students." - Barbara Nesbitt, Ph.D., Director of Instructional Technology

[Forsyth County Schools](#)

"The IMS global standards have already allowed us to take significant strides towards integrating all of our digital resources into one virtual learning commons. Moving forward, we envision these standards being at the heart of a powerful personalized learning system that will empower our teachers to meet each student's educational needs." - Lessell Martiny (Marty) Bray Ph.D. Chief Technology and Information Officer

[Newton Public Schools](#)

"The adoption of IMS standards and the Open EdTech Ecosystem as part of our practice will ensure our ability to blend the best of breed together and effectively deliver a rich learning experience to our learning community" - Leo Brehm, Director of Information Technology and Library Media

[McGraw-Hill Education](#)

"McGraw-Hill Education is pleased to be a partner in the K-12 Open EdTech Ecosystem Initiative. As highlighted in our recent announcement (<http://www.mheducation.com/about/news-room/mcgraw-hill-education-takes-important-step-open-technology-enabling-educators-build>) of Compound Learning Objects and our strategic commitment to open learning via IMS standards, we look forward to the industry coalescing around open and interoperable implementations. We are thrilled to support initiatives that work in service of our learners and teachers to make technology easier to use. McGraw-Hill Education is grateful to the leadership of the extended IMS community in driving a learning environment that is based on a true ecosystem of collaborators and an ecosystem that makes it easy to construct digital learning experiences." - Stephen Laster, Chief Digital Officer

[Pearson](#)

"As a leading digital curriculum and learning platform provider, Pearson firmly supports the IMS K-12 Open EdTech Ecosystem as a direct way to make curriculum offerings easier to integrate for our customers and more valuable for teachers and learners." - Marc Nelson, VP Technology Product Management

[Houghton Mifflin Harcourt](#)

"As a Global Learning Company, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH) is committed to providing best-in-class content for its customers through a variety of systems. HMH continues our commitment to supporting IMS Global and the education community by dedicating resources to help drive the adoption and evolution of the IMS standards and specifications. The new K-12 Open EdTech Ecosystem provides a focused opportunity to remove friction and improve the user experience for pre-K-12 students. HMH looks forward to the Open EdTech Ecosystem creating even more ways for customers - students, teachers, administrators, and parents - to leverage our dynamic learning content." - Claudia Reuter, Vice President HMH Labs

[SMART Technologies](#)

"SMART has been committed to supporting IMS standards since 2011, when we initially received the interactive whiteboard standard certification for our SMART Notebook software," says Linda

Thomas, IMS board member and Vice-President, Planning and Business Analysis, SMART Technologies. "Our new education software, SMART amp, takes classroom software to the cloud in a new way – providing rich, digital, manageable collaborative experiences that foster natural learning between students and teachers. SMART fully supports the K12 Open EdTech Ecosystem initiative, providing simple, seamless interoperability between SMART amp and other leading education software, apps and content."

[SAFARI Montage](#)

"The IMS standard creates a k12 educational ecosystem that does not just support digital content but supports protection of district-created content as well. Finally in k12 education we have an integration of full Classroom interoperability to make a district roadmap for digital resources work!!!!" – Tim Beekman, President

[D2L](#)

"D2L believes strongly in making teaching and learning easier and smarter by supporting a rich technology and content ecosystem. Open interoperability and standards are a key part of building a truly flexible learning platform to support that ecosystem, and IMS is the place where that happens."

- Jeremy Auger, Chief Strategy Officer

[Learning.com](#)

"As early adopters of the LTI and Thin Common Cartridge standards, [Learning.com](#) supports our customers by ensuring our digital content and curriculum tools integrate with multiple learning systems," says senior product manager and IMS Global liaison Andy Miller. "We are excited to support the IMS K-12 Open EdTech Ecosystems initiative and will continue to provide solutions that help districts innovate and deliver high quality teaching and learning experiences." – Andy Miller, Senior Product Manager

[Classlink](#)

"When it comes to data exchange in K-12, it feels like the Middle Ages. We have fiefdoms of costly and proprietary systems requiring the creation of handwrought data files by candlelight. It's just not sustainable to continue to operate like this," said Berj Akian, Founder and CEO of ClassLink. "Educators and students have so much to gain when instructional materials are easily accessible and the information inside them is accurate. IMS Global has been a leader in creating easy and secure data exchange standards and ClassLink is pleased to be a contributing member."

[Performance Matters](#)

"This IMS initiative promises to dramatically reduce the cost of integration for school systems and education technology companies like Performance Matters. Simplifying integration will free all ed tech companies to invest more resources in innovations that improve instruction and learning which is what we are all trying to accomplish." – Woody Dillaha, co-founder and CEO

[Samsung](#)

"Samsung is pleased to be an IMS Contributing Member and to lend its support to this open ecosystem to promote better learning outcomes, inspire innovation and reduce costs for school districts. We embrace collaborative ingenuity, and this initiative will integrate the new with the old, and ensure that investments in schools withstand the test of digital changes in the future," said Ted Brodheim, Vice President of Vertical Business, Samsung Electronics America.

[Microsoft](#)

"Microsoft's commitment to openness and collaboration is ingrained in our day-to-day approach to supporting education institutions and industry partners around the world. Learning has fundamentally transformed the way students and educators create, share and connect. This

transformation will be powered by increasingly interconnected tools, content and platforms. Leadership and partnership to ensure we integrate with transparency, respect for student privacy, and a path to new innovation will be critical.” - Anthony Salcito. Vice President, Worldwide Public Sector Education

[Classworks](#)

“Classworks’ priority is to make our high quality instruction available in as many ways as possible. As part of that, we develop to the IMS Global interoperability standards because it allows our instruction to effectively communicate across all platforms,” says Melissa Sinunu, President of Classworks. “The key is making it inherent in all our development practices, so there are never hidden fees for interoperability and data connections. This includes single-sign on, student rostering; even assigning content and results storing across multiple platforms.”

[Carson-Dellosa](#)

Carson-Dellosa Publishing Group is fully supportive of IMS’s leadership and on-the-ground efforts towards an open ecosystem for digital-based learning in K-12. As evidenced by the use of IMS standards in the training industry for more than a decade and the related savings and benefits accrued by both consumers and organizations, Carson-Dellosa believes that the same type of improvements in innovation, future-proofing of technology investments, and reductions in time and costs for integrating systems, will likewise be enjoyed by K-12 districts. - Steve Griffin, Chief Technology and Digital Officer

About IMS Global Learning Consortium ([IMS Global](#))

IMS Global is a nonprofit organization that advances technology that can affordably scale and improve educational participation and attainment. IMS members are leading suppliers, institutions and government organizations that are enabling the future of education by collaborating on interoperability and adoption initiatives. IMS sponsors the Learning Impact Leadership Institute, a global program focused on recognizing the impact of innovative technology on educational access, affordability, and quality while developing the people and ideas that are going to help shape the future of educational technology.