

EDUCATION COUNCIL

Wednesday, December 20, 2023 at 9:00 A.M. CT

Host Location: Zoom

MINUTES

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:

Co-Chair, Mr. Andrew Buker, University of Nebraska
Co-Chair, Mr. Gary Needham, ESU 09
Mr. Nick Muir, Wayne State College
Mr. Brandon Eckman, Northeast Community College (Alt for Paul Feilmeier)
Mr. Jeremiah Ourada, Nebraska Wesleyan University
Ms. Kate McCown, University of Nebraska (Alt. for Dr. Jaci Lindburg)
Mr. Tom Peters, Central Community College
Ms. Cheri Polenske, Nebraska State College System
Mr. Matt Chrisman, Mitchell Public Schools
Mr. Gregg Robke, ESU
Mr. Trent Kelly, Hastings Public Schools
Ms. Stacey Jolley, Nebraska Association of School Boards

LIAISONS/ALTERNATES PRESENT:

Dr. Paul Turman, Nebraska State College System
Ms. Ling Ling Sun, Nebraska Public Media
Dr. Mike Baumgartner, Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education
Ms. Kathleen Fimple, Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education
Ms. Christina Struebing, Nebraska Department of Education

MEMBERS/LIAISONS ABSENT:

Mr. Derek Bierman, Doane University
Ms. Cassandra Joseph, South Sioux City Public Schools
Mr. Stephen Hamersky, Omaha Gross Catholic High School
Dr. Ted DeTurk, ESU 2
Mr. Ed Toner, OCIO

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

Mr. Buker called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. There was a quorum present to conduct official business. Meeting Notice Posted to the [Nebraska Public Meeting Calendar](#) December 18, 2023. Agenda Posted to the [NITC Web site](#) on December 18, 2023.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA FOR THE December 20, 2023 MEETING*

Mr. Kelly moved to approve the December 20, 2023 agenda. Mr. Muir seconded. Roll call vote: Buker-Yes, Muir-Yes, Eckmann-Yes, Ourada-Yes, McCown-Yes, Peters-Yes, Polenske-Yes, Chrisman-Yes, Robke-Yes, Tickle-Yes, Kelly-Yes,

Jolley-Yes and Needham-Yes. Results: Yes-13, No-0, Abstained-0. Motion carried.

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

Mr. Kelly moved to approve the October 18, 2023 meeting minutes. Mr. Robke seconded. Roll call vote: Buker-Yes, Muir-Yes, Eckmann-Yes, Ourada-Yes, McCown-Yes, Peters-Yes, Polenske-Yes, Chrisman-Yes, Robke-Yes, Tickle-Yes, Kelly-Yes, Jolley-Yes and Needham-Yes. Results: Yes-13, No-0, Abstained-0. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

NUSF 117 Update

Ms. Carrie Gans, Asst. Director of Communications and the NUSF Department, Nebraska Public Service Commission (PSC) presented regarding changes to NUSF 117 (E-Rate Special Construction Matching Program). Primary changes to NUSF 117 include:

- Extends the E-Rate Special Construction matching program indefinitely.
- Increases the state match to cover the cost of fiber deployment for eligible entities up to 100%.
- Adopts changes relative to the service provider requirement to place credits on the billing statement prior to reimbursement of funds.

Mr. Kelly departed the meeting prior to the end of the NUSF 117 Update.

Upcoming Federal Grants

Mr. Tom Rolfes, Federal Program Officer, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) provided a presentation regarding the upcoming federal grants. Details specific to Nebraska and allocated amounts are available in the [meeting documents](#) linked in the agenda. Council members are urged to spread awareness both about the programs and the [Nebraska Broadband Map](#) or the [FCC Broadband Map](#) to confirm connection speeds and to join the [Broadband Office](#) update email list to remain informed. Service level verification and challenges can occur until February 1, 2024 on the Nebraska Broadband Map, more information about the challenge process can be found [here](#).

Ms. McCown departed the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

Network Nebraska/RFP 2023 Update

B. Kingery/C. Struebing provided RFP updates, the standard E-Rate RFP went live at the end of November and vendors can currently bid on any of the sites; there are four

appendices encapsulating standard E-Rate sites, ESU point-to-point connections, and University county extension offices for both commodity internet and ethernet transport. Bid opening is scheduled for January 4, 2024. Anticipating that contracts will be assigned by late February or early March.

The Internet RFP to replace internet connections into both the Omaha and Lincoln aggregation points as well as other sites for the University of Nebraska Systems which should be submitted to SPB previously and is scheduled to be posted to the site on the date of the meeting, with bid opening scheduled for late January and contracts finalized in late March.

Network Nebraska is handling Special Construction differently this year, because of the lengthy procurement process with the state interested libraries will work with Chris Struebing directly to post their own Form 470 and seek bids to get them connected to Network Nebraska.

Statewide Technology Plan

Every two years the NITC updates and submits the Statewide Technology Plan, the strategic initiatives of this Statewide Technology Plan are approved at the recommendation of the commissioners of the NITC. Those initiatives are communicated back to the councils who then evaluate or develop action items for the coming term of the plan. Action items from the Education Council will need to be finalized prior to the March meeting to be presented to the NITC for their review and approval. (Clarification: Strategic Initiatives are approved in the March meeting, action items are then developed and voted on by the Education Council to be presented at the July NITC meeting.)

A recommendation was made to recess so task groups could break out to discuss action items and potential changes.

Task Group Breakouts (Recess)

CONSIDER A MOTION FOR MEETING RECESS

Mr. Muir moved to approve meeting recess for the Task Group Breakout session. Mr. Peters seconded. Roll call vote: Buker-Yes, Muir-Yes, Eckmann-Yes, Ourada-Yes, Peters-Yes, Polenske-Yes, Chrisman-Yes, Robke-Yes, Tickle-Yes, Jolley-Yes and Needham-Yes. Results: Yes-11, No-0, Abstained-0. Motion carried.

Mr. Kelly rejoined the meeting during recess, Ms. Jolley departed the meeting during recess.

CONSIDER A MOTION TO RECONVENE MEETING

Mr. Kelly moved to approve meeting recess for the Task Group Breakout session. Mr. Muir seconded. Roll call vote: Buker-Yes, Muir-Yes, Eckmann-Yes, Ourada-

Yes, Peters-Yes, Polenske-Yes, Chrisman-Yes, Robke-Yes, Tickle-Yes, Kelly-Yes, and Needham-Yes. Results: Yes-11, No-0, Abstained-0. Motion carried.

Network Nebraska Services, Ling Ling Sun. The NN Services task group plans to address reliability and adjust the wording for Action Item #1 to say, "Prepare for the future of Network Nebraska as a statewide, secure, multipurpose, high capacity, scalable, and reliable telecommunications network..." with the addition of the words "and reliable" in Network Nebraska Action Item# 1.

Digital Education, Matt Chrisman. The group is considering adding tools such as AI, Zoom and other tools to add to the inventory. The group also felt that access to quality professional development could assist in the implementation of technology. They are looking for data surrounding Action Item #2 and depending on its availability could determine if partial completion or a rewrite is necessary. Mr. Buker vocalized there might be data available because of the Digital Equity plan. The group is planning to meet again in January to discuss further.

Cybersecurity, Cheri Polenske. Applications for the IJA grant is open now until February 4, 2024. Applicants are required to complete the CISA Self-Assessment tool to be eligible to participate in this grant cycle. Gregg Robke added that awardees were announced for the previous application cycle, awardees should be working on next steps to facilitate grant funding.

SUBSECTOR REPORTS (if time permits)

Public K-12 and ESUs, Trent Kelly. Representatives from NATA met with Congressman Flood's aide the day prior and discussed E-Rate topics and possible inclusion of cybersecurity in E-Rate program.

Nebraska Public Media, Ling Ling Sun. The CEO of NPM, Mark Leonard, announced plans to retire on June 30, 2024, during their December 7th meeting. They will begin a search for a replacement in 2024.

University of Nebraska, Andrew Buker. There are significant leadership changes underway at the University, President Carter's final day is December 31st before moving onto Ohio State. Kearney's Chancellor, Douglas Kristensen, also announced his retirement for the end of the academic calendar. The search for replacements will be active soon.

OTHER BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Gary Needham suggested the task groups confirm their stance on their assigned action items and deliverables for the Statewide Technology Plan so they may be presented in the next meeting. It was suggested any major changes be provided in writing prior to the meeting Ms. Kingery so drafts could be available for council members.

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

The next meeting is scheduled for February 21, 2024 and is scheduled to be a virtual meeting. No potential agenda topics were discussed.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Kelly moved to adjourn. Mr. Ourada seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

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

The meeting minutes were taken by Becca Kingery, of the Office of the CIO.