



**EDUCATION TELECOMMUNICATIONS COUNCIL
NOTES
September 22, 2003**

I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The September 22, 2003, meeting of the Education Telecommunication Councils was held at Iowa Public Television with the following members present: Robert Barak, Board of Regents; Al Bode, ISEA; Jim Bodensteiner, Board of Regents; Bruce McKee for Merv Cronbaugh, IACCT; Susan Olesen for Greg Davis, IASB; Mary Gannon, IASB; John Hartung, IAICU; Ellen Kabat Lensch, IACCT; Pam Pfitzenmaier, IPTV; Kay Runge, DE/Pub Libraries; Gail Sullivan, DE; and Mary Travillian, AEA Boards and Connie Maxson for Robert Vittengl, AEA Boards. Paul Bowers, IAICU; Tim Dose, SAI; Ed Gambs, SAI; David Montgomery, DE/CIANS; and Kathryn O'Shaughnessy, ISEA; were absent.

The following visitors were also present at roll call: Kathy Guilgot, RTC 1; Kathy Otis, backup scheduler for Region 3; Kitty Conover, RTC 3; Colette Scott, RTC 4; Kathy Goebel, Region 5 ICN Scheduler; Rick Maehl, RTC 5; Julie Thomas, RTC 6; Roger Rezabek, RTC 7; John Haack, RTC 10; Pat Thieben, RTC 11; Dennis Yoshimura, RTC ICN consultant for Heartland AEA 11; Pam Southworth, RTC 13, Cena Johnson, RTC 14; Linda Abel, RTC 15; Robin Madison, Legislative Service Bureau; John Gillispie, Tami Fujinaka, and Phil Groner, ICN; Judy Jones, State Library; and Deb Fiscus, IPTV.

Mary Gannon added a new item to the agenda under updates: G. New ETC Member. Pam Pfitzenmaier moved to approve the agenda. Robert Barak seconded. The agenda was approved as amended.

II. ISSUES

II.A. Appointment of New ETC Executive Committee Members

Mary Gannon opened the discussion with an overview of the duties of the 7 member executive committee that is rotated yearly with each new chair. The duties of this committee are to set up the agendas for the ETC meetings, provide advice and input to the chair concerning issues that come up between meetings, etc. The members who automatically make up the committee are the past chair (Paul Bowers), the chair (Mary Gannon), the chair elect Ellen Kabat Lensch and Pam Pfitzenmaier, facilitator. Mary asked for 3 volunteers to complete the 2003-04 executive

committee. Those who volunteered are: Robert Barak and Mary Travillian. Mary Gannon will check with the other K-12 representatives as well to recruit one more Executive Committee member.

II.B. Revision of Educational Trends Document

Pam Pfitzenmaier provided an overview of the document, "ETC Technology and Telecommunications for K-12 Current and Future Needs, 12/17/01," that was written by the ETC for the ITTC concerning Part III bids. According to Pam, the document is outdated and does not include either higher education or public library needs. Pam asked for volunteers to help with modifying the document. Al Bode, Kay Runge, Ellen Kabat Lensch, Paul Bowers, Jim Bodensteiner, and Pam Pfitzenmaier volunteered. This group will draft a revision and forward it to the full committee for feedback before the December ETC meeting.

II.C. Upcoming Legislative Session

Mary Gannon opened the discussion with what issues/topics IASB expects in the upcoming legislative session.

- a. Status quo funding for schools; IASB will ask for allowable growth--2% for 2004-05 and 4% for 2005-06 school year.
- b. The sale of the ICN
- c. Virtual academies—e.g., "Bill Bennett" school issue; online learning
- d. Apple laptop issues—a leadership bill of both houses; mandates wireless laptops for 7th and 8th graders up to 12th grade, as well as those who teach those students—estimated to cost \$50 million per grade level for start up
- e. Increase in professional development dollars; that was lost this year—both the monies for the AEAs and Phase III

IPTV:

- a. \$18 million to complete the conversion to digital television
- b. \$400,000 for operating expense of the digital transmitters

Board of Regents has not developed their budget request as yet.

Dept. of Ed.

- a. Teacher quality—how to maintain what they've got;
- b. Professional development
- c. Funding for community colleges

Independent colleges:

- a. Student financial aid including work study
- b. Iowa grants; tuition grants

AEAs:

- a. Funding
- b. Replacing state dollars with federal dollars in special ed
- c. Issues discussed last session ("sale of services" proposal)

Community colleges:

- a. State funding
- b. Keep local control
- c. Ability to generate funds locally

Mary Gannon stated that the legislative revenue conference meeting is held the first part of December and more would be known regarding the State budget at that time. She suggested asking that someone from the revenue meeting attend the December ETC meeting to apprise members of the outlook for the 2004 legislative session.

II.D. Results of the ITTC Meeting

The ITTC decided at their September 11 meeting to maintain FY 05 ICN video rates at the FY 04 levels. The ETC will send a thank you note to the ITTC for their decision.

After looking at the copy of the Video Rates for FY 04 and FY 05 document, Pam posed a question for ICN staff concerning the Non-E-rate supported K-12 use category—she understood that this category was to be effective immediately. Tami Fujinaka, ICN, reported that she would check with the appropriate ICN staff and have a clarification.

Pat Thieben and Roger Rezabek reported that they presented at the September ITTC meeting, detailing the fact that the video rates for community colleges have increased in previous years. The cost increase had necessitated not offering classes at remote sites where the student enrollment was not high enough.

III. UPDATES

III.A. K-12 Use Task Force

Paul Bowers was absent and unable to provide an update.

III.B. Iowa Virtual Academy

Pam explained that the name, “Iowa Virtual Academy” has been changed to “Iowa Learning Online” so it is not confused with Bill Bennett’s company, K-12 Virtual School Program.

Gail Sullivan explained that Pocahontas School District has contracted with Bill Bennett’s company and mailed marketing materials to parents with kindergarten students. In the materials, it was suggested to the parents that if they would like to take advantage of this virtual school program, they would open enroll their child through their local school district. It appears that Bennett’s company focused on kindergarten students this first year because they missed the deadline for parents to file for open enrollment for anyone other than kindergarten students. While Bennett’s company was suggesting this would qualify as a public school program and the full per-pupil amount would be transferred from the district of residence to Pocahontas as the receiving district, the DE examination of the situation determined that this would not meet accreditation standards for open enrollment. However, the DE did find that the program would probably meet the conditions of the home school assistance program. DE has sent a letter to all school districts telling them if they have parents who have enrolled their children in Pocahontas for this program, the resident district could count each student as .6, the home school assistance per pupil weighted amount.

Pam provided a timeline to members of the status of the Iowa Learning Online initiative.

- a. There are advisory committees established to aid in this effort. There is an advisory committee for each group--IASB, ISEA, SAI, AEAs, school counselors, and community colleges.
- b. There was a web site established last year that will be revised.
- c. Last January, school administrators in Iowa were polled about classes needed for high school students.
- d. Preparing high school teachers with skills for teaching "at a distance" is in progress. NCREL provided a class for teachers this past summer and a second class will be held this coming spring for those who want to develop their own online courses.
- e. The operational structure for Iowa Learning Online will be established in fall 2003.
- f. Selection of platform and tech support for online classes has been completed for a year. By February or March a decision will be made whether to change platforms.
- g. Existing high school Web-based classes from various providers were reviewed by Iowa high school educators for possible use. Approximately 3 dozen HS teachers reviewed those classes. Cost is an issue. None of the courses are free, some come with strings attached.
- h. The design/development of three Web-enhanced HS science classes (physics, chemistry, anatomy/physiology) is in progress. They are hybrid classes with ICN video sessions, Web-based elements and F2F labs. The courses are expected to be fully completed by summer 2004. Funding for these classes is provided by some Star Schools money, but most will come from the Roy J. Carver Trust. The lead teachers involved in the development of these classes are Gail Wortmann of Ottumwa for anatomy/physiology; Shannon C'de Baca of Council Bluffs for chemistry; and Terry Fritsch of Johnston for physics. When the courses are completed, the course content will be available to Iowa educators at no cost.
- i. "Broker" schools needing courses with those schools/colleges providing courses is on-going.
- j. Actively recruit schools/colleges to offer needed courses that are not currently available is on-going.
- k. Publicize the availability of Iowa Learning Online services to schools is on-going.

Discussion followed.

III.C. ICN Ten Year Anniversary

Tami Fujinaka informed members of a ten year anniversary celebration being planned for the ICN. A committee has been set up that includes various authorized ICN users from around the state. They are producing documents that will help celebrate the ten year anniversary on the state level and are hoping to provide ideas of what to do in communities and local/regional levels to tell the ICN story. There will be more information provided at the December ETC meeting.

III.D. ICN Update

Phil Groner provided an update on the ATM/MPEG2 conversions to date. The ATM backbone has been completed in all 5 rings throughout the state. In addition to that, three rings (1, 4, and 5) are 100% complete. Ring three in southeast Iowa is 96% complete—there are 5 sites

remaining, 4 of which have been converted; ring two is in northeast Iowa and extends to the middle and a little south of DM, and is 44% complete—88 of 202 sites completed and converted to ATM/MPEG2. The ATM conversion completion date for all classroom codecs is planned for the end of October. Ring 6, which is the DM area, does not have a completion date set.

Phil also updated members on the Internet worm and virus problems of last month, stating that the ICN put a new router into service and plans to upgrade the other routers in the network to more robust systems to handle situations like those that occurred last month.

Discussion followed.

III.E. The Dept. of Education Technology Advisory Committee

Gail Sullivan and Pam Pfitzenmaier co-chair this committee. They have had one meeting and plan another on Oct. 15. Basically, the purpose for this committee is to provide advice to both the DE and the State Board of Education on the instructional use of technology. This group is looking at the policy framework, rules, legislation, what is currently in place and does it address all of the new things coming up, and to make recommendations for changes as needed. Kristin Ciesemier of NCREL/NCRTEC has been invited to the next meeting to provide information about current research that is available.

III.F. ICN Ad Hoc Task Force

John Gillispie, Executive Director of the ICN, provided an update on the status of the ICN Ad Hoc Task Force on ICN Futures that was set up to look into the pros/cons of selling the ICN. The task force discussions have been completed and involved a broad range of participants from the ICN, private sectors, education, other customers of the ICN, and legislators. The Governor asked John Gillispie to look at the various principles that both the legislature and the Governor might agree to and to craft a proposal that might be acceptable to both. The proposal that he submitted called for a financial restructuring of the ICN, involving disposal of the back bone fiber assets, as well as some of the optronics (the electronic gear that is used to light the fiber to create capacity). In return the State would receive rights to use specified bandwidth/"lambdas" or light waves. There were a series of goals articulated by the Governor and legislators that they wanted to accomplish if any restructuring was necessary. First, the Governor wanted to ensure that education was protected in any change and that education remains the focus of the ICN. Second, he wanted to ensure that homeland security, as well as other users of the network, is protected. And third, the Governor indicated that if excess capacity existed he'd like for it to be used to promote economic development in the state.

John recommended that interested individuals keep an eye on the ICN web site. The disposition of assets proposal, as well as two other documents—Technology and Telecommunications for K-12 Current and Future Needs and the 21st Century Infrastructure documents—will be posted there. The proposals from the various telecom providers are posted there as well.

Discussion followed.

III.G. New Member Orientation

Tim Dose, superintendent at North Scott CSD in Eldridge, has been appointed as the new SAI representative replacing Mick Starcevich. As a new member is appointed, members of the ETC provide an orientation for that member to become familiar with the role of the ETC. Mary Gannon asked for volunteers to join her and Pam in the orientation for Tim. Those who volunteered are Mary Gannon and Ellen Kabat Lensch.

IV. INPUT/SHARING FROM GUESTS PRESENT AT MEETING

Pat Thieben asked about the move of the technicians of the video help desk at IPTV to the ICN. Pam responded that as the network has moved through the ATM upgrade, the demarcation of what is classroom and what is transport has become less clear cut. It is less easy to define who to call when you are in a video classroom and experiencing problems. There was a discussion between the ICN and IPTV to join the two help desks and put them in one place physically. The two people at IPTV who have dealt primarily with classroom issues, Manila Houangvan and Allen Kinkennon are moving to the ICN effective September 26.

Judy Jones informed the members of the 165th birthday anniversary of the State Library of Iowa on Wednesday, September 24, 2003, at the State Library. First Lady Christy Vilsack and writer Chuck Offenberger will be there in the afternoon.

V. ADJOURNMENT

The September 22, 2003, meeting of the Education Telecommunications Council adjourned at 11:30 a.m. The next meeting of the ETC will be December 15, 2003, at Iowa Public Television.

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