

ACCESS Council

Network Advisory Meeting

Friday, January 29, 2021

9:00 a.m.

Zoom Virtual Meeting

The meeting began at 9:00 a.m.

In attendance (via Zoom Logging)

Lisa Smith, ACCESS Executive Director

Eric Lowe, Superintendent, Beaver Local, ACCESS Board Representative

Donald Mook, Superintendent, Columbiana Exempted, ACCESS Board Chair

Tom Yazvac, Superintendent, Springfield, ACCESS Board Vice-Chair

Patrick Rager, ACCESS

Dale Santangelo, ACCESS

Tom Davies, ACCESS

Josh Boone, ACCESS

Andrew Velchek, MCEC

Bill Ricciardulli, Wellsville

Chris Cardelein, East Liverpool

Chuck Sanor, Western Reserve

Dale Santangelo, ACCESS

Daryl Miller, Crestview

David Whorten, Springfield

Dean Pagnotta, South Range

Dennis Klaustermeyer, United

Eric Gonzalez, Campbell

Fred Schriner, Lowellville

Jim Graham, West Branch

Jonathan Pera, Poland

Josh Boone, ACCESS

Lance Hostetler, United

Lisa Smith, ACCESS

Nate Aldrich, Beaver

Pat Rager, ACCESS

Rachael Smith, Youngstown Community

Ryan Rotuna, CCCTC

Ryan Clapsadle, Leetonia

Sean Sich, Jackson-Milton

Tom Davies, ACCESS

Toni Viscounte, Sebring

Tim Saxton, Boardman

Tom Ventresco, Austintown

Ms. Lisa Smith welcomed the group. She shared that an agenda was emailed with the invitation and also introduced the current representatives on the Network Advisory Committee. This meeting was opened to all technology directors and superintendents.

ACCESS Update

Mr. Patrick Rager, ACCESS

- Recent Security Initiative - The installation of a new Intrusion Detection System (IDS) at ACCESS, just after Christmas, in partnership with MC-ISAC (Multi-State Information

Sharing & Analysis Center) through the Center for Internet Security (CIS) and in conjunction with Homeland Security. The service provided by MS-ISAC provides 24x7x364 monitoring of our data by their NOC (Network Operations Center). The IDS is installed on our network edge. The NOC is watching ACCESS and district traffic and will report any issues that arise. ACCESS will receive reports that we can share with local districts which should be of benefit and may even prove beneficial when being assessed for cybersecurity insurance.

- MCOECN Internet Filtering Committee. A committee of ITC technologists met and discussed filtering options for K-12 schools. After meeting with companies and reviewing products, Securly ranked number 1 with Lightspeed Systems as number 2. ACCESS' contract with Securly will be up in July of 2022. Costs and features were factored in. If ACCESS wishes to consider a product change, we may want to begin the evaluation process this summer. Lightspeed's classroom product pricing (similar to the Go Guardian product) is really aggressive. ACCESS can offer multiple filters to gain the best coverage as needed by districts.
- Endpoint Protection - ACCESS contracted with Symantec in the past; however, have been unable to negotiate a good renewal agreement. We are looking at moving toward Sophos or Palo Alto. We will soon have some options for you to select from and will provide demos as needed.
- Reducing costs for districts - Is it advantageous for ACCESS to look at developing applications in-house instead of districts entering into long-term contracts for certain applications that are commonly used across districts.. Developing in-house allows the application to be tailored to the district(s) needs. An example shared by Ms. Lisa Smith was *Harmony*, a reporting application aligned with StudentInformation that was developed in-house by the ITC NOACSC in Lima and used by ACCESS districts. Many ITCs have an application developer on staff

Future Planning Needs

The goal of this meeting is to get a sense for district-wide needs for future planning.

Mr. Eric Lowe, Board Representative mentioned that with monies needing to be spent from this CARES funding grant, the board wondered if there was something that districts could fund collectively providing ACCESS the ability to provide a service, additionally, to benefit all districts. He gave examples such as hardware upgrades and district storage capacity needs. Mr. Lowe offered that Beaver will be using some funds for recycling and purchasing MacBooks. He would like to brainstorm some things that the group would be interested in.

Several expressed the need for products such as Chromebooks and the issue with delayed deliveries. Ms. Smith spoke about ACCESS working with partners to develop a store front for districts to purchase needed items at reduced prices based on consortium volume. ACCESS

will attempt to align with companies and provide product lists for districts. Many ITCs are doing this on behalf of their schools. Mr. Tom Yazvac expressed interest in obtaining products consortium-wide.

Mr. Patrick Rager offered some suggestions based on what he has heard from district conversations. A large storage option for district backups, zoom recordings, video camera repository, etc. was mentioned as well as VDI (virtual desktop) technology to produce a new image via a virtual desktop to extend the life of a device. The development of in-house applications has also been mentioned as a suggestion. Dr. Don Mook asked about ACCESS having its own version of DropBox where teachers add documents and have disk space within our cloud. Mr. Patrick Rager shared that ACCESS already has an application for secure file transfer being used by fiscal.

Mr. Daryl Miller asked about developing a cloud-based active directory that will allow policies to be pushed to home students.

Mr. Ryan Rotuna solicited feedback from the group regarding one-to-one and connectivity hotspots future use. Ms. Smith shared that there are many initiatives underway at the state and federal level to provide connectivity for students in the home. There is lobbying underway also to modify Erate to allow for schools to be engaged in this venture. Mr. Tom Yazvac mentioned that Springfield had a low need for devices at home. Mr. Schriener mentioned Lowellville has a significant need. Ms. Lisa Smith shared information about the discrepancies across the counties and regions. From data gathered by the state, many families are abandoning their in-home Internet service costs in lieu of cell phone Internet services. Many of our schools had to scramble to obtain hotspots for student use at home. The Tesla Starlink project is being looked at by the state and there are discussions underway in Columbus for connectivity. ITCs are fortunately represented at the table.

Regarding data storage, Mr. Jonathan Pera suggested we not reinvent the wheel since there are providers who offer their Amazon or Google cloud storage. Ms. Lisa Smith cautioned about data storage that cannot be retrieved or guaranteed.

Mr. Eric Lowe suggested ACCESS consider an option for school personnel to join meetings and/or training virtually as well as in-person (perhaps as a hybrid) to assist with travel and time away from school. He also suggested that ACCESS develop training videos and short videos of pertinent information in lieu of all of the email sent that is difficult to keep up with reading. Mr. Patrick Rager will look into ACCESS expanding recordings.

Mr. Daryl Miller suggested that a "Best Practices" document be developed ACCESS-wide for districts to utilize covering common items around how to handle things, etc. so that districts can follow similar paths and guidance.

Mr. Patrick Rager asked about the need to keep event logs, network device logs, etc. and whether or not districts were keeping them. Mr. Daryl Miller mentioned the need to keep a

history on students. He cited an example how it is difficult to get filtering or Google logs on student activity especially during this time of remote learning. Google logs are unreliable and Securly logs are oftentimes inaccurate or up-to-date. Mr. Tom Ventresco agrees that the delay that is in the cloud for reporting is unacceptable and the data is unreliable. Real-time reporting would be helpful for many schools. Mr. Dale Santangelo shared that Google controls their reporting and ACCESS has no means to remedy district needs. Securly Internet filter is also controlled by the company. Mr. Nate Aldrich shared that he pushes PAC files and has been having success getting data. It appears those using DNS in their filtering set-up are seeing less. Mr. Daryl Miller mentioned that chromebook and windows log data provides little value. Mr. Jonathan Pera shared some experience with students bypassing the filter and hacking chromebooks so their data isn't reportable. He mentioned diagnostic tools that could assist. One of particular interest is QRadar. Ms. Lisa Smith will look into this product.. Mr. Daryl Miller emphasized that this topic is where some best practices would be appreciated. Mr. Eric Lowe suggested best practices would be good to develop in video format and placed in a YouTube channel. He suggested making information more interactive. ACCESS will look into producing some content.

Mr. Dean Pagnotta would like a standard for repairing Chromebooks covering the question when do you repair?. He asked the group if they have staff that works on them or student clubs. Mr. Tom Ventresco shared he has a part-time technician that fixes screens to keyboards and anything you can get parts for. They try to keep as many as they can in operating condition.

Mr. Patrick Rager asked if there would be interest in using windows devices if they are priced similarly as chromebooks. There didn't appear to be any interest by the group. Mr. Patrick Rager spoke with a vendor with a new product called Chromebook Killer and is trying to get a demo unit. Mr. Daryl Miller expressed concerns about the core components of the device.

Mr. Daryl Miller also expressed inconsistencies with Google Hangout. Mr. Dale Santangelo shared he has opened tickets with Google when ACCESS is notified of issues. Unfortunately, we are at the mercy of Google to fix things.

Mr. Patrick Rager asked about the Google G-suite environment and if it would benefit all for ACCESS to reconstruct the hierarchy allowing districts to have easier management access and align products to their environments. The group appears to express interest in this area. Mr. Tom Ventresco felt that segmenting the AD could be beneficial allowing some tasks to be done at the district level for expediency, if a district wanted this ability. ACCESS could continue to offer support as it does today. Many in attendance expressed support in pursuing this request. ACCESS will look into developing a parallel instance so as to not disturb current production and classroom management and structure needs.

Mr. Fred Shriner mentioned the need for products such as hotspots, wireless projectors, among laptops. Mr. Dean Pagnotta mentioned Smartboard software needed. ACCESS will compile a list of items needed to have available when working with vendors. Mr. Andrew Velchek mentioned he experimented with Intwine hotspots since he had a large number of individuals in

need of hotspots and their pricing was reasonable. Mr. Tom Ventresco also mentioned that Austintown has purchased Intwine hotspots for their students' use at home.

Mr. Daryl Miller asked about the increased costs in google licensing and whether or not we could negotiate better pricing as a consortium. Ms. Lisa Smith asked Mr. Miller to provide the information he obtained so we can see what we can pursue.

Dr. Don Mook suggested that everyone in the meeting consider what they would recommend to school superintendents or tech committees and then ask can ACCESS pursue this need and better serve the districts and strengthen what they already do?.

Mr. Eric Lowe we will take items discussed to the ACCESS board. ACCESS will keep everyone updated.

Ms. Lisa Smith asked that any ideas or concerns that arise after this meeting be shared with her.

Meeting ended at 10:24 p.m.

Documented by Lisa Smith