

**EDUCATION COUNCIL**  
Wednesday, October 18th at 9:00 A.M. CT  
Host Location: Varner Hall Lower Level  
**MINUTES**

**VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Co-Chair, Mr. Gary Needham, ESU 09  
Co-Chair, Mr. Andrew Buker, University of Nebraska  
Mr. Derek Bierman, Doane University (Video Participation Only)  
Mr. Matt Chrisman, Mitchell Public Schools  
Mr. Paul Feilmeier, Northeast Community College  
Ms. Cassandra Joseph, South Sioux City Public Schools  
Mr. Stephen Hamersky, Omaha Gross Catholic High School  
Mr. Trent Kelly, Hastings Public Schools  
Ms. Kate McCown, University of Nebraska (Alt. for Dr. Jaci Lindburg)  
Ms. Stacey Jolley, Nebraska Association of School Boards  
Mr. Jeremiah Ourada, Nebraska Wesleyan University  
Mr. Tom Peters, Central Community College  
Ms. Cheri Polenske, Nebraska State College System  
Dr. Ted DeTurk, ESU 2

**LIAISONS/ALTERNATES PRESENT:**

Dr. Paul Turman, Nebraska State College System  
Ms. Ling Ling Sun, Nebraska Public Media

**MEMBERS/LIAISONS ABSENT:**

Mr. Nick Muir, Wayne State College  
Mr. Ed Toner, OCIO  
Dr. Mike Baumgartner, Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education  
Ms. Christina Struebing, Nebraska Department of Education

**CALL TO ORDER, ELECTRONIC POSTING, LOCATION OF OPEN MEETING LAW DOCUMENTS, ROLL CALL, INTRODUCTIONS**

Mr. Needham called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. There was a quorum present to conduct official business. Meeting Notice Posted to the [Nebraska Public Meeting Calendar](#) October 12, 2023. Agenda Posted to the [NITC Web site](#) on October 16, 2023.

**CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA FOR THE OCTOBER 18, 2023 MEETING\***

**Mr. Kelly moved to approve the October 18, 2023 agenda. Mr. Hamersky seconded. Roll call vote: Buker-Yes, Chrisman-Yes, DeTurk-Yes, Hamersky-Yes, Jolley-Yes, Joseph-Yes, Kelly-Yes, McCown-Yes, Muir-Yes, Needham-Yes, Ourada-Yes, and Polenske-Yes. Results: Yes-11, No-0, Abstained-0. Motion carried.**

## **CONSIDER APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE AUGUST 30, 2023 MEETING\***

**Ms. Jolly moved to approve the August 30, 2023 meeting minutes. Mr. Ourada seconded. Roll call vote: Polenske-Yes, Ourada-Yes, Needham-Yes, Muir-Yes, McCown-Yes, Kelly-Yes, Joseph-Yes, Jolley-Yes, Hamersky-Yes, DeTurk-Yes, Chrisman-Yes, and Buker-Yes. Results: Yes-11, No-0, Abstained-0. Motion carried.**

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

## **IIJA GRANT UPDATE**

Patrick Wright, State Information Security Officer, provided information on the IIJA (Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act) grant. Nebraska was the first state to allot monies to local organizations. Other states spent their first year developing a plan. Nebraska was awarded 1.4 million dollars for the first year of funding. The planning committee is preparing for its 2<sup>nd</sup> round of funding. Projects that were not awarded during first round of funding can apply for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year. At their next meeting, the planning committee will be deciding on the timeline and dates for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of funding. It is being proposed to have a November 1st to February 28<sup>th</sup> submission window. Of the 80 plus projects that were submitted for the first round, only 6 were education focused. The 1<sup>st</sup> year funding focused on inventory assessment of what is out there and what is needed. The 2<sup>nd</sup> year will focus on the protection phase, how are we going to protect our assets/networks/etc. The website for the State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program is <https://slcg.nebraska.gov/>. Members were invited to visit the website to learn more about the grant and application requirements. Mr. Wright pointed out that Nebraska has the grant monies and now need to utilize those monies through collaborative projects.

The Education Council can assist Nebraska in this effort by communicating to their sectors about this funding opportunity and encourage them to apply. Nebraska will be receiving \$5.1 million for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of funding. The planning committee will be conducting Q&A sessions. NEMA is handling the financial aspects of the grant. The Office of the CIO is addressing the cybersecurity aspects of the grant.

## **NETWORK NEBRASKA/RFP 2023 UPDATE**

Ms. Kingery reported that the mega RFP is nearing completion; this includes approximately 90% of endpoint circuits on the network and the entirety of the leased backbone. It also includes over thirty additional county extension offices which are seeking ethernet transport and commodity internet, they were added to the RFP. Callie Richards has been hired as administrative support for Network Nebraska. NTIA monies are available to libraries. Libraries would be required to follow E-Rate guidelines. After

this RFP is turned in, focus will shift to the Internet RFP for the Lincoln aggregation point.

## **NETWORK NEBRASKA GOVERNANCE**

There is a need to communicate the good work of Network Nebraska but it is also important to learn about the organizational structure of Network Nebraska. The inter-local agreement is also being developed and updated. Mr. Buker reviewed the organizational chart with the Council members.

Discussion followed regarding additional services for Network Nebraska participants, as well as expanding the memberships to museums for example. The burden of cost of Network Nebraska services falls on the participants.

## **TASK GROUP UPDATES**

Communication. The Task Group met on October 4<sup>th</sup>. A draft Network Nebraska brochure was distributed to council members. Ms. Jolly stated that as a new Council member she had not heard about Network Nebraska or its benefits. The Nebraska State Education Conference is coming up in a few weeks and the Task Group wanted to distribute brochures. The cost for printing these with the State Print Shop was very reasonable. It was agreed to print 500 copies for the conference. Members will be sent an electronic copy of the brochure as well. Andrew Easton suggested a podcast be recorded with the Education Council Co-chairs and Ms. Kingery about Network Nebraska.

Digital Education, Steven Hamersky. The Task Group has not met yet. The group will need to decide who will be the chair of the task group.

Network Nebraska Services, Trent Kelly. The Task Group has not met. Mr. Needham reported that Eduroam continues to grow. The implementation takes time but the word is starting to spread. Network Nebraska decided that if an entity does not belong to Network Nebraska, they could participate in Eduroam at 25% of the fee.

Security, Sheri Polenske. Derek Bierman is the Chair of the Task Group. The group explored ways of getting information out to the group. Two lists were created:

- Security events happening locally and nationally
- List of potential speakers to meet with the EC potentially or for conference speakers.

## **SUBSECTOR REPORTS (if time permits)**

University of Nebraska, Andrew Buker. There was nothing new to share. The University Presidential search is still underway. Discussions have been occurring regarding the use of AI in and outside of the classroom, developing a low, medium, and

high-risk policies. Mr. Needham asked if this information could be shared with the EC members.

Nebraska State Colleges, Polenske. The Gamma Phi Security platform training is being utilized. The office has been getting good feedback. The information has been shared with the other campuses. Communication tools to use with students.

Nebraska Community Colleges, Tom Peters. The annual meeting will be held on November 6<sup>th</sup> in North Platte. Dr. Thurman reminded members about the broadband development and planning. There is currently a lot of great funding opportunities to the states. The Broadband office will be presenting at the November 6<sup>th</sup> NETA conference.

Nebraska Independent Colleges and Universities, Ourada. Wesleyan University is partnering with Lincoln Public Schools administering a \$9.9 million grant from the Department of Labor. The project will work with underserved students to advance their educational careers. After completing the program, students will shadow an instructor. AP courses will be offered for dual credit.

Public K-12 and ESUs, Ted DeTurk. There have been lots of conversation about AI. Institutions need to also deal with the AI insurance. Mr. Needham serves on the NUSF Council Board and reported that fiber funding is available to Libraries and a handful of K-12 public schools for construction costs. Schools should be taking advantage of this opportunity. Next Monday, Google is turning on new privacy feature, schools will need to authorize applications individually. Schools are having conversations about this change and working through the process.

Private/Denominational K-12, Steven Hamersky. The diocese is transitioning from balancing service provider support versus self-support.

Nebraska Public Media, Ling Ling Sun. FEMA has awarded CPB \$40 million to establish and implement the Next Generation Warning System grant program. CPB is administering this program, awarding approximately \$34 million to public media stations to fund equipment upgrades and training, including the ability for public television stations to use Next Gen TV broadcast technology and for public radio stations to use comparable digital broadcast technology. Public media stations serving underserved communities, primarily in rural and Tribal areas, receive top priority. NPM is working toward submitting application for the grant. Application deadline is Nov. 8, 2023. NPM has hired COO, Peter Clowney, starting October 23rd. Peter joined NPM from Pushkin Industries, an audio production company.

Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education. There was no report.

Nebraska Department of Education. There was no report.

## **OTHER BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Cybersecurity Conference is scheduled to be held on October 31<sup>st</sup>. Heartland Business is one of the sponsors.

### **CONSIDER LOCATION(S) and AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

Per new meetings law, all video conference sessions need to be recorded and filed. Video meetings have been scheduled for winter months for December and February. The summer meeting may also be a video conference.

The December 20<sup>th</sup> meeting could be a video conference. AI discussion. It was recommended to have the AI discussion for the February meeting.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Mr. Kelly moved to adjourn. Ms. Jolley seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

The meeting minutes were taken by Lori Lopez Urdiales and reviewed by Becca Kingery, of the Office of the CIO.



Across the United States, almost 8.5 million locations lack access to high-speed Internet service. **The Biden Administration’s Investing in America agenda aims to bridge this divide and connect everyone in America with affordable, reliable, high-speed Internet service.** Last year, the Administration launched the **Internet for All** initiative with \$65 billion from President Biden’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, \$25 billion from the President’s American Rescue Plan, and several other high-speed Internet programs. **Internet for All** will deliver high-speed Internet infrastructure to every corner of the country, enable working families to afford service, and ensure that everyone has the digital skills and devices they need to fully utilize the Internet. Together, we will close the digital divide and grow our economy from the bottom up and middle out.

<b>Total State Funding:</b>	<b>\$611,789,455.10</b>
-----------------------------	-------------------------

## INFRASTRUCTURE

NE Funding Amount	Program Description	Awarding Agency
\$405,281,070.41*	<p><b>The Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program</b> provides \$42.45 billion from President Biden’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to expand high-speed Internet access by funding planning, infrastructure deployment, and adoption programs across the country.</p> <p>*\$4,999,817.07 already awarded for Internet infrastructure planning.</p>	NTIA, Department of Commerce
\$10,000,000.00*	<p><b>The Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF)</b> program, funded by President Biden’s American Rescue Plan Act, delivers \$350 billion to state, territorial, local, and Tribal governments across the country to support their response to and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, including high-speed Internet deployment.</p> <p>*Figure represents dedicated high-speed Internet funding.</p>	Department of the Treasury
\$88,000,000.00*	<p><b>The Capital Projects Fund (CPF)</b> provides \$10 billion from President Biden’s American Rescue Plan to states, territories, freely associated states, and Tribal governments to fund critical capital projects that enable work, education, and health monitoring in response to the public health emergency, including high-speed Internet infrastructure.</p> <p>*Figure represents dedicated high-speed Internet funding.</p>	Department of the Treasury
\$40,748,827.19	<p><b>The Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program (TBCP)</b> is a \$3 billion program, from President Biden’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Consolidated Appropriations Act, to support Tribal governments bringing high-speed Internet to Tribal lands, including telehealth, distance learning, affordability, and digital inclusion initiatives.</p>	NTIA, Department of Commerce
\$3,640,690.00	<p><b>The ReConnect Loan and Grant Program</b> is a \$1.9 billion program funded through President Biden’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law that provides funds for the cost of construction, improvement, or acquisition of facilities and equipment needed to provide high-speed Internet service in eligible rural areas.</p>	Department of Agriculture
\$26,610,165.49	<p><b>The Enabling Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure Program</b> provides \$1 billion from President Biden’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to reduce the cost of bringing high-speed Internet service to unserved and underserved communities by connecting local networks to major networks.</p>	NTIA, Department of Commerce

This document does not constitute an authorization to start a project and is not a guarantee of funding. With regard to BEAD, this document also does not constitute the Notice of Available Amounts, which shall be issued separately.



## DIGITAL EQUITY

NE Funding Amount	Program Description	Awarding Agency
\$6,417,316.04	<b>The Emergency Connectivity Program</b> funded by President’s Biden’s American Rescue Plan Act provides \$7.171 billion to support Internet services and connected devices for students, school staff, and library patrons in communities across the country.	Federal Communications Commission
\$598,745.97	<b>The Digital Equity Act</b> provides \$2.75 billion to establish three grant programs that promote digital equity and inclusion.	NTIA, Department of Commerce
\$2,938,816.00	<b>The Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program (CMC)</b> provided \$268 million to help colleges and institutions that serve minority and Tribal communities.	NTIA, Department of Commerce

## AFFORDABILITY

NE Funding Amount	Program Description	Households Enrolled in NE
\$27,553,824.00	<b>The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)</b> provides \$14.2 billion from President Biden’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to provide eligible households with a discount of up to \$30/month (\$75/month on qualifying Tribal lands) for high-speed Internet service, and up to \$100 discount toward a desktop, laptop, or tablet computer offered by participating Internet service providers.	80,134

### NTIA Points of Contact

<b>Ed Duggan</b>	<b>Tom Rolfes</b>
Intergovernmental Affairs Advisor	Federal Program Officer
eduggan@ntia.gov	trolfes@ntia.gov
202-596-4431	202-595-4548

### State Broadband Contact

**Patrick Haggerty**  
 State Broadband Director, Broadband Office, Nebraska Department of Transportation  
 patrick.haggerty@nebraska.gov  
 402-479-4409

