



EduTech's PingFederate Deployment Takes Education to a Higher Level

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Industry:

Education

Key Business Challenge:

Breaking down barriers across the NY educational ecosystem to securely deliver wider access to the siloed arsenal of valuable applications provided by a trusted network of Regional Information Centers.

Key Business Solution:

PingFederate®

Technical Environment:

- WebSphere™ portals
- Custom applications developed, owned and maintained by 12 Regional Information Centers
- Services and applications maintained by the New York State Department of Education

Benefits:

- Achieved identity federation across 12 Regional Information Centers and the State Department of Education
- RIC applications are now seamlessly available state-wide to teachers, students and administrators
- Eliminated arguments about ownership, control, vendor choices and license fees

Results:

- Lowered costs for RICs without forcing them to give up control
- Built community, enabled collaboration between groups who could not easily work together before
- Simplified RIC compliance with FERPA

PingIdentity™

Company Overview:

Educational Technology Services (EduTech) is one of 12 Regional Information Centers (RICs) in New York State that provide technology services to the 697 school districts in the State. EduTech supports over 19,000 computers in 200 LANs (Local Area Networks) in 160 different locations. In addition, 45 of the 47 districts are connected to EduTech's Wide Area Network (LakeNet), which provides them with a central link to the Internet and offers the opportunity to set up and maintain e-mail. EduTech also supports a number of server-based administrative applications for student and financial applications.

Business Challenge/Challenges Faced:

EduTech provides web-based courses for students and staff development, traditional technology workshops, web-based tools for data analysis of student assessment results, and assistance in instructional — technology integration. On a daily basis, the EduTech network handles nearly 6.5 million URL Internet requests and EduTech currently maintains approximately 10,000 e-mail accounts.

Although EduTech always looks for ways to help lower costs, widening the deployment of EduTech's innovative DataMentor application was the catalyst for a partnership conversation between the Regional Information Centers, and the reason the team focused on federated Identity Management. The goal was to make it easy to access DataMentor through existing WebSphere portals.

Simultaneously, the State started to create one big portal, intending to own and offer all available applications to every district, statewide. While everyone recognized the value of delivering wider access to the siloed arsenal of existing and valuable applications, this approach dictated that the RICs would have to give up control or simply stop coordinating with the State, which would prevent easy access to State-owned testing results and limit educator success.

Success Strategy:

The objective of the deployment of federated identity across the school ecosystem was to increase teacher and administrator access to tools and information, enhance teaching efforts, increase test scores and lower operational costs. EduTech standardized on industry standards and selected the PingFederate server from Ping Identity for their federation deployment. EduTech secured buy-in to use PingFederate and standards-based single sign-on from all 12 RICs, who had no incentives to partner except good will and collaboration. Before identity federation, it was simply easier for the RICs not to collaborate.

“The deployment of federated identity makes multiple tools accessible to educators across the State. Teachers are now using tools that they did not know were even available. Additionally, PingFederate’s ease of use does not change the way teachers interact with their IT systems. It is seamless, so they do not even know they are accessing applications and information from other sources. A circle of trust between EduTech, all regional information centers, and the State was built specifically because PingFederate removed the discussion about interoperability.”

Jenine Wech - Web Services
Production Manager, EduTech

The deployment of PingFederate initiated serious and productive conversations about collaboration across the entire NY education system. People recognized and experienced that data synchronization using the School Interoperability Framework (SIF) currently deployed is not all that is needed. They recognized that with federation, people can now work together, share applications that enhance their work, and cross-pollinate ideas and skills to employ.

Benefits and Results:

EduTech achieved identity federation across 12 RICs without requiring extensive upgrades to any entrenched Identity Management systems. Identity federation has built community and enabled conversations to happen that have never happened before between people who should be collaborating. The deployment of PingFederate and standards-based federated identity eliminated all fighting over ownership, control, vendor choices and license fee structures. Additionally, federated identity has simplified reporting of Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) educational data and each regional educational center now has the control they need to satisfy FERPA requirements.

QuizMaker, a homegrown application designed by one of EduTech’s companion RICs known as SCT, helps teachers target and build strengths in weak areas. SCT services 9 districts in NY State, and QuizMaker was only available to the teachers in these districts. Once identity federation was deployed with PingFederate, everyone in the ecosystem had seamless access to QuizMaker.

With PingFederate, EduTech is continuing to help break down barriers that have been in place for a long time across the NY educational ecosystem. The State Department of Education is now using identity federation to offer state-level services and applications to their RIC partners. Because of this, educators can be more successful and leverage tools that others have created and own. For the RICs, federated identity lowered their costs without forcing them to give up control. Everyone is able to tap into a much larger market and a much larger tool kit. The end result has been that test scores are moving higher and teachers are more successful in building student skills.

About Ping Identity Corporation

Ping Identity is uniquely dedicated to delivering Internet Identity Management software and services that are transforming how organizations work with employees, customers and business partners. Our open and flexible approach offers best-of-breed software complemented with best-in-class service that exceeds the ever-expanding needs of customers which include large enterprises, service providers and government agencies world-wide.

For more information, please visit <http://www.pingidentity.com>, call Ping Identity toll-free at +1 877.898.2905 or 1 303.468.2882, or email sales@pingidentity.com.

