



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Quality Digital Learning Study Minutes September 11, 2013

Members present: Dr. Ed Franklin, Dr. Richard Abernathy, Representative Dan Douglas, Len Pitcock, Adrienne Gardner, Elizabeth Bowles, Dr. Jay Barth, Cody Decker, Susan Harriman, Dr. Tom Kimbrell, Dr. John Ahlen, Claire Bailey, and Katie Burns.

The meeting was called to order at 10:00. Chair Franklin gave introductions of the two speakers joining the meeting via conference call: Mark Johnson, Chief Technology Officer and Vice President of Applications Architecture at Microelectronics Center of North Carolina and Brady Kraft, Technical Director at the Idaho Education Network were both on hand to discuss successful solutions used in their states.

Mr. Johnson stressed the following points about North Carolina's network:

- It received a one-time chunk of money from North Carolina's legislature
- Steep growth curve since 2008, factor of 7 or 8
- Aggregating demand for all districts drove down price
- Districts no longer get a bill for internet service
- Districts not permitted to spend savings on anything other than technology
- MCNC provides connectivity, engineering support/assessment, internet, on-site and phone support which helped districts with fewer resources so there's less up selling
- MCNC is a 501c3

Chair Franklin next recognized Brady Kraft, who made the following points about Idaho's network:

- Legislature passed bill in 2009 creating the Idaho education network
- Initial legislation created a network tasked with connecting every school, establishing a growth framework, creating an E-rate consortium and video conference network
- Allocated 3 million per year to fund it
- Contracted with their E-rate provider to do the managed services and network operations and included a connection to I2
- Now in Y5, it is the first year they needed more than 3 million dollars (3.1 million)
- The State picks up 100% of non-E-ratable costs
- Stressed that district buy-in is critical, but districts were not mandated to participate

Dr. Richard Abernathy asked Mr. Kraft if a survey had been conducted of superintendents in Idaho to see if they are satisfied. Mr. Kraft answered that no formal survey had been conducted,

but they also aren't getting calls from superintendents complaining about broadband access issues anymore.

Chair Franklin thanked the speakers for their time. He then recognized Cody Decker for a report from ADE Research and Technology. Mr. Decker provided copies of the ADE Bandwidth survey. Eight schools in the state have not completed the survey, and Mr. Decker asked the committee to encourage those schools to do so. Highlights from the survey responses include:

- 50% of demarcs are single campus/single building, no MAN
- 21% have a MAN
- 14% have a hybrid
- 67% of bandwidth is through a local provider (outside of DIS) and 7% comes from ADE, only 17% is purchased by ADE, the rest comes from district money.

Mr. Decker stressed that data quality is an issue and pledged that ADE and DIS will continue to work on issues related to data quality.

Chair Franklin recognized Len Pitcock, Elizabeth Bowles, and Katie Burns to give a presentation about cable, wireless, and telephone providers. Mr. Pitcock noted that the majority of cable customers reside in municipalities. Some challenges that they face are geography and owners of poles. Ms. Burns indicated that wireline providers must also contend with poles. The costs can vary from about \$6 to \$50 a pole, and there are poles every 300 ft. Mr. Pitcock pointed out that broadband is currently an unregulated utility. Ms. Bowles said that some challenges facing fixed wireless are pole rates, geography, trees, and lack of vertical assets. She noted that fixed wireless tends to be where wireline and cable aren't. It's faster than fiber and would make a good temporary solution in many cases.

Chair Franklin noted the time and told the committee that this meeting and future meetings would last until 12:00 p.m.

Chair Franklin recognized Claire Bailey. Ms. Bailey handed out the E-rate timeline and bid timeline. Dr. Abernathy asked if school districts will be able to buy off the bid. Ms. Bailey answered that their recommendation is that all state entities and school districts be able to buy off the bid, which will be owned by the Dept. of Education.

Chair Franklin reported that he testified before the joint Education Committee in the Arkansas Legislature. He noted that legislative interest in the committee's activities is building. Ms. Bailey asked if school equipment could be a future agenda item. Ms. Burns asked if the tech subcommittee could give a report to the larger committee. Dr. Kimbrell suggested that focus groups of superintendents would be useful.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:03.