

COMMISSION ON EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

MEETING MINUTES – NOVEMBER 16, 2009

Nevada Department of Education
State Board Room
700 East Fifth Street
Carson City, NV

Humboldt County School District
Administration Board Room
310 E. 4th Street
Winnemucca, NV

White Pine County School District
1135 Avenue C
Ely, NV

Clark County School District
Curriculum & Professional Development Center
3950 S. Pecos McLeod
Las Vegas, NV

Elko County School District
1092 Burns Road
Elko, NV

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Carson City:

Dori Jensen
Arnie Maurins
Bill Slentz
Dr. Keith Rheault

Winnemucca:

Dr. John Newman

Las Vegas:

Assemblyman Mo Denis
David Flatt
Senator Mike Schneider

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Jhone Ebert, Chairperson
Dr. Essington Wade
Ji Wang
Dan Stockwell

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Carson City:

Dr. Kim Vidoni, (NDE)
Carol Crothers, (NDE)
Christy Borino, (NDE)
Tedie Lee, (NDE)
Mindy Martini (Legislative Counsel Bureau)
Janice Towns (Carson City School District)
Alan Medeiros (Lyon County School District)
Jerry Atkins (Storey County School District)

Joe Elcano (Washoe County School District)
Pat Miller (KNPB)

Ely:

Mark Bechtel (White Pine County School District)
Jennifer Farnworth (White Pine County School District)

Las Vegas:

Loretta Asay (Clark County School District)
Pamela Jones-Jernigan (Clark County School District)
Brian Saffle (Clark County School District)
Lynda Spann (Virtual High School)

Winnemucca:

Kelly Novi (Humboldt County School District)
Jeanne Moline (Humboldt County School District)
David Jenson (Humboldt County School District)

1. Call to Order/Roll Call – In the absence of Chairperson Ebert, Commissioner Slentz called the meeting to order at 9:05 am. Roll call was heard.

2. Pledge of Allegiance – Commissioner Jensen led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Slentz requested to move Item 7 after Item 9. No objections were heard.

3. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes, April 17, 2009 & August 6, 2009

Commissioner Slentz noted that the August 7th minutes were missing.

Tedie Lee, Administrative Assistant, responded that the transcription service that worked on the August minutes failed to transcribe the August 7th disc but they have been completed and will be presented at the next meeting.

Commissioner Slentz asked that approval of the minutes, with the noted correction, be postponed until the Commission has reached a quorum.

4. Legislative input on needs for the ACR2 (Assembly Concurrent Resolution 2) Study of Governance Subcommittee

Mindy Martini, Legislative Counsel Bureau, explained that ACR2 directs an interim study by the Legislative Commission of the governance and oversight of K-12 education. Various entities would be reviewed and changes will be made as needed to make the system work better. One of the entities is this Commission. Assemblywoman Bonnie Parnell, Chairwoman, and the 5 other subcommittee members reviewed testimony presented at the 2009 Legislature and decided to study the issue of governance and obtain input from the public and the members of various committees and entities before making any decision on changes to the governance structure of K-12 education

Ms. Martini urged Commission input and participation in a web-based survey that will be available soon. The first meeting of the subcommittee will be on January 21, 2010. The January meeting will include discussion on the Commission on Educational Technology and Ms. Martini urged the members to attend. Also at this time the

survey results will be reviewed. The second meeting is scheduled for March 11, 2010. This meeting is intended to consider the state level entities such as the State Board of Education and Legislative Committee on Education and others. The third meeting is scheduled for May 13, 2010. This meeting will include public input and any new or additional information from the Commission. Chairwoman Parnell and the members of the subcommittee will examine governance structures in other states, the history of Nevada governance structure, and survey findings, then the subcommittee will review recommendations with the intent of drafting a bill request for the 2011 Legislative Session.

There will be a link on the Legislative website under the ACR2 Committee. The Legislative Committee on Education will convey information to the public using their website. The meetings are to be held at the Grant Sawyer Building in Las Vegas with a videoconference to the Legislative Building in Carson City.

Commissioner Slentz noted that Senator Schneider had arrived at 9:19 am. The Commission has reached a quorum and can now return to Item 3.

Commissioner Jensen moved to approve the minutes, Commissioner Flatt second, the motion carried.

5. Request to Begin Annual Update on Educational Technology Plan.

Dr. Vidoni advised that legislation requires an annual update of the Educational Technology Plan. Dr. Vidoni stated she would like to start the review at the beginning of 2010 using the same members from last year.

There were no questions or comments from Commission Members or the public.

Commissioner Denis moved to authorize the update/revision of the Tech Plan, Commissioner Schneider second, the motion carried.

6. Results of Competitive RFP Process for the Evaluator of State Educational Technology Grants.

Dr. Vidoni reported that approximately \$85,000, or 2%, of funds for the EdTech Grant were set aside for a state-wide evaluation. Seven applications were reviewed and the Wexford Institute was awarded the evaluator contract. Wexford has a branch office in Las Vegas that will be used for this work. Dr. Vidoni stated she will invite representatives from Wexford to the next Commission meeting.

Dr. Rheault asked if the Board of Examiners has approved the contract and if Wexford was ready to start the project immediately.

Dr. Vidoni responded yes to both questions.

Commissioner Newman announced his arrival at 9:26 am.

8. Status Report on Pathway to Nevada's Future Project (ARRA EETT)

Loretta Asay, Clark County School District, and Joe Elcano, Washoe County School District are the project managers for this collaboration. Ms. Asay stated that the administrator professional development training mirrors the teacher professional development training. A large part of the funding went toward the purchase of equipment for the districts. The evaluation is moving forward with Dr. Strudler and Dr. Schrader involved. Ms. Asay asked Mr. Elcano to explain some of the concerns.

Mr. Elcano stated that collaborations are really difficult to do. Each district wants to use different websites and infrastructure and people need access to all equipment such as Moodle and iPods. The Commission was invited to review teacher bookmarking sites used for information storage.

Ms. Asay explained that Moodle is on-line course delivery system for teachers. Clark County School District is sharing their server with other districts for this project. Stimulus Funds were used to hire a technician and Formula Funds paid for a server.

Commissioner Newman added that the course management software is free.

Dr. Rheault asked who developed the modules and how many hours of instruction is in each module.

Ms. Asay advised that CCSD and WCSD each hired one person to work with professors at UNLV and UNR to design the professional development. Each module equals 3 graduate credits and takes 45 hours of time to complete.

Commissioner Jensen asked how many modules there are.

Ms. Asay responded that there is one orientation module and 4 credit hour modules that mirror the university calendar.

Dr. Vidoni added that she was in Washington, DC to participate in a showcase of State Educational Technology projects sponsored by Senator Reid's office and SETDA. As a Nevadan, Dr Vidoni presented the welcome address to some 450 Senators and staff. After reviewing the Nevada Pathways Project, Utah is considering using Nevada to model their project.

9. Report on Site Visits to Elko and Humboldt County School Districts, Plan for Upcoming Visits

Commissioner Flatt stated that the learning value of seeing these schools was more than expected. There is a big difference between an Elko elementary school and a Clark County elementary school. These visits showed that there is success value from the work the Commission has done.

Commissioner Newman echoed these comments and stated that Elko first and second grade students are proficient in the use of SMARTBoards. This was an eye-opening experience and was well worthwhile.

Commissioner Denis asked how these sites compared to the school the Commission visited in August and was this observed in other types of classrooms.

Commissioner Newman replied that this was much the same. The engagement of the students is what really shows the value of the teacher training. At a high school they saw an interactive technology environment in use. At Humboldt County High they saw CAD programs and learned of multi-media class success stories.

Commissioner Denis stated that at Cannon ES, technology usage was part of the teacher evaluation and asked if this was true for Elko.

Joe deBraga, Elko County School District, responded that technology was added to the classrooms as teachers asked for it, the district didn't force usage but did offer ongoing training at different levels. Technology is not yet a part of the teacher evaluations.

Dr. Rheault asked if the trainers are school district employees.

Mr. deBraga answered that some are contracted. The main trainer is an elementary teacher. There are also certified SMART trainers funded through grant funding.

Commissioner Flatt noted that the principal at Grammar #2 stated that if teachers were not up to speed the students would carry them there.

Commissioner Newman advised that since the time of the site visit 13 new SMARTBoards have been installed in Humboldt schools and more are on the way.

Dr. Vidoni addressed more site visits but advised that the Commission was out of money. She suggested that Commissioners do day trips to sites in their own geographic areas.

Mr. Elcano suggested that since this is a Technology Commission technology should be used to share information, perhaps podcasting would work.

Commissioner Slentz noted that the personal relationship between the Commission and the schools is important to maintain and this is accomplished by going to the schools. The Commission needs to continue to look at this.

7. Educational Technology Plan Budget Request and Discussion on Systematic Approach to Future Fund Distribution

Dr. Vidoni advised that the Tech Plan calls for the creation of a budget request for the implementation of the Plan. The Commission should come up with a model for the state with goals aligned to funding allocations. The spreadsheet included for review is based on equipment cost data collected earlier this year. Perhaps the Commission could develop a 'minimum standard' of a digital-age classroom in Nevada and suggest how future funding can implement that model. Dr. Vidoni added that she would welcome ideas or feedback.

10. Status Report on State Ed Tech Fund Grants

Dr. Vidoni invited the Commission to review the spreadsheet listing the districts and the awards per district. There are two districts that have not yet met the conditions of the award, Esmeralda and Mineral.

Commissioner Slentz asked if the Commission should set a timeline for these districts to comply.

Dr. Rheault advised that since the Commission approved the grants they can now ask for a status report from these districts. The Commission doesn't want to possibly lose the funding if they don't comply. By looking ahead several months the Commission can redistribute funds to other districts and avoid the funds reverting.

Dr. Vidoni suggested adding an action item to the next meeting if these districts have not met the conditions.

11. Results of District Price Sharing Survey

Dr. Vidoni directed the Commission to the last 2 pages of the meeting packet, spreadsheets for various items and the pricing, including state pricing. Dr. Vidoni advised that it appears the districts tend to get better prices than the state. This will be an on-going process.

Commissioner Slentz thanked Dr. Vidoni for the information and stated that it appears the district purchasing personnel are doing a good job when securing pricing.

12. Set Date of Next Meeting and Discuss Future Agenda Topics

Commissioner Slentz suggested: discussion of a systematic approach to the distribution of funds; a status report on the EdTech funds distribution; referring to Item #6, meet the selected evaluator; alternate ways to fund site visits.

Commissioner Maurins stated if the meeting is scheduled after January 21st there would be an update on governance subcommittee activities.

Dr. Rheault added that the LCE action was coming on November 17th regarding the \$10,000 requested for the annual assessment, so that could be reviewed.

Dr. Vidoni suggested Tuesday, February 9, 2010. No objections were made.

Commissioner Slentz restated the date as February 9th, 9 AM, same locations as this meeting with videoconferencing.

Commissioner Jensen moved to adjourn, Commissioner Flatt second, motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:23 AM.

Respectfully submitted:

Dr. Keith Rheault
Superintendent of Public Instruction

Jhone Ebert, Chairperson
Commission on Educational Technology

Transcribed by:

Tedie Lee