



**Legislative Office Building Room 1C
210 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106
1:00 – 3:00 PM**

**MINUTES
September 12, 2016**

Commission Members in Attendance

Raymond, Mark – Commission Chair, CT DAS-BEST, Chief Information Officer
Casey, Doug – Executive Director, CT Commission for Educational Technology
Baillie, Colleen – Director, West Haven Library (Connecticut Library Association)
Caruso, Nicholas – Senior Staff Associate, CT Association of Boards of Education
Dillon, Thomas – Founder, Flagship Networks (Speaker of the House)
Elsesser, John – Town Manager, Coventry (Connecticut Council of Small Towns)
Feinmark, Russell – Connecticut General Assembly (Speaker of the House)
Mindek, James – Manager, Bureau of Information Technology (State Department of Education)
Mundrane, Michael – Chief Information Officer, University of Connecticut
Pellegrini, Lisa – First Selectman, Town of Somers
Shanley, Scott – General Manager, Manchester (Connecticut Conference on Municipalities)
Vallee, William – CT Broadband Policy and Programs Coordinator, Office of Consumer Counsel
Vittner, John – Director, Office of Policy and Management
Widness, Jennifer – President, Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges
Wiggin, Kendall – State Librarian, Connecticut State Library
Zak, Scott – Director of IS Applications, Board of Regents

Facilitators, Presenters, Guests, and Others in Attendance

Deprey, Brynn – Marketing Communications Manager, CT Education Network
Taylor, Scott – Director, CT Education Network

Agenda Items

- Welcome: Mark welcomed the meeting participants and shared that Scott Taylor has officially resigned his position with State service. Mark thanked Scott for his 11 years of dedication to the Connecticut Education Network, including the difficult transition to convert the network to a fee-for-service program. There are three weeks remaining before his departure on October 7. All attendants applauded Scott for his commitment and wished him the best of luck in his future endeavors. We would not be where we are now without Scott.



Tom Dillon, Nick Caruso, Ken Wiggin, Lisa Pellegrini, John Vittner, Dawn Lavalle, Michael Mundrane, and Doug Casey all addressed the group and thanked Scott for his service, consistent level of professionalism, and contributions he has made to CEN and wished him luck in his future endeavors.

Scott Taylor thanked everyone for their kind words and willingness to work with him to face whatever collective challenges the CEN faced. He wished future success to the team and assured the Commission that his employees behind the scenes will keep the momentum going.

Mark Raymond closed with the Commission's ever-lasting thanks.

- **Approval of Meeting Minutes, June 13, 2016:** A motion was made and seconded. Having no discussion, the minutes were unanimously approved as written with no abstentions.

- **Report of Executive Director**

Initial Strategic plans address core principles and methodologies. It would be remiss of the Commission to be forging ahead with strategic initiatives such as student technology proficiency standards, open education resources, and digital equity without sharing these initiatives with the broader educational community. To that end, the Commission will host a strategic retreat on Friday, October 21. The Governor, Commissioner of Education, and key stakeholders in education including representatives of the Board of Regents, General Assembly, etc. will be invited. The goal will be for them to understand what we are working on and look to align these efforts with other initiatives across institutions and agencies. The outcome of this session could be to establish continuing conversations with this group and forging stronger relationships. Lisa Duty of Innovation Partners America and a co-founder of The Learning Accelerator has been invited to facilitate the day. She comes highly recommended and has experience in leading sessions such as this.

Doug shared that the Commission has been providing support to the creation of an Education Innovation Cluster in Connecticut. The model for such a program was established by the U.S. Department of Education; information is available at tech.ed.gov. The Connecticut cluster includes schools, investors, education technology companies, and learning scientists (researchers) from higher education working together within a geographic concentration to create better learning outcomes for students. In addition to creating educational technology products tailored to the needs of our state's schools, the cluster's activities will also support economic and community development, attract and retain high-skilled workers, and inform best practices in teaching and learning.



In February, Doug reached out to Connecticut Innovations regarding their work on a similar concept. The investment from Senate Bill 1 allowed Connecticut Innovations to hire Don Burton, a venture capitalist and founder of an ed tech accelerators in Manhattan, as the cluster lead. The program is in its infancy, but we have attracted attention from education technology companies and educators across the state. Outcomes could also include training for companies looking to expand in Connecticut.

Mark Raymond shared that engaging the industry will only further our charge and he thanked Doug for his initiative.

- **Statutory Changes**

Chair Raymond introduced the topic of Statutory changes or updates to the Commission's statutory language that might be recommended. The Commission members were presented with this material ahead of time to consider proposing updates or changes.

Nick Caruso recommended that we ask the Legislature to restore positions to the Commission that represent superintendents and teachers, which he sees as critical stakeholders on the Commission. Chair Raymond thanked him for his suggestion.

Lisa Pellegrini referenced page 2A, 4d-80 and recommended that there be more mention of the towns and CEN being included. Chair Raymond responded that the Public Safety Data Network is not governed by the Commission for Education Technology. There is another PSDN governance group that is a subcommittee of the 911 Commission and the Public Safety Advisor Commission that oversees it. Bill Vallee reinforced the recommendation to further integrate the municipalities and libraries. He recommended forming a subcommittee before the next meeting to develop language. John Elsesser noted that the original makeup of the Commission was education and library representatives, and these remain our primary audiences. Adding language about the Nutmeg Network will require a more in-depth dive into the wording. He also referenced Section A and recommended that the Commission address the interests of preschools. Preschool is not a constitutional responsibility for the states but can be a legislative responsibility. Under Item 6 that addresses the measurement, availability, and usage of Internet access, John feels that addressing the digital divide should go beyond "measuring" it and expand it to promote solutions for availability regardless of an individual's income.

Having no further discussion, Chair Raymond invited motions for:

- Greater teacher representation on the makeup of the Commission



- Integration of municipalities into the makeup of the Commission through legislation
- Recognize pre-K education as part of the Commission's charge
- Address online access (the "digital divide") for all learners, regardless of income

Chair Raymond supports the recommendation of forming a smaller group to review and suggest changes to the statute governing the Commission. The group would convene, discuss these possible changes, and return to the Commission members with specific recommendations.

Scott Shanley has confidence in a small group from this Commission to bring their recommendations back to the Commission before the Legislative Session. Chair Raymond entertained a motion to create a legislative workgroup. Nick Caruso made the motion, Scott Shanley seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved with no discussion or abstentions.

Chair Raymond asked that Commission members interested in volunteering for that group e-mail Doug Casey. Chair Raymond agreed with John Elsesser's recommendation that the makeup of the subcommittee match the makeup of the Commission (i.e., representation from schools, libraries, towns, etc.).

• CEN Updates

Scott Taylor introduced Brynn Deprey to speak on some of the aspects of CEN that she oversees.

- The CEN Update document was distributed for reference, and Brynn discussed the items on that report.
- Members were encouraged to save the date of May 12, 2017, for next year's CEN Conference.

Scott then reviewed the remaining contents of the CEN Update.

In reference to refilling vacant positions, Scott shared that there is low or even negative unemployment in some required IT roles. Compensation is a factor, but education incentives and benefit packages also influence the decision to accept IT positions.

Brynn Deprey then reviewed the remainder of the Update.

In response to Rick Mavrogeanes, Scott Taylor explained that the total CEN cost is \$5.8 million per fiscal year. The State (General Fund) support has been cut to approximately



\$1 million, or one-third of its former level. The CEN generated approximately \$2.5 million from K – 12 schools. The federal Universal Services Fund (i.e., “E-rate” program) provides offsets to cover roughly half of those costs, but only about half of eligible schools filed for Erate reimbursements.

Colleen Bailie thanked CEN for assisting libraries with the application process. Michael Mundrane noted that since there were not a lot of drop offs (just one school terminated its circuit contract), we can assume that participants learned that CEN costs were notably below what they would have paid on the open market for the same services.

Nick Caruso shared calls he received from educators when costs were being collected. Since the CEN change came through after local board of education budgets had been finalized last spring, districts were put in a difficult position. After considering other service options, they can really see the value of staying with CEN. He suggested underscoring to districts that they push their respective members of the Legislature to restore CEN funding. He encouraged CEN to continue marketing the network. Jim Mindek endorsed this recommendation as well and offered any support that SDE could offer.

John Elsesser also referenced that the local cable providers cannot handle the bandwidth required for testing periods and backup requirements.

Colleen Bailie has also heard from other library directors about the need for education on Erate as well as governance and logistics around content filtering.

John Vittner asked if there was a historical annual cost for CEN. Chair Raymond referenced the costs that have been documented over the past few years. Since the billing process changed, the information should be updated. John Vittner explained that there is a shift from where the dollars are originating. Usage and capacity have grown but overall costs have remained fairly constant.

Nick Caruso explained that, for districts, CEN charges do not represent just another existing line item but an additional charge on top of the many other mandated costs. Although this cost is not significant, when added to the other costs — and in the context of funding cuts — CEN charges can be seen as a challenge.

Chair Raymond appreciates the conversation and recommendations that the marketing is not yet done. Educating customers about the value of technology compared with its cost is an important part of that discussion and will remain an ongoing priority.



- **Advisory Council Reports and Motions**

Practices Advisory Council: Nick Caruso, Council Chair reviewed the attached minutes dated August 11, 2016.

Nick proposed the motion as detailed on the form entitled “Proposed Language for Student Standards Page” that was distributed to Commission members. Discussion included Doug Casey’s statement that current State standards are 13 years old; he believes that only good can come out of endorsing the new ISTE 2016 Student Standards. Nick added that the Practices Advisory Council members feel that endorsing the standards represents just the start of a broader effort to integrate these standards into every aspect of teaching and learning.

John Elsesser sought clarification on process after approval and was informed that it would be posted as an updated standard on the CET Web site. Doug will also begin the discussion with the SDE to push the ISTE standards into the SDE’s Evidence Guides, which serve as roadmaps to supporting the broader Connecticut Core academic standards. The endorsement of the ISTE standards will also appear in the Commission’s annual report back to the Legislature. He added that the Commission will also look to ISTE; the Connecticut Educators Computer Association (or CECA, the state chapter of ISTE); the Consortium of School Networking (CoSN); and other organizations to help support the integration of the ISTE standards into Connecticut teaching and learning. This is the start of where we are going with this, not the end.

Jim Mindek sought clarification about standards vs. advisory recommendations. He said the wording appears to be too general to call standards and recommended that they be referenced as a starting point for improving these standards. Doug Casey affirmed that this discussion is more of a framework than a standard. More detailed information and guidelines are already available on the ISTE Web site (www.iste.org/standards). Michael Mundrane cautioned about being overly prescriptive when making standards so their definition does not become their limitation. He sees the lack of specificity as an opportunity. Chair Raymond agreed and furthered that in the world of technology the environment changes so quickly that standards should be flexible.

Having no further discussion, the motion was unanimously approved with no oppositions or abstentions.

Digital Learning Advisory Council: Scott Zak, Council Chair, reviewed the attached minutes dated August 25, 2016.

Chair Raymond asked if our group would be playing a supportive or lead role in this area. Scott Zak explained that their intention is to play a supporting role as not to



duplicate other's efforts. Doug Casey explained that there are different threads of activity so we should play a leadership role in pulling together those threads to ensure efficiency. Chair Raymond requested clarity on the duties of these councils and noted that they eventually may need to be a permanent home for these discussions to ensure that the conversations continue.

Data & Privacy Advisory Council: In the absence of Council Chair Jeff Kitching, Doug Casey reviewed the minutes dated August 29, 2016.

John Elsesser recommended that DAS not be utilized if possible because they are not a nimble agency. He suggested the Council of Governments or CREC may have more flexible, faster-moving bidding options. State law passed last year allows other groups to be used. Doug Casey appreciated the suggestion as they have an interest in expediting this process and will look at RESCs and other bodies to expedite the execution of statewide privacy agreements. The Council of State Governments has agreements that may be viable options for consideration. Chair Raymond added that we should investigate as many options as possible and explore the most viable options.

Jim Mindek questioned the possibility of centralized hosting of these services to save additional dollars. Doug Casey responded that seeds have been planted regarding that option and he agrees it is an excellent suggestion.

John Elsesser referenced a CCAT financial package for towns with CEN hosting for Discovery Video and live video streaming. Doug Casey stated that conversations have been initiated and will be continued.

Infrastructure Advisory Council: Tom Dillon, Council Chair, reviewed the minutes of the meeting dated September 2, 2016.

Bill Vallee discussed outcomes since the meeting that included State Broadband funding dollars. Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC) is a research entity that can tie in with their expertise to do a survey that will address the presence of high-speed Internet for students outside of school.

Nick Caruso recommended connecting with Connecticut Voices for Children as a resource. He asked for CEN to create a consistent set of bullet points explaining the value of CEN that the Commission members can reference as they advocate for it.

In closing, Chair Raymond thanked all involved in these advisory councils for their contributions.



• **Public Comment**

Jack McCoy, Chief Information Officer of the Town of Manchester, addressed the Commission members regarding an initiative he is leading on behalf of the Connecticut GMIS chapter, the association of government technology leaders. His initiative addresses fiber to the premises, with the first phase of collecting data and assessing needs. There are elements of this work that could couple with the CT Gig initiative and ongoing CEN work. His committee is working on last-mile connectivity, and this Commission could be part of that work.

• **Future Meeting Dates:**

- **December 5, 2016**, Legislative Office Building, 300 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, Hearing Room 1-C
- March 6, 2017 Location to be announced
- June 5, 2017 Location to be announced
- September 11, 2017 Location to be announced
- December 4, 2017 Location to be announced

• **Adjournment:**

Having no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made and unanimously passed without exceptions or abstentions.

Respectfully submitted,

Aleshia M. Hall, Executive Secretary
Office of Chief Information Officer Mark Raymond
State of Connecticut, Department of Administrative Services
Bureau of Enterprise Systems and Technology
55 Farmington Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut 06105
Office: (860) 622-2416 Email: aleshia.hall@ct.gov

