The Edulogger

Looking Ahead

Plan, Schedule, Implement

EDULOG

Client Engagement

Edulog is pleased to announce the addition of our Client Engagement team. This team will work with Sales, Account Management, and Advisory Services to enhance your experience with Edulog and provide you with useful and timely information.

For example, did you know about ESSER, the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund? Congress set aside approximately $13.2 billion of the $30.75 billion allotted to the Education Stabilization Fund through the CARES Act for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER Fund). These grants will be awarded to State Educational Agencies (SEAs) for the purpose of providing Local Educational Agencies (LEAs), including charter schools that are LEAs, with emergency relief funds to address Covid's impact on elementary and secondary schools across the nation. We can assist you with

Meet the

Project Management Office

Over the past several years, Edulog has undertaken the development of a Project Management Office (PMO). The PMO has created a standardized project management discipline and approach for our projects, which allows us to collect standard data points, compare projects, share resources more effectively, and report in a standard way. This data allows us to incorporate a number of Quality Assurance elements into our process. Project and department managers review team projects and share experiences, including lessons learned, compliance with the process, and performance data. The entire process allows us to spot problems early and address them quickly.

Within the PMO, we use training, mentoring, and coaching to continually develop leadership talent and to create knowledge of all current and legacy Edulog products. We support and develop our project managers in-

Sabrina Vincent, Service Level Manager

Sabrina Vincent joined Edulog in 2019 and has continued to grow in her role to manage services for our valued clients. She came to us after finishing her master's degree in Data Analysis with an emphasis on predictive models and regression analytics. Yep, she is trained to see into the future. But don't let that big brain fool you, she is as tough as they come. While completing her bachelor's in Wildlife Biology, she spent her time studying/raising Cottonmouth snakes. You read that right… while some people were raising cute kittens or beautiful house plants Sabrina was raising highly venomous snakes. Tough as nails and smart as a whip… we give you Sabrina.

Favorite Food: Coffee flavored everything, with a side of coffee, and coffee

Favorite Color: Royal Blue

Favorite Edulog Product: eSQL with its one screen routing makes it super-efficient to change and adapt as needed.

Dream Vacation: Iglu-Dorf in Gstaad, Switzerland

Edulog Advice: One can never have too many backups, as long as they are archived!

Quote: "I have no special talents. I am only passionately curious."

- Albert Einstein

Forward Planning

It's time to prepare for school startup! Do you have a plan to stay organized and to communicate with the district and parents? Here are suggestions from Edulog to keep you moving forward through this hectic time.

- **June**: All students should have been pushed to the next grade level and 95% of all students should be set up for transportation.
- **July**: Edulog should receive all of your special education students' busing requirements. By the end of July, all special education students should have all their transportation needs fulfilled.
- **August**: You should be looking at your three-week countdown to school start.
  - 3 weeks before school starts: All runs should be locked, meaning no additional stops are added to runs. This does not mean that late-arriving students can't be assigned to an existing bus stop. It just means that you will not add a bus stop until after the first week of school. This ensures that all families that have registered their students on time receive accurate information for the first week of school. A separate list will need to be kept for any students that will need a bus stop added to a run.
  - 2 weeks before school starts: All runs should be tested and verified. Any issues with run directions should be corrected. Busing information should be distributed to parents.
  - 1 week before school starts: All students should be assigned and all runs should be finalized.

It may be important that parents understand that their bus stops time may have changed and for them to verify their stop times either through Web Query, the Student Information System (SIS), or Parent Portal. During the first few weeks of school, you should make general adjustments by adding stops and students as well as removing stops and students. There should be a plan in place to identify students who are not riding and those corresponding stops should be removed from runs. This will ensure that driver directions are up-to-date and substitute drivers can be assigned with a minimum of distraction.

In the fall, you should make sure your data is accurate. Zero stop loads should be removed from runs. Unmatched students and students that are not riding the bus should be corrected as they are identified in the system. Be sure to verify that the district boundaries are correct.

Scheduling a meeting with your transportation team when the startup process is complete can be beneficial. Discuss what went right and what went wrong. A plan should be in place to correct any remaining issues. Additionally, suggestions on how to improve transportation can be reviewed with leadership. The best-made plans are communicated throughout the district. Plans should be posted on district websites and shared with the administration, staff, school board, and parents to align all groups of people.

Transportation is a never-ending job. It requires sustained planning and execution. Make sure your district has a great plan throughout the year. If there is anything that Edulog can help you with, please let us know.

Driver Shortages in a Post-Covid World

As North America slowly begins to move away from restrictions brought about by the Covid pandemic, another crisis is growing for school districts across the country. The shift from remote-learning and hybrid programs back into the classroom full-time has grown the task of transporting students to-and-from school into an even greater challenge. While summer break has arrived for many, districts are experiencing no relief as they scramble to address their driver shortage issues.

Recent data published by *School Bus Fleet* found that over 91% of survey respondents were facing shortages in qualified drivers to staff their normal bus routes. While driver shortages are not a new challenge to student transportation, over 70% stated that their issues have been exacerbated by the pandemic. The average age of a school bus driver is 56 years, which puts them at higher risk against the Covid virus. Many drivers, furloughed by the pandemic, transitioned to other jobs/careers, while others simply retired altogether.

In recent months, the Edulog Advisory Services Group has started to see a large increase in the number of school districts asking for help on this issue. From optimizing bus routes to shifting school bell-times to changing student eligibility policies - districts are examining a wide range of options and want the expertise of Edulog consultants to determine the best path forward in a post-Covid world. The summer heat has arrived for school transportation, and the issue of driver shortages won't cool off anytime soon.

Advisory Services

Edulog's Advisory Services group has been working with districts to manage significant change projects, including transportation re-designs, bell-time changes, re-tierings, and much more. Click here to see how Edulog's Advisory Services Group could help you:

Advisory Services

Supporting Drivers with Edulog Driver Portal

Transportation Departments are responsible for much more than the safe and efficient transport of students to and from school - district stakeholders and parents also expect delivery of accurate and timely data. Edulog has a solution for distributing important information as well as additional support for school bus drivers. With our state-of-the-art tablet and applications, drivers can safely transport students to and from school.

Digital Route Sheets: Driver Portal allows both visual and audio turn-by-turn directions for driver ease, compliance with state DOT policies, and reduction in errors for accurate route management.

Driver Time and Attendance: You're able to track and report different pay rates for multiple jobs (when your driver has to put on a different hat, the correct code can be assigned). Multiple people can log in on the tablet at the same time, including drivers, aides, and monitors. Integration with a GPS platform allows you to view driving patterns so that you can identify which drivers are meeting their goals and which need extra attention.

Real-Time Substitutions: Managing substitutions in real-time only takes a few clicks. Once a driver has logged in, they can select the route and run for which they are responsible, including non-planned substitutions. Once a run is selected, the digital route sheet containing an interactive map and specific turn-by-turn directions is loaded. For districts that offer parent bus tracking apps, this real-time substitution provides accurate reporting and communication so that parents are getting the correct information.

Accurate Student Ridership Data: Tablets with Student Ridership can help drivers ensure that the right students get on and off the right bus at the right stop. In the event of an ill student, driver, or bus aide, schools can easily identify all those that may have been exposed with accurate Manifest and Ridership Reports. Further integration with parent bus tracking apps makes it easier than ever to communicate information like this directly to parents.

By providing school bus drivers with the support tools they need, Transportation can guarantee accountability and streamlined communication. Edulog Driver Portal provides digital route sheets with audio and visual directions, student ridership management, and driver time and attendance with an easy-to-use interface. With these important support tools in place, your district and drivers can be better prepared to meet the challenges of the next crisis. Talk to us today to see how your district benefits from our Driver Portal solution.

Crossword Answers

Across	Down
(Across)	9. Time
9. Terminal	6. Ridership
8. Route	1. Disembarking
7. Substitutions	
5. Card	
4. Boarding	
3. Directions	
2. Training	

There's ~~An App~~ a Utility for That

Even in the best of times, summer is hectic for a transportation department. In the face of the pandemic, it is doubly so. You may find yourself pulling apart runs that were used for free meal deliveries, routing extended summer programs, or planning for fall startup in both a 'normal' and a 'Covid' data area. Your time is precious. If you find yourself repeating the same activity in Edulog software over and over, there may be a utility that will do the job for you. This is only a partial list:

DEASGN	**Removes students from stops**
FLAGSET	**Deletes students**
DEASSIGNSTOPSONRUNS	**Removes stops from runs**
KILSTP	**Deletes unused stop services and stops**
DELETERUNSNOSTOPS	**Deletes runs that have no stops**
DEASSIGNRUNSONROUTES	**Removes runs from routes**
DELETEROUTES	**Deletes routes with no runs**
BTHASGN	**Assigns students to stops**
BATCHECHOSTOPS	**Copies stops from one school to another**
INSERTCHECKPOINTS	**Inserts @CPs at beginning or end of runs**

Even familiar utilities can be used in unexpected ways. ROLOVR, for example, doesn't just roll students up a grade. It also can be used to keep students at the same grade but move them to a different school or program.

Running ad hoc utilities takes a little planning. They often require a worklist. Loading the worklist in Display or Tabular mode in Edulog Advanced and spot-checking the results can help ensure that only the right things have been included. Running utilities from EMU requires exclusive access to the data, so you may need to have users close Edulog apps for that data area at a quiet time such as lunch, or you might schedule the batch to run in the evening. The batch will almost always need to start with a Stop Tomcat and end with a Start Tomcat so that eSQL and WebQuery users don't interfere.

There is the potential for unintended or undesirable data changes. Before you start, verify that your IT is making regular backups, or that you have just run a script that you have verified makes valid backups. If you have any concerns or questions about backups or which are the right utilities to run for your particular project or how to configure them, please contact your Account Manager, Service Level Manager, or Product Support, support@edulog.com, or 406-728-0893 ext. 3146.

Client Engagement

locating and finding ways to support transportation, operation or investment with this funding.[1]

The Client Engagement team will let you know about upcoming initiatives directly related to your day-to-day operations, as well as invite you to organized events such as trade shows, webinars, and conferences. We are excited to be able to bring this service to you and provide yet another way for us to remain connected.

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[1] https://oese.ed.gov/files/2020/05/ESSER-Fund-Frequently-Asked-Questions.pdf

Meet the Project Management Office

house and, more importantly, our Project Management Office is strategically aligned to the business strategy of both Edulog and the clients we serve.

It is our pleasure to introduce the team that makes all of this possible:

- Brendan Conners
- Aurora Rummel-Lindig
- Christina Restrepo
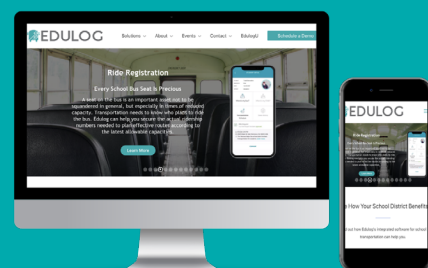- Tyler Simonich
- Ricky Schade
- Kelci McFarland

We look forward to working with you!

Our New Website!

We're happy to officially announce Edulog's new website. We designed it for you so that it's easier to find the information you need and talk directly with our team. Please take a peek at edulog.com

Commit to the Objective

By Lam Nguyen-Bull

This column is the first of a mini-series of personal articles introducing each member of our management team! Many of the folks you've worked with over the years are still here and part of the team, and we have been fortunate to add new talent who bring interesting experience and perspectives. Each issue of the Edulogger will feature personal pieces written by some of these folks, with a focus on a theme for the quarter that is relevant to you and important to us in a personal way.

Hi everybody! I am Lam Nguyen-Bull. I am Hien Nguyen's daughter and Hong-Linh Nguyen's sister. We are a family business, and we – Edulog and our clients – are a family. This means you are not just business to us. Your success is our success and your challenges are our challenges. And right now, our industry is going through some truly major upheaval, so "succeeding" is more of a challenge now than it was 10 years ago.

What I want to talk about is how to not just weather that change, but how to embrace it and come out a champ. Let's face it, none of us are going to succeed in today's world by doing what we did 10 years ago.

A ton of ink has been spilled about change and change management, and I have spoken to a few Edulog clients about this topic. I want to take a slightly different and more personal take on what it takes to deal with change successfully.

Two years ago, I started Olympic weightlifting. The gist of the sport is to get a loaded barbell from the floor to an overhead position with your arms locked out. I've really started to throw around what, for me, is real weight. And as the weights get heavier, the brain begins to take over with doubts – "ugh, this feels really heavy," "oops, I missed the crease," "my legs extended too fast," or simply, "oh no!" – in short, a whole litany of why I should fail to make the lift. My challenge these past few months has been to, no matter what happens as the weight comes off the floor, *commit to getting myself under the bar as fast as possible and commit to the lockout.* No wobbles at the bottom, no negative self-talk. Just commit to the end point, because it's the strength (no pun intended) of that commitment that will make or break the lift.

What does this have to do with pupil transportation? It turns out that it has everything to do with embracing change and coming out a champ! As long as we keep our eyes laser-focused on the prize, most of what else needs to happen will manage to fall into place. It's when we lack commitment to that final objective, when we allow ourselves to get distracted with the challenges that pop up on the way that we fail to make the lift. *Maintaining focus on the end goal and allowing ourselves to absorb or adapt to whatever happens along the way means that while our path from A to B wasn't exactly as planned, we still arrive at B.*

Obviously, absolute commitment should not be blind commitment. The point, though, is to commit to the objective, and not necessarily to the initial *plan* to achieve that objective. Absolute commitment to the *end goal* is especially important when we are working in and with teams. After all, commitment is the same as direction. And there are few things worse to a team than a lack of clear direction, which leads to internal misalignments, frustration, and failure.

As each of you works to recover from Covid disruptions, or to achieve longer-term change initiatives, we are here to support you and your team with practical and pragmatic advice, and/or with tools that provide you with the information you need to make data-driven decisions so that you can overcome the challenges on the way to reaching your end goals.

Information about Edulogger

EDULOGGER CROSSWORD

ACROSS

2. The key to driver acceptance and effective usage of tablets

3. Digital route sheets provide these in an audio and visual format

4. When a pupil enters the bus, it is called _____

5. Students use an RFID _____ to scan on and off the bus

7. Managing these is vital for the distribution of accurate information

8. Driver Portal integrates with your Edulog _____ Management System

9. Tablets are sometimes called a Mobile Data _____

DOWN

1. When a pupil exits the bus, it is called _____

6. A term describing the number of pupils riding the bus

9. Edulog Driver _____ and Attendance allows drivers to clock in on the bus

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