# Alabama, Louisiana, and Minnesota Commit to Transparent Credential Data

*In partnership with Credential Engine, states will tackle education data silos in an effort to empower students and workers*

August 15, 2019 **(Washington, DC)** – Alabama, Louisiana, and Minnesota announced today their commitment to credential transparency by joining as state partners to Credential Engine—the national nonprofit dedicated to credential data transparency and literacy. Through the partnership, the lead agencies—Alabama's Office of the Governor, Louisiana's Community and Technical College System, and the Minnesota State system—will collaborate with partner agencies to publish data, including education and career outcomes, for thousands of apprenticeships, certificates, licenses, degrees, and other credentials to the cloud-based Credential Registry in an effort to bring clarity, understanding, and improved utility to state education data.

The partnership brings the total number of states and regions partnering with Credential Engine to publish information about their education and training programs to 14. Together, these states are transforming their education and workforce efforts by ensuring their data on credentials, what they represent, and how they connect to larger state efforts is comprehensive and accessible to students, consumers, and employers.

Alabama plans to use linked credential data to better connect employers, education providers, and students, beginning with high-demand sectors. Ultimately, the state plans to develop a one-stop platform to house longitudinal data, serve as a student backpack, and provide an employer signaling platform. Relevant credential data will also be published to the Registry to contribute to the ultimate goal of enhancing learners' access to career pathways.

"Enhancing credential transparency will produce powerful results for the citizens of Alabama," Gov. Kay Ivey said. "Partnering with Credential Engine will help our state move forward with meeting growing workforce demands, beginning with the growing aerospace and aviation and healthcare industries."

Louisiana's work aims to better serve a  growing portion of higher education students who often struggle to complete credentialing programs, starting with veterans and other students with prior learning experience. The state will focus its initial efforts on high-wage, high-demand industry sectors including welding, construction, and manufacturing.

"Publishing to the Credential Registry will help advance statewide efforts to empower learners with the information they need to make better informed education decisions," said Dr. Monty Sullivan, President of the Louisiana Community and Technical College System. "We look forward to leveraging this partnership with Credential Engine to implement processes that will be able to recognize a student's existing knowledge-base based on past credentials and ultimately provide learners with more efficient pathways to careers."

In Minnesota, three agencies—Minnesota State, Office of Higher Education and the Department of Employment and Economic Development—will work together to use the Registry as a publicly searchable database for the credentials offered in the state, thereby creating a centralized one-stop experience for Minnesotans looking for education and training options. This work will transform how the state shares information about its public programs with students.

"We know that students today need to be prepared with a multitude of skill sets and be lifelong learners," said Commissioner Dennis Olson, Jr. of the Minnesota Office of Higher Education. "Through the work with Credential Engine, we will provide a comprehensive and user-friendly platform for students, workers, and education counselors to search for education opportunities all across Minnesota."

"The addition of Alabama, Louisiana, and Minnesota to our growing list of state partners speaks volumes about the value of credential transparency," said Scott Cheney, Executive Director of Credential Engine. "These three states are the latest to join us—not only because they believe in Credential Engine's mission—but because they understand that their statewide economic success will increasingly rely upon their ability to evaluate and recalibrate their education and workforce systems in order to meet the demands of tomorrow's jobs. Rich and comparable credential data are at the heart of solving this long-term need."

With support from Credential Engine, each state will work to meet their ambitious goals for publishing information to the Registry through cross-agency collaboration, targeted outreach, and stakeholder engagement. The work will kick off in the coming weeks, and will continue to evolve as publishing begins over the next year.

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Credential Engine is a non-profit whose mission is to create credential transparency, reveal the credential marketplace, increase credential literacy, and empower everyone to make more informed decisions about credentials and their value. Credential Engine receives support from Lumina Foundation, JPMorgan Chase & Co., Walmart, Northrop Grumman Foundation, ECMC Foundation, and Microsoft.

**Credential Engine Contact: Carrie Samson** csamson@credentialengine.org

**Office of the Governor of Alabama Contact: Gina Maiola** Gina.Maiola@governor.alabama.gov

The Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS) serves as the management board for the state's 12 public two-year institutions. The LCTCS is a mission driven primary contributor to the state's workforce and overall educational attainment, and in 2018-19 served 161,600 students. LCTCS colleges are governed by a single Board of Supervisors, function under one set of policies, have the same admissions application, and a single student information system. This degree of coordination provides the LCTCS with an ability to scale on a state-wide level, affording a unique opportunity to address and ameliorate socioeconomic, gender, and racial disparities through access to transformative postsecondary education and workforce development.

**Louisiana Community and Technical College System Contact: Quintin Taylor** quintintaylor@lctcs.edu

Minnesota State includes 30 community and technical colleges and seven state universities serving approximately 375,000 students. It is the third-largest system of two-year colleges and four-year universities in the United States.

**Minnesota State Contact: Doug Anderson** doug.anderson@minnstate.edu

The Minnesota Office of Higher Education is a cabinet-level state agency providing students with financial aid programs and information to help them gain access to postsecondary education. The agency also serves as the state's clearinghouse for data, research and analysis on postsecondary enrollment, financial aid, finance and trends.

**Minnesota Office of Higher Education Contact: Sandy Connolly** sandy.connolly@state.mn.us

The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) is the state's principal economic development agency, promoting business recruitment, expansion and retention, workforce development, international trade and community development. For more details about the agency and its services, visit the DEED website or follow DEED on Twitter.

**Minnesota DEED Contact: Shane Delaney** Shane.M.Delaney@state.mn.us