

EDUCATION COUNCIL

Wednesday, April 15, 2020 at 9:00 AM CT

Zoom Connection

MINUTES

[Open Meetings Act](#)

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ms. Cassandra Joseph, South Sioux City Public Schools, Alt. for Mr. Burke Brown
Mr. Bret Blackman, University of Nebraska-Omaha
Mr. Matt Chrisman, Mitchell Public Schools
Dr. Ted DeTurk, ESU 02
Mr. John Dunning, Wayne State College
Mr. Stephen Hamersky, Omaha Gross Catholic High School
Dr. Dan Hoelsing, Schuyler Public Schools
Mr. Chuck Lenosky, Creighton University
Mr. Greg Maschman, Nebraska Wesleyan University
Mr. Alan Moore, ESU 03
Mr. Gary Needham, ESU 09
Ms. Mary Niemiec, University of Nebraska
Mr. Tom Peters, Central Community College
Dr. Paul Turman, Nebraska State College System
Ms. Ling Ling Sun, NET
Ms. SuAnn Witt, Nebraska Department of Education (NDE)
Dr. Mike Baumgartner, Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education (CCPE)

LIAISONS/ALTERNATES PRESENT: Andrew Buker, University of Nebraska; Gregg Robke, ESU 4; and Scott Jones, Southwest Nebraska Distance Education Network

MEMBERS/LIAISONS ABSENT: Trent Kelly, Hastings Public Schools
Ms. Carla Streff, Northeast Community College; and Mr. Ed Toner, OClO.

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

Co-Chair, John Dunning, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. CT. Roll call was taken. A quorum existed to conduct official business with 13 members or alternates present. The meeting notice was posted to the [Nebraska Public Meeting Calendar](#) April 14, 2020. The meeting agenda was posted to the [NITC Web site](#) April 14, 2020.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA FOR THE APRIL 15, 2020 MEETING*

Mr. Maschman moved to approve the April 15, 2020 agenda as presented. Mr. DeTurk seconded. Vote tally: Joseph-Yes, Blackman-Yes, Chrisman-Yes, DeTurk-Yes, Dunning-Yes, Hamersky-Yes, Lenosky-Yes, Maschman-Yes, Needham-Yes, Peters-Yes, Turman-Yes, and Moore-Yes Results: Yes-12, No-0, Abstained-0. Motion carried.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE [MINUTES](#) FROM THE 2/19/2020 MEETING*

Mr. Moore moved to approve the February 19, 2020 agenda as presented. Mr. Turman seconded. Vote tally: Joseph-Yes, Blackman-Yes, Chrisman-Yes, DeTurk-Yes, Dunning-Yes, Hamersky-Yes, Lenosky-Yes, Maschman-Yes, Needham-Yes, Peters-Yes, Turman-Yes, and Moore-Yes Results: Yes-12, No-0, Abstained-0. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no requests from the public to join the meeting via Zoom. Thus, there was no public comment.

RURAL BROADBAND TASK FORCE UPDATE

The meeting scheduled for April 28th has been postponed. There is a lot of activity in this area as demonstrated with recent occurrence of COVID19. Of the six homework gap recommendations proposed by the Task Force, five have been acted upon. The recommendation for the regional technicians for public libraries will more than likely not be approved in this legislative session. LB 992 is still in committee but work is continuing on the amendment.

NITC [MARCH 12 MEETING](#) UPDATE

[Network Nebraska and Digital Education Action Items](#)

The NITC approved the action items unanimously. The Commission thanked the council for their work in this area. The Commissioners challenged the EC to take the lead for the education sector's pandemic response in Nebraska. The Commission asked for a Council report after the pandemic: how did the "education" sector deal with the pandemic, what were the issues good and bad, how were the issues addressed, etc. The NITC will meet in July and then again in November. It was suggested to develop a collaborative collective journal for members to document stories, events, etc. Scott Jones may have an option that will work for the Council and will get the information to Mr. Rolfes.

Dr. Hoelsing arrived to the meeting.

NETWORK NEBRASKA OPERATIONAL UPDATE

[RFP 6206 documents](#). Fourteen (14) provider bids were submitted and opened on February 14th. Ten (10) will be awarded. April 29th is the deadline for E-Rate filing. Pricing was more competitive with a 50% reduction in cost for most circuits. Hopefully, State Purchasing will have contracts negotiated and completed soon.

RESPONDING TO INSTANTANEOUS ONLINE LEARNING--THE ROLE OF VIDEOCONFERENCING

Scott Jones reported that Zoom has gone from 15,000 licensed users to 19,000 within the past month. For the pandemic, Zoom provided free accounts rather than purchase 600 new accounts in the month of March. There are reports of many educators learning how to use Zoom. There are security features the meeting originator can implement for safer videoconferencing. A HIPAA Compliance sub-account has been created to assist with Telehealth. The webinar features will allow 100 panelists with up to 10,000 attendees. Several of the Council members acknowledged and thanked Mr. Jones for his work and leadership to the education sector. Co-Chair Mr. Needham commented that there is strength in the Education Council group.

Ms. Niemec arrived to the meeting.

SUBSECTOR REPORTS--EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTIONS IN RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

University of Nebraska, Bret Blackman, Andrew Buker, and Mary Niemec. The Nebraska University system will have a projected \$50 million negative impact on their budget. Since the onset of COVID-19, distance learning experienced the following:

- There were 8.1 million views on campus with about 200-260 thousand log-ins.
- In March, 2.5 million minutes were used on Zoom. Zoom had 4.1-5.1 million minutes by the first part of April. Zoom does its best to maintain security.
- Vid Grid has been used about 80,000 minutes per week. This application boosts accessibility and ADA captioning.
- More robust laptop checkout systems were implemented, as well as JetPacks for those who were "internet insecure".
- ITS is quarantining about 35,000 e-mail messages per day.

Although the University has implemented a system-wide hiring freeze, it has committed to I.T. student employment so that they can maintain a commitment to the payroll protection act. Bringing up phones remotely was a major challenge. For the first time on Friday, the Board of Regents meeting was held completely by Zoom. All four campuses will be fully online and remote for the summer term. The online learning consortium and Educause have resources for higher education as well as K-12. The UN High School is working with NDE on providing 10 dual-credit courses this spring for no cost. If interested or want further information, members were asked to contact Barb Shousha or Hugh McDermott. The University's May pedagogy colloquium will be delivered fully online via Zoom webinars. There will be 12-14 sessions. The keynoter will speak about the universal design of courses. Ms. Niemec will send the conference and registration information to Mr. Rolfes.

Nebraska State Colleges, Paul Turman and John Dunning. The transition to complete remote instruction has occurred about as smoothly as it could. Student connectivity and the first generation students were a challenge. Finals and the end of the semester will occur on May 8th. Mr. Dunning stated that the student quick form data

has been made available to faculty to advise them about students who encountered connectivity challenges. Students' ability to pay their college costs has become a concern. Microsoft Teams is becoming a major deployment on the Wayne State College campus. Remote phone access for faculty was a major challenge. Mr. Dunning complimented Network Nebraska for the scaled bandwidth available to education.

Nebraska Community Colleges, Tom Peters. Online learning has gone as smooth as they would have hoped. The college had already been planning for a situation like this. Soft phones were deployed. The Service Center is working remotely as well. There have been several new challenges but technology has worked well.

Nebraska Independent Colleges and Universities, Chuck Lenosky and Greg Maschman. Mr. Lenosky provided kudos to Scott Jones for helping with the HIPAA compliant Zoom sessions for counselors and health care. Creighton University uses Kinopto, Canvas, and Zoom system-wide. Every session is being recorded, with 13,000 hours of lectures in one week, compared to 21,000 hours for a full year last year. Zoom use is up to 8,000 meetings, with 2 million minutes. Two-factor authorization implementation was right in the middle of this challenge and has gone amazingly smoothly. Mr. Maschman thanked Scott Jones for the numerous Zoom Pro licenses and support. Nebraska Wesleyan University uses Canvas. The Teams function was quickly implemented in one week. Faculty have been very appreciative throughout all of this challenge.

Public K-12 and ESUs, Ted DeTurk, Scott Jones, Dr. Dan Hoelsing, Cassandra Joseph and Matt Chrisman. Dr. DeTurk also complimented Scott Jones for his work with Zoom. Lincoln Public Schools has acted as a model for best practices, device and application roll-out. ESUs have been meeting twice a week for the last month to coordinate responses. Mr. Jones said that Zoom allowed Network Nebraska to whitelist all of our Zoom license domains so that the basic time limits were lifted. Dr. Hoelsing will be implementing fiber to all of its rural locations. Student internet connectivity is about 50%, with 72% either ELL or Special Ed students. Many materials have been in print. Eagle Communications has been helping with school-sponsored connections with students. Zoom is great and all sessions have been recorded, even with the Board of Education. Ms. Joseph reported that South Sioux City is in its third week of fully online instruction. South Sioux City uses Google Classroom and Zoom but is seeing only about 50% student participation. A local provider has provided free internet for 90 days. Mr. Chrisman said that Maxwell PS has been 1:1 at the high school. Junior High had some challenges for connectivity as they took devices home for the first time. The Senior class has really missed out on a lot, and their parents are feeling left out. Other states are not in as good a shape. WNCC dual credit has maintained grading even during the pandemic. Mr. Moore reported that the rural ESU 3 schools have had connectivity problems. Mr. Needham commented that he is amazed and pleased that at least three school districts are working to maintain relationships with students and parents. Not only are academics important but so is the mental health of the students and parents. Personally, COVID-19 touched Mr. Needham's family and every morning his household has four Zoom sessions going on.

Private/Denominational K-12, Steve Hamersky. Mr. Hamersky reported that his school has been using an attendance question in PowerSchool to track student involvement. The administration has called student homes when students have not logged in. Some teachers needed more technical training. Mental health and motivation from students has been a challenge. Students who were not motivated before and were motivated by teacher relationships have really been struggling. Final spring activities and athletic and performance contests being cancelled are having a negative effect on student mental health. Student time management and instructional compliance has been a challenge. Snow days may be a thing of the past.

Nebraska Educational Television, Ling Ling Sun. Ms. Sun shared that NET staff transitioned well to telework. NET media has been providing supplemental programs in science, language arts and providing materials for high school instruction, as well as history programs. NET also has learning at home resources. Nebraskastudies.org has resources for 4th to 8th grade. Zoom and Facebook Live have been great tools. Educational content links: <https://www.pbslearningmedia.org/>, www.netNebraska.org/watchscience, www.netNebraska.org/watchhistory, <http://www.nebraskastudies.org/>, <http://nebraskavirtualcapitol.org/>.

Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, Dr. Mike Baumgartner and Dr. Kathleen Fimple. Dr. Baumgartner reported that the first virtual CCPE meeting will be held in two weeks with some practice runs for some of the commissioners. CCPE has been reviewing distance learning rules that affect instruction. Financial Aid has been distributed for the year so that is not a big concern. Dr. Fimple informed the Council that SARA has circulated a query for state-by-state concerns. Nebraska institutions are responding. She is also a judge for the statewide geography competition for grades 4-8. National Geographic will be providing an opportunity to participate in a virtual competition yet this spring.

Nebraska Department of Education, Suanne Witt. Mr. Jones said that NDE has done Zoom sessions with as many as 870 attendees. Ms. Witt reported that the Pandemic is the second challenge after the flooding that caused challenges for student learning. A meeting will be held tomorrow regarding the CARES Act guidance for K-12 Education.

OTHER BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

NUSF-117 Hearing, Tom Rolfes. Next Tuesday, April 21, 2020 at 1:30 p.m., there will be a virtual hearing. If the docket proceeds and is approved by the PSC, there would be \$1 million available over 4 years - \$1 million in special construction matching funds would translate to \$10 million in total project expenditures.

[Article: CARES Act Education Stabilization Funding](#), Tom Rolfes. There was discussion regarding the anticipation of guidelines as to how the monies are to be used. Mr. Dunning said that the most important use for the CARES Act money, from an educational perspective, is equity of student access. Mr. Needham, Mr. Dunning, and Mr. Rolfes will work on an Education Council opinion piece to help guide education stabilization funding.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE 6/17/2020 MEETING and CONSIDER LOCATION(S) FOR THE 6/17/2020 MEETING

Agenda items for next meeting in June with the location to be determined.

- CARES Act
- After pandemic report
- Detailing the Digital Education and Network Nebraska Action Items

Members were asked to send Mr. Rolfes other agenda items.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Niemec moved to adjourn. Mr. Turman seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:29 a.m.

Meeting minutes were recorded by Lori Lopez Urdiales and reviewed by Tom Rolfes, Education I.T. Manager, NITC.