

**EDUCATION COUNCIL  
of the  
NEBRASKA INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMMISSION**

**Friday, January 20, 2006  
9:00AM-12:00PM CT**

**Nebraska Video Conferencing Network  
Host site: Executive Building #103, 521 S. 14th Street, Lincoln  
Remote Site #1: Kearney Public Library, 2020 First Avenue, Kearney  
Remote Site #2: State Office Building #207, 1313 Farnam, Omaha  
Remote Site #3: ESU 16, 1221 W. 17th, North Platte**

**Proposed Agenda Available on or before Tuesday, January 17, 2006**

(The Council will attempt to adhere to the sequence of the published agenda, but reserves the right to adjust the order of items if necessary and may elect to take action on any of the items listed. Items marked in **BOLD** are expected action items.)

|                |  |                 |
|----------------|--|-----------------|
| 9:00 AM        | 1. Call to Order, Electronic Posting, Roll Call, Introductions   | Co-Chair        |
| <b>9:03 AM</b> | <b>2. Consider approval of the Agenda for the January 20, 2005 meeting</b>   | <b>Co-Chair</b> |
| <b>9:05 AM</b> | <b>3. Consider approval of <a href="#">Minutes</a> from the November 18, 2005 meeting</b>  | <b>Co-Chair</b> |
| 9:08 AM        | 4. Public Comment  | Co-Chair        |
| <b>9:10 AM</b> | <b>5. Membership: Consider <a href="#">nomination</a> of ESU representative to fill remainder of the 2004-06 term</b>                              | <b>Co-Chair</b> |
| <b>9:15 AM</b> | <b>6. Education Council <a href="#">Charter language</a></b>   | <b>Co-Chair</b> |
| <b>9:25 AM</b> | <b>7. Consider Election of a Co-Chair to represent K-12 Education</b>  | <b>Co-Chair</b> |
| 9:35 AM        | 8. Discussion: Distance Education Enhancement Task Force <a href="#">Final Report</a> (20.2MB) and <a href="#">Recommendations</a> Excerpt (750Kb) | T. Rolfes       |
|                | A. <a href="#">NITC involvement</a>  |                 |
| 9:45 AM        | 9. <a href="#">Legislative Report</a> : LB XXXX  | T. Rolfes       |
| 10:00 AM       | 10. Discussion: <a href="#">Statewide Technology Plan</a> NITC Initiatives & Education Council Action Items  | Co-Chair        |
|                | A. <a href="#">Network Nebraska</a>  |                 |

|                 |  |                 |
|-----------------|--|-----------------|
|                 | B. <a href="#">Statewide Synchronous Video Network</a>   |                 |
|                 | C. <a href="#">Digital Education</a>   |                 |
| <b>11:45 AM</b> | <b>11. Consider approval and forwarding of the Network Nebraska, Synchronous Video Network, Digital Education Action Items to the NITC</b> | <b>Co-Chair</b> |
| 11:50 AM        | 12. Agenda Items for the March 17 meeting  | Co-Chair        |
| 11:55 AM        | 13. Confirm locations for the March 17 (Nebraska Wesleyan--Lincoln) and May 19 meetings  | Co-Chair        |
| <b>12:00 PM</b> | <b>14. Adjournment</b>   | <b>Co-Chair</b> |

The NITC Education Council wishes to thank the Nebraska Video Conferencing Network for arranging the January 20, 2006 meeting.

NITC/Education Council Homepage: <http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/>

Meeting Notice Posted to the NITC Web site 11-21-05

Meeting Notice Posted to the [Nebraska Public Meeting Calendar](#) 11-21-05

Agenda Posted to the NITC Web site 01-17-06

## **EDUCATION COUNCIL**

Nebraska Information Technology Commission  
Friday, November 18, 2005, 9:30 a.m.  
Governor's Mansion – Lower Level Conference Room  
1425 H Street, Lincoln, Nebraska

### **PROPOSED MINUTES**

#### **VOTING MEMBERS/ALTERNATES PRESENT:**

**Mr. Arnold Bateman**, University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
**Mr. Clark Chandler**, Nebraska Wesleyan University  
**Mr. Dennis Baack**, Alt. for Michael Chipps  
**Mr. Kent Gydesen**, Alt. for Linda Richards  
**Ms. Yvette Holly**, University of Nebraska Medical Center  
**Dr. Jack Huck**, Southeast Community College  
**Mr. Jeff Johnson**, Centennial Public Schools;  
**Mr. Chuck Lenosky**, Creighton University  
**Mr. Rich Molettiere**, Omaha North High School  
**Mr. Al Schneider**, Educational Service Unit 5  
**Mr. Alan Wibbels**, Educational Service Unit 10

#### **LIAISON/ALTERNATES MEMBERS PRESENT:**

**Ms. Brenda Decker**, Chief Information Officer  
**Mr. Terry Dugas**, Alt. for Mike Winkle, NET  
**Mr. Mike Kozak**, Department of Education  
**Dr. Marshall Hill**, Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education  
**Ms. Linda Engel**, Nebraska City Public Schools  
**Mr. Wayne Fisher**, Department of Education

#### **MEMBERS/LIAISONS ABSENT:**

Stan Carpenter, State College Board; Dr. Terry Haack, Bennington Public Schools; Joe LeDuc, Catholic Diocese of Lincoln; Dennis Linster, Wayne State College; and Dr. Ed Rastovski, Wahoo Public Schools

**Others Present:** Jim Zemke, William Scheideler, Lavay Rinehart, Kristie Jergensen, Bev Lauby, Jodi Banks, Jay Sears

#### **CALL TO ORDER, ELECTRONIC POSTING, ROLL CALL & INTRODUCTIONS**

Dr. Jack Hack, Co-Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. There were 11 voting members present at the time of roll. A quorum was present to conduct official business. The meeting notice was posted to the Nebraska Public Meeting Calendar on October 1, 2005. The meeting agenda was posted to the NITC website on November 15, 2005.

#### **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA FOR THE NOVEMBER 18, 2005 MEETING**

**Ms. Holly** moved to approve the [November 18, 2005 agenda](#) as presented. **Mr. Chandler** seconded.

**Roll call vote: Bateman-Yes, Baack-Yes, Chandler-Yes, Gydesen-Yes, Holly-Yes, Huck-Yes, Johnson-Yes, Lenosky-Yes, Molettiere-Yes, Schneider-Yes, and Wibbels-Yes. Results: Yes-11, No-0. Motion carried.**

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE SEPTEMBER 23, 2005 MEETING**

**Mr. Molettiere moved to approve the [September 23, 2005 minutes](#) as presented. Mr. Lenosky seconded. Roll call vote: Bateman-Yes, Baack-Yes, Chandler-Yes, Gydesen-Yes, Holly-Yes, Huck-Yes, Johnson-Yes, Lenosky-Yes, Molettiere-Yes, Schneider-Yes, and Wibbels-Yes. Results: Yes-11, No-0. Motion carried.**

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

## **DISTANCE EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT TASK FORCE (DEETF) UPDATE**

Mr. Rolfes, Mike Beach and Wayne Fisher have assisted with staffing the task force. Education Council members, Dr. Huck and Mr. Kozak, also serve on the task force. Some of the recommendations and items discussed at yesterday's DEETF staffing meeting included:

- decision making at the local level regarding distance education
- encouragement and incentives for participation in the statewide network
- local level upgrades
- CIO to arrange opportunities for school districts to link to Network Nebraska
- CIO to bid for distance education equipment per Technical Panel standards
- Equipment reimbursements up to \$20,000 (synchronous) for those who participate to be matched by \$5,000 by the school,
- Schools will be obligated to provide 2 classes/year, and
- Establish a distance education council to explore statewide scheduling program

Discussion followed regarding tax equity and opportunities for school aid funding. As recommended, ESU's would also be eligible for the technology allowance. It was recommended that the definition of synchronous and asynchronous needs to be defined. The Task Force will be reviewing and discussing a draft report at their final meeting on December 7<sup>th</sup>. The submission deadline for the report is December 31, 2005.

## **SPECIAL RECOGNITION: ALAN WIBBELS**

Brenda Decker, Chief Information Officer

Since the inception of the Education Council in 1998, Dr. Huck and Mr. Wibbels have served as co-chairs. Mr. Wibbels' expertise, input and skills have contributed to the work and accomplishments of the council. ESU 10 was the first customer on Network Nebraska. Ms. Decker conveyed Governor Heineman's and Lieutenant Governor Sheehy's regrets for not being able to attend. On their behalf, Ms. Decker presented an appreciation certificate and plaque. Mr. Wibbels made some farewell remarks and thanked the council.

## **NOVEMBER 8 NITC [MEETING UPDATE](#)**

Steve Henderson, I.T. Administrator, Planning and Project Management

Dr. Janie Park, president of Chadron State College, representing the general public on the NITC, was installed as a new commissioner. This afternoon, the NITC will be providing a legislative briefing to the Appropriations Committee and the Transportation and Telecommunication Committee. Education Council members/alternates are invited to attend. On November 21<sup>st</sup>, Lieutenant Governor Sheehy, along with the State Government Council, is meeting with agency directors to discuss security & business resumption, as well as to discuss what services should be restored and in what order. During this legislative session, legislation will be proposed to integrate I.T. operational services and policy together under the direction of the CIO for the State of Nebraska. The Statewide Technology Plan was discussed. Several NITC Commissioners' terms will expire in April 2006. Dr. Doug Christensen's term will be expiring. Mr. Henderson suggested that the Education Council may want to discuss how this position should be addressed.

## **AUGUST 9 JOINT TECHNICAL PANEL AND ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING PROJECTS; [MEETING SYNOPSIS](#) AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES**

The CIO's office will convene the work groups to identify and discuss the five cooperative initiatives developed at the meeting.

## **NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION [DEFICIT REQUEST](#) AND [TECHNICAL REVIEW](#) UPDATE**

Tom Rolfes, Education I.T. Manager

The Technical Panel's review evaluated the NDE technology proposal as technically feasible and provided the agency an opportunity to address reviewer comments. Department of Education recognized that the funding and impact of LB 689 will be superseded by a new bill to be introduced in the upcoming session of the Legislature.

## **[STATEWIDE TECHNOLOGY PLAN](#)**

The NITC has approved the Statewide Technology Plan 1.0 which contains 8 initiatives. The advisory groups have been charged to further develop action items to accomplish the initiatives. The Education Council has taken the lead for the following three initiatives: Network Nebraska, Statewide Synchronous Video Network, and Digital Education.

A question was raised regarding collaboration of the Education Council's action items and the Community Council's Telehealth initiative. Consideration and discussions must occur regarding federal regulations and confidentiality and the pros and con of having two separate networks. There may be a requirement to have two separate systems because of the policy and privacy issues on a public network. Homeland security and [CALEA](#) requirements must also be considered by Network Nebraska.

Mr. Rolfes is meeting with the Library Commission advisory council this afternoon to inform them about Network Nebraska.

## **EDUCATION COUNCIL [ACTION ITEMS](#) DISCUSSION**

After providing input and suggestions, the council directed Mr. Rolfes to draft action items for the January 20<sup>th</sup> meeting.

## **NEXT MEETING AND ADJOURNMENT**

The next meeting of the NITC Education Council will be a videoconference meeting to be held on Friday, January 20, 2006, 9:00 a.m.

Mr. Chandler offered to host the March 17, 2006 meeting at Wesleyan University in Lincoln, Nebraska.

With no further business, Dr. Huck adjourned the meeting at 11:57 a.m.

Meeting minutes were taken by Lori Lopez Urdiales and reviewed by Tom Rolfes, Office of the CIO/NITC.

**Nebraska Information Technology Commission  
EDUCATION COUNCIL**

**Membership Replacement pro tem 2004-06 term**

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Representing</u> | <u>Status</u> |
|-------------|---------------------|---------------|
|-------------|---------------------|---------------|

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**K-12 EDUCATION**

|                 |                           |  |
|-----------------|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Ron Cone</b> | Educational Service Units | <b>Nominated by ESUAA (1-5-06)<br/>to fill the term vacated by Alan<br/>Wibbels, 2004-06</b> |
|-----------------|---------------------------|--|

**Ron Cone**

Ron Cone has been employed by ESU 10 in Kearney as a network engineer since 1997. Most recently, he was hired by ESU 10 as the Director of Networking and Information Services to succeed Alan Wibbels. Mr. Cone is being nominated by the ESU Administrators Association to fill the 2004-06 term of Mr. Wibbels, due to his retirement. Mr. Cone graduated from UNK in 1994 with a degree in computer science and information management. Ron has also served as alternate to the K-12 representative on the NITC Technical Panel. He has earned certification as a Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA) and Cisco Certified Network Instructor (CCNI). Mr. Cone assisted with previous NETCOM phases I and II as well as Network Nebraska infrastructure issues.

# Nebraska Information Technology Commission

## --Education Council Charter--

~~(Last Revision: June 22, 2000)~~

### 1. Introduction

The Education Council (hereafter referred to as "Council") of the Nebraska Information Technology Commission (hereafter referred to as "Commission") is a 16-member advisory committee of the Commission composed of representatives from K-12, postsecondary education, and four state agencies. The Council was originally formed by Executive Order 97-7 in November 1997 to identify, prioritize, and coordinate user needs with respect to educational information technology. The Council first met on March 12, 1998 and has conducted monthly

or bimonthly meetings since.

### 2. Purpose of Charter

The purpose of this charter is to provide operational guidance to the Council members, clarify its relationship to the Commission, and to provide general information to all who read the proceedings and recommendations of the Council.

### 3. Authority

~~The authority for the Education Council of the Nebraska Information Technology Commission is derived from Section 6-7 of LB924 passed April 1998.~~ The Nebraska Information Technology Commission shall: "Establish ad hoc technical advisory groups to study and make recommendations on specific topics, including work groups to establish, coordinate, and prioritize needs for education, local communities, and state agencies[.]" NEB. REV. STAT. § 86-~~1506~~516(7).

## ~~4.~~1. Commission Responsibilities and Mission

### 4.1 Commission Mission

"The mission of the Nebraska Information Technology Commission is to make the State of Nebraska's investment in information technology infrastructure more accessible and responsive to the needs of its citizens regardless of location while making government, education, health care and other services more efficient and cost effective." <http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/>

## 4.2 Commission Responsibilities:

4.2.1 Adopt policies and procedures used to develop, review, and annually update a statewide technology plan;

4.2.2 Create a technology information clearinghouse to identify and share best practices and new developments, as well as identify existing problems and deficiencies;

4.2.3 Review and adopt policies to provide incentives for investments in information technology infrastructure services;

4.2.4 Determine a broad strategy and objectives for developing and sustaining information technology development in Nebraska, including long-range funding strategies, research and development investment, support and maintenance requirements, and system usage and assessment guidelines;

4.2.5 Adopt guidelines regarding project planning and management, information-sharing, and administrative and technical review procedures involving state-owned or state-supported technology and infrastructure. Governmental entities, state agencies, and political subdivisions shall submit projects that directly utilize state-appropriated funds for information technology purposes to the process established by NEB. REV. STAT. §§86-

~~1501-512~~ to 86-~~1514~~524. Governmental entities and political subdivisions may submit other projects involving information technology to the Commission for comment, review, and recommendations;

4.2.6 Adopt minimum technical standards, guidelines, and architectures upon recommendation by the technical panel created in NEB. REV. STAT. §86-

4.2.7 Establish ad hoc technical advisory groups to study and make recommendations on specific topics, including work groups to establish, coordinate, and prioritize needs for education, local communities, and state agencies;

4.2.8 Make recommendations on technology investments to the Governor and the Legislature, including a prioritized list of projects, reviewed by the technical panel, for which new or additional funding is requested;

4.2.9 Approve grants from the Community Technology Fund and Government Technology Collaboration Fund; and

4.2.10 Adopt schedules and procedures for reporting needs, priorities, and recommended projects.

## **5. Education Council Mission and Responsibilities**

### **5.1 Council Mission**

The mission of the Council is to advise the Commission concerning education information technology needs, goals, and policy. The Council will identify, coordinate, and prioritize matters pertaining to information technology for a more strategic and cost-effective approach to developing the State's education information technology infrastructure.

### **5.2 Council Responsibilities:**

5.2.1 Identify and prioritize education needs that could be met in a more cost-effective manner through the use of information technology;

5.2.2 Report needs, priorities, and recommended projects to the Commission in the manner determined by the Commission;

5.2.3 Assist the Commission in developing, reviewing and updating the statewide technology plan;

5.2.4 Recommend policies and guidelines for acceptable and cost-effective use of information technology in education;

5.2.5 Establish such subcommittees, task forces, or working groups as necessary and appropriate to advise the council on matters including coordination of technology initiatives, information technology operations, information management, data administration, and technology planning and training;

5.2.6 Encourage research on the effects of technology on learning and learner cognition;

5.2.7 Promote equitable use and access to technology throughout the education community;

5.2.8 Communicate information developed under Section 5.2 of this charter to education constituents through methods such as the technology information clearinghouse; and

5.2.9 Such other responsibilities as directed by the Commission.

## 6. Membership

### 6.1 Number of Members

The Council has 16 members, eight representing the K-12 sector, eight representing the

Postsecondary sector, and four non-voting ex officio representatives of the Department of Education, the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, the Department of Administrative Services, and the Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Commission.

### 6.2 Sector Representation

#### 6.2.1 K-12 Representation

6.2.1.1 Teachers--private schools (1), public schools (2)

, as recommended by the Executive Officer of the Nebraska State Education Association

### 6.2.1.2 Administrators (2)

, as recommended by the Executive Officer of the Nebraska Council of School Administrators

### 6.2.1.3 Educational Service Units (2)

, as recommended by the Executive Officer of the Educational Service Unit Administrators Association

### 6.2.1.4 Boards of Education (1)

, as recommended by the Executive Officer of the Nebraska Association of School Boards

## 6.2.2 Post

### sSecondary Representation

#### 6.2.2.1 State Colleges (2)

, as recommended by the Executive Officer of the State College System

#### 6.2.2.2 Independent Colleges and Universities (2)

, as recommended by the Executive Officer of the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Nebraska

#### 6.2.2.3 Community Colleges (2)

, as recommended by the Executive Officer of the Nebraska Community College System

#### 6.2.2.4 University of Nebraska System (2)

, as recommended by the President of the University of Nebraska System

## 6.2.3 Non-voting Ex Officio Representation

#### 6.2.3.1 Department of Education (1)

#### 6.2.3.2 Coordinating Commission for Post

### sSecondary Education (1)

### 6.2.3.3 Department of Administrative Services (1)

### 6.2.3.4 Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Commission (1)

## 6.3 Member Responsibilities

Each member is responsible for maintaining two-way communication with their sector constituents concerning issues brought before the Council.

Each member is responsible for attending the meetings of the Education Council or alerting his/her voting alternate to attend in their absence.

## 6.4 Change in Membership

If a change in membership becomes necessary due to resignation, removal, or change of job status, the sub-sector or agency represented is responsible for nominating or recommending the replacement member to the Council. The nomination will then be recommended by a simple majority of the Council members present and forwarded to the Commission for approval.

## 6.5 Length of Service

The current members will serve until June 30, 2001, with subsequent two-year staggered terms expiring on June 30 of each year. There is no limit to the number of consecutive terms that can be served.

One-half of the K-12 and one-half of the postsecondary members' terms shall expire on even numbered years and one-half of the K-12 and one-half of the postsecondary members' terms shall expire on odd numbered years.

## 7. Meeting Procedures

### 7.1 Chair(s)

7.1.1 The elected Co-Chairs will conduct the meetings of the Council,

oversee the establishment, operation and dissolution of committees, propose meeting agendas, and maintain the general operations of the Council. The Council will follow an informal protocol as defined by Robert's Rules of Order.

#### 7.1.2 The

~~current Chair or~~ Co-Chairs of the Council will serve until June 30, 2001; with subsequent two-year elected, ~~staggered~~ terms expiring on June 30 of each year.

7.1.3 One Co-Chair shall be representative of K-12 education and one Co-Chair shall be representative of postsecondary education.

### 7.2 Quorum and Action Items

An official quorum consists of 8 (50%) of the 16 official members or their alternates. No official voting business may be conducted without an official quorum. Issues shall be decided by a majority vote of the voting members present.

### 7.3 Designated Alternates and Non-voting Alternates

7.3.1 Each member of the Council shall designate one (1) official alternate. This official voting

alternate shall be registered with the Office of the Chief Information Officer and NITC and, in the absence of the official member, have all the privileges as the official member on items of discussion and voting.

7.3.2 If the official member and the member's official alternate are unable to attend a Council meeting either in person or electronically, then the sub-sector affected may send a non-voting alternate to gather or share information.

### 7.4 Meeting Frequency

The Council shall meet not fewer than four times per year (quarterly). As a general rule, the Council shall attempt to meet

bimonthly (every other month), except in conditions of extreme circumstances.

## 7.5 Subcommittees

The Council may, as it deems necessary, form task forces, teams, work groups, and special, ad hoc, and standing subcommittees to carry out its mission and responsibilities. Each time a new subcommittee is formed under the Council, the following seven sections must be decided and assigned within 30 days of formation.

### 7.5.1 Authority

The authority of any subcommittee of the Council is obtained and assigned through an official motion of the Commission and/or Council.

### 7.5.2 Goals

The

**Chair or** Co-Chairs of the Council assign the goals of any subcommittee of the Council.

### 7.5.3 Charge

The Council delivers the charge to the subcommittee, which includes a monthly progress report back to the Council at its regular meeting.

### 7.5.4 Membership

The membership of each subcommittee of the Council shall be determined by appointment, election, or volunteerism, whichever means is most suitable to the Council. The subcommittees may include members from outside the Council as resource persons, as determined by the Council. The number of members on any subcommittee shall be fewer than a quorum of the members of the Council (<8).

### 7.5.5 Leadership

Each subcommittee of the Council shall have a single chair to provide leadership. The

Co-Chair(s) of the Council may appoint this person, if the Co-Chairs desires, or the majority of the

subcommittee may elect this person.

#### 7.5.6 Duration

The Council shall assign each subcommittee a specific duration to complete its charge. At the conclusion of the duration and delivery of its charge, the subcommittee shall be dissolved. If the subcommittee requires a longer duration than has been assigned, the chair of the subcommittee shall request an extension or renewed duration.

#### 7.5.7 Process

The subcommittees charged by the Council may conduct their own meetings and forums away from the Council's regular monthly meetings. The chair of the subcommittee must inform the Office of the CIO-NITC of the date, time, and location of additional meetings.

#### 7.5.8 Open Meetings

"Sections 84-1408 to 84-1414 of the Open Meetings Law shall not apply to subcommittees of such bodies unless a quorum of the public body attends a subcommittee meeting or unless such subcommittees are holding hearings, making policy, or taking formal action on behalf of their parent body..."

### **7.6 Expense Reimbursement**

81-1182.01 "Any department, agency, Commission, council, committee, or board of the state may pay for the reasonable and necessary expenses for the recruitment, training, utilization, and recognition of volunteers providing services to the state and certain providers of services as established by the Director of Administrative Services."

7.6.1 NAS Policy CONC-005 "Volunteers shall mean those persons providing services to the State who are not being compensated for their time."

7.6.2 Council members needing reimbursement must submit a signed request to the Office of the CIO-NITC using the official state accounting forms.

## 7.7 Open Meeting Laws and Public Notice

It is the policy of the State of Nebraska that the formation of public policy is public business and may not be conducted in secret. Every meeting of a public body shall be open to the public in order that citizens may exercise their democratic privilege of attending and speaking at meetings of public bodies.

### 7.7.1 Advance Notice

The Council shall give reasonable advance publicized notice of the time, place, and agenda of each meeting through the use of its web page, <http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/>. The agenda will also be available for public inspection during normal business hours at the Office of the CIO-NITC, 521 S. 14<sup>th</sup>, Suite

~~200~~301, Lincoln, Nebraska. The Council will attempt to adhere to the sequence of the published agenda, but reserves the right to adjust the order of items if necessary and may elect to take action on any of the items listed.

### 7.7.2 Videoconferencing

Meetings of the Council may be held by means of videoconferencing if: reasonable advance publicized notice is given; reasonable arrangements are made to accommodate the public's right to attend, hear, and speak; at least one copy of all documents being considered is available at each site; one member of the council is present at each site of the videoconference; and no more than one-half of the Council's meetings in a calendar year are held by videoconference.

### 7.7.3 Rights of the Public

It is not a violation for the Council to make and enforce reasonable rules and regulations regarding the conduct of persons attending, speaking, reporting, videotaping, photographing or recording its meetings. The Council may not forbid public participation at all meetings but may not be required to allow citizens to speak at each meeting. The Council shall not require members of the public to identify themselves as a condition for admission to the meeting but may do so as a condition for addressing

the Council.

#### 7.7.4 Minutes and Voting

The Council shall keep minutes of all meetings showing the time, place, members present and absent and the substance of all matters discussed. Any action taken on any question or motion duly moved and seconded shall be by roll call vote of the Council in open session, and the record shall state how each member voted or if the member was absent or not voting. The roll call shall be called on a rotational basis. Minutes shall be written and available for inspection within

**ten** 10 working days or prior to the next convened meeting, whichever occurs earlier.

Approved by the Nebraska Information Technology Commission on June 29, 1999.

Amendments approved by the NITC on June 22, 2000 and January 27, 2006.

**LB 689**

**Distance Education Enhancement  
Task Force**

**December 31, 2005**

**Task Force Members**

**Senator Ron Raikes, Education Committee Chair**  
**Senator Elaine Stuhr, Education Committee Member**  
**Senator Tom Baker, Transportation and Telecommunications Committee Chair**  
**Senator Don Pederson, Appropriations Committee Chair**  
**Lt. Governor Rick Sheehy, Nebraska Information Technology Commission**  
**Eric Brown, Nebraska Information Technology Commission**  
**John Heil, Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Commission**  
**Jerry Vap, Public Service Commission**  
**Brenda Decker, Governor's Representative**  
**Mike Kozak, Department of Education**  
**Al Schneider, Educational Service Units**  
**Nigel Buss, Distance Education Consortia**  
**Daniel J. Hoelsing, Superintendent**  
**Michael J. Cunning, Superintendent**  
**John Horvath, Postsecondary Education**  
**Jack Huck, Postsecondary Education**

**Task Force Staff Group**

**Tammy Barry, Education Committee**

**Kris Valentin, Education Committee**

**Jill Becker, Transportation and Telecommunications Committee**

**Jessica Kolterman, Senator Stuhr's Office**

**Mikki McCann, Senator McDonald's Office**

**Ron Theis, Senator Schrock's Office**

**Tami Soper, Senator Howard's Office**

**Janet Anderson, Senator Byars' Office**

**Kathy Tenopir, Legislative Fiscal Office**

**Sandy Sostad, Legislative Fiscal Office**

**Phil Hovis, Legislative Fiscal Office**

**Tom Rolfes, Nebraska Information Technology Commission**

**Mike Beach, Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Commission**

**Wayne Fisher, Department of Education**

**Alan Wibbels, Educational Service Unit 10**

**Rick Golden, University of Nebraska**

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## **Executive Summary of Distance Education Improvement Plan**

The Distance Education Improvement Plan provides for statewide connectivity and coordination for distance education in Nebraska. The plan will rely on voluntary participation in an expansion of Network Nebraska. A new Distance Education Council comprised of E.S.U. administrators or their representatives will coordinate distance education among school districts. The interlocal agreements forming distance education consortia will be terminated and responsibility for distance education services will rest with educational service units (E.S.U.'s). Incentives and equipment reimbursements will be offered to school districts choosing to participate in both Network Nebraska and statewide coordination through the Distance Education Council. Payment for purchasing distance education courses from other school districts or educational institutions will be negotiated among the entities involved. The school finance formula and budget limits will be modified to reflect some distance education costs, receipts, reimbursements, and incentives.

## Distance Education Improvement Plan

The improvement plan developed by the Distance Education Enhancement Task Force is centered on three general principles. First, the plan recognizes school district, educational service unit (E.S.U.), and public postsecondary education institution responsibility for making decisions related to participation in distance education. Second, the plan encourages the exchange of distance education courses using a statewide network, currently known as Network Nebraska. Third, the plan provides for statewide coordination through a new entity, to be called the Distance Education Council. The plan would be implemented as follows:

- The Nebraska Chief Information Officer will arrange for all school districts, E.S.U.'s, and public postsecondary education institutions to have the opportunity to link to Network Nebraska at the earliest available opportunity.
  - Private not-for-profit educational institutions will be allowed to participate according to the cost structure established by the Chief Information Officer based on actual costs plus administrative expenses.
- The Chief Information Officer will also bid for equipment (hardware and software) related to distance education, which meets at least minimum standards as set by the Nebraska Information Technology Commission (N.I.T.C.) for school districts, E.S.U.'s, and public postsecondary institutions who want to participate in statewide leasing and/or purchasing contracts.
  - The Chief Information Officer will need additional staff funded through administrative fees collected from participating entities to coordinate the expanded network and equipment contracts.
  - School districts and E.S.U.'s will be eligible to receive one-time equipment reimbursements of up to \$20,000 from lottery funds beginning in the first year of participation in Network Nebraska and ending June 30, 2013.
    - School districts receiving the reimbursements will be required to participate in distance education by either sending or receiving two-way interactive video courses each semester, or the equivalent of two semester courses each year, for four years. To qualify, the courses must be coordinated through the new Distance Education Council and shall have at least one participating student who is enrolled in and attending a school district that is not generating the course. Failure to participate at the required level will result in a forfeiture of the funds.
- The interlocal agreements forming each distance education consortium will terminate on June 30, 2007, and all assets and liabilities (including staff) of each

consortium will be transferred to the E.S.U. chosen by a majority of the superintendents of the consortium member school districts.

- E.S.U.'s would act as fiscal agents for distance education and coordinate funding sources with core service and technology infrastructure funding.
- Participating districts would be charged by the E.S.U. for the distance education program of services transferred from consortia.
  - A one time budget exception for school districts would accommodate the distance education program of services transferred from consortia that would no longer be exempt from the budget limitations.
- The current authorization for interlocal agreements among E.S.U.'s would continue, allowing E.S.U.'s to contract with other E.S.U.'s to fulfill the distance education responsibilities for some or all of their member districts.
- An alternative to the June 30, 2007 termination date would be to terminate each distance education consortium when the existing contract with the private telecommunications company serving the distance education consortium is renegotiated to extend the term, the contract is materially altered, any party to the contract defaults, the contract ends for any other reason, or on August 30, 2012, whichever comes first.
- The Distance Education Council will be composed of E.S.U. administrators, or their representatives, and will provide statewide coordination for K-12 distance education courses and dual enrollment courses.
  - If there is not a member of the Distance Education Council in the membership of either the N.I.T.C. or the Technical Panel of the N.I.T.C., the N.I.T.C. will be required to have a member of the Distance Education Council on any ad hoc technical advisory group or workgroup that establishes, coordinates, or prioritizes needs for education.
  - Coordination will include, but not be limited to:
    - Access to lists of distance education course offerings;
    - Access to school schedules for participating school districts;
    - Facilitation of distance education course scheduling;
    - Brokering of distance education courses and dual enrollment courses to be purchased by school districts or private not-for-profit

elementary and secondary schools contracting with Network Nebraska;

- Pricing for distance education courses would be determined by the provider.
- Assessment of distance education needs and evaluation of distance education services;
- Compliance with technical standards as set forth by the Nebraska Information Technology Commission and academic standards as set forth by the Department of Education related to distance education; and
- Scheduling and prioritization for access to Network Nebraska by school districts, E.S.U.'s, and private not-for-profit elementary and secondary schools contracting with Network Nebraska;
  - The Council shall provide scheduling software or scheduling services meeting any standards established by the Nebraska Information Technology Commission;
  - A system shall be established by the Council for prioritizing courses if the network reaches capacity and for choosing receiving sites when the demand for a course exceeds the capacity as determined by either the technology or the course provider.
- Council purchases of hardware and software related to distance education in excess of \$10,000 will need to be approved by the Technical Panel of the N.I.T.C. as being in compliance with N.I.T.C. standards.
- Coordination will be limited to entities participating in Network Nebraska and using Network Nebraska for the exchange of the distance education course offerings, except that access to the list of coordinated course offerings will be available to all Nebraska residents.
  - Private not-for-profit elementary and secondary schools and postsecondary education institutions (for dual enrollment courses) will be included in coordination services if the costs of participation are paid by the school or institution and the school or institution is participating in Network Nebraska.
  - Access to the Council's coordination services will also be offered to other public entities participating in Network Nebraska on a contractual basis.

- The Distance Education Council will coordinate with E.S.U.'s and postsecondary education institutions to provide assistance for:
  - Instructional design for both two-way interactive video and internet based distance education courses; and
  - The offering of graduate credit courses in distance education.
- The Distance Education Council may also administer, or delegate the administration of, learning management systems that are in compliance with N.I.T.C. standards. The administration of learning management systems would be funded by school districts choosing to participate.
- The Distance Education Council may require a state appropriation to fund required personnel, purchased products or services, and coordination activities and may receive additional funds from E.S.U.'s, participating school districts, and other contracting entities.
- A technology allowance will be added to the Tax Equity and Educational Opportunities Support Act for access and transport charges equal to 85% of the local system costs minus federal reimbursements from the E-rate program.
- Payment for purchasing courses will be negotiated between the educational entities involved and receipts for courses shared through the Distance Education Council will be excluded from accountable receipts in the state aid formula and from the budget limitations.
- A technology allowance will be added to the minimum allocation in the E.S.U. infrastructure funding formula for access and transport charges equal to 85% of the E.S.U. costs minus any federal reimbursements from the E-rate program.
- Incentives for school districts and E.S.U.'s sending or receiving distance education courses will be funded with lottery funds through the 2015-16 school year and be administered by the Department of Education.
  - The formula for the incentives will be based on:
    - 1 unit for sending a one semester (or the equivalent) distance education course that is either a two-way interactive video course or an internet based course offered for high school credit and coordinated through the Distance Education Council;
    - 1 unit for receiving a one semester (or the equivalent) distance education two-way interactive video course offered for high school credit and coordinated through the Distance Education Council, including dual enrollment courses; and

- 1 additional unit for sending a one semester (or the equivalent) distance education two-way interactive video course offered for high school credit and coordinated through the Distance Education Council to at least one sparse or very sparse local system.
- The available lottery funding would be divided by the number of units to determine the incentives per unit, up to \$1,000 per unit.
- The data for determining incentives will be collected from the annual curriculum reports submitted to the Department of Education and may be verified by the Distance Education Council. There would also be an appeals procedure for school districts that were denied incentives.
- The incentives will be excluded from the accountable receipts in the state aid formula and there will be an exception to the budget limitations.
- The incentives will be paid one year in arrears.

## Distance Education Improvement Plan: Fiscal Analysis

### Estimated State Expenditures for the Distance Education Improvement Plan

|       | <u>Plan Component</u>   | <u>FY2006-07</u>                      | <u>FY2007-08</u>                      | <u>FY2008-09</u>   | <u>FY2009-10</u>   |
|-------|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| Aid   | Network Transport Expense   | 0                                     | 0                                     | Unknown increase<br>in state aid*                                      | Unknown increase<br>in state aid*                                      |
| Aid   | Technology Allowance<br>- Schools<br><br>- ESU's  | 0                                     | 0                                     | Shift state aid<br>among schools<br><br>Shift state aid<br>among ESU's | Shift state aid<br>among schools<br><br>Shift state aid<br>among ESU's |
| Aid   | Equipment Reimbursement - Schools & ESU's   | 3,000,000 GF**                        | 1,580,000 CF                          | 1,620,000 CF   | 0  |
| Aid   | Budget Lid Exceptions - Schools   | 0                                     | 0                                     | Unknown increase<br>in state aid                                       | Unknown increase<br>in state aid                                       |
| Aid   | Accountable Receipts Exemptions - Schools   | 0                                     | 0                                     | Unknown increase<br>in state aid                                       | Unknown increase<br>in state aid                                       |
| Aid   | Incentives - Schools & ESU's  | 500,000 GF**                          | 2,920,000 CF                          | 2,880,000 CF   | 4,500,000 CF   |
| Aid   | Distance Education Council Aid - ESU's<br>- Staff & Operating Expenses<br>- Scheduling System Software<br>- Scheduling System Maintenance | 191,400 GF<br>492,000 GF<br>30,750 GF | 188,300 GF<br>264,000 GF<br>78,000 GF | 195,100 GF<br>252,000 GF<br>112,700 GF                                 | 202,300 GF<br>0<br>126,000 GF  |
| Oper. | Chief Information Officer Staff & Operations - DAS  | Unknown increase<br>CF/RF***          | Unknown increase<br>CF/RF***          | Unknown increase<br>CF/RF***   | Unknown increase<br>CF/RF***   |
| Oper. | Dept. of Education Operations - NDE   | Minimal                               | Minimal                               | Minimal  | Minimal  |
|       | <b>General Funds</b>  | <b>4,214,150 GF</b>                   | <b>530,300 GF</b>                     | <b>559,800 GF</b>  | <b>328,300 GF</b>  |
|       | <b>Cash Funds</b>   | <b>0 CF</b>                           | <b>4,500,000 CF</b>                   | <b>4,500,000 CF</b>  | <b>4,500,000 CF</b>  |
|       | <b>Total Funds</b>  | <b>4,214,150</b>                      | <b>5,030,300</b>                      | <b>5,059,800</b>   | <b>4,828,300</b>   |

\* Schools opting to participate in statewide synchronous video course sharing will have increased transport costs via Network Nebraska. It is projected there will also be increased transport costs related to system technology upgrades as well as the elimination of the impact of the buy-down provision in existing contracts. Increased school district expenditures for transport costs will increase state aid, two years later. Vendor contracts and school participation will determine the amount of increase.

\*\* Proposal uses lottery funds for equipment reimbursements and incentives. A general fund fiscal impact is shown because lottery proceeds, pursuant to current law, are deposited in the General Fund in FY07.

\*\*\*Increased staff for management of the expanded network will likely increase administrative charges to users of the network.

## Background

Nebraska established a reputation for being a leader in distance education in the early 1990's. As a state with a wide variety of school districts, including some very remote districts serving sparsely populated areas, distance education makes sense. From 1989-1996, Nebraska offered a multi-state Japanese program that continues to stand as a model for enhancing education through distance technologies. In 1992, the first distance education consortium, also known as a pod, was activated to allow the exchange of classes within a region of the state. Since then, lottery funding and other grants have assisted in providing the opportunity for every school district in the state to join a consortium. For more information about distance education consortia, see Appendix A.

In the fall of 2004, it came to the attention of the Legislature that the existing contracts between the consortia and the private telecommunications companies were beginning to expire, and that new equipment was going to be required in order to continue distance education. The existing equipment in much of the state uses a technology that is no longer being supported by the original manufacturers. Furthermore, updating equipment could offer the opportunity for statewide course exchanges.

Two bills were introduced in January of 2005 to address the issue of the expiring contracts and the expanded possibilities for distance education. Legislative Bill 467 was introduced by Senator Byars on behalf of the Department of Education to create the Creating Essential Educational Opportunities for All Students Act. Included within the Act was an intent to appropriate \$10 million annually beginning with the 2005-06 fiscal year to be disbursed for purposes related to distance education. The measure is being held by the Education Committee at the time of this report.

Legislative Bill 689 was introduced by Senator Stuhr and co-sponsored by Senator Raikes to develop an improvement plan to upgrade and coordinate distance education in Nebraska. The proposal was amended and adopted by the Legislature and approved by the Governor. The Distance Education Enhancement Task Force is submitting this report as a result of that measure. The slip law, committee statement, final fiscal note, and initial fiscal note for L.B. 689 are contained in Appendix B.

The Distance Education Enhancement Task Force was appointed by the Executive Council of the Legislature and the Governor and began meeting monthly in July of 2005. The meetings included speakers to provide background material and discussion of alternatives to implement the objectives for the plan as laid out in the legislation. The membership of the Task Force, the mission listing the objectives of the Task Force, and the list of presenters are contained in Appendix C.

For a chronology of educational telecommunications events, see Appendix D.

## Network and Equipment

Objectives 1, 2, and 3 of the Task Force were directed toward establishing a statewide network and replacing outdated equipment. Those objectives were:

1. Development of a high capacity, scalable telecommunications infrastructure;
2. Development of an Internet protocol-based network to interconnect all existing and future distance education and videoconferencing facilities; and
3. Upgrades of current telecommunications equipment.

The Distance Education Improvement Plan relies heavily on the Nebraska Chief Information Officer and the existing statewide telecommunications backbone, known as Network Nebraska, to accomplish these objectives. Under the plan, the Chief Information Officer would arrange for all school districts, Educational Service Units (E.S.U.'s), and public postsecondary education institutions to have the opportunity to link to Network Nebraska at the earliest available opportunity, with private not-for-profit educational institutions being allowed to participate according to an established cost structure. The Chief Information Officer would also be tasked with bidding for equipment for school districts, E.S.U.'s, and public postsecondary institutions who want to participate in statewide leasing and/or purchasing contracts.

Network Nebraska is a series of contracts with telecommunications companies that provide a multi-purpose scalable transport backbone for use by state agencies, education institutions, and health care entities. The network was developed as a cooperative effort between the University of Nebraska and the State of Nebraska to aggregate bandwidth and reduce costs for participants. It is a network that is currently able to carry Internet1 and Internet2 traffic. The plan would call for the capacity of the network to be expanded in order to allow two-way interactive distance education courses to be exchanged across the state. For a map of the current backbone, see Appendix E.

As current contracts with the telecommunications companies expire, the leased distance education equipment will need to be replaced. Generally, there are at least three items required to provide distance education in the future. Typically, each building will need a new building switch, router, and Codec. The building switch and router will be used to route telecommunications signals to the correct location and application. The routing becomes necessary as the new technology allows multiple applications to travel down the same fiber connections. This advancement will also allow the exchange of courses statewide, instead of limiting exchanges to regional consortia. The Codec is the device that completes the conversion between the digital signal and the video display or input.

The plan includes up to \$20,000 in equipment reimbursements for school districts and E.S.U.'s participating in Network Nebraska. School districts would also be required to send or receive courses coordinated by the Distance Education Council for four years. The estimated equipment cost is \$25,000 per site. The N.I.T.C. video standards that would apply to equipment purchases are included in Appendix F.

## Organization and Coordination

Objectives 5, 6, and 9 of the Task Force were centered around the coordination of distance education. Those objectives were:

5. The transfer of distance education coordination responsibilities from distance education consortia to educational service units by July 1, 2007;
6. Statewide coordination for distance education offerings; and
9. Establishment of a system that allows districts to purchase quality distance education offerings from other school districts either directly or with E.S.U.'s acting as fiscal agents.

To comply with statutory requirements, the Distance Education Improvement Plan would terminate the interlocal agreements forming each consortium on June 30, 2007. All assets and liabilities, including staff, would be transferred to the E.S.U. chosen by a majority of the member school districts. The plan also offers an alternative to the June 30, 2007 termination date. The alternative would allow each consortium to continue until the existing contract with the telecommunications company servicing the consortium is renegotiated to extend the term, the contract is materially altered, any party defaults, or the contract ends for any other reason. If none of these events has occurred, the consortium would terminate on August 30, 2012.

The E.S.U.'s would act as fiscal agents and coordinate distance education funding, including core services and technology infrastructure funds. Participating districts would continue to pay for distance education services. A budget exception would accommodate charges that have been outside the budget limitations due to inter-local agreements.

A Distance Education Council composed of E.S.U. administrators, or their representatives, would provide statewide coordination for elementary and secondary courses, dual enrollment courses, and learning management systems. The Council would provide lists of course offerings, school schedules for participating districts, and facilitation of course scheduling. The Council would also be responsible for scheduling and prioritization for K-12 access to Network Nebraska using scheduling software or scheduling services. Additional responsibilities would include assessment of distance education needs, instructional design assistance, and compliance with technical and academic standards related to distance education.

The Distance Education Council would receive a state appropriation and would also be authorized to receive funds from E.S.U.'s, participating school districts, and other contracting entities. Services of the Council would be limited to entities participating in Network Nebraska, but could be purchased by private not-for-profit educational institutions and other public entities that participate in the network. The Council would assist with the brokering of courses, but the pricing would be determined by the providers. See Appendix G for information on high school, dual-enrollment, and postsecondary distance education offerings.

## Finance

Objectives 7 and 8 of the Task Force were focused on financing for distance education. Those objectives were:

7. Identification of potential funding sources; and
8. Establishment of an equitable and affordable financing system for both equipment and usage.

The financing system developed by the Task Force aligns with the basic principle that school districts, educational service units (E.S.U.'s), and public postsecondary education institutions have the responsibility for making decisions related to participation in distance education. The plan relies on incentives, recognition of costs in the state aid formula, and budget exceptions to encourage participation.

Two components in the incentive package would be financed from lottery funds. The plan includes up to \$20,000 in equipment reimbursements for each school district and E.S.U. that choose to participate in Network Nebraska. School districts are also required to provide or receive two-way interactive video courses offered for high school credit for the equivalent of two semesters each year for four years. The reimbursements would be available beginning with the first year of participation in Network Nebraska and ending June 30, 2013. The costs for equipment are estimated to be approximately \$25,000 per site.

The other component of the incentive package is based on sending or receiving distance education courses and will be funded through the 2015-16 school year. The formula for the incentives would be based on:

1. 1 unit for sending a one semester (or equivalent) course that is either two-way interactive video or internet based, offered for high school credit, and coordinated through the Distance Education Council;
2. 1 unit for receiving a one semester (or equivalent) two-way interactive video course offered for high school credit and coordinated through the Distance Education Council; and
3. 1 additional unit for sending a one semester (or equivalent) two-way interactive video course offered for high school credit to at least one sparse or very sparse local system.

The available lottery funding would be divided by the number of units to determine the incentives per unit, up to \$1,000 per unit. The incentives would be excluded from the accountable receipts in the state aid formula and there would be an exception to the budget limitations. Due to data availability, the incentives would be paid one year in arrears. An analysis of lottery proceed distributions is contained in Appendix H.

School districts could also benefit from selling their courses to other school districts. Payment for purchasing courses would be negotiated between the educational entities involved. Receipts for courses shared through the Distance Education Council would be excluded from accountable receipts in the state aid formula and from the budget limitations.

There are differences in the access and transport costs that disproportionately impact the districts that have the greatest need for distance education opportunities. To minimize those differences, a technology allowance would be added by the plan to the Tax Equity and Educational Opportunities Support Act equal to 85% of the local system access and transport charges minus federal reimbursements from the E-rate program. The E-rate program provides discounts to schools and libraries for telecommunications and Internet access and is funded through the federal Universal Service Fund at the direction of the Federal Communications Commission. The allowance would have the effect of associating the costs directly with the school system experiencing the costs in the calculation of formula needs. A similar allowance is currently used to recognize differences in transportation costs. The cost recognition is limited to 85% to encourage cost containment. An example of how the allowance would work is included in Appendix I.

Just like school districts, the E.S.U.'s with the greatest responsibility for offering distance education services experience the greatest costs. A technology allowance would also be added to the minimum allocation in the E.S.U. infrastructure funding formula for access and transport charges equal to 85% of the E.S.U. costs minus any federal reimbursements from the E-rate program. Tables showing E.S.U. technology infrastructure funding, core services funding, and total state and property tax funding beginning with FY99 are included in Appendix J.

A one time budget exception for school districts would accommodate the distance education program of services transferred from consortia that would no longer be exempt from the budget limitations. These costs are currently included in the inter-local agreement exception to the budget lids.

## **Teacher Training and Other Services**

Objectives 4 and 10 of the Task Force were directed toward teacher training and other technology-based services. Those objectives were:

4. Implementation of training and support programs for educators in the development and use of distance learning; and
10. Statewide provision of other technology-based services.

The plan would require the Distance Education Council to work with postsecondary education institutions in the offering of graduate courses in distance education. Undergraduate teacher training in technology based services is required for graduates of Nebraska postsecondary education institutions. For a list of instructional technology offerings in teacher education prepared by the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, see Appendix K.

Under the plan, learning management systems may be administered through the new Distance Education Council. Currently, districts may purchase systems such as Blackboard on their own or use the Angel system through an E.S.U. interlocal arrangement called Myelearning.org. Any learning management system administered by the Council would be required to comply with N.I.T.C. standards.

**DEETF Recommendations Affecting the NITC and its advisory groups  
December 30, 2005**

**Distance Education Enhancement Task Force Recommendations that affect the NITC Technical Panel, in the event that they are agreed to by the Legislature:**

1. "The Chief Information Officer will also bid for equipment (hardware and software) related to distance education, which meets at least **minimum standards as set by the Nebraska Information Technology Commission** for school districts, E.S.U.'s, and public postsecondary institutions who want to participate in statewide leasing and/or purchasing contracts." p.3

*A. What, if any, additional standards are needed?*

*B. Who shall be responsible for drafting these minimum standards?*

*C. To which pieces of equipment and software do they apply?*

*D. If new standards are needed, how quickly must these standards be approved by the NITC?*

2. "The Distance Education Council shall provide scheduling software or scheduling services **meeting any standards established by the Nebraska Information Technology Commission.**" p.5

*A. Who shall be responsible for drafting these minimum standards (bid specifications)?*

*B. How quickly must these standards be approved by the NITC*

*C. How will the NITC coordinate with the Distance Education Council?*

3. "(Distance Education) Council purchases of hardware and software related to distance education in excess of \$10,000 **will need to be approved by the Technical Panel of the NITC as being in compliance with NITC standards.** p.5

*A. What system or process of approval will be used?*

4. "The Distance Education Council may also administer, or delegate the administration of, **learning management systems that are in compliance with NITC standards...**" p.6

*A. What additional standards are needed?*

*B. Who shall be responsible for drafting these minimum standards?*

*C. If new standards are needed, how quickly must these standards be approved by the NITC?*

=====

**Distance Education Enhancement Task Force Recommendations that affect the Collaborative Aggregation Partnership (CAP) and the operations of Network Nebraska, in the event that they are agreed to by the Legislature:**

1. "The Nebraska Chief Information Officer will arrange for all school districts, E.S.U.'s, and public postsecondary education institutions to have the opportunity to **link to Network Nebraska** at the earliest available opportunity." p. 3

A. *How does CAP define “link to” or “participate in” in networking terms?*

2. “A technology allowance will be added to the Tax Equity and Educational Opportunities Act **for access and transport charges** equal to 85% of the local system costs minus federal reimbursements from the E-rate program.” p.6

A. *How does CAP plan to charge school districts for access and transport charges on a fair and equitable basis?*

3. “A technology allowance will be added to the minimum allocation in the E.S.U. infrastructure funding formula **for access and transport charges** equal to 85% of the E.S.U. costs minus any federal reimbursements from the E-rate program.” p.6

A. *How does CAP plan to charge ESUs for access and transport charges on a fair and equitable basis?*

4. “Coordination of the Distance Education Council will include, but not be limited to: **Scheduling and prioritization for access to Network Nebraska** by school districts, ESUs, and private not-for-profit elementary and secondary schools contracting with Network Nebraska.” p.5

A. *What does it mean to coordinate scheduling and prioritization for access to Network Nebraska?*

5. “A system shall be established by the (Distance Education) Council for prioritizing courses if the **network reaches capacity...**” p.5

A. *What communication mechanism will be used to help the Network Nebraska operations staff to know which videoconference(s) to preserve and which to delete?*

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**Distance Education Enhancement Task Force Recommendations that affect the NITC Education Council, in the event that they are agreed to by the Legislature:**

1. “If there is not a member of the Distance Education Council in the membership of either the NITC or the Technical Panel of the NITC, **the NITC will be required to have a member of the Distance Education Council on any ad hoc technical advisory group or workgroup that establishes, coordinates, or prioritizes needs for education.**” p.4

A. *Does this mean the NITC Education Council?*

B. *Does it apply to any other existing advisory group or workgroup?*

**NITC Strategic Initiatives  
Action Items**

**Network Nebraska**

**Action Items - Completed (from 2004-05 Plan)**

- C1. Created a Service Level Agreement for use by CAP and the eligible network participants.**
- C2. Created a Network Nebraska Level 1 Helpdesk.**
- C3. Created a Network Nebraska Website.**

**Action Items - Discontinued (from 2004-05 Plan)**

**Action Items - Proposed for 2006**

**P1. Identify Tier II communities that offer opportunities for aggregation for services onto the network**

P1.1 The CAP will identify and work with communities that express an interest in aggregating their public sector transport.

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Lead                   | Network Nebraska (CAP)  |
| Participating Entities | Specific communities, NITC Community Council, Nebraska League of Municipalities, Nebraska Association of County Officials, NITC Education Council |
| Timeframe              | February 2006-December 2006   |
| Funding                | No funding required for this action item.   |
| Status                 | New   |

P1.2 The CAP will write and release a brief that explains the technical feasibility of sharing public sector transport over high bandwidth, IP-based circuits in order to incentivize Tier II aggregation.

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Lead                   | Network Nebraska (CAP)   |
| Participating Entities | NITC Education Council, NITC Community Council, ESU-NOC, Nebraska League of Municipalities, Nebraska Association of County Officials |
| Timeframe              | February 2006-December 2006  |
| Funding                | No funding required for this action item.  |
| Status                 | New  |

**P2. The Chief Information Officer will arrange for all school districts, ESUs, and public postsecondary education institutions to have the opportunity to link to Network Nebraska at the earliest available opportunity.**

P2.1 The Chief Information Officer will establish criteria for “link to” and “participation in” Network Nebraska in order to satisfy the requirements of LB XXXX.

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Lead                   | Chief Information Officer                 |
| Participating Entities | Network Nebraska (CAP)                    |
| Timeframe              | February 2006                             |
| Funding                | No funding required for this action item. |
| Status                 | New                                       |

P2.2 The Chief Information Officer will determine the specifications of any regional aggregation centers that must be established in order to serve the statewide data traffic of K-12 and postsecondary education institutions.

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Lead                   | Chief Information Officer                 |
| Participating Entities | Network Nebraska (CAP)                    |
| Timeframe              | February 2006-April 2006                  |
| Funding                | No funding required for this action item. |
| Status                 | New                                       |

**P3. Offer Internet I services to eligible network participants.**

P3.1 The CAP will accept new orders for Internet service and continue to aggregate purchasing demand to secure a more economical price for statewide Internet service.

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Lead                   | Network Nebraska (CAP)                         |
| Participating Entities | NITC Education Council, NITC Community Council |
| Timeframe              | February 2006-December 2006                    |
| Funding                | No funding required for this action item.      |
| Status                 | Continuation                                   |

**P4. Meet with the Technical Subcommittee of the Nebraska Telehealth Network to discuss issues related to network administration, scheduling and management.**

P4.1 The Collaborative Aggregation Partnership will conduct ongoing discussions with the Technical Subcommittee of the Nebraska Telehealth Network.

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Lead                   | Network Nebraska (CAP)   |
| Participating Entities | Nebraska Telehealth Network Technical Subcommittee, NITC Technical Panel |
| Timeframe              | February 2006-December 2006  |
| Funding                | No funding required for this action item.                                |
| Status                 | Continuation   |

**P5. Implement a cost and funding model to allow shared use of the statewide backbone for data transport.**

P5.1 Develop an equitable cost and funding model that takes into account the number of participating entities, student populations, and the cost for transport and ongoing aggregation services.

|                        |                               |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Lead                   | Network Nebraska (CAP)        |
| Participating Entities | Network Customers             |
| Timeframe              | March 2006-June 2006          |
| Funding                | Funding determined by LB XXXX |
| Status                 | New                           |

**Action Items - Future**

**F1. Develop a three-phase (2007-09) upgrade plan for statewide backbone transport that includes the demand created by the upgrade of K-12 districts and colleges converting to IP networking.**

**F2. Investigate the feasibility of offering advanced network services to Network Nebraska customers.**

**NITC Strategic Initiatives  
Action Items**

**Statewide Synchronous Video Network**

**Action Items - Completed (from 2004-05 Plan)**

- C1. Identified a single audio and video standard for low-bandwidth distance learning and videoconferencing.**

**Action Items - Discontinued (from 2004-05 Plan)**

- D1. Acquisition of upgrade or replacement equipment and/or software that ensures compliance with the audio and video standard.**

D1.1 Development and submission of a Congressional funding request to fund upgrade of classroom and networking resources necessary to bring K-12 and higher education distance learning facilities into compliance.

D1.2 Equipment RFP, bidding, ordering, delivery and installation of equipment.

- D2. Development of training modules for new users.**

D2.1 Development of training modules to accompany equipment orientation.

**Action Items - Proposed for 2006**

- P1. Acquisition of upgrade or replacement equipment and/or software that ensures compliance with the audio and video standard.**

P1.1 The Chief Information Officer will determine the list of biddable hardware and software items related to distance education for purposes of enhancing distance education according to LB XXXX.

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Lead                   | Chief Information Officer                |
| Participating Entities | NITC Technical Panel, DAS-DOC, ESU-NOC   |
| Timeframe              | March 2006-April 2006                    |
| Funding                | No funding required for this action item |
| Status                 | New                                      |

P1.2 The Chief Information Officer will bid for equipment (hardware and software) related to distance education, which meets at least minimum standards as set by the Nebraska Information Technology Commission for school districts, E.S.U.'s, and public postsecondary institutions who want to participate in statewide leasing and/or purchasing contracts.

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Lead                   | Chief Information Officer                     |
| Participating Entities | DAS-DOC, DAS Purchasing                       |
| Timeframe              | March 2006-May 2006                           |
| Funding                | Determined by the Legislature through LB XXXX |
| Status                 | New   |

P1.3 The Chief Information Officer will designate a fiscal entity or entities to oversee ordering, delivery and installation of distance learning equipment.

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Lead                   | Chief Information Officer                     |
| Participating Entities | To be named.                                  |
| Timeframe              | March 2006-August 2006                        |
| Funding                | Determined by the Legislature through LB XXXX |
| Status                 | Continuation                                  |

**P2. Development or purchase of a scheduling system or enterprise resource management program that allows potential users to know the location and availability of resources, and/or set up or reserve ad hoc or regularly scheduled events with other entities.**

P2.1 Research scheduling systems and enterprise resource management programs.

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Lead                   | NITC Technical Panel's Statewide Synchronous Video Work Group |
| Participating Entities | NET, NDE, NITC staff  |
| Timeframe              | February 2006   |
| Funding                | No funding required for this task.                            |
| Status                 | Continuation  |

P2.2 The Nebraska Information Technology Commission shall establish standards or bid specifications related to synchronous video scheduling software or scheduling services.

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Lead                   | NITC Technical Panel  |
| Participating Entities | NITC Technical Panel's Statewide Synchronous Video Work Group |
| Timeframe              | February 2006-April 2006                                      |
| Funding                | No funding required for this task.                            |
| Status                 | New   |

P2.3 Purchase or develop a scheduling system and/or enterprise resource management program.

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Lead                   | Distance Education Council for K-12; each agency for their respective purchases. |
| Participating Entities | Network Nebraska (CAP)   |
| Timeframe              | Summer, 2006   |
| Funding                | To be determined by LB XXXX.   |
| Status                 | Continuation   |

**P3. Implement a network bandwidth management system or network operations center that assures pre-determined qualities of service, depending upon the type of data traffic.**

P3.1 Implement a network operations center that assures particular qualities of service.

|                        |                            |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Lead                   | Network Nebraska (CAP)     |
| Participating Entities | Network Nebraska customers |
| Timeframe              | April 2006 –July 2006      |
| Funding                | To be determined.          |
| Status                 | Continuation               |

**P4. Develop an event clearinghouse that allows promotion, marketing, and registration for interactive video events.**

P4.1 Develop a web-based clearinghouse that allows originators to post events and users to register for or view the date, time and frequency of individual events.

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Lead                   | ESU Distance Education Council  |
| Participating Entities | NITC Technical Panel's Statewide Synchronous Video Network Work Group, NITC Education Council |
| Timeframe              | April – July, 2006  |
| Funding                | To be determined by LB XXXX.  |
| Status                 | Continuation  |

**P5. Develop a cost and funding algorithm to allow shared use of the statewide backbone for interstate distance learning and videoconferencing.**

P5.1 Research models from other States' education networks.

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Lead                   | Network Nebraska (CAP)  |
| Participating Entities | NITC Technical Panel's Statewide Synchronous Video Work Group |
| Timeframe              | Ongoing   |
| Funding                | No funding required for this task.                            |
| Status                 | Continuation  |

**Action Items - Future**

**F1. Develop a three-phase (2007-09) equipment and transport upgrade plan for synchronous video distance learning that affects a majority of the public high school districts and public postsecondary institutions.**

**NITC Strategic Initiatives  
Action Items**

**Digital Education (formerly eLearning Initiative)**

**Action Items - Completed (from 2004-05 Plan)**

- C1. Organized a series of October 2004 Planning Workshops to bring together participants who have a stake in improving educational and training opportunities for Nebraska citizens through eLearning.**

**Action Items - Discontinued (from 2004-05 Plan)**

- D1. Develop a design document detailing the technology components, standards, costs and administration of a Nebraska eLearning Knowledge Repository for the sharing of educational content.**
- D2. Work with education and staff development professionals to document strategies, techniques and tools used in course management and create a clearinghouse of eLearning best practices and training modules.**

**Action Items - Proposed for 2006**

- P1. The NITC Technical Panel will establish standards related to the procurement and use of learning management systems by K-12 schools.**

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Lead                   | NITC Technical Panel   |
| Participating Entities | NITC Education Council, myeLearning.org, ESU Distance Education Council, UNL Independent Study High School |
| Timeframe              | March 2006 – May 2006  |
| Funding                | No funding is required for this action item.   |
| Status                 | Required by LB XXXX.   |

- P2. Promote the availability, distribution, and use of digital media throughout the Nebraska educational community.**

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Lead                   | NITC Education Council  |
| Participating Entities | NET, ESUs, School districts, State Colleges, Community Colleges, independent universities, University of Nebraska |
| Timeframe              | March 2006 – December 2006  |
| Funding                | No funding is required for this action item.  |
| Status                 | New   |

**Action Items - Future**

**F1.**