



Meeting Minutes
Legislative Office Building,
300 Capitol Ave, Hearing Room 1C,
Hartford, CT
June 9, 2014

Members Present: Nick Caruso, Judy Greiman, Bill Vallee, Ken Wiggin, Scott Zak, Russell Feinmark, Scott Shanley, Mark Raymond, Abe Krisst, John Vittner, Scott Taylor (on behalf of Michael Mundrane), John Elsesser, Kathy Giotsas, Tom Dillon, Jim Watson (on behalf of Catherine Smith), Jeff Kitching

Others Present: Bob, Joe Campbell, SDE, Andrea Kielty, Wendy Rego, Jennifer March-Wackers, Jim Mindek, Mike Clancy, Garrett Eucalitto

Not Present: Lisa Pellegrini, Rich Mavrogeanes,

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Mark Raymond starts the meeting @ 2:36pm, welcomes members to meeting and introduces new member Jeffrey Kitching, Superintendent of Plainville Community Schools.

Approval of March 10, 2014 Meeting Minutes — a motion from Nick Caruso, Scott Shanley seconds the motion. Ken Wiggin and Jeff Kitching abstain. Motion passes.

Report of Commission Chair – In related activities, Chair attended a meeting that was conducted by the Office of Consumer council to move Connecticut towards a gigabit state. In my role as CIO I also attended a workshop “Alliance to Transform State Government Operations” conducted by the US Department of Commerce and the NTIA in Washington, D.C. It was very similar themed topic in how to get people connected at gigabit speeds with a focus was on municipalities.

CEN Status Report – Scott Taylor - Our second annual member conference on May 22, 2014 was a huge success with approximately 350 attendees.

Municipal Project update - Wendy Rego - 13 towns already connected; OPM will issue notice of grant awards for 54 towns & 4 COGS totaling \$1,787,620. Seven towns did not submit paperwork on time and will not be getting a grant award; they’ve completed all of the paperwork and are first in line for next year. Timing for next year’s grants will be the same as it was this year.

Discussion / Approval of Rates for FY 2015 – Mark Raymond - proposing a revision to the existing cost/reimbursement pricing for 2015. This revision would allow us to “fix” the amount that is charged for and years’ worth of service. Currently, the usage agreement is based on what is being used and is adjusted on a quarterly basis. The proposal is to adjust on an annual basis and to do it in the context of our rate changes. This will give those who are budgeting some more predictability and it will also provide them incentive to use the Network in the current year.

- Received a recommendation to engage a qualified consulting to take a look at the different kinds of rate structures and connectivity levels so that rate structure is sync with the public policy goals and our customers' needs for next year.
- Received a recommendation to to better explain that CEN is a different type of network. That with CEN's redundancy of circuit and quality of availability, CEN eliminates "throttling" and allows for the "higher" speeds which would allow our customers to be far more productive
- A motion to accept the FY 2015 pricing structure for the Nutmeg Network was made by John Vittner and seconded by John Elsesser. Motion Passes.
- A motion to investigate as what a consultant might cost and whether we would have funds available to look at our policy goals, pricing structure, connectivity and competitiveness was made by Scott Shanley seconded by Mark Raymond. Motion passes.

Executive Director Position – A motion to move forward to establish and fill the Executive Director position for the Commission for Education Technology was made by Ken Wiggin and seconded by Nick Caruso. Motion passes.

SDE Updates -

- **Digital Learning Report** – 10 elements that we are gauged on.
 - Student Eligibility – All students are digital learners – CT ranked 48th
 - Student Access – All students have access to high quality digital content and online courses – CT ranked 44th
 - Personalized Learning – All students can customize their education using digital content using an approved provider – CT ranked 50th.
 - Advancement
 - Quality Content – Digital content, instruction materials online and blended learning courses are high quality – CT ranked 32nd.
 - Quality Instruction – Alternative routes for teacher certification, reciprocity among other states for teacher certification, Statewide definition of Teacher of Record, etc. – CT ranked 27th.
 - Quality Choices - All students have access to multiple high quality digital providers – CT ranked 47th.
 - Assessment and Accountability – the student learning is the metric for evaluating the quality of content and instruction – CT ranked 49th.
 - Funding – creates incentives for performance options and innovations, public funds are available for online learning to all districts, all charter public schools, private schools and home education students – CT ranked 49th.
 - Delivery – infrastructure supports digital learning – CT ranked 22nd.
 - CT overall ranking in 2012 & 2013 – 50th.
- Discussion –
 - it would be very beneficial to know what is the path forward? What can this commission do to help move us up the scale? How can we work the State Department of Education and local leaders to help move us?
 - This isn't just about resources, it's also about how do we spend our resources'? We've spent a great deal on "Brick and Mortar" Schools and within the State of Connecticut we do not allow on-line Charter Schools. Which is cheaper? Which has a broader impact? Which doesn't require a nonproductive bus ride

to/from a standard classroom? Which is more flexible? Which is more modern?

- The original Legislation set state goals and it was the responsibility of the commission to the best of ability to hold the agencies accountable. It was the commission responsibility to develop a strategic plan for the State around what the elements that are important in Educational technology.
- Not entirely surprised by this result because too much time has been wasted in fighting for the funding for the wires and not having an Executive Director.
- What are the State goals around on-line learning?
- We need to watch out for duplications which waste money (ex. Online databases that are available at both schools and libraries).
- Another audience that could benefit from this would be the Superintendents Association (SA). If it's deemed to be important then the SA should really be involved so that it's not perceived as a mandate and therefore resisted.
- While at the State level were not doing the best job but at the Local level there are a lot of positive things. It would be negligent that there are pockets that have realized this weakness and has created a lot of creativity in the districts to address this issue.
- **Statewide online testing – Abe Krisst**
 - Since 1985 student assessments were administered with paper and pencil.
 - For this school year (2013-2014) 90% of our students in grades 3 – 8 and 11 had the opportunity to do the on-line Smarter Balance field test. From March 26 to June 5th over 1000 CT students using an online device and over 264,000 unique students taking their tests online.
 - State assessment will no longer be just the Summative Assessment done during the last 12 weeks of the school year. There will be two interim assessment testing that can be done throughout the year leading up to the Summative Assessment.
 - There is a Digital Library being developed with not only CT teachers but teachers throughout the country and several vendors.
 - In March 2012 we asked districts to provide information regarding their tech readiness to help prepare them for the online assessments. Earlier this year performed a bandwidth speed test to help determine the readiness of the connection speeds for each of the districts.
 - Over the past two years we've been promoting the specifications for the Smarter Balance Field Test.
 - During this field test things have been very positive but there have been glitches.

- Districts are being encouraged to work with the vendors regarding technology issues rather than the SDE.

Other business –

- **iConn – Ken Wiggin –**

- State to create its own eBook Platform with an estimated completion date of one year. This will be supplemental to some communities and for other communities it will be their first eBook service. Part of the planning to included:
- Textbook delivery – allowing students access to textbooks online (purchasing of online Textbook is not state funded)
- Commission members' would like to have Charter Oak to come in and do a digital learning presentation

Public Comment – None

A motion was made and seconded; Meeting adjourned 4:24