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 3, 2019

Commission Members in Attendance

Raymond, Mark – Commission Chair and Chief Information Officer, DAS-BEST

Mundrane, Michael — Commission Vice Chair and Vice President and Chief Information Officer, University of Connecticut

Casey, Doug – Executive Director, CT Commission for Educational Technology

Caruso, Nick — Senior Staff Associate for Field Service, Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE)

Dumais, Charles — Executive Director, Cooperative Educational Services (C.E.S.)

Elsesser, John — Town Manager, Town of Coventry (CT Council of Small Towns)

Fortuna, Carl — First Selectman, Town of Old Saybrook (Minority Leader of the Senate)

Gopalakrishnan, Ajit — Chief Performance Officer, State Department of Education

La Valle, Dawn — Director, Division of Library Development, Connecticut State Library

Mavrogeanes, Rich — President, Discovery Video (President Pro Tem of the Senate)

Provencher, Maura — Vice President of Research and Administration, Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges (CCIC)

Shanley, Scott — General Manager, Town of Manchester (CT Conference of Municipalities)

Vallee, Bill — State Broadband Coordinator, Office of Consumer Counsel

Vittner, John — Director, IT Policy, Office of Policy and Management (OPM)

Facilitators, Presenters, Guests, and Others in Attendance

Chatterjee, Supriyo (S.B.)

Choquette, Erin — Department of Administrative Services (DAS)

Giammarco, Peter — Verizon Wireless

Kocsondy, Ryan — Director, Connecticut Education Network (CEN)

Racamato, Victoria — Assistant to the State Chief Information Officer

Welcome

Commission Chair Mark Raymond greeted members and others in attendance and called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM. He began by welcoming the Commission's newest member, Ajit Gopalakrishnan, who serves as the Chief Performance Officer of Connecticut's State Department of Education (SDE). The June meeting comes at an exciting time of the year, Mark noted, following another successful CEN Conference, the upcoming close of the school year, and plenty of updates on the Commission's work as part of its Strategic Goals and Plan.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Mark entertained a motion to approve the minutes from the Commission's March 4 meeting, sent previously and available in hard copy for in-person attendees as well as on the Commission's Web site. Nick Caruso made the motion, with John Vittner offering a second. Mark asked for any discussion or changes regarding the minutes. With none offered, the Commission members unanimously approved the minutes, with Dawn La Valle abstaining, given that she had not attended the previous meeting.

Report of the Executive Director

Following the approval of the March meeting minutes, Mark turned the meeting over to Doug to provide progress updates on the Commission's initiatives.

- **GoOpenCT (OER) Campaign**
  Doug shared the recent launch of GoOpenCT through the Web (www.GoOpenCT.org), a YouTube channel, and Twitter (Twitter.com/GoOpenCT). The campaign should raise awareness of the outstanding efforts underway statewide to increase access to high-quality learning materials. Doug reminded the members of the March 2017 motion to make Connecticut a GoOpen state, one of 20 that have taken this U.S. Department of Education pledge (tech.ed.gov/open) and participated in various communities of practice to support the development and use of open education resources (OER). Examples of OER include unit plans, lesson plans, textbooks, assessments, and even full courses, developed and shared free through Creative Commons licensing.

  The benefits of using OER include equity of access for students and districts to high-quality learning materials, ensuring relevancy and currency of materials that educators update on a regular basis, cost savings to students and schools, and the ability to take advantage of student and district technology investments. These all tie back to the original vision and mission for the Commission, to support digital

learning through the creation, curation, and sharing of high-quality instructional materials.

The GoOpenCT campaign includes a series of video testimonials of OER leaders across schools, universities, and libraries. For example, Eileen Rhodes, the Director of Libraries at Capital Community College (CCC), talks about the "NoLo" campaign that started at CCC and is now in place in 8 of our state's 12 community colleges. The program allows students to search for classes that have no or low (less than $40) materials costs. Reducing or eliminating materials costs means that students can take more classes and have greater freedom to enroll in courses they wish to take, not limited by textbook expenses. For schools, Mike Rafferty of Region 14 shares in his testimony of how the use of open materials has reduced his district's curriculum costs by two-thirds.

A team of students in the University of Connecticut's Digital Media and Design program produced the videos, under Professor John Murphy's leadership. Victoria Nazworth, a junior in the UCONN program, designed the GoOpenCT logo. Nick Caruso noted the high quality of these marketing assets and that his organization, CABE, has engaged with Professor Murphy to support their own outreach efforts.

The campaign includes a strong call to action via Twitter updates and messages through various leadership groups throughout the state to respond to an OER survey. The form takes approximately 10 minutes and comes from the work of an informal OER working group that Doug assembled, comprised of many of the same individuals featured in the video series. The intent of the survey is to demonstrate that schools, colleges, and libraries are already engaged in developing and sharing OER. The results of the survey should also provide a good "footprint" of OER collections that respondents are willing to share.

Carl Fortuna asked how widely school districts are using and sharing OER materials. Doug indicated that virtually every district does develop instructional materials, but that the degree to which they share these resources remains uncertain. The survey results should provide a more exact sense of district resources and their willingness to share them. Those results may also provide strong evidence for the potential benefits of having a shared technology platform for authoring and sharing high-quality digital materials.

Chip Dumais mentioned the inclusion of OER funding in the "implementer" bill (HB-7424). Originally proposed through HB-7162, the language provides for the creation of a Connecticut Open Educational Resource Coordinating Council with the ability to provide grant funding to open education initiatives that serve the higher education community. Doug noted that the provisions only address OER for colleges and universities, whereas the Commission's work addresses open education across schools, higher education, and libraries. Doug has engaged with other state leaders and the Legislature to look at ways of connecting these efforts to benefit as broad an audience as possible.

Michael Mundrane noted the "nontrivial" role that publishers provide in moving materials to a "publication ready" state. Despite the value they bring, he noted the recent termination by the University of California at Berkeley of its agreement with Elsevier publishing, a significant development in higher education and indicator that colleges and universities may no longer be willing to invest in costly bundled content subscriptions. In the "triangle" of consumers, providers, and creators, this move has significance among colleges and universities, not to mention professional publishers. Dawn La Valle mentioned the role of libraries in providing access to high-quality materials, as shared in recent Pew research. Finally, Ajit noted the connections across OER, assessment, privacy, CEN, and other concerns of the Commission in the context of the upcoming Performance Matters Forum that his bureau will host Thursday, October 17, 2019. He encouraged Doug and Ryan to submit a proposal to present at the conference, an offer both warmly accepted.

- **Data Privacy Updates**
  Student Data Privacy Task Force
  Following the discussion of OER, Doug shared a few updates on student data privacy. First, he noted the development and release of a report by the Student Data Privacy Task Force, which he chaired and that included Commission member Ajit Gopalakrishnan as well as other appointees from agencies and the broader educational community. The Task Force developed the report as part of Public Act 16-189, with the intent of reviewing data privacy issues and making recommendations to the Connecticut General Assembly's General Law and Education Committees. Recommendations from the report, released in March, include the following:

  o Reduce Inefficiencies While Ensuring Privacy: Throughout the report, the task force acknowledges the importance of protecting student privacy in ways that also minimize impact on the limited resources of districts, especially small ones.
  o Strengthen Penalties: Define and reference measures that compel vendors to comply with the law, pointing to existing state statute, when possible.

- Leverage and Ensure Coherence Across Statutes: Connecticut's data privacy law does not require additional definitions regarding requests for data deletion or public hearings, which federal statute, Connecticut education law, and local board of education policies already address. Furthermore, new state education and general privacy statutes should align with the current and future versions of the Connecticut student data privacy law.
- Training and Professional Development: Provision of high-quality training materials by the State will minimize the need for districts to do so individually. A centralized solution would also help address the critical need to strengthen digital literacy competencies among all members of the educational community without placing additional resource burdens on districts.
- Further Study: A formal study to measure the qualitative and quantitative impacts of the law would help identify the collective direct and indirect costs on Connecticut's school districts.

Michael Mundrane asked about how statewide contracting might take place to streamline the negotiation of compliant terms, whether this would occur through the State Department of Education. Mark Raymond clarified that the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) provides the ability to post contracts that towns and agencies may use through BizNet (https://biznet.ct.gov), the State contracting portal. Agreements posted on the site follow standard assurances and terms, lending the process and platform to support data privacy requirements, if those became part of standard contract language.

LearnPlatform Chrome Plugin
On April 24, the Commission hosted a Webinar with LearnPlatform, which provides the technology behind the Educational Software Hub. This solution has saved millions in indirect costs to districts in complying with Connecticut's data privacy law, based on survey responses. The Webinar provided an overview to school technology leaders on how to leverage free dashboards on educational technology use. Through an extension that districts can enable on their Chromebooks, this solution collects and presents aggregate usage data for greater insights into the software that students and teachers use. This information can help districts avoid paying for licenses they do not use and allows them to address the use of titles that do not comply with Connecticut law. More than 40 districts now use this dashboard, with details available at https://learnplatform.com/google-chrome-extensions. Doug noted that for a relatively modest, state-level investment, use of LearnPlatform has provided enormous benefits to districts. The roadmap of future product enhancements will only deepen its value to Connecticut school leaders.

- **E-rate Report and Next Steps**
  Doug finalized and shared the Commission's [E-rate report and recommendations](#) on April 17. The document reflects survey responses from more than 130 districts and libraries about their use of and attitudes toward the Universal Services Fund program that offsets the cost of connecting schools and libraries to the Internet. Analysis of federal data indicates that Connecticut institutions have not fully leveraged the program, leaving approximately $24M in potential funding unused.

  The new "Opportunities" section highlights a few areas the Commission should consider, including greater transparency over the pricing of E-rate consulting services. Given that 80 percent of districts use the same firm with apparently inconsistent fees and cost bases, Doug mentioned that he is looking at developing a request for proposal (RFP) for services. Posting responses to the RFP would provide transparency into what individual firms charge and what districts receive in return. Other opportunities that the document highlights include cooperative or volume purchasing for frequently procured connection services and network hardware.

Digital Learning Advisory Council Report

Mark turned the meeting over to Nick Caruso, chair of the Digital Learning Advisory Council, for his report from that group's meeting on April 30, 2019. Commission members had the opportunity previously to review [the minutes of that meeting](#).

The first topic the Digital Learning Advisory Council members addressed is the potential impact of 5G networking on teaching and learning. If future cellular networks will provide connection speeds at or faster than school network connections, what policy and practice changes will schools need to consider? To provide insight on this topic, Doug is currently reaching out to wireless carriers and will soon have a date when members of the Commission and Advisory Council can meet with experts from Verizon Wireless.

Nick also provided an update on learning competencies, or standards, for students, teachers, and leaders. The Commission has previously adopted the ISTE Standards, and the Advisory Council members discussed competencies for adult learners, including the newly released SkillRise standards (www.SkillRise.org). Relating digital learning standards to core academic learning, and assessment in particular, remains one of several topic that Nick hoped the new Commissioner of Education would engage with the Commission on when she or he assumes the office.

To close out his report, Nick shared his ongoing efforts to tie the work of the Commission more closely with that of other groups with similar interests and stakeholders, such as the CAPSS Technology Committee.

CEN Updates

Following Nick's report, Ryan Kocsondy, Director of the Connecticut Education Network (CEN), provided the Commission with highlights of his quarterly updates, [posted on the Commission's Web site](#).

He highlighted the recently completed five-year strategic plan and welcomed feedback from Commission members, who had previously received a digital copy of the document. As part of that plan, the Network will expand the reach and type of services to members. Ryan highlighted the recent announcement of CEN's Cloud Connect offering (ctedunet.net/cloud-connect) at no additional cost to members. Leveraging the current and expanding connections that the Network offers, Cloud Connect allows members to link directly to major providers such as Amazon, Google, and Microsoft. Michael commented that the direct connection to Internet2 provides a gateway to content provided by research institutions, tying into the previous discussion around OER. The Network's expansion into New York City — expected in July 2019 — will increase CEN's ability to improve and diversify services and to explore cost savings by taking advantage of providers in that marketplace. Ryan encouraged members and their constituents to take a few minutes to provide feedback on service needs using the brief survey that the CEN Service Advisory Council designed: bit.ly/CENSurvey19.

Ryan and other Commission members discussed the recent (May 10) CEN Conference, with 674 registered attendees, an increase of more than 100 over last year's total. Nick appreciated CEN hosting other technology committees and groups at the event, including CAPSS, ACES, EASTCONN, and the CXO Roundtable. Given the success of this year's conference and expansion of content offerings across all member groups, Ryan indicated that the conference committee was considering expanding the event to two days. The first day would offer longer-form sessions, with the second providing a similar format to that of previous conferences (e.g., keynote, shorter workshops, etc.). Michael commended Ryan and the conference planning team. This year, Michael encouraged any member of his UITS team to come to the conference, resulting in an additional 50 attendees from UCONN. He encouraged his peers at the CXO Roundtable to extend the same offer to their staff next year. Bill Vallee concluded the discussion by praising the conference organizers and sharing some of the highlights of his panel discussion on digital inclusion.

In the area of threat management, Ryan stated that CEN has mitigated 136 distributed denial of service (DDoS) attacks since the March 4 Commission meeting. He appreciated the members sharing these updates with their constituents and specifically thanked Ajit for helping to clarify CEN's work in protecting districts against DDoS attacks, especially during online testing season.

Mark thanked Ryan for his report and shared the recent request from a citizen received through the State's #CuttheRedTape campaign. That individual suggested that CEN provide connectivity services to non-education and government members, something the Network already provides through its open access offerings. The question reinforced the need for Commission members to continue communicating with their constituents the value of, and services offered by, CEN, including connecting private entities.

Digital Equity

Doug provided a general introduction and context to the topic of digital equity. From a national perspective, suggestions to updated eligible services under E-rate (e.g., wireless on busses) continue to emerge. Proposed legislation such as the [Leading Infrastructure for Tomorrow's America (L.I.F.T) Act](#) and the [Digital Equity Act of 2019](#) indicate a desire to close the gap between the digital haves and have-nots. The Commission's work has had a positive impact on and continues to address these concerns. From the development and operation of CEN, release of its [Digital Equity Toolkit](#), and Eduroam pilot to promoting the use of OER, this group has long committed itself to ensuring that students and institutions have the devices, connections, content, and skills they need for learning in the 21st century. With this as background, Doug asked Michael to provide an overview of the document shared in advance of the meeting, a [Resolution on the Role of Libraries to Support Digital Equity](#).

Michael began his comments by remarking on the outstanding model of UCONN's Hartford campus, with strong ties to the Wadsworth and Hartford Public Library. That community-based partnership reflects the broader role of how learning institutions can collaborate and highlights the library as a nexus of technology and expertise to serve its community. The Resolution that Michael, Colleen Bailie, and Ken Wiggin drafted identifies libraries as key locations to access services. The document proposes that the Commission endorse the role of public libraries in ameliorating the digital divide. Additionally, the Resolution states that the Commission would work with the Connecticut State Library and Connecticut Library Association to develop a plan to address digital inequities across the state. The plan would include equipment, software, and connectivity resources as well as the in-house training expertise of librarians to support their patrons.

Bill Vallee underscored the ongoing challenges of providing access to specific populations in the state, as highlighted in the Office of Consumer Counsel's [Overview of Broadband Deficiencies](#) report from 2016. He pointed to availability and affordability of broadband and the need for training and support to ensure effective use of online learning and citizenry resources. John Elsesser agreed with the spirit of the Resolution and expressed his concern that the rollout of 5G networking may further disenfranchise certain parts of the state that have not historically had access to the latest networking

technology (e.g., Hartford, Northwest Hills). Michael appreciated the comments and suggested clarifications to the introductory remarks of the Resolution, to focus on the role of libraries in addressing these concerns. He also pointed to the need to update other levers to address inequities, such as funding for mobile hotspots through E-rate. Dawn La Valle referred Commission members to the wealth of data collected by her Division of Library Development on services delivered via local libraries to patrons across the state (https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/stats).

Mark felt that the timing for the report was "spot-on," tying directly to the Lamont Administration's commitment to expand and enhance digital government. In order to deliver on the promise of online efficiencies, the State should consider all segments of the population and ways to increase access not just to technology but also to the human supports to increase digital literacy. Libraries provide much-needed assistance to help citizens leverage online learning and government resources. Nick asked about a motion to adopt the Resolution, with Mark suggesting that the Commission members take time before the next meeting to review and suggest changes to the document.

Public Comment

Mark welcomed Supriyo "S.B." Chatterjee to the meeting to provide public testimony. As background to his remarks, S.B. noted that he serves on the Practice Transformation Task Force of the State Innovation Model program, which considers the future of healthcare delivery, especially regarding Medicare and Medicaid. Future trends include telehealth, e-prescriptions, and other innovations in healthcare. He offered a copy of his testimony on school-based health centers (SBHCs). In that document is a call to increase inclusion of SBHCs as components of healthcare reform in Connecticut. The tie to the Commission's work in education technology comes in that testimony's call to update the data systems that support SBHCs. He thanked the Commission members for their consideration of his comments on this topic.

Scheduled 2019 Meeting Dates

The Commission's scheduled meeting dates for the remainder of 2019 are as follows:

Monday, September 9
Monday, December 2

Prior to entertaining a motion to adjourn, Mark acknowledged the outstanding work of his former administrative secretary, Aleshia Hall, who has taken a position with the State's Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection. He introduced his new administrative secretary, Victoria Racamato, who he expected to do a fabulous job in supporting the work of the Commission.

In light of upcoming meetings, Mark reminded the members that 2020 would mark 20 years since the Commission's creation. He welcomed ideas on ways to celebrate this milestone and the impact of the group over two decades of work. He also invited members to review the current statute (CGS § 61a) to consider any revisions to that law.

Adjournment

Mark entertained a motion to adjourn, with Nick offering the first and Bill a second. The motion passed unanimously with no abstentions. The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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