Enterprise Architecture Governance Plan Phase 1 Report

Enterprise Architecture Governance Plan Report and Recommendations for the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

20 January 2012

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Content

1. Overview

1.1. Intent

The intent of the SBAC architecture is to drive coordinated decision-making for system selection, application design, infrastructure planning and other technology-related activities required for SBAC to meet its assessment obligation in the Fall of 2014. The scope of the SBAC program requires this decision-making process to include Consortium personnel, State and District education and technology representatives, traditional assessment vendors, the education technology and general technology marketplaces, and other stakeholder groups. As a result, the SBAC architecture requires a broad, robust and defined governance structure to ensure that decision requiring thorough analysis and extensive consensus across organizations can be made in a timely fashion that keeps pace with the overall program schedule.

1.2. Term

The planning horizon or term for the SBAC architecture and governance plan is expected to run through October, 2014.

2. Architecture Governance Organization

The Architecture Governance processes will be executed by several groups, each of which has a different purpose and set of members. Critical to the success of these groups is their alignment to the existing decision-making process and level of authority among group members.

2.1. Executive Committee

The Architecture Executive Committee (EC) sponsors SBAC architecture governance activities. The EC approves elections to the Architecture Review Board (ARB) and authorizes this group to make decisions about architecture standards and adoption. The EC also establishes vision and goals for the architecture, as well as monitors critical architecture. The EC gives final approval on SBAC architecture modifications and implementation priorities that may impact overall scope and objectives, time and/or budget constraints. Recommended EC membership includes the SBAC Executive Committee.

Responsibilities

The EC oversees the execution of architecture governance within the context of the overall SBAC program. Responsibilities include:

1. Authorize ARB to assume decision-making authority over architecture decisions and approve ARB membership.

2. Provide updates to the SBAC architecture vision and goals

3. Evaluate and resolve critical architecture issues escalated by the ARB.

4. Monitor architecture governance metrics and progress

5. Establish program priorities for the ARB

6. Accept or reject developed and implemented architecture capabilities

2.2. Architecture Review Board

The Architecture Review Board is the policy-making organization within the architecture governance structure. The ARB is sponsored by the Executive Committee to make decisions about the SBAC architecture standards. Recommended ARB membership includes the Measured Progress Enterprise Architect (Chair), representation from the SBAC Technology Approach Working Group (TAWG), as well as State K-12 and Higher Education leadership.

Responsibilities

The ARB reviews and prioritizes all changes to the SBAC architecture, reviews and approves architecture component buy vs. build decisions, and assists in the monitoring of contractor application development to regarding the degree to which components comply with SBAC technology standards. Responsibilities include:

1. Resolve recommendations for updates to the SBAC architecture

2. Make recommendations regarding technology including buy vs. build evaluations

3. Escalate unresolved architecture decisions to the Executive Committee

4. Review architecture implementations for compliance with SBAC technology standards

5. Evaluate architecture governance metrics on a periodic basis

2.3. Architecture Core Team

The Architecture Core Team implements the architecture processes in evaluating, selecting and recommending technology standards for SBAC. The Core Team also establishes documentation standards for maintaining the SBAC architecture over time. Recommended Core Team membership includes the Measured Progress Enterprise Architect (Chair), as well as lead architects from vendors that are selected to develop and implement SBAC architecture components in Period B.

Responsibilities

1. Chair the ARB (Measured Progress Enterprise Architect)

2. Define and recommend architecture standards for the ARB

3. Represent architecture implementations to the ARB

4. Oversee project delivery of architecture components

5. Support project delivery risk management and issue management activities

6. Advise on project delivery systems and infrastructure design and implementation

7. Inform program management scheduling

8. Capture data on architecture governance metrics

2.4. Extended Architecture Team

The Architecture Core Team may require an Extended Core Team of industry leadership to help analyze, evaluate and define interoperability standards and other architecture decisions that may have a broader industry impact. Recommended membership for the Extended Core Team includes the Measured Progress Enterprise Architect (Chair), representatives from the Measured Progress Collaborative assembled for Period A activities.

Responsibilities

1. Evaluate and recommend interoperability standards

2. Provide subject matter expertise on specific architecture components

3. Research technology trends that may impact architecture components

4. Assist in project delivery and other SBAC program activities as needed

3. Architecture Governance Processes

Architecture governance encompasses the following key functions:

3.1. Architecture Definition

Architecture updates are analyzed, evaluated and documented by the Architecture Core Team and, as needed, by the Architecture Extended Team on an ongoing basis. The scope of these updates may include recommendations for new and/or modifications to existing architecture capabilities, impacts to established architecture drivers and goals, as well as new and/or modifications to existing architecture requirements and models. Architecture definition also includes the buy vs. build analysis of architecture components. The Architecture Core Team and The Extended Architecture Team will meet on a periodic basis to identify and evaluate opportunities to update architecture artifacts. The frequency of these meetings will be determined by the Architecture Core Team in Period B.

3.2. Architecture Approval

Approval of architecture updates recommended by the Architecture Core Team will be given by the ARB in a formal review meeting chaired by the Measured Progress Enterprise Architect. Other members of the Architecture Core Team, the Architecture Extended Team and/or other stakeholders may also be invited to these review meetings to represent and evaluate architecture updates under consideration. Any documentation capturing impacts to existing architecture artifacts will be submitted to the ARB in advance of the review meeting. Official meeting minutes summarizing group decisions, outstanding issues and action items will be published by the Measured Progress Enterprise Architect. The frequency of these meetings is anticipated to be: two meetings per month for the first six months, one meeting per month for the next six months, one meeting per quarter for the remainder of the SBAC program.

3.3. Architecture Assurance

Review of planned and/or in-progress project deliverables that impact the SBAC architecture will be completed by the ARB on an ongoing basis to ensure compliance with approved technology standards. These deliverables may include systems approach, design, development and implementation. The Architecture Core Team is responsible for identifying critical project deliverables and recommending compliance review needs to the ARB. Tools such as compliance checklists may be useful in establishing assurance standards for project teams and identifying critical milestones for the SBAC program schedule. Other members of the Architecture Core Team, the Architecture Extended Team and/or other stakeholders may be invited to the compliance review meetings to represent and evaluate project deliverables for adherence to technology standards. Official meeting minutes summarizing group decisions, outstanding issues and action items will be published by the Measured Progress Enterprise Architect. Specific architecture assurance standards, in addition to the frequency of assurance meetings, will be established by the ARB in Period B.

4. Related Program Functions

Architecture governance will assume an advisory and subject matter expert role for several related oversight-and execution-oriented functions within the SBAC program. Please note that each function will be led by SBAC organizations outside of the architecture governance structure.

4.1. Program Management

Architecture governance will help identify risks and establish risk mitigation strategies, establish technology dependencies across SBAC working group projects, define key technology schedule milestones, and evaluate overall quality of technology deliverables.

4.2. Project Delivery

Architecture governance will advise on key project systems design and infrastructure planning issues, as well as help triage critical project systems issues as they arise.

4.3. Procurement

Architecture governance will assist in the solicitation, evaluation and selection of technology vendors as needed.

5. Architecture Governance Measurement

Architecture governance requires defined performance metrics to establish efficacy and value, as well as to identify areas for improvement over time. Suggested architecture governance metrics follow:

5.1. Coverage

This metric compares the current number of approved technology standards to the total number of required technology standards identified by the Architecture Core Team and tracked by the Architecture Review Board. Coverage can be established in aggregate and/or defined at the capability level. Coverage can also be stratified across standard priority levels.

5.2. Compliance

This metric compares the number of technology standards adopted by each individual Consortium member to the total number of approved technology standards enforced by the Architecture Review Board. Compliance can be established in aggregate and/or defined at the Consortium member level. Compliance can also be stratified across standard priority levels.

5.3. Cycle Time

This metric evaluates time required to execute each governance process. Target and actual cycle times will be identified by the Architecture Review Board. Cycle time should be stratified across individual governance processes.

6. Nomination Process

A nomination process will be implemented in determining the make-up of the ARB.
This process will include the following:

1. November 21   Survey sent to SBAC Management for review

2. November 29   Survey sent to WestEd to create

3. December 1   Nominations open via survey

4. December 8   Survey reminder sent

5. December 15   Nominations are closed

6. December 15   WestEd sends survey results to Measured Progress

7. December 20   Member state survey completed and preliminary report developed by
Measured Progress

8. December 20   Measured Progress delivers survey results to the Technology Approach Work Group

9. December 20-27   Technology Approach Work Group initiates selection process and creates a slate of
candidates. Conducts interviews if necessary

10. December 29   Measured Progress generates final report list for Executive Committee meeting

11. January 5   Executive Committee reviews and approves final list

12. January 5   ARB solicitation process begins

13. TBD   Initial ARB meeting