15 February 2012

Building Identity Trust Federations Conference Call

February 15, 2012

1) In Attendance

- Suresh Balakrishnan (University System of Maryland)
- Mark Beadles (OARnet)
- Joseph Giroux (California Community Colleges)
- Keith Hazelton (University of Wisconsin, Madison)
- Michael Hodges (University of Hawaii)
- George Laskaris (NJEDge.Net)
- Steve Olshansky (Internet2)
- Rodney Petersen (EDUCAUSE)
- Mark Scheible (MCNC)
- Randy Stout (Kansas Board of Regents)
- Valerie Vogel (EDUCAUSE)
- Ann West (InCommon)

2) K-12 Federated Identity and Access Management Task Force

- Mark Scheible and Steve Olshansky joined this call to discuss current activities of the K-12 Federated IAM Joint Task Force.
- Recommended Reading
  - US Federations Meeting Minutes, 1/20/10
  - Discussion Topics from 1/20/10 US Federations Call
- Background on the K12-JTF, www.cosn.org/FederatedIdentity
  - CoSN is trying to bring federated identity management benefits to the K-12 community. The first task was developing a primer to explain federated identity and access management, as well as how it's beneficial to the K-12 community.
  - The task force includes members from CoSN, EDUCAUSE, InCommon, and Internet2.
  - Steve noted that the mailing list is open to anyone with an interest in discussing Federated IAM in the K-12 context. Members of this group are welcome – and encouraged – to join.
  - Ideally, they would like to see K-12 schools use InCommon as a starting point.
  - Since federated IdM may not be viable at the district level, an approach through StateNets work best since StateNets already have the resources and infrastructure.
- K-12 Primer on SSO/Federation, http://www.cosn.org/Portals/7/docs/Publications/CoSNK-12ID5-15.pdf
  - The task force developed "Single Sign-On, Multiple Benefits," a primer on K-12 federated IAM. It's a brief 12-page document.
- K-12 Self-Assessment document, http://www.cosn.org/Portals/7/docs/Publications/CoSNK-12ID5-15.pdf
  - A similar self-assessment was previously used in CAMP sessions. Mark modified the assessment document for K-12. This is available for any school district or state department of education that wants to look at the key topics in IAM or federated IdM.
  - The assessment covers 5 key areas to determine a district's level of readiness.
- Quick update on the North Carolina Education Cloud project
  - A Race to the Top award is being used for a North Carolina Education Cloud that would support K-12 education applications. The purpose is to add to the equity across the state for all of the districts. Instead of having individual servers in less than optimal conditions or worrying about redundancy, they will move the infrastructure to the cloud and allow local resources to be focused on other things. Teachers, parents, students, and guests can access these cloud services with a single username.
  - They spent the last year developing an architecture plan and will purchase a managed service to run the IAM infrastructure. Most of the requirements have been written in the architecture document. They are currently developing a framework for the RFP and hope to issue the RFP in late March.
- Any information that call attendees might have on K-12 efforts in their own states?
  - Ohio: There is a certain level of attention from the state department of education and others in the local government regarding IdM, but there's not a lot of attention or knowledge among the broader K-12 education community yet.
  - There are more school districts than universities. To make progress, it would be helpful to organize the next steps or develop a plan for how to move forward. This is probably something best addressed by the joint task force. It would be useful to develop a roadmap for K-12: how to get to federation, show the benefits, etc. We could share examples or documentation where higher ed has blazed a trail in federation, InCommon, middleware, etc.
  - Suresh asked if there are efforts to engage key people in K-12 across state boundaries or is it mainly discussions within the state (and maybe there, only within certain districts). For example, in HE we share information very easily across states, different Carnegie classifications, etc. Are there plans for CoSN to reach out to the K-12 community strategically?
    - Each state may have different politics even if the issues or objectives are the same.
  - Codify the value proposition for K-12
    - Show that federated IdM is a win-win for districts and vendors.
    - Create a space to capture the use cases and build the reasons for federation.
    - Document peer experiences and help circulate the ideas throughout the K-12 community. We want to encourage K-12 folks to talk to each other.
    - Show how top-down vs. bottom-up approaches may vary from state to state for K-12. For example, county superintendents meet and work together frequently in NJ and it helps to go through this group when targeting counties as early adopters.
    - Need to find within each of the states (at the very least) individuals at the K-12 level who understand the benefits and are willing to help drive that within their individual states. Helpful to work through Keith and state constituents to make sure these individuals are represented properly.