

CEN Network Infrastructure Advisory Council Meeting Summary

Date: 01/19/2007

Location: Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT

The following members were present:

Tom Hilbe
Eric Lindquist
Tom Sweda
Ralph Valenzisi
Russ Feinmarle
Randel Osborne - Vice Chair
Karen Kaplan
John Vittner
Robin Brown
Ganesan Ravishanker (Ravi) - Chair
Bryan Adams
Ken Sayers
John Kalinowski

Charter School Connectivity to CEN

Karen Kaplan gave a short background of the issue at hand - what is the best way to offer network connectivity to the charter schools in 16 individual school districts. John Vittner presented the cost estimates of running leased fiber to these buildings - \$450K as well as for DSL connectivity (6 Mb downstream and 3 Mb upstream) which is \$140 a month per connection.

After considerable discussion on the merits of the various methods of connectivity, including extending the fiber network from existing CEN locations, the council unanimously favored the DSL connectivity approach. Based on the usage data by K-12 schools currently connected to CEN presented in an earlier meeting as well as on the number of students in each of the charter schools, the council members felt that the DSL connectivity should be able to provide the necessary bandwidth. In addition, the council recommended that these connectivities be actively monitored so any capacity issues can then become the basis for revisiting more appropriate alternatives. Currently there is no funding for this at the levels required for fiber connectivity and anyway, data on the bandwidth needs will be required when seeking funding, so this approach to go with DSL first was considered the most optimal solution. We confirmed that the DSL option will not require any long time commitments, so that it can be terminated any time in favor of other alternatives.

We suggested that the CEN staff should be keeping abreast of the new wireless technologies such as Wi-Max and long haul wireless as options which may be a more cost-effective solution for cases like this.

CALEA Compliance Document

John Vittner gave us an update on CEN's response to CALEA. Rob Vietzke would be presenting the strategy to CET at its next meeting which basically is modeled after the state of Michigan network Merit. The plan is to file for CALEA compliance on Feb 12, as required by FCC and prepare to install 3 probes which will be used for probing if needed, but will be used for other purposes. The estimated cost to CEN from the CALEA compliance activities is \$100K.

Content Filtering

Robin Brown from CEN gave an update on the issues surrounding the content filtering model currently in place for K-12 schools. Whereas it seems to do the job, it does not scale well. The model that CEN is likely to move to will be a distributed model with the content filtering being logically moved closer to the end points - the schools themselves. There were questions about customization and distributed administration capabilities, so that IT staff from an individual school can have some administrative control over the content filtering. Robin was CEN is experimenting with a few products and will make the distributed administration to be a requirement. The council members felt that whereas the distributed content filtering systems add management costs, technologically this is the most practical and scalable solution.

Restricting Access to Network Usage Data

CEN would like to restrict access to the network usage graphs, so any given member institution can only view data for its network. This was viewed favorably by the council and Robin will begin setting up the authentication and contact the users. Wesleyan would like to partner with CEN on experimenting with Shibboleth as a way to manage the access restrictions, so as to avoid CEN maintaining usernames and passwords.

Future Topics

Collectively work on policy documents - Ravi will set up a wiki

CEN Budget - Council needs to know more about the CEN budget if we can play a productive role.

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