South Carolina K-12 School Technology Initiative Committee Meeting Minutes

June 13, 2024

Attendees:

Robert Nichols, Admin	Valarie Byrd, SDE
Victoria Gooch, Admin	Rebecca Gunnlaugsson, SDE
Petra Turner, Admin	Salandra Bowman, SCETV
Susannah Simpson, Admin	Matthew Laverly, EOC
Mackenzie Jackson, Admin	Lynn Fralick, SEGRA
Matt Kinard, Admin	Jason Jones, AT&T
Mike Shelton, Admin	Terrance Ford, AT&T
Jason Epting, Admin	Valerie-Byrd Fort, USofC
Nathan Hogue, Admin	Tina Leitzsey, Newberry Co. SD
Gabe Creech, Admin	Mark Leslie, Richland One SD
Brian Pratt, SDE	

Noting a quorum of Committee members, Nathan Hogue called the meeting to order.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the July 27, 2023 Committee meeting were provided to Committee members.
Mr. Hogue solicited the Committee members for comments, edits, and questions regarding the minutes.
Hearing none, Matthew Lavery motioned to approve the minutes as presented, and Rebecca Gunnlaugsson seconded the motion.

- The July 27, 2023 S.C. K-12 School Technology Initiative Committee Minutes were unanimously approved.

E-Rate Update

Victoria Gooch provided an update on various E-Rate related issues to the Committee.

1. Current-year applications have not yet been approved for funding, which is slower than previous years. The initial review requirements are stricter this year, slowing down the process.
2. The spring and summer months are a busy time for E-Rate application reviews and audits. Victoria is assisting consortium members and their consultants with third-party validation letters, obtaining the required levels of approval, and answering questions.

      a. Victoria thanked Brian Pratt from SDE for his help in the validation approvals. It has been instrumental in E-Rate funding for the state.
3. Bandwidth Allocation Policy (BAP) updates:
      a. There are inconsistencies in the current policy regarding allocation of bandwidth between the special schools and school districts based on student counts.
      b. Victoria is working on an update which will allow charter schools and school districts to all have the same amount of bandwidth available, based on their student count.
      c. The goal is to have a finalized BAP to present at the July committee meeting for approval, with an effective date of July 1, 2025.
4. FCC and USAC have approved the Cybersecurity Pilot Program
      a. Program includes $200 million in funding over three years.
      b. There is a new application process (Form 484) which requires applicants to be approved for program participation prior to soliciting and submitting funding applications.
      c. There will be strict requirements for reporting, to determine the return on investment for the schools, libraries, or school districts.
      d. USAC and the FCC will evaluate the pilot programs return on investment in making a final decision as to if cybersecurity will become a permanent part of E-Rate funding after the three years.
      e. Nathan noted how important it is to help fund cybersecurity and asked for a break down of how the funding and the pilot program will work.
         i. Here is a link to the Report and Order provided by USAC.
         ii. If the program is adopted after the three-year pilot, it would be considered Category 1 funding and the consortium would evaluate and determine if the service would be provided by the consortium or be left for the schools and libraries to apply for funding on their own.

No further questions on Victoria's updates.

Robert Nichols: Budget Updates
Robert presented the preliminary budget proposal for the upcoming funding year, having received requests from everyone except for State Library so far.

1. Discretionary Funds
      a. Department of Education and DTO had no additional requests
      b. State Library: Unknown at this time, last year's request was $550,000
      c. SCETV: requesting $490,000 in additional funding

Even with additional requests, we have a surplus of $1.3 million in K12 Funds available to the Committee. We plan to have a finalized budget to present at the August Principals' meeting.

Nathan thanked the group for the overview of the budget and said he would reach out to State Library to ask for their budget requests.

Nathan Hogue: Open Committee Discussion
Nathan Hogue opened the floor to questions regarding the updates provided. Victoria Gooch asked for a Progress Report update from Mike Shelton. He mentioned the deadline of June 15, and said there were just a few outstanding items. He is currently working on a draft of the 2022-2023 Progress Report.

Adjournment
Hearing no other new or old business, Salandra Bowman motioned that the meeting be adjourned.

- All Committee members approved, and the meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.