

Managed Learning System® Program

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What is the Managed Learning System® Program?

- A. *The Managed Learning System® Program is an open-system, standards-based research and development effort addressing a framework of key technical standards and best practices that enable educators to build enterprise systems in which all elements communicate and interoperate. Managed Learning System® Framework technical standards and best practices include educational content and delivery; academic standards; assessment and testing; technology and business processes.*

Q. What is JES & Co.?

- A. *JES & Co. is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit educational organization comprised of educators and education policy makers and has been a leading educational technology consultancy for schools and the private sector since its inception. Founded in 1997, the organization has programs operating in over 20 states and hundreds of schools nationwide. JES & Co. administers education programs and consults to departments of education at state and regional levels on projects that integrate technology with administration, content, and people throughout the education process. The organization has developed and executed programs for secondary and post secondary schools that offer training and technical curriculum as well as opportunities for youth to earn school credit and compensation while learning about technology.*

Q. Who supports the Managed Learning System® Framework?

- A. *Initially, Dell, EdVISION, Intel, Microsoft, OneNET, Riverdeep and SAP provided the founding sponsorship to prove and validate the Managed Learning System® Specification developed over several years by JES & Co. These founding sponsors understand the value of assuring that the Managed Learning System® Framework remains open, current and relevant. In the years since the Managed Learning System® Program was founded, JES & Co. has worked with hundreds of companies and*

education agencies to expand the relevance and significance of the framework approach to building enterprise information and curriculum systems in education .

Q. Why is this important?

- A. *As education spending increases to meet state and federal funding requirements, it's vitally important that schools have alternatives to proprietary solutions to help hold down operating costs while increasing performance.*

Q. How does the Managed Learning System® Program work?

- A. *The Managed Learning System® Program works by providing a framework that technology companies who provide goods and services to education can use to assure that what they offer works as specified and meets the needs of educators. Because educational technology systems are complex and the needs of education extensive and varied, no single technology company can provide 100% of the solution. Companies and integrators who build, modify, and improve educational IT systems according to the Managed Learning System® Framework standards and best practices address the needs of educators who must manage and integrate the entire gamut of systems and information in order to provide the accountability required in today's educational and political environment.*

Q. Why did JES & Co. develop the Managed Learning System® Program?

- A. *JES & Co.'s founders spent many years in private enterprise serving to fulfill technology needs in education. They came to understand that many high tech systems and projects did not live up to their potential because they did not truly address the needs of the educators who used them. As technology systems became more and more a part of the actual process of curriculum delivery, and as accountability to the public and to government became integral to the process, it became clear that educators needed to be placed in the driver's seat when it came to saying what needs should be met. The Managed Learning System® Program is one of the programs giving JES & Co.'s membership – comprised of educators, schools, and education policy makers – a voice in their own destiny and the destiny of the children who will benefit from realizing the potential technology offers.*

Q. What is the Managed Learning System® R & D lab?

- A. *JES & Co. has developed and implemented the Managed Learning System® R&D Lab in cooperation with engineers and system architects from the founding sponsors. The lab is a vendor-neutral development center where technology companies, developers, and content providers can test their products for interoperability and explore technical standards and best practices.*

Q. What benefits does the Managed Learning System® Program have to educators, administrators and school children?

- A. *Above all, the Managed Learning System® Program gives educators a way to develop, clarify and state their technology needs to fulfill their responsibility to school children and the public.*

Q. What business or administrative functions does education IT serve?

- A. *Education as an industry is approaching \$1 trillion a year. Many larger school districts today have annual budgets in the tens of millions of dollars, with thousands of employees. Federal spending on education is exceeded only by spending on national defense and public welfare. Education relies on IT to track, manage, and account for its activities just as do other industries.*

Q. Why are these functions important to accountability?

- A. *From a macro-economic perspective, productivity in education measures how much it costs to bring students to a certain level of achievement. The increasing emphasis on accountability contributes to the administrative burden – measuring who does how well at doing what. That includes student and teacher performance in the classrooms, but at this point, administrative and educational systems do not interoperate efficiently or at all. Without the ability to relate all the various kinds of information generated by the different functions serving education, both administrative and educational, true accountability is not possible.*

Q. Why is interoperability an important concern in developing education IT solutions?

- A. *School funding is tied to accountability, and the No Child Left Behind act puts specific burdens on states and their districts to comply with reporting requirements. Can we collect and collate the information needed to make decisions, provide reporting and fulfill accountability needs? If the various systems that collect data cannot interoperate efficiently and without costly proprietary solutions, we will not be able to make informed decisions.*