

eTech Ohio Commission Meeting Minutes
35 E. Chestnut Street, Columbus, Ohio
October 11, 2012

Present: Commission Chair Designee John Conley, Commissioner Designee Katrina Flory, Commissioner Bruce Hawkins, Commissioner Jan Osborn, Commissioner William Sams, Commissioner Joseph Schiavoni and Commissioner Glenn Watts.

Staff present: Laura Bryson, Chief Information Officer, Kimberly Christopher, Education Technology Resources Director, Katy Coy, Communications Director, Greg Davidson, Interim Executive Director, Sarah Luchs, Chief Learning Officer, Kathryn Luther, Administrative Assistant, Lorrie Germann, State E-Rate Coordinator, Jill Grier, Legal Counsel, Attorney General's Office, and Krista Shaw, Chief Operating Officer.

I. Opening and Roll Call

Commission Chair Designee John Conley opened the eTech Ohio Commission (eTech) meeting and asked that the roll call be read. Administrative Assistant Mitzi Dunn called the roll and stated there was a quorum present.

II. Approval of Minutes

Commission Chair Designee Conley asked for a motion to approve the draft September 13, 2012, minutes. Commissioner Watts sent in edits that were made to the minutes. These were noted on the record. The motion was made by Commissioner Hawkins and seconded by Commissioner Osborn. All of the Commissioners voted in favor of the motion and the minutes from September 13, 2012, were approved as edited.

III. Reports and Administrative

A. Interim Executive Director's Report

1. Interim Executive Director Greg Davidson provided a contract update. He said the contracts are complete for the television stations and the Ed-Techs. There was great team participation to get those complete and the funding is flowing.
2. Relating to the Child Internet Protection Act (CIPA) safety training with learning.com, as of yesterday, there are now 275 districts participating in this training initiative. There are additional districts signing up for this training on a daily basis, so the number of participating districts is expected to increase. Commission Chair Designee Conley asked if there was a cost to the district and Interim Executive Director Davidson said this training was provided at no cost to the district. Commissioner Sams asked about the total value of the CIPA training contract and Interim Executive Director Davidson replied that it was \$395,000.
3. Interim Executive Director Davidson said that they have some unexpected issues at the North Star facility related to satellite dishes. They are faced with the decision on whether to replace or repair a satellite. This relates to the ability to transmit the November 2012 Election results. eTech has notified the television stations that are affected that they will need to make other arrangements. With the timeline, the satellite would not be repaired or replaced by November. A replacement would cost \$60,000 and a repair would be approximately half of that cost. In any event a replacement or repair would be after the first of the year.

~~Interim Executive Director Davidson said that there are two other public television stations in Ohio that have similar facilities and hopefully they will be sharing the election data with their affiliates.~~

Discussions centered on the maintenance of the satellite dishes. Interim Executive Director Davidson said that the satellites are approximately twenty years old (the newest one is sixteen years old) and the vendor that installed the satellites is no longer in operation. Therefore there is no ongoing maintenance agreement. Interim Executive Director Davidson said the immediate need is to repair or replace the satellites by requesting capital funding. Ms. Bryson said that the one satellite that is working is the designated Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) satellite. She further said there is no redundancy if the last satellite fails. This is the way all live events are transmitted via satellite. She explained the uses of that particular satellite.

The Commissioners began to discuss replacing the satellite. Commissioner Flory asked if there was funding to replace the satellite. Interim Executive Director Davidson said there is funding available for parts to repair the satellite and there may be funding available for a replacement of the satellite. Commissioner Hawkins asked about the risks if the last satellite failed. Interim Executive Director Davidson said his greater concern is there is no disaster recovery plan for the North Star facility. The equipment is insured but the replacement if there was a major fire would be six months to a year. eTech is in the process of developing a capital plan for the Office of Budget and Management (OBM).

Commission Chair Designee Conley asked Ms. Bryson about the capacity of emergency management capacity if necessary. Ms. Bryson explained the differences between the satellite that remains and the one that broke. She said the satellite that works is fixed on PBS satellite and doesn't receive any other content. The satellite that is broken can be moved to catch information from whichever other satellite they need to. There are only two other television stations in Ohio that have satellites that are able to move as this one did.

Commissioner Sams voiced concerns about this issue and wanted to know what steps needed to be taken to ensure that eTech was fulfilling its obligation. Interim Executive Director Davidson said they have started an engineering evaluation. They will then take that information to OBM and go before the Controlling Board for funding approval from the capital appropriations. Commission Chair Designee Conley asked if there would be a clearer understanding at the next meeting and Interim Executive Director Davidson replied yes.

4. Relating to public radio stations, Interim Executive Director Davidson said that that they still have T1 connections. He said the T1 connections will no longer be in contract and were just released from a blanket agreement that OARnet had. He explained what technology they were being replaced with and that the radio stations will need to be transitioned from the old equipment. Interim Executive Director Davidson said the process will be fairly simple for the radio stations that are on campuses but for those that aren't it will be a different issue. There are equipment and funding issues to consider.

Commission Chair Designee Conley asked how many radio stations there were to transition. Dave Carwile a representative for the Ohio Educational Television Stations said he was not sure because of how the transmitters are configured relating to the T1 lines.

5. Interim Executive Director Davidson introduced Kimberly Christopher, Education Technology Resources Director. She is a contractor that replaced Victoria Boczkowski that was the Conference Director. Ms. Christopher will provide services for approximately ten hours a week.

B. eTech Ohio Fiscal Year 2013 Financial Update

Krista Shaw, Chief Operating Officer provided a financial update. Ms. Shaw distributed documents and explained the line items. Relating to the North Star facility, which is supported by line item 409, they have completed the contract with OARnet for the network services and 'backbone' for \$249,000.

eTech has received the 300,000 as it relates to video conferencing that the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) has given them through a pass through entity This is with the understanding that it is to be \$150,000 used in Fiscal Year 2013 and \$150,000 used in Fiscal Year 2014. Commission Chair Designee Conley asked if this funding would fill the video conferencing budget deficit that they were facing. Interim Executive Director Davidson confirmed that it would fill the video conferencing budget deficit, however not the budget crisis they are facing for the North Star facility. He further added that the funding is to only be used for K-12 video conferencing.

Relating to staff additions, Ms. Shaw said they had one intermittent staff member that began this Tuesday in the video conferencing area. They also have a contract with the Licking Area Computer Association for a part-time staff member in the video conferencing area.

Ms. Shaw said line item 411, relates to the CIPA training for learning.com. They issued the purchase order and eTech has made the payment. As mentioned by Interim Executive Director Davidson, all of the Ed-Tech subsidies are in agreement and they have received four back to date. They are currently processing those in OAKS and payments are expected to be released on Monday.

Relating to line item 640, Ms. Shaw said payroll projections no longer include Victoria Boczkowski. Her last day with eTech was September 22nd. She was replaced with a contractor, Ms. Christopher. It is understood that eTech needs a full-time staff person in this role and a request has been made to the Governor's office to hire someone in this capacity.

eTech received a request to go before the Controlling Board for the Ohio Government Television. There are two appropriations, one for robotics repair and replacement totaling \$191,610 and the other for HD conversion totaling \$236,000. The deadline for submission was Tuesday. OBM has asked for additional information and corrections and eTech is working on this. She believes that these items will appear on the October 29th Controlling Board agenda for approval.

C. Communications Update

Katy Coy, Communications Director provided a communications update. She said that eTech launched 'Speak Up'. The feedback from the partners and the field on that initiative has been positive. She added that the ODE has been very helpful with cross-promotional activities. Approximately 1,000 surveys have begun.

Relating to learning.com, Ms. Coy said that initiative has launched. A postcard was distributed in the meeting materials for the Commissioners. eTech received national exposure relating to this project. She said learning.com is offering valuable tools to eTech as well as a robust training schedule.

Ms. Coy said that eTech conducted their first webinar series in conjunction with Speak Up. This was very successful. Ms. Luchs continued and said that the webinar was conducted with Julie Evans who is a national contractor for Speak Up. There was a great turnout and it was recorded as well. The survey opened on October 3rd and will stay open until December 14th.

Ms. Luchs shared that every state is able to participate in the program, whether or not they officially participate, but the difference this year is they want their numbers to be higher. She said last year they had 3,000 students participate without any type of promotion. They will continue to utilize the webinar to promote this program through the end of the year. Ms. Evans will attend the annual conference in February and feature Ohio's state profile.

Ms. Luchs also discussed the various surveys that are available to the districts. She said they are able to receive the Technology Readiness Tool Data Collection and this will support the digital assessment plan for the full implementation in 2014. She went on to say that districts could be receiving communications from both ODE and/or eTech about Speak Up or this survey. They are ensuring that the districts understand the importance and significance of completing each survey.

Ms. Coy commented on the New Technology Coordinators Symposium that is being held on October 17th. This is an opportunity to bring together all of the new technology coordinators in the state and let them hear from eTech and their state partners.

D. Blended Learning

Sarah Luchs, Chief Learning Officer, provided an update regarding the blended learning initiatives. She said that the blended learning grants are progressing well. She said they are offered a focused professional development for the grantees. Most do not begin teaching in the blended format until January or later. However, a few grantees launched this Fall as they are the 'early implementers'. Ms. Luchs said they have been making site visits, one most recently as yesterday at the Canton Local School District that is an expansion site.

Ms. Luchs said that the professional development that is being offered is a webinar that is focused on online and blended teaching. That is being led by the online teacher of the year Kristine Kip. She is also speaking at the annual conference. Ms. Luchs explained that the first day of the annual conference will be concentrated on digital/blended learning. She said the third day is tailored to the higher education community. She said ODE will also be sharing their latest information on digital assessments as well during the conference.

Commission Chair Designee Conley asked when the Digital Learning Task Force Report was going to be released. Ms. Luchs replied that she was not aware of a release date for this report. Commission Chair Designee Conley asked for an update on the Mobile Grants. Ms. Luchs said that these have been released. The evaluations are in place and they are progressing well. The first round of data has been collected. These grants close at the end of year.

Commissioner Sams said they are starting to see some demonstrated results that are quite encouraging. He wanted to know how they could accelerate the adoption of this across the state. Ms. Luchs said this is one reason for the site visits. She began to speak about Senate Bill 316's definition of blended learning and how the community is not always operating in that fashion. Ms. Luchs said that there are some really great things happening in the state - both at grantee and non-grantee sites.

Commissioner Sams made further comments relating to the high enrollment numbers of online programs such as Coursera. Ms. Luchs said that she believes that ilearn.org was akin and in the spirit of this movement. Commissioner Sams went on to say that there are 31,000 fewer people enrolled in higher education and there is speculation that the change to semester caused this. He offered his own speculation. He said Coursera, where students are able to take courses online at no cost are making an impact. Commission Chair Designee Conley added that The Ohio State University announced their participation in Coursera two weeks ago.

Commission Chair Designee Conley said that the ilearn.org platform has been delayed. They are trying to eliminate as much duplicity as possible with what Ohio releases. They have had a lot of conversations with the ODE so the hope is to have a large unveiling at the eTech annual conference.

Commissioner Osborn asked about the timetable for responses for the online assessments. He wanted to know this information as it related to students utilizing their own devices and the bandwidth concerns that the districts are facing. He said that he believes that school administrators are anxious to receive intermediate answers. Commissioner Hawkins added that if changes are going to be made they will need to be accomplished this summer. He said that the changes may be made in phases and to segmented populations as well. Ms. Luchs said they will have someone from ODE speaking to eTech on Friday and can arrange for them to speak to the Commissioners as well. She explained the implementation strategy depending on the type of district you may be and she said eTech may have to let go of the one standard definition of readiness.

E. Conference Update

Kimberly Christopher, Education Technology Resources Director provided an update regarding the annual eTech Technology Conference. She said they have 123 exhibitors committed for 23,000 square feet of exhibit space. This will generate approximately \$293,000 in revenue and this is in pace with where eTech has been in previous years. There are twenty new exhibitors and she believes this can be attributed to eTech's participation in national conferences where they made key contacts. Of the exhibitors, forty-six of those are Ohio-based companies.

As it relates to registration, there are 630 registrants to date. This is approximately 76 more individuals than was what registered last year at this time. This will generate approximately \$96,000 in revenue. In total revenue, eTech is above last year's total at this time by approximately \$17,000.

Ms. Christopher said they are finalizing the keynote speakers. Yesterday was the deadline for proposals for sessions and they have received 352 proposals. They will review those and discuss the content with their partners to finalize the sessions.

Commissioner Watts made comments regarding Bring Your Own Device. He said he has received a large amount of correspondence relating to this topic. Ms. Luchs said this will be a topic at the conference and the featured speaker hopes to release a toolbox of information.

F. Information Technology

Laura Bryson, Chief Information Officer, provided an update regarding Information Technology. Ms. Bryson said that the Biennial Educational Technology Assessment (BETA) survey launched last week. She said the technology coordinators took the BETA on Monday and Tuesday. They received great feedback on the ease and use of the survey. Commission Chair Designee Conley asked if this survey was being conducted through the Salesforce application and she replied it was being conducted through QualTrex. Ms. Bryson said they have forwarded approximately 18 districts to the ODE for payment and plan to send over additional districts this Friday. The initial application needs to be in by October 31st.

Commissioner Osborn asked for an update on the capital improvement funds for the North Star facility. Interim Executive Director Davidson said that a portion of these funds were used for upgrades for the Ohio Government Television at the Statehouse. The original intent of that was to provide for automation at the North State facility. However, there were no provisions allowed for the maintenance. This would be an additional \$300,000 - \$400,000 a year. This is in addition to hiring an additional three staff. This project is on indefinite hold. Interim Executive Director Davidson said they may need to use the funding for satellite repair or purchase.

Discussions then centered on next steps. Commissioner Watts commented that the intent was to create efficiencies and have less redundancy. Interim Executive Director Davidson said funding is not available to hire three new staff members. Ms. Bryson said they are waiting for a recommendation from the stations. Ms. Shaw explained the capital budget process for the Commissioners. Mr. Carwile provided comments on this issue and others. He said that they are working on this and hope to have movement. Commissioner Osborn asked for this topic to be on the next month's agenda.

G. E-Rate

Lorrie Germann, State E-Rate Coordinator, provided an E-Rate update. She said that they have had great responses with the CIPA training. They currently have 275 districts registered. She explained the process learning.com uses with the districts.

Ms. Germann said the 'Face to Face' workshops began yesterday. She said eight of those are scheduled around the state. The email that announced the workshops was distributed late so learning.com is giving eTech an additional day for the workshops. She shared that one of the trainers is a part-time employee of Ross Local School District as a Technology Integration Specialist. This trainer is under contract with learning.com. She said that the training was very well received. Interim Executive Director Davidson said that the trainers are not eTech employers and provided under a contract with learning.com.

Interim Executive Director Davidson said the training is a requirement to be eligible for E-Rate. Ms. Germann said she is recommending during the E-Rate workshops at the end of the school year that districts print out the reports and place them in their file as proof of meeting requirements. Interim Executive Director Davidson said that the contract with learning.com is renewable for future years.

Commissioner Hawkins asked how other states are meeting the requirements that are not using learning.com. Ms. Germann said they are using Common Sense media and NetSmart but the districts have to create their own reports and this is quite tedious.

IV. Presentations

A. Hilliard City School District – “Flipped Classrooms”

Rich Boettner, Director of Technology, Mark Pohlman, Instructional Technology, Jennifer Sayre, English Teacher, and Wayne Tsai, Math Teacher, from the Hilliard City School District (HCSD) provided a presentation titled ‘flipped classrooms’ for the Commissioners. They each spoke individually and had an accompanying PowerPoint Presentation. The entire team introduced themselves and provided their backgrounds to the Commissioners. Mr. Boettner said they use a number of tools and created standards for blended and online learning. He said that blended learning is a continuum of the face to face classroom experience.

Mr. Tsai began and he shared videos that the students watch during math class. He said that students are interacting with him working with practice problems, group work and working on various skills. He said this would be normally hard for a traditional teacher to do because they are content-based. Mr. Tsai shared the web-based component of his math program for the Commissioners. He said it is very interactive and very easy for the students to use. All of the components are free to the students and able to be customized. Mr. Tsai said he is provided different levels of feedback about the student’s progress through Math XL.

Commissioner Sams asked why Mr. Tsai didn’t use the Khan Academy for the assessment component. Mr. Tsai said that initially he was using the Khan Academy. However, he found their videos were not very good. There are specific terms and language that he prefers and uses in class. If it conflicts with what the Khan Academy uses the students get really confused.

Commissioner Watts made comments relating to a group approach to students answering questions that Mr. Tsai might receive late at night from a student. Mr. Tsai replied that he has been working towards a journaling process and posts those on the board and that fuels discussion. He believes this is a great example of peer to peer learning. Mr. Tsai said it would be challenging to have a ‘Wiki’ page because there are so many math characters. He said this is worth exploring.

Commission Chair Designee Conley asked about their application ‘Moodle’. He said that HCSD used this application to create most of this content and it was free. This links out to ‘Pearson’ and he wondered was this free as well. Mr. Boettner said that Moodle/eCampus is the focusing launch point but this links out to various sites. Pearson is a licensed product. Mr. Boettner said there are 800 courses on the Moodle site. These courses are created when the teachers ask for them. They start as early as 1st grade. At the elementary level these things are most often support materials.

Ms. Sayre discussed how Moodle is used as a supplement to the classroom. The teachers that are in the classroom on a daily basis begin at the eCampus site and link out to other sites. They use eCampus as a supplement to teaching. The assessment component is one of the tools that they use. They also use the quizzing and objective testing components as well. Ms. Sayre also shared that several years ago that the English teachers decided to have students store information relating to research assignment projects in eCampus as well to assist with this process.

Ms. Sayre continued and said that students also use eCampus for presentations and blogs about novels that they read. They interact with the website Goodreads.com. With that, one of the students connected with an author from the country of Ireland and set up a Skype session. This was a very worthwhile experience for the entire class that may not have otherwise happened without these teaching resources. Ms. Sayre also discussed Google Apps. She said these are wonderful tools for collaboration and blend seamlessly for working on projects.

Commissioner Sams made comments and said what Ms. Sayre shared is what he has dreamed of and wanted to know what caused this to happen. Ms. Sayre replied and said she attributed it to having a champion and the support of an administration. She also attributed it to the professional development. Mr. Boettner said they have been very strategic over the years with Moodle. They wanted one main launching point for the students.

Discussions centered on the professional development and training of new teachers vs. established teachers. Mr. Boettner said they newer teachers are digital natives and some of the established teachers need a little more guidance.

Mr. Pohlman gave the Commissioners an example of how digital devices are used in the classroom setting. He said that teachers are able to use an iPad to project images on the board and move about the classroom. The teachers 'push' the presentation to the student's iPad as well and they are able to take notes. They have implemented Wi-Fi throughout the district and it has made a tremendous impact. He said there is 24/7 access for the students.

Mr. Pohlman continued by discussing distance learning by way of video conferencing. He said they have eight poly-com units. They are teaching foreign language and utilizing the video conferencing for collaboration across the globe. Last year they used the video conferencing for professional development in the HCSD.

Mr. Boettner discussed the Innovative Learning Center (ILC). He said they have been working on this for the past year. There is a need for a place where they are able to have more personalized support for students. There will be a virtualized learning center and an area to focus college and career skills as well. Mr. Boettner said they will also have their community partners working with them. He said the goal is authentic learning and having students working on things that are meaningful to them. They want to create a space for them to do that.

Ms. Sayre finalized the HCSD presentation by discussing the online course offerings. She said she teaches online English full-time. She discussed other teachers that teach core and elective courses. She said it is challenging to teach the online courses part-time and be a traditional 'in class' teacher part-time. Ms. Sayre discussed what types of students are taking online courses and shared pictures of a classroom. She explained the Hope program which is a 'last chance' program for students. Ms. Sayre said that the success of the online program is built on the strength of the teacher/student relationship. She said the teachers have designed each online course based on state standards. All online courses require a face to face assessments; the mid-term and final exam.

Commissioner Hawkins made comments relating to the demographics and performance of Charter Schools vs. traditional students. Mr. Boettner said the best data is in the 'credit recovery' students. Those are the students that failed a course in a traditional setting. With that, 85% of these students passed the online course. They believe the personal relationship between the teacher/student is the key to the success.

Commissioner Hawkins followed up and asked if there were any studies about how these students compare with the statewide standardized testing. Mr. Boettner said they have not done a comparison with the online students vs. the traditional students as compared to the statewide standardized testing. However, he said they are most proud of their graduation rates. Most of these students would not have otherwise graduated in a traditional environment. They believe very strongly in the blended environment.

Commissioner Sams asked how many students were in the online English course. Ms. Sayre replied that she currently has 80 students enrolled but she can easily receive up to 150 students. Mr. Boettner said last year they had 335 semester hour courses completed among the four content hour courses. This year they have added 585 semester hour courses.

Commissioner Watts wanted to know if they used machine scoring for writing. Ms. Sayre replied that they do not. She said she received an email for a program relating to this and she is not convinced it is effective. She is working on incorporating self-grading assessment into the curriculum. Mr. Boettner said in general HCSD encourages the online teachers to do about 50% system-graded work and 50% teacher-graded work.

B. Higher Education Teacher Preparation

Rebecca Watts, Associate Vice Chancellor, P-16 Initiatives, Ohio Board of Regents (OBOR), provided the Commissioners a briefing on Higher Education teacher preparation. She said that Ohio wants educators that are collaborative, creative and committed. The collaborative component can be challenging for the veteran teacher with the advances of technology. She gave a baseball analogy to describe teachers and said that you have a mix of 'players' on the team. You have both the veteran teachers with pedagogical knowledge and you have brand new teachers with fresh ideas.

Relating to new accountability measures for teacher preparation programs, Ms. Watts said that effective December 31st, the OBOR will be posting online the preparation program performance reports. This will look at specific metrics for every preparation program in the state. In Ohio there are more than 1,900 licensure preparation programs and more than 51 (soon to be 53) public and private institutions that offer licensure preparation programs. The OBOR has to review the program metrics at each of these institutions. The teacher evaluation is tied back to this information as well.

Ms. Watts said they are seeking qualitative feedback as well. The pre-service teachers are receiving an on-line survey that relates to teachers and how their programs prepared them to use technology. They are asking every pre-service teacher this question in the state. They are also posing this same question to the resident educator and the principals that are interning as teachers as well.

Ms. Watts provided a dual enrollment update. The requirements for teaching a dual enrollment program in Ohio are that the faculty member must have a content Master's Degree. Through the Race to the Top program, a Request for Proposal is being released for grants that will support blended or online delivery that meets the needs of teachers to meet this standard. This will ensure that the student is prepared and able to transfer the credit within the entire University System of Ohio.

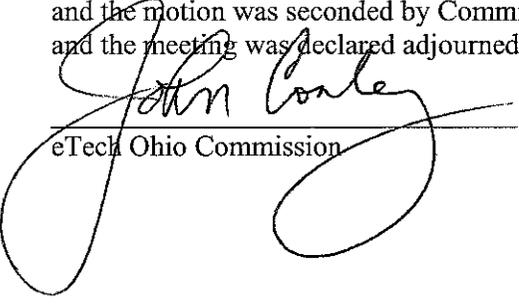
Commissioner Hawkins asked about the 'Seniors to Sophomores' program. Ms. Watts said they do not refer to that program any longer. They encourage students to take advantage of Advanced Placement, Dual Enrollment and Post-Secondary options.

Commissioner Watts asked if there was any encouragement at the state level for institutions to adopt blended learning in their education curriculum. Ms. Watts commented there are no specific grants. However, competition is driving the environment. There are grant programs that support the idea of blended learning such as Choose Ohio First and the Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellowship. Commissioner Watts followed-up and asked if there was any focus on teacher licensure related to blended learning. Ms. Watts said that the ODE actually licensed teachers. There are inter-agency discussions that are in process. She explained they are looking at ways that do not exclude valuable teachers.

Commissioner Osborn followed-up with a question about the dual enrollment faculty requirements. Ms. Watts explained the requirements again and discussed the challenges they have had in the past. She said there is a grace period until the Fall of 2016 and these requirements are in line with the Higher Learning Commission.

V. Adjournment

There being no further business before eTech, Commissioner Sams made a motion to adjourn the meeting and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Watts. All commissioners were in favor of the motion and the meeting was declared adjourned.



eTech Ohio Commission

November 8, 2012

Date