DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
BUREAU OF ENTERPRISE SYSTEMS AND TECHNOLOGY
Legislative Office Building Room 1C
210 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106
1:00 – 3:00 PM

M I N U T E S

June 4, 2018

Commission Members in Attendance

Raymond, Mark – Commission Chair, CT DAS-BEST, Chief Information Officer
Bailie, Colleen — Director, West Haven Public Library
Casey, Doug – Executive Director, CT Commission for Educational Technology
Caruso, Nick — Senior Staff Associate for Field Service, Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE)
Dillon, Thomas – Founder, Flagship Networks
Dumais, Charles — Superintendent, Amity (Region 5) Public Schools
Elsesser, John — Town Manager, Town of Coventry
Feinmark, Russell — Connecticut General Assembly
Mundrane, Michael — Chief Information Officer, University of Connecticut
Provencher, Maura — Vice President of Research and Administration, Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges (CCIC)
Shellard, Susan — Director of Administration, Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD)
Stanco, Bart — Vice President, Gartner
Vallee, Bill — State Broadband Coordinator, Office of Consumer Counsel
Vittner, John — Director of IT Policy, Office of Policy and Management (OPM)
Wiggin, Kendall – State Librarian, Connecticut State Library
Zak, Scott — Senior Director of Learning Technologies, Connecticut Board of Regents

Facilitators, Presenters, Guests, and Others in Attendance

Chatterjee, Supriyo "SB"
Dantos, Evan — Robinson + Cole
Hall, Aleshia — Assistant to the State Chief Information Officer
Kocsondy, Ryan – Director, Connecticut Education Network (CEN)

Note on Video Access

As of the publication of these meeting minutes, a video archive of the meeting was available through the Connecticut Network (CT-N) at the following address: https://www.ct-n.com/ctnplayer.asp?odID=15353.

Agenda Items

Welcome
Chairman Mark Raymond greeted the attendees and called their attention to the Legislative Office Building safety information for visitors. He also shared that the Connecticut Network (CT-N) was recording the meeting. He thanked Aleshia Hall for securing and preparing the room for the afternoon's meeting and for her assistance with the forthcoming Vice Chair vote. Mark called members' attention to the full agenda, including relevant highlights from the recent legislative session, another successful CEN Conference, and the forthcoming updates to share on improvements and progress on a variety of Commission initiatives.

New Member Introduction: Carl Fortuna
Mark shared that Len Fasano, President Pro Tem of the Senate, has appointed Carl Fortuna, First Selectman of the Town of Old Saybrook, to the seat previously held by Lisa Pellegrini, former First Selectman of Somers. Carl is currently serving in his third term in Old Saybrook, a town that has multiple CEN connections. The Commission members welcomed Carl and looked forward to meeting him in person at the next meeting. Mark noted that the Commission now has a full membership.

Approval of Meeting Minutes, March 5, 2018
Mark requested a motion to approve the minutes from the Commission's March 5 meeting. Ken Wiggin made the motion, with Michael Mundrane offering a second. Ken requested one change to the minutes, that on page 6 the reference to the "Connecticut Library Consortium" appear as the "Connecticut Library Fiber Consortium." Mark noted the change and asked for any other comments or revisions. Seeing none, he called a vote to approve the minutes, with all accepting them as changed, except for John Vittner's abstention due to his absence from the March meeting.

Vice Chair Election
Mark introduced the next topic on the agenda by noting a previous review of the Commission Bylaws, which call the members to appoint a Vice Chair. Those Bylaws, and the nomination form that all members received at the start of the meeting, define the responsibilities of the Vice Chair position:

> The Vice Chair of the CET, at the request of the Chair or during the Chair's absence or inability to act, shall perform the duties and exercise the functions of the Chair of the CET, and when so acting shall have the powers of such Chair. The Vice Chair of the CET shall have such other powers and perform such other duties as may be assigned by the CET. The Vice Chair shall serve terms of two years and may not serve more than two consecutive terms.

Mark noted that the members had nominated two candidates for the position, Michael Mundrane and John Vittner. In the absence of defined rules governing the election of a Vice Chair, the Commission would follow *Robert's Rules of Order*, adopting a written, "slated" ballot with both candidates' names and the Vice Chair responsibilities. Mark welcomed any questions or comments prior to the vote.

Bart Stanco noted that the Commission is fortunate to have two highly qualified candidates and offered a few words of endorsement of Michael. He called attention to his experience in education within various institutions of higher education, his technical leadership as a chief information officer, and his ability to build consensus and get results by engaging faculty and students. Mark thanked Bart for his comments and opened the floor for additional endorsements. With none given, he asked members to indicate on their ballots their choice for the Vice Chair position. Aleshia collected the ballots and exited the room to tally the votes, with Ryan Kocsondy acting as a witness.

Later in the meeting, Mark announced that the members of the Commission had voted in Michael Mundrane to serve as Vice Chair. As a testament to the outstanding qualifications of both candidates, he noted that only one vote separated the two.

Executive Director's Report
Mark turned the floor over to Doug Casey to provide the Executive Director's report, highlights of which appear below.

- Educational Software Hub
  Doug began by sharing some updates on the Hub, launched last August. The interactive Web site was designed to reduce the estimated 80,000 staff hours that public schools spend annually in complying with Connecticut's student privacy law. According to a recent survey, use of the Hub has led to an approximate 10 – 15 percent reduction of effort by the nearly 2,500 educators and leaders across 205 local education agencies statewide using the site. On average, the Hub sees 784 monthly visits, a total that has increased by 25 percent each quarter since its launch. Districts also benefit from using the Hub through its ability to help them track actual software usage for compliance against the student data privacy law and to save money by identifying unused paid software licenses.

  He also noted the recent work among members of the Commission, Department of Administrative Services (DAS), and Google to create an addendum that, when entered into with public schools, makes use of the company's education software compliant with Connecticut law. The impact of providing the addendum was significant, given that nearly every K – 12 student in the state has a district-issued Google account, and many districts rely heavily on the Google education suite, administrative tools, and Chromebooks to support 1:1 computing and assessment. Work is currently underway to review updated terms

from Apple and Code.org, two providers of educational software widely used by Connecticut districts. These companies join nearly 200 others, including Microsoft and PowerSchool, that have taken steps to register their products on the Hub and provide compliant agreements for districts to execute.

Recently, the Hub has received national recognition in terms of design and positive impact for Connecticut's schools and the educational technology providers that support them. A recent EdSurge article and session at the March SXSW Education conference in Austin, Texas, called attention to the Commission's work as a model for other states, and Amelia Vance of the Future of Privacy Forum spoke to the Commission's work in her testimony during a House Education and Workforce Committee Hearing on May 17. The morning of the quarterly Commission meeting, local station WNPR also aired a story highlighting the Hub as a resource to support districts and contractors.

In addition to conference and media coverage, the Hub as a model for privacy compliance has also garnered interest from other states and regional organizations tasked with helping districts to comply with state and federal statutes. Doug also shared that he had submitted Connecticut's approach to leveraging technology to support privacy compliance for consideration as part of the NASCIO State IT Recognition awards and as a key component in the education section of the biennial Digital States Survey.

During the recently concluded session, the Legislature passed HB 5444, which contains several obligations that the Commission will fulfill. First, it calls for the creation of a Model Terms-of-Service Addendum that school boards and contractors can leverage to create compliant agreements, addenda, or other contract vehicles. The bill also calls on the Commission to collect reports from each public school district on their use of software that does not comply with state student data privacy statute. Under provisions in the new law, districts may use non-compliant software as long as it meets other strict criteria. The reporting requirement allows members of the Legislature to identify usage trends according to this exemption. A forthcoming "Request" feature in the Hub will allow districts to indicate their desire to use non-compliant software. Culling these requests will allow the Commission to fulfill its duties to report to the Legislature and to encourage developers to comply with Connecticut privacy statute.

Michael noted the success of the Hub as an example of how efficiency and scale can be more effective than force to encourage compliance. He asked Doug if, given the number of providers and titles that the Hub contains, there might be an opportunity to leverage the site for efficiencies in other areas such as purchasing. The University of North Carolina System of colleges and universities, Doug noted, uses the technology that runs the Hub — LearnPlatform — to support purchasing. Members of that system can leverage a list of

approved software and develop request for proposal (RFP) documents tracked from purchasing to fulfillment. The LearnPlatform has other features that, when choosing to use the provider to support Connecticut's educational technology needs, Mark and Doug saw as promising areas of expansion.

- Digital Equity Session at CEN Conference
  As part of the Commission's ongoing efforts to help communities identify ways of getting students online outside of school, Doug provided highlights from a digital equity session he chaired at the May 18 CEN Conference. Panelists included leaders from the Connecticut Technical High School System, Hartford, Manchester, Norwalk, and West Hartford. Each shared the challenges they faced, from measuring gaps in home Internet coverage to identifying funding sources to run programs that connect students. The diversity of solutions that the panelists shared underscore the fact that equity remains a local challenge that communities must address. Doug plans to share these and other case studies as new sections in the Commission's Digital Equity Toolkit.

  On a national level, leaders from the Consortium for School Networking (CoSN) reached out to Bill Vallee and Doug, based on the Commission's work to develop its Digital Equity Toolkit. Because of those efforts, CoSN has enlisted Bill and Doug's assistance in making updates and revisions to that organization's Digital Equity Initiative Toolkit, which releases on Jun 21. As with the Hub, we are seeing the Commission's work in the area of digital equity serve as a model and resource for work on a national level.

- Student Technology Standards
  Shifting to the topic of technology competencies, Doug noted that the State Board of Education planned to vote on adopting the ISTE Standards for Students on Wednesday, June 6. The Commission has worked closely with Deputy Commissioner Ellen Cohn and her team at the State Department of Education (SDE) to ensure proper public comment and State Board subcommittee review of the proposed ISTE Standards prior to the vote June 6. Following the likely adoption of the Standards, Doug will coordinate with the SDE to post supporting materials for districts to use. He plans an ongoing campaign over the coming year to assist schools with implementing the standards in their classrooms, where real adoption takes place. He thanked Ellen and her staff for their partnership in this effort as well as the ISTE Standards team and the Connecticut ISTE chapter, CECA. Doug also thanked Nick Caruso as Chair of the Digital Learning Advisory Council for continuing to champion technology competencies, a topic he would cover in his report later in the meeting.

- Open Education Resources
In an effort to identify common needs and resources to support the use of open education resources (OER), such as lesson and unit plans, instructional videos, and tests, Doug convened a working group meeting on Monday, May 7. Representatives from our state's public and private institutions of higher education, school districts, and libraries discussed their current OER initiatives and challenges. Outcomes from the session include the development of a Connecticut OER compendium of initiatives, based on the input of participants. The group will also work on developing requirements for a statewide OER platform for educators to create, curate, search for, and share digital learning resources among local colleagues as well as those in the 19 other #GoOpen states. A key component of what districts, colleges, and libraries will need is a means of ensuring quality in materials. Given the lack of resources to provide centralized review and vetting in Connecticut, the group agreed that leveraging "crowd-sourced" approaches such as material reviews and rankings would help elevate the highest quality content in searches.

Members of the working group also noted their need for certification in the Creative Commons framework for understanding copyright and licensing, a key to the effective and proper use of OER. Finally, the group agreed to develop a shared communications and outreach toolkit to help champion the use of OER across different types of institutions. They cited such a resource as helping to dispel common misconceptions about OER among various constituent groups (e.g., professors, teachers, students, school leaders, and parents).

On a related topic, Doug mentioned that he will co-present at the upcoming Northeast OER Summit May 31 on the state of OER in Connecticut with Kevin Corcoran, Executive Director of the Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium, and Irene Parisi, Greenwich Public Schools' Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Learning.

Following his report, Doug asked members if they had questions regarding any of the topics he had covered. Michael Mundrane acknowledged the great work statewide around OER, particularly at the University of Connecticut. He highlighted the inherent difference between a course, with an organizational structure and pacing, and the materials used in a course. He underscored the importance of ensuring the quality of digital resources and pointed to the profound difference between "content" and publication-quality materials. The benefits of using the commercially produced materials of publishers include an increased likelihood of high quality, especially in their production. He suggested that OER and commercial materials may share approximately 80 percent of the same content and format, but the extra 20 percent that a commercial publisher introduces, in the form of elements such as an accurate topic index, help justify the cost of such materials.

Nick had a follow-up question regarding technology standards, asking if the State Board would likely address the ISTE Standards for Educators for adoption. Doug shared that his understanding is that the Board would likely not address standard sets dealing with technology other than the Student Standards.

CEN Updates

Following the Executive Director's Report, Mark turned the floor to Ryan Kocsondy, Director of the Connecticut Education Network (CEN), for his updates. Ryan referred to the one-page handout for details on the topics he planned to share, as follows.

- Staffing: Total hours of support from part-time interns has declined, as these students often seek full-time work elsewhere during the summer. He commended the work of Commission member Tom Dillon for his volunteer assistance as well as that of Dick LaFave, the former CEO and CIO of a large telecommunications firm.

- Budget: Ryan reminded the members of this fiscal year's reduction in the General Fund appropriation as well as the impact of the $1M sweep. However, the Network should end with a net positive by the end of the year, June 30. CEN expects to utilize approximately half of its $1.5M capital expenditure bond funding to invest in equipment to support the core network in preparation for the fall semester.

- Value-Added Services: Ryan shared updates on the managed firewall solution that his team presented at the annual CEN Conference in a standing-room-only session. Several CEN members have committed to purchasing the service. He reminded Commission members that CEN strives to provide solutions driven by CEN member demand, that introduce efficiencies, and that offer capacity that these members would otherwise not be able to appreciate.

- Advisory Councils: The first set of CEN Advisory Council meetings took place in late April and early May, with members of those groups helping to identify and prioritize services aligned with member needs. The intent is to deliver at scale technology solutions that remain low touch for CEN but high impact for members. Ryan is looking for CEN members to serve as chairs on each of the Councils.

- CEN Conference: The event drew an all-time high of 568 registered attendees and 44 sponsors. Post-event survey responses indicate that attendees found the Conference extremely valuable, especially in the time it afforded them to network with colleagues. They also appreciated the relevance of breakout sessions to their work. Ryan also shared that CEN is considering expanding the conference to a two-day event next year.

John Vittner noted his appreciation for the Net Neutrality session that Commission members Michael Mundrane and Bill Vallee led at the conference. Michael appreciated the positive feedback and noted the generally superficial coverage of the topic of Net Neutrality and the importance of exploring multiple paths to ensuring access to content. Bill echoed his appreciation and complemented the conference organizers.

John Vittner commended Ryan and the CEN team on their efforts to ensure continuity of service during the three major storms that affected significant regions of the state over the past year. He thanked them for the updates that CEN members received, delivered in a user-friendly and timely manner. Ryan appreciated the feedback and acknowledged the great work of his team.

- Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS): Ryan provided members with a [sample report of DDoS attacks](#) across CEN members. He noted the increasing frequency and complexity of attacks that have led his team to acquire additional scrubbing capabilities.

  Michael noted the total of 207 attacks since July 1 of this year and asked if these incidents tend to concentrate around certain CEN members. Ryan shared that the non-redacted report would show a preponderance of attacks against members that use high levels of bandwidth and that serve the largest populations. Mark added that these attacks often come in waves against the same members. Michael asked how CEN provides support or referrals to repeated targets. Ryan noted the engagement of the [Multi-State Information Sharing & Analysis Center (MS-ISAC)](#) as a resource for K – 12 and municipal members as well as the [Research & Education Networking Information Sharing & Analysis Center (REN-ISAC)](#) for higher education institutions needing additional guidance and support. CEN will also advise members to take specific measures to help offset future attacks, such as changes in IP addressing.

  Michael commended Ryan and his team for their work and for taking the important steps of referring CEN members to the additional resources mentioned above. He pointed to DDoS and other types of troubleshooting support as key differentiators for CEN members, services that commercial providers would charge significant premiums to provide, if they could offer such services at all. Mark echoed the importance of engaging all broader community resources to support educational institutions across K – 12, higher education, and libraries.

- Fiber Buildouts: Ryan shared the continuing progress toward establishing the New York City connection and library buildouts, with the goal of connecting 136 of 193 total libraries through the multi-phase Connecticut Library Fiber Consortium initiative.

Digital Learning Advisory Council Report
Nick Caruso began his report by acknowledging the outstanding work of a core group of Digital Learning Advisory Council members. The group has concentrated its efforts to support broader adoption of the ISTE Standards for Students and Standards for Educators on two initiatives: integration into existing standards frameworks, and providing guidance on district policy. He did note that members of the Advisory Council all have challenging, full-time work that often limits their ability to develop completed deliverables. For this reason, he and Doug have looked at ways of leveraging their time efficiently and scaling the impact of their insights to the benefit of the broader educational community.

- Integration Options
  The integration working group members met on April 20 to explore ways of leveraging existing standards, programs, and initiatives to support classroom-level adoption of the ISTE Student Standards. The group acknowledged the utility of developing a crosswalk with the current State Department of Education (SDE) Evidence Guides for teachers, a collection of exemplary practices tied to the Common Core Standards. This initiative would require a significant amount of effort from highly trained educators to develop.

  The group also discussed various approaches to collecting existing best practice models, including ISTE-aligned lesson plans and digital instructional materials. They noted the importance of tapping into high-quality resources, rather than trying to create new materials and guides. Finally, the group pointed to potential partnerships with institutions of higher education and the SDE around teacher preparation programs as a catalyst for preparing educators to support technology integration. Doug had previously mentioned the Commission's work in partnering with ISTE around its recently unveiled ISTE Certification program for teachers as a way of preparing educators for 21st century teaching.

  Doug added that he has been working through the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS) and directly with deans of the state's schools of education to integrate technology into teacher preparation programs. He reiterated that working with existing institutions and programs holds the most promise for ensuring that educators have the skills to use technology effectively for their own practice and as a means of modeling and building technology competencies among students of all ages.

- Policy Supports
  In a separate meeting that convened April 4, a policy working group engaged with CABE's Policy team to conduct a landscape review of common district policies that boards of education might consider revising to strengthen technology use and competencies among students and teachers. Outcomes of the meeting include the identification of the most relevant and effective policies to revise, including acceptable use, student performance, electronic resources, and graduation requirements. Later this summer, the group expects to release guidance to school boards, in partnership with CABE, on the types of changes to specific policies that districts should consider to have the greatest impact on supporting exemplary digital learning practices.

Infrastructure Advisory Council Report
Mark thanked Nick for his report and turned the floor to Tom Dillon, Chair of the Digital Learning Advisory Council. Tom provided updates on two initiatives: maximizing Connecticut's use of the federal E-rate program, and closing the homework gap for students without broadband outside of school.

- E-rate Maximization
  Tom called members' attention to the significant deficit between the funds paid into the Universal Service Fund (E-rate) and actual returns to our state's schools and libraries. In 2016, for example, a total of $16M in school network funding went unused. A smaller working group of school and library leaders from the Infrastructure Advisory Council has met to discuss potential reasons why districts and libraries do not fully leverage E-rate. They cited a lack of local matching funds, misconceptions about the program, need for procurement and technology design skills among district and library staff, and the timing of awards as potential hindrances to adoption.

  To vet these theories and identify areas of opportunity, the group has developed a survey for districts and libraries. Doug has already sent a communication regarding the survey to technology and district leaders statewide, with an expected release of the survey by the end of the week. The Infrastructure Advisory Council members will review the responses and offer recommendations that could include the development of communications to dispel some of the misconceptions around E-rate, identification of resource needs across districts and libraries, and suggestions for changes to the federal E-rate program itself.

- Digital Equity
  Members of the Infrastructure Advisory Council had previously written and released the Commission's Digital Equity Toolkit (http://bit.ly/CT_Digital_Equity) as a resource to empower local communities to get students online with high-quality devices and the skills to use them effectively. Tom reiterated the valuable case studies shared by the panelists at the CEN Conference session on this topic.

On a separate note, he also complemented the work of Paul Tarsa and Rick Cheung for their packed session on managed firewall services at the conference. The enthusiasm for the solution reflects its value to CEN members and echoes Ryan's earlier remarks about the importance of developing member-driven services that scale and deliver value.

Michael acknowledged the value of conducting a statewide E-rate survey as providing fidelity and that, at a higher level, this initiative ties to the work of the Commission around the ISTE Standards. Providing broadband and devices to students represents one of the essential conditions necessary to gaining digital literacy and fully leveraging technology for learning. Educational leaders need to acknowledge this connection and make prolonged commitments to infrastructure investments (e.g., E-rate matching funds) if they want to see real improvements in digital learning.

Regarding digital equity, Michael expressed that the Commission should develop a position statement identifying the significant work that libraries already do — with too few resources — to connect and support learners across all aspects of online learning and digital citizenship. He also pointed to the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) rules around E-rate funding as not helping libraries provide these services. For example, the single set of rules governing filtering that apply to, for example, a kindergarten class and a public library do not address the very different audiences using technology in those two types of learning environments.

Colleen Bailie agreed with Michael's points and cited her library (West Haven Public Library) as depending on these funds to provide broadband service to its patrons. Some libraries will simply not accept E-rate funding because of the requirement to filter content, which in some ways ties back to the earlier discussion around Net Neutrality. She echoed Michael's earlier remarks, stating the importance of articulating the critical role that libraries play in addressing all aspects of the digital equity challenge: providing broadband, devices, technical support, and training. Michael welcomed these comments and invited Colleen to join him in developing a position statement around libraries' value, which they would submit for review at a future Commission meeting.

Ken offered his assistance with the effort and noted the critical role that libraries play in providing digital literacy training and support, stating that the E-rate program should offer funding to support training and support. He felt that state and federal legislators need to understand libraries' impact on connecting and educating learners and to look at funding mechanisms, such as E-rate, to support this important work.

Mark welcomed the discussion and did not see a reason to call for a motion on Michael's proposal to develop a position statement for future consideration. Mark felt that the topic aligned exactly with the Commission's purpose and mission and embraced the opportunity for this group to elevate the critical role that libraries play in online learning. He also thanked Nick and Tom for their continued leadership as chairs of their respective advisory councils, championing important work that benefits the greater citizenry of Connecticut.

Public Comment

The Commission welcomed Supriyo "SB" Chatterjee to share some brief comments. He began by sharing his background in technology and economic policy, primarily in healthcare. He then highlighted some of the points in a recent Connecticut Innovations blog post that Doug had written on the promise of establishing an education innovation cluster in Connecticut ([Connecting Connecticut's EdTech Community](#)). The state has a number of educational technology firms, from start-ups to established companies, that serve K – 12 and higher education. He encouraged the Commission to support the educational technology marketplace in our state, which has seen explosive growth in recent years. He saw Connecticut's strength in education as an ideal environment in which to encourage the growth of these companies. Mr. Chatterjee promised to share with the Commission some formal, written remarks and recommendations.

After thanking Mr. Chatterjee for his comments and continued engagement in the Commission's work, Mark asked the members if they had any items to suggest for future meetings. John Elsesser asked that the group revisit the CEN strategic plan, which members had drafted several years ago. Mark thanked John for his suggestion and acknowledged the value of assessing progress on at least an annual basis, for both the CEN and Commission plans. He did note that the Commission already submits an annual report to the legislative committees of cognizance on its progress. Ryan added that an updated, rough draft of a CEN strategic plan exists, though he would like to solicit more member feedback on the document before sharing it with Commission members. Ken and Bill welcomed the dialog and suggestions, and Ken underscored the benefit of highlighting the Commission's body of work in advance of the next legislative session.

As a point of clarification, Doug reminded the members that the Commission's five-year [Educational Technology Goals and Plan](#) is available online, as are each year's [annual reports](#). The Goals and Plan include eight initiatives that guide the Commission's work, taking place through the advisory councils and other efforts. Nick echoed this point and suggested that making future clarifications on how advisory council efforts support the Goals and Plan would serve everyone's interests. Mark agreed with these suggestions and noted the value of revisiting the CEN and Commission plans, given that we have a mission and long-term plan that exist in a dynamic educational, economic, and policy environment.

Future Meeting Dates

- Monday, September 10

- Monday, December 3

Adjournment

After noting the remaining scheduled meeting dates for 2018, Mark requested a motion to adjourn. Nick made the motion, with a second from Michael. The members unanimously approved the motion, and Mark adjourned the meeting at approximately 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Douglas Casey
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