



Strategic Initiative Planning: Digest of Member Feedback on Priorities, Resources, and Activities

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Background

This document provides the quantitative and qualitative responses to a survey sent to Commission members in February 2017, asking for their feedback on proposed strategic initiatives. These initiatives include ongoing Commission projects and align with state and national priorities and best practices. Respondents ranked each initiative on a scale of 1 (most important) to 4 (least important), based on their understanding of educational technology best practices and the needs of the constituents they represent. Commission members also offered qualitative feedback about each initiative, including specific goals and activities as well as resources that would support the work, such as partner organizations, grant funding, and other programs with similar objectives.

The proposed initiatives include the following items with examples below each:

Access and Connectivity

Establish standards on, and measure access to, broadband access, computing devices, and funding as follows:

- Connectivity to Schools
- Connectivity within Schools (e.g., WAN, Wi-Fi)
- Connectivity Outside of Schools (e.g., Closing the “Homework Gap”)
- Access to High-Quality Devices
- Opportunities to Maximize Federal eRate Funds (Districts, Libraries, and CEN)

Access to Digital Learning Resources

Identify, curate, promote, and share high-quality digital resources and the professional skills needed by educators to maximize the use of open education resources (OER). Activities would include the following:

- Adopt National OER Framework (U.S. DoE #GoOpen)
- Establish Statewide OER Platform for Resource Curation and Sharing
- Develop and Share Professional Development Resources (Online, In-Person, Events)
- Pursue Pilot and Program Funding from National and State Resources

Technology and Technology-Enabled Learning

Establish, promote, and provide resources to support the use of technology to support innovative teaching and learning, through these milestones:

- Student Standards
- Educator (Teachers, Librarians, Administrators) Standards
- General (Adult) Standards
- Statewide Framework for Mastery-Based Learning (Hume)
- Support the Integration of Technology into Teacher Preparation Programs
- Develop and Share Digital Resources That Support Work of Educational Technology Professionals
- Conduct and Share Research on Educational Technology Standards and Needs Statewide
- Promote Computer Science Education (Standards, Curriculum, Job Growth, etc.)

Efficiencies and Cost Savings

Identify and pursue opportunities to introduce efficiencies and cost savings to schools, libraries, universities, and towns. Efforts would include the following:

- Cooperative Purchasing
- Software Hosting and Support
- Guidance and Peer-to-Peer Networking to Streamline Software Procurement
- Tools and Best Practices to Assist in ROI Measurement

Data and Privacy

Ongoing support to educational leaders in the area of student data privacy and security, including the following work:

- Facilitation and Support of Statutory and Policy Development
- Introduce Efficiencies through Statewide Software Agreements
- Establishment and Support of Privacy Registry
- Identification and Promotion of Privacy Best Practices

Strengthen Public-Private Partnerships to Support Ed Tech

Continue the development of an educational innovation cluster that benefits schools, Connecticut-based educational software developers, and learning scientists through the following activities:

- Partnerships Between Schools and Companies to Produce Rapid-Cycle Software Iteration to Address CT School Needs
- Support of Educational Research through Learning Trials Among Schools, Businesses, and Software Companies
- Establishment of a Peer Network to Attract and Retain High-Skilled Technical Workers and Businesses

Communications and Advocacy

Fulfill the Commission's charge to serve as the liaison between the Office of the Governor, General Assembly, and Education Stakeholders, as well as the following activities:

- Sharing Educational Technology Standards and Best Practices
- Publish and Share Annual Report
- Foster and Support Relationships with State Educational Technology Organizations
- Represent and Promote Connecticut Among National Educational Technology Organizations
- Promote Commission Initiatives within the State and Nationally

Survey Responses

Response feedback comes from the following Commission members:

Colleen Baillie	Michael Mundrane	John Vittner
Nick Caruso	Lisa Pellegrini	Jennifer Widness
Tom Dillon	Mark Raymond	Ken Wiggin
John Elsesser	Isabelina Rodriguez	Scott Zak
Russell Feinmark	Scott Shanley	
Jeff Kitching	Susan Shellard	

Initiative Priorities

The following list appears in order of the average weighting of each initiative, based on survey response data:

Initiative	Average Rank
Access and Connectivity	1.69
Communications and Advocacy	1.69
Technology and Technology-Enabled Learning	1.94
Data and Privacy	2.00
Efficiencies and Cost Savings	2.00
Access to Digital Learning Resources	2.31
Strengthen Public-Private Partnerships to Support Ed Tech	2.50

The following table shows the same data as in the previous table, disaggregated by member sub-groups (member count in parentheses), representing government, higher education, K – 12, municipal, and private organizations:

Initiative	Govt. (4)	Higher Ed. (3)	K – 12 (3)	Library (2)	Municipal (3)	Private (1)
Communications	1.25	2.33	2.33	1.50	1.33	1.00
Access – Connectivity	2.00	2.00	1.67	1.50	1.33	1.00
Technology Learning	1.50	2.00	2.33	2.50	1.67	2.00
Data and Privacy	2.00	3.00	2.00	2.00	1.33	1.00
Efficiencies	1.50	3.33	1.67	2.00	2.00	1.00
Digital Learning	2.00	3.00	2.67	1.50	2.33	2.00
Public-Private	2.25	3.33	2.67	2.00	2.67	1.00

Initiative Feedback

The following sections provide qualitative member feedback on initiatives. Note that the preceding number in parentheses correlates to the priority value that the author of each comment gave to the initiative.

Access and Connectivity

- (1) Bridging Digital Divide for all learners is vital.
- (1) Look at solutions that combine efforts of schools and libraries to reach similar audiences.
- (2) Advocate for state support of network (CABE, CAPSS, etc.)
- (1) This is a critical issue for the Commission. We cannot believe in the importance of technology in education while knowing many cannot participate in its benefits.
- (1) I feel the erosion of many funding sources (federal, state, and local) that have helped move tech initiatives forward in recent years will force schools and districts to cut back at this critical time. Equity of access to technology is our state's number one issue in my mind.
- (1) Would like to be able to measure – no unmet needs for access to technology.
- (1) Planning and creative approaches to action are needed
- (4) The CET has largely spent time focusing on the “access and connectivity” initiative (e.g. CEN and now Nutmeg Network) since its inception and I believe this no longer should be its focus, therefore, my score reflects its relative importance to our current mission. I do, however, wonder if “Opportunities to Maximize Federal eRate Funds (Districts, Libraries, and CEN)” belongs as a bullet in this particular initiative – e.g. sustained funding is likely to be a separate and distinct initiative or should be included for all specific initiatives listed in this survey.
- (2) If not standards, then best practices
- (1) This is clearly defined in the Commission's mission. However, this should be expanded to include Connectivity to and within Towns through the Nutmeg Network.

Communications and Advocacy

- (1) This seems like our main mission. Continue to build partnerships and leverage other groups to see importance of tech in schools/towns.
- (1) Again, because of limited resources, the Commission would be well served to use the wide array of representative organizations to set a high bar for the expectations of integrating technology into the educational process. This bully pulpit might be a great way to set large-scale attention and progress.
- (2) Work in this area could help minimize misunderstandings of what the CET does and potential roadblocks from other agencies and branches of government.
- (1) Would like to measure how many people access / use best practices
- (1) Need to do this to promote program

Technology and Technology-Enabled Learning

- (3) Data Warehouse accessible for all CT educators?
- (3) Market and promote to educators sharing of programs?
- (1) We need to work with SDE (and higher ed) to do this. It is not just adopting standards, but figuring out how to get them into the classroom.
- (2) Again, I agree with the initiatives but wonder how to take on so much work with limited resources.

- (2) It is not that I do not feel this is as important, but this is one area where I feel others across the state are working (locally) on some great things. Most of the other initiatives here will be up to the CET if they are to be addressed at all.
- (2) Developing digital resources seems a stretch
- (1) This gets to the heart of creating a technically savvy citizenry. Really do not know how to capture outcomes. Can we get information from Higher Education on technical readiness of students from CT entering their institutions?
- (2) Teaching Teachers a top priority
- (1) As one of the primary providers of teacher education, the CSCU academic Departments of Education would find this to be the only truly important priority group.
- (1) This is why we have and continue to want technology in the first place.

Data and Privacy

- (3) Look at similar state agreements
- (3) Efforts should be to figure best practices and figure out how to get General Assembly to stop micro-managing this.
- (1) This is a strong area where the central position of the Commission may allow for us to save a great deal of effort among all the separate organizations that will have to deal with these issues on an ongoing basis.
- (1) I think this is high priority, I am not so sure about those bullets
- (1) Especially advocacy at legislature so lawmakers understand what they have adopted (words matter)
- (1) The reliance on technology has become so important, yet basic "safe cyber" principles are not part of our curriculum. Data and Privacy are two of the "best practices" which need to be taught early in our development in order to breed tomorrow's workforce in a way that will promote good technology hygiene

Efficiencies and Cost Savings

- (2) Look at CLC co-op purchasing; libraries join and get similar discounts statewide
- (2) Look at collaborative hosting among different agencies for cost savings?
- (2) Not unimportant, but the energy of the Commission should be focused on application of academic initiatives.
- (1) There are many places where organizations can save money by sharing resources with technology, particularly in Connecticut with so much decentralization. I am concerned however that this will be a difficult objective to achieve and it needs to be done without creating new operating expenses but maybe lean to a self-funded collective amongst like-minded organizations.
- (2) When you help municipalities and school districts save money, they take notice of what you are doing. Progress here might help us in other areas that would not otherwise get the attention and cooperation they deserve.
- (2) Add support for eRate
- (1) I think there are enormous opportunities we can and should take advantage of. We should be working with our partners such as CRCOG and CREC.

Access to Digital Learning Resources

- (2) Seek grants and collaboration among agencies to build a framework.
- (2) I only gave this a "2" because without a steady, long-term commitment from the state for supporting it we will not succeed.

- (2) Yes to adopting the standards
- (2) While I agree with all the initiatives, I am concerned about resources and wonder if there are other organizations that are closer to these needs. The pilot program connection may be a way for the Commission to exert influence and partner with other people without taking on the legwork of implementation.
- (2) Important, but I see it as contingent on Initiative #1 [Access and Connectivity].
- (2) Time or \$\$ saved would be tremendous.
- (3) This is clearly defined in the Commission's mission. However, this should be expanded to include connectivity to and within towns through the Nutmeg Network.
- (3) This could be impactful at the higher education level. The steps here come under "you can lead a horse to water . . . ", but there is no guarantee of a return on investment.

Strengthen Public-Private Partnerships to Support Ed Tech

- (3) Should not lead, but maybe participate. Encourage CCAT to work with us?
- (1) This would be an excellent place for the Commission to leverage limited resources to greater effect for statewide use.
- (3) Not in the bullseye, but closely related to what we are charged with doing. Not sure about metrics. If we needed to drop something — this would be the first.
- (2) Again, we need to incorporate the inclusion of municipalities in this initiative.