

eTech Ohio Commission Meeting Minutes
35 E. Chestnut Street, Columbus, Ohio
August 9, 2012

Present: Commission Chair Designee John Conley, Commissioner Designee Katrina Flory, Commissioner Bruce Hawkins, Commissioner Rosemary Herpel, Commissioner William Sams, and Commissioner Glenn Watts

Staff present: Jocelyn Zadzi, Administrative Assistant, Katy Coy, Communications Director, Greg Davidson, Interim Executive Director, Scott Gaughan, Director of Networking and Planning Services, Krista Shaw, Chief Operating Officer, Sarah Luchs, Chief Learning Officer, Laura Bryson, Chief Information Officer, Victoria Boczkowski, Conference Director, and Jill Grier, Legal Counsel, Attorney General's Office

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 July 12, 2012, minutes. The motion was made by Commissioner Hawkins and seconded by Commissioner Sams. All of the Commissioners voted in favor of the motion and the minutes from July 12, 2012, were approved as submitted.

III. Reports and Administrative

A. Chairman's Report

Commission Chair Designee Conley said that the 100 Gigabit Project is still on schedule. The first five cities are still ready to be active as projected in September. They should have an update at the end of August.

Commission Chair Designee Conley said since the last eTech meeting there have been several meetings with interested parties relating to video conferencing. He said that The Department of Administrative Services, Office of Information Technology has been instructed by the Mid-Biennium Review (MBR) to develop an enterprise solution for all of Ohio as it relates to video conferencing. eTech has taken a main role in these discussions from a K-12 perspective. Commission Chair Designee Conley said he believes that eTech will do well this school year budget-wise but he is concerned for the next fiscal year.

Commission Chair Designee Conley said they have spent a lot of time collaborating with the Governor's office. He believes that there is a functional team in place and the Ohio Board of Regents (OBOR), the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) and eTech are working together on alignment.

Commission Chair Designee Conley thanked Executive Director Theresa Fredericka of INFOhio for working with Special Projects Director Gwen Evans of OhioLINK. He said that Ms. Fredericka has provided knowledge in the area of where the future lies for librarians. He also appreciated her presentation at the last eTech meeting. Commission Chair Designee Conley also mentioned the Office of Budget and Management's (OBM) Beyond Boundaries Report. They are looking for ways for the library systems to work together and aggregate lower costs.

Commission Chair Designee Conley said last week he attended a connectivity meeting with Interim Executive Director Greg Davidson. There was a presentation given based on information provided by eTech staff. The presentation revolved specifically around the PARCC assessment. This assessment is scheduled to begin in Fall 2014. Senior staff of the OBOR is talking with representatives from PARCC to determine what the specific technology needs are. Commission Chair Designee Conley continued and said subsidy reports are due in December so they will have a better analysis of connectivity needs.

Commissioner Watts made an inquiry about middle mile contracts that were due to expire. Commissioner Hawkins said the ten year contract is about to expire and he believes that the ODE may request funding for this. He further said as the biennial budget is prepared and goes through the process they need to watch this to make sure they are protected. Commission Chair Designee Conley said this topic was discussed most recently with the Governor's office and the OBM as well. Interim Executive Director Greg Davidson said that the ODE made a \$10M budget request as it relates to the middle mile.

Relating to the Voice over Internet Protocol (VOIP), Commission Chair Designee Conley said that there was a one page overview document in the Commissioners meeting packets that they were welcomed to share with their constituents. He said the VOIP will be a big cost savings for the state of Ohio.

Commission Chair Designee Conley said he and other eTech representatives have been involved with the ILearn Ohio initiative. He hopes to be able to provide an update on this initiative at the next meeting.

As it relates to the student portal, there was going to be a presentation for the Commissioners today. However that will be tabled until the next meeting. They are a few weeks away from rolling out a comprehensive website. Students, parents and educators will be able to obtain institution information, career planning opportunities, and transferring credit information.

B. Interim Executive Director's Report

1. Interim Executive Director Greg Davidson provided a staff update. He said that Scott Gaughan, Director of Networking and Planning Services announced his retirement. He congratulated him and the Commissioners thanked him for his service. Interim Executive Director Davidson provided the Commissioners with a new eTech Table of Organization that reflected this change. With this, the North Star Operations will now report to Laura Bryson, Chief Information Officer.

Commissioner Watts inquired about the two vacancies at the North Star Operations and asked if recruitment was being conducted at this time. Interim Executive Director Davidson said that they have posted the two intermittent staff positions to support video conferencing. They have received good responses to date.

2. As it relates to the video conferencing, Interim Executive Director Davidson said that he and Commission Chair Designee Conley met with John Bowers, Executive Directive of the Licking Area Computer Association. They discussed the large amount of distance learning their organization does which is approximately 55-60 sessions a day for the districts they serve.

They learned about the Ohio Distance Learning Consortium as well. Commission Chair Designee Conley said they are offering services across the state and the sessions have increased over the last year. He wants to ensure that the ultimate enterprise solution will accommodate everyone. Commissioner Sams commented that Coursera (Stanford University) has 740,000 students currently enrolled in its online learning programs.

3. Interim Executive Director Davidson said the Request for Quote (RFQ) relating to the Child Internet Protection Act (CIPA) training has closed. They received three responses, evaluated those and have a preferred vendor. The vendor met each of the RFQ's requirements and they are in the process of negotiating with them. When an agreement is reached Interim Executive Director Davidson will notify the Commissioners. Commission Chair Designee Conley asked if eTech would be bearing the costs of the CIPA training for the schools. Interim Executive Director Davidson replied yes.
4. Interim Executive Director Davidson said that eTech received Controlling Board (CB) approval this week. This request was for an equipment upgrade at the North Star Facility which was a requirement by August 31, 2012. Mr. Gaughan further explained that the CB request was for both the continuation of the capital project and equipment upgrades. He said that the Public Broadcast Service is upgrading from Mpeg2 to Mpeg4 and their Satellite receivers cannot handle the higher versions. The vendor they have chosen has assured them a delivery date to meet the August 31st deadline.

Relating to the capital project, he said that some of the equipment that they are utilizing is nearly 15 years old. They are buying new equipment, transitioning to new technology and will be using the OARnet backbone. This will save approximately \$66,000. Interim Executive Director Davidson added there was an audit conducted and eTech realized a savings of approximately \$186,000 from unused circuits.

C. 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. She said relating to line items 401 and 402 they are waiting for invoices so they can send out the first quarter subsidies. Relating to line 410, the subsidies for television are complete, however they are missing four radio and three radio-reading service subsidies. These entities need to complete their forms online before eTech can send out their first quarter subsidies. Ms. Shaw said in terms of Ed Tech subsidies, Line 411, they hope to bring in leadership from their group to work with staff to assist with the design of the program.

Three payrolls have processed to date. The projections for payroll are based solely on current staff, and not any new hires.

Commission Chair Designee Conley asked about when the Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2014/2015 had to be submitted. Ms. Shaw replied that it had to be submitted by September 17, 2012, as they are a non-cabinet level agency. She went on to say that eTech leadership will be meeting tomorrow morning to discuss the 10% reduction of the agency's FY 13 appropriation and personnel needs.

D. Conference Update

Victoria Boczkowski, Conference Director provided an update regarding the annual eTech Technology Conference. She said they have 82 exhibitors committed at 17,400 square feet of exhibit space. Approximately 30% of the exhibitors are Ohio-based. There are 496 registrants to date and this is 100 more individuals than was what registered last year at this time. Of those registrants, 59% have registered for the full conference for the entire three days and at the team rate.

The Request for Proposal for the hotel has been sent to the vendor and the hotel block will be released after Labor Day. The contracting process for hotels has been improved and they are seeing some streamlined efficiencies in this area. Additionally, they have purchased their speaker portals. They will ask for proposals sometime after Labor Day. The call for volunteers will begin as early as next week.

Commissioner Sams asked about the theme for this year's annual conference. Ms. Boczkowski replied that the theme is distance learning and the taglines are equip, engage, and empower.

Commissioner Herpel wanted to know if all of the attendees registered to date were paid attendees and Ms. Boczkowski replied that yes they were. Commission Chair Designee Conley asked if the complimentary tickets were going to be handled differently for this year's annual conference. Interim Executive Director Davidson replied that a process would be in place from this point forward to issue the complimentary tickets.

E. Blended Learning

Sarah Luchs, Chief Learning Officer, provided an update regarding the blended learning initiatives. She said the July 18th and 19th professional development event for blended learning grantees went very well. There were 100 participants from the twelve sites. The first day the participants attended as teams. The second day the teachers attended and it was focused on teacher capacity and support. Ms. Luchs discussed some of the topics that were discussed at the professional development event.

Ms. Luchs went on to talk about the Governor's visit to Gahanna Lincoln High School (GLHS). She said they are doing some interesting things and their school is really conducive to blended learning. It is co-located with a community college and a career-tech center. They also have a partnership with the YMCA for their gym facilities which is school and community based. She discussed the options students have with their learning styles at GLHS.

Ms. Luchs said last week she attended the Innovative Learning Environments Conference which was hosted at Hilliard Bradley High School. She said it is supported by various organizations and several of the blended learning sites were presenting at this conference. She conducted a session with a representative from the U.S. Department of Education that was an overview of the alignment between the National Ed-tech plan and Ohio's Digital Task Force Report.

Relating to the MBR, Ms. Luchs said that the ODE was charged with identifying the blended sites that are currently operating or intend to operate starting this Fall. Her understanding is that they are currently working on a process to fulfill this requirement.

Commission Chair Designee Conley said that based on what they are observing that there is a range on where individuals are as it relates to blended learning. The marketplace is the driving force.

Commissioner Herpel inquired about the universities as it related to blended learning and course content. Commission Chair Designee Conley said that OBOR senior staff has recognized that there are teacher preparation issues as they relate to teaching in a blended learning environment. He went on to say that the Colleges of Education see this as a challenge as well and will be looking forward to guidance from the ODE, OBOR and the Governor's office.

Commissioner Watts said that there is a risk of the higher education institutions continuing to maintain a curriculum that is focused on testing and teaching students to test for things that no longer exist. This will be damaging to the institutions as well as the student. Commission Chair Designee Conley said he will get more information on their plan and bring it to the next meeting. He will also invite a senior staff person from OBOR that is familiar with the topic to speak at the next eTech meeting.

Commissioner Hawkins made comments about traditional institutions vs. electronic institutions. He said that news reports said that the traditional institutions are suffering. He said that there were three times as many students at the electronic institution as the traditional institution that was cited in the news report. Commissioner Hawkins also asked when the Distance Learning Task Force Report was going to be released. Ms. Luchs replied that she wasn't sure of the release date.

Commissioner Sams commented about the University of Wisconsin's announcement regarding moving away from classic course credit and enabling 'testing out'. He said this will allow students to use the free online courses to take exams and receive full credit. This is a revolutionary change and calls into question tuition at traditional colleges. Ms. Luchs said that there is a policy in Ohio that is called Credit Flex. She said that not all institutions use it as it relates to 'testing out'.

Commissioner Sams made additional comments relating to assessments and the Khan Academy. He said they are educating over 10,000 students and the test is free. Ohio could implement this and the test is formative not summative and is available now not in two years. Commissioner Hawkins provided his thoughts on formative vs. summative. He said students need to be able to accomplish initial steps in math before they can advance to the next. Learning is sequential.

Commissioner Watts asked if there were any Ohio districts that have adopted the Khan Academy methodology. Commissioner Sams and Ms. Luchs were not aware of any specifically. Commissioner Sams mentioned that a city in North Carolina uses the Khan Academy as a supplemental tool to classroom teaching.

The Commissioners began to discuss the P-20 challenges. They said that they need to concentrate on the students. There needs to be a plan developed that is not going to be changed every few years. There should be clear direction that is focused on technology to advance the needs of the student.

F. Information Technology

Laura Bryson, Chief Information Officer, provided an update regarding Information Technology. She said that the technology planning tool and K-12 Grants are currently active in the Salesforce application. There will be an update within the next two weeks for the K-12 Grants to allow districts to update their building information.

Ms. Bryson said they plan on conducting the Biennial Educational Technology Assessment (BETA) during the normal time frame. This will be October through December. The process will change but they will conduct the building and teacher survey.

Commission Chair Designee Conley asked if they had the ability to audit the information. Interim Executive Director Davidson said in the past the information was given to the ITC's to verify. Commission Chair Designee Conley said as it related to PARCC assessments and connectivity, accurate building information is going to be very critical.

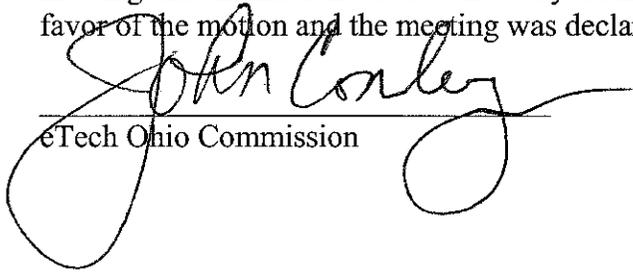
IV. Miscellaneous

Commissioner Sams provided some closing comments to his fellow Commissioners relative to Epic 2020. He said this website has had over 16,000 views to date and spoke about the wealth of information it has to offer relating to free online learning opportunities. He went on to discuss the ed-X partnership of Harvard and MIT.

Commissioner Herpel wanted to know how the various organizations can afford to offer the online learning programs for free. Commissioner Sams discussed his participation in a free online learning program. There were two hundred students that participated in the course program on campus and paid \$4,000 tuition each. There were one-hundred and sixty thousand individuals who participated at no cost online. He went on to explain that they are able to offer these free online programs due to a new revenue model that is the employment agency model.

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 Herpel. All commissioners were in favor of the motion and the meeting was declared adjourned.



John Conley

eTech Ohio Commission

September 13, 2012
Date