



Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 24, 2015

I. Welcome and Introductions

The June 24, 2015 meeting of the Education Telecommunications Council was held at the Iowa Department of Education, various ICN sites, and via conference call. The following members were present at the meeting: **Kenneth Colwell**, IAICU; **Galen Howsare**, IASB; **Duane Willhite**, SAI; **Kent Johnson**, Regents; **Ellen Kabat-Lensch**, IACCT; **Tom Kruse**, IAICU; **Sally Lindgren**, AEA Boards; **Gwen Nagel**, DE; **Randy Richardson**, ISEA; **Terry Rinehart**, IPTV; and **Kay Runge**, DE/Libraries,

Carol Montz, SAI; **Erin McConnell**, ISEA; **Lane Plugge**, AEA Boards; **Chet Rzonca**, Regents; **Mark White**, IACCT, and **Mary Wieser**, DE/CIANS were absent.

The following guests were also present at the meeting: Ryan Wise, DE; Phil Groner, Jontell Harris and Lori Larsen, ICN; Pam Jacobs, State E-rate Coordinator; Jan Robertson, RTC 10; Lisa Walker, RTC 13; Linda Abel, Darla Shockley and Ruth Reynolds, RTC 15; Nancy Medema, alternate for DE/Libraries; and Angi Hillers, DE.

II. Updates

1. DE Update

Ryan Wise noted that we are entering the second year of the Department of Education providing administrative support and fiscal management of the RTC funding. He thanked the ICN and Lori Larsen for providing guidance and assistance during this transition.

2. ICN Services Update

Phil Groner provided an update on ICN services, noting that there are two services of key importance. The ICN will be able to offer phone services statewide. Previously the ICN had only offered line-side service on the Capitol Complex. After July 1, customers will be able to utilize managed voice service anywhere the ICN network touches. Managed voice service

includes desktop phone service, conferencing service, or virtual remote services including long distance and toll-free access.

Groner also reminded those present that the ICN is sunsetting Mpeg video conferencing service. June 30, 2018 will be the final sunset date. This sunsetting is occurring because the codecs that power the Mpeg platform are no longer manufactured, and also because the ICN is moving to a fully IP-based system. The technology utilized in the former system is dated, and schools and libraries can no longer afford to dedicate a room to ICN services. Online learning is changing, and the ICN wants to continue to meet the educational needs of schools and libraries.

3. ICN Legislative Update

Jontell Harris provided the ICN legislative update on behalf of Mark Johnson, the ICN's legislative liaison. House File 655, the Connect Every Acre bill was signed by Governor Branstad on Monday, June 22nd. This bill encourages the expansion of broadband to every corner of the state. Additionally, this bill appoints a Chief Information Officer to the ITTC who will be an ex officio, or non-voting member.

House File 650 went to the Governor on June 15th, but is yet unsigned. This bill provides appropriations from the Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure fund to the Department of Education for Part III lease payments and the ITTC for equipment replacement, operation and maintenance costs.

Kay Runge proposed a motion to send thank you letter from the ETC to Governor Branstad for his efforts regarding the last mile of broadband connection. This motion was seconded by Ken Colwell, and was unanimously approved. As the outgoing chair, Ellen Kabat-Lensch will draft the letter.

4. E-Rate Update

Pam Jacobs, E-rate Coordinator for the Iowa Department of Education, provided an update on the changes to the E-rate program as a result of two Modernization Orders in 2014 by the Federal Communications Commission. The first Order issued in July 2014 focused the E-rate program on affordable broadband access to and inside schools and

libraries. With this focus, certain E-rate supported services are being phased out, such as voice/telephone service. Emphasis is placed on category 2 products and services with a five-year "budget" established for each school and library. The second Order issued in December 2014 provided an increase in the E-rate fund to \$3.9 billion annually (up from \$2.5 billion). The second order also provided some relief on the definition of urban and rural as well as made lit and dark fiber comparable in E-rate support. In addition, under special circumstances, applicants will now be able to receive E-rate support for special construction costs related to self-provisioned/owned fiber networks.

As a result of the two Orders, more Iowa schools and libraries are seeing a shift in E-rate funding away from support of voice (telephone) and an increase in category 2 funding (equipment and installation to support broadband access inside the school or library). The items most commonly sought for E-rate support are switches, wireless access points and controllers as well as the installation costs for such equipment purchases.

In past years, the average total E-rate funding for Iowa applicants ranged from \$12 million to \$15 million. For funding year 2015 (2015-16 school year), the amount requested for E-rate support is nearly \$25 million. (Although approximately \$25 million has been requested, the actual amount to be committed/approved is yet unknown).

For future years, it is anticipated that even more schools and libraries will request category 2 funding. In the summer of 2015, USAC is launching a new portal that will provide applicants with greater access to their funding history and a way to file all required E-rate forms electronically and to track the progress of the forms.

III. Issues

1. RTC usage survey results

Ryan Wise lead the discussion regarding the RTC usage survey. The Department of Education received a request to survey RTCs regarding usage last fall. The results of this survey were sent to the ETC and RTC listserv contacts prior to this meeting. Wise summarized the results.

Regarding questions one and two, asking what funding categories should be added or removed, approximately eighty percent of respondents

recommended no changes. Five respondents requested additional categories. Discussion followed regarding whether current categories cover these requested additions. Internet capacity and online use was one requested addition. Wise notified the group that these expenses currently qualify under LAN and WAN support. Another requested addition was supplies and travel, these expenses currently qualify under the video maintenance category.

Regarding question three, more responses were received. Wise offered a summary of the responses, noting that many requested a loosening in code of allowable uses to reflect changing technology. Discussion followed regarding if it would be possible to make the language reflect a less restrictive nature than what is currently being interpreted. Wise requested that Lori Larsen provide guidance regarding the feedback given in response to question three of the survey.

Lori Larsen with the ICN noted that the three funding usage categories are reflected in the appropriation language, but not necessarily in Iowa Code. Ryan Wise stated that a change in the appropriation language would hopefully be easier, and would likely need to be addressed by caucus staff during appropriation discussions.

Question five of the survey requested recommendations for RTCs that are experiencing issues filling vacancies, or regarding the structure of the RTCs. Wise noted that most of the feedback recommended that voting via email should be allowed, as well as convening meetings via phone and/or video conferencing.

Wise requested that Lori Larsen with the ICN respond to whether RTCs could implement these suggestions. Larsen noted that meeting in person is not required, that voting is allowed via video conferencing, and teleconference. She further noted that the Department of Education may choose to interpret the requirements differently, but the guidance received from the Assistant Attorney General for the ICN stated that voting via email would not be acceptable under Iowa's open meeting laws.

Wise requested any additional questions or comments regarding the RTC funding usage survey. Jan Roberts, the RTC Coordinator for Region 10 mentioned that she has problems filling vacancies. She also noted that it is difficult to vote on budgets during the summer when staff are not in school, and possibly not on contract. She would like to receive a legislative decision sooner regarding funding, and would like the DE to make budget information available sooner. There were no further comments or questions regarding the RTC funding usage survey.

2. Recommended Funding Request for RTC Support for FY 2017

Ellen Kabat-Lensch opened discussion regarding the funding request for fiscal year 2017. Discussion followed.

Galen Howsare motioned to table the funding recommendation for fiscal year 2017 until the next meeting of the ETC, in December 2015 to allow time to consider the survey responses and any need for legislative code or appropriation language changes. This motion was seconded by Ken Colwell. The motion was passed unanimously.

3. RTC Funding Plan and Guidelines for FY 2016

Ellen Kabat-Lensch opened discussion regarding the RTC funding plan and guidelines for fiscal year 2016, which were sent out prior to this meeting. There were no questions regarding these distributions or the guidelines.

4. Review of RTC Plans

Ellen Kabat-Lensch notified the group that the Executive Committee will again review and approve these plans. The Executive Committee consists of the Past-Chair, the current Chair, and the Chair-Elect. There were no questions or comments regarding this topic.

5. Recommendation to the ITTC regarding Educational Video Rates

The Educational Video Rates for FY 2016 were reviewed. Kay Runge asked for comments from the ICN regarding when video rates had last been increased. Phil Groner responded that it had likely been 2003 or 2004 since rates had changed. There was discussion regarding whether the sunseting of Mpeg video service will result in any changes in video rates.

Terry Rinehart offered a motion to recommend to the ITTC that video rates remain at the same level. Kay Runge seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

6. Approval of 2016 ICN Educational Video Scheduling Deadlines

The recommended ICN Educational Video Scheduling Deadlines were reviewed. Terry Rinehart offered a motion to approve these scheduling deadlines. The motion was seconded by Galen Howsare, and passed unanimously.

IV. Miscellaneous

1. Election of New ETC Chair

Ellen Kabat-Lensch opened discussion of the new ETC Chair for the upcoming year. Mary Gannon had been elected as chair-elect, but is no longer serving on the Council.

Kabat-Lensch motioned for Gwen Nagel to be elected Chair. The motion was seconded by Kay Runge and passed unanimously. Gwen Nagel will take over as Chair of the Education Telecommunications Council.

2. Election of ETC Chair-Elect

Ellen Kabat-Lensch opened discussion regarding the Chair-elect, who will take over at the spring 2016 ETC meeting. Kay Runge nominated Nancy Medema, her alternate as the library representative for Chair-elect of the ETC. This motion was seconded by Terry Rinehart and passed unanimously pending confirmation that an alternate can be elected to Chair the Council.

V. Adjournment

Ellen Kabat-Lensch thanked the Department of Education for their work on the transition of the fiscal and administrative management of the ETC, and the ongoing support of the ICN. Kay Runge offered a thank you to Ellen Kabat-Lensch for serving as Chair during this transition.

A motion to adjourn was offered by Gwen Nagel and seconded by Terry Rinehart. The motion was unanimously approved and the June 24th meeting of the Education Telecommunications Council was adjourned at 4:24 PM.