LACATech Meeting Minutes – February 1, 2006

Roll Call

The LACATech meeting was called to order at 8:30am on February 1, 2006. The following members were present: Denny Souder (Granville), Michele Berry (Heath), Mike Carter (Johnstown), Jesse Lyon (C-TEC), Keith DeVore (Licking County ESC), Chris Cashdollar (Licking Heights), Tom Larkin (Maysville), Sondra Wilson (Newark City), Larry Smith (North Fork), Lisa Smith (Northridge), Jeff Cameron (Southwest Licking), Mark Goodall (Tri-Valley), Beth Spieth (Lakewood), Kevin Snyder (West Muskingum), and Sandy Mercer (LACA). (Newark). Others attending included Mike Haudenschild (Granville), Brian Gottfried(Granville), Megan Robinette (Newark City), Dave Calloway (LCESC), Jon Bowers(LACA), Joey Alexander (LACA), David Stein (LACA), Chad Carson (LACA), Carol Van Deest (ETech), Amy Palermo (ITSCO), Ed Reck (Fairfield Christian), Paul Kamenan (Fairfield Christian), Jill Merry (St. Francis), Tess Wigginton (Newark Catholic).

Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes

06-16 It was moved by Denny Souder and seconded by Beth Spieth to approve the minutes of the October 5, 2005 LACATech meeting. A vote of approval was taken. (NOTE: The scheduled December 2 LACATech meeting was not held due to a lack of topics to discuss).

New LACA Staff Member

Jeff Davis, LACA's new Data Analysis Coordinator, was introduced to the group, and provided a brief DASL update.

ITSCO Update

Amy Palermo from ITSCO gave an update to the group. Please direct any questions about the ITSCO update to amy@itsco.org

eTech Update

Carol Van Deest provided an eTech update to the group. The next LACA Technology Coordinators meeting will be March 14, 2006 at Damon's in Newark. Please direct any questions about the eTech update to carol.vandeest@etech.ohio.gov

Ohio K-12 Network Updates

One hundred percent of LACA's schools were approved for Ohio K12 Network connectivity funds. There has been no new activity on the Third Frontier Network for LACA. As of yet, no ITCs have been connected to the network. The lighting ceremony for the first Ohio districts (Toledo City Schools and Scioto Valley Local Schools) to connect to the TFN will be February 27, 2006. The MCOECN is negotiating a new contract for Internet service for the ITCs. The switch to a new Internet provider will require LACA to give up our current IP address ranges and receive new ones. Any addresses in the 156.63.145.x range and the 66.144.184 range will need to change. District 10.x.x.x network ranges will not need to change. The expected date for us to receive our new addresses is April 12, 2006 and we should be able to use the old addresses until September 1, 2006. LACA will be putting together a transition plan for the districts.

Wide Area Network Updates

Time Warner Fiber Project - Districts were asked to let LACA know about any potential building construction that will be occurring in the near future, and the street addresses of these new buildings. LACA will provided these to Time Warner ahead of time to lock in pricing at the rates being offered to current buildings. Districts were asked to validate the hub location for their district, and it if needs to change from the current building where LACA T-1s connect to, let us know. Also, if the demark location needs to change from the current location of LACA's T1s, we will need to provide this to Time Warner as well. Please provide LACA detailed instructions of how to get to the demark location from the main entrance to your building (same as you would when we install a new T1).   There will be two different ISP contracts with LACA, one for T1 connections (single year contract) and one for fiber (four year contract). The 471 deadline is February 16 at midnight.   Upgrades on the new fiber network can be done at anytime, but keep in mind that if they do not happen during the E-rate window you will not receive federal funds for the upgrade.

Technical Services Updates
8e6 Content Filter - Our three year contract is up in November. There is potential that cost for this service may double as our workstation count for the consortium has nearly doubled in the last three years (we are still collecting data on the number of workstations in the network).   Everyone appears to be satisfied with the product, with a few features that we would like to see added : Wildcard domain blocking (Ex: *.ebay.com), blocking downloads with certain extension (Ex: *.exe), and adding blocking to groups rather than individual IP address ranges, which requires duplication of effort for our districts.   LACA will pass this information on to 8e6, and we will also research other options for content filtering before the next meeting to present to the group.

Sophos Virus Scan - Our site license contract for Sophos is up this year as well.   There is general dissatisfaction with the product, so LACA will be researching other products and seeing what kind of group pricing we can get.   Districts are still interested in having LACA provide virus-scanning as a bundled service. Norton and McAfee are two products that districts would like LACA to pursue. The group decided providing the service for home accounts is not a necessary option as it was with Sophos.

StorServer - LACA has purchased a new StorServer comprehensive tape backup system which should be installed in the late February/early March timeframe. After LACA becomes familiar and comfortable with the server, a backup service offering to the districts will be created and presented, probably in the August timeframe.   LACA has been working with the treasurers to put together a disaster recovery plan for the districts and to refine LACA's existing plan. LACA identified 23 items to be completed over the next two years, and purchase of the StorServer was one of the first steps to be completed.

Secure Telnet – LACA has extensively tested the "Reflection for the Web" product as an alternative to standalone installations of Reflection. The primary reason for this is the fact that Reflection version 8 does not function properly on Mac OS-X.   LACA is asking districts with MAC licensing and other unused Reflection licensing to donate those to LACA. We will pay to convert them into Reflection Web licenses, which can be used during off-hours to provide Reflection from home.   This is a less resource intensive solution than the previous solution of providing VPN access for home Reflection users. Once Reflection web is in place and information is passed out, LACA will continue with the previous course of action of shutting down telnet access from outside the network. LACA will be asking for a signed form, turning over the licenses to LACA. LACA is not recommending a change to any current user setups or Reflection licensing in place at district locations unless the user is having problems (I.E. Running Mac OS-X).

LAMA – Chad Carson provided an update to LAMA, making sure everyone knows it is available. A draft LAMA access form was distributed. This form will give LACA official authority to grant people access to LAMA. It will be presented to the Governing Board and Treasurers for approval.

Future downtime - Districts were informed that there will be two future downtime events. LACA will be switching to a new 6500 core network switch, and we will be doing more data center electrical work. These events should happen within the next two months. Notices will be sent out well in advance, and these events will be scheduled during the least disruptive times possible.

Remote Assistance Tool - Chad Carson demonstrated the UltraVNC Single-Click remote assistance tool. This remote assistance tool will assist LACA staff in supporting web-based applications as we move away from terminal-based applications.

MailMarshal Spam Console - Chad Carson demonstrated the new MailMarshal Web Console tools, which allow users to log in and view messages that have been spam-blocked for their account. They can also add their own blocked and allowed rules into MailMarshal. The tool is accessible at http://mailmarshal.laca.org/

Other Discussion

Mount Vernon City Schools – LACA has a potential new member. Their official vote by their school board is on February 13, 2006. If approved, LACA will begin conversions as soon as possible.

IVDL Updates – LACA will be converting all existing VTEL systems to IP, rather than ATM. OIT will be providing IP to ATM bridging in the July timeframe, which will eliminate the need to keep ATM in the network. Maintenance ends on the VTEL systems in September 2007. Cost to maintain the VTEL systems is nearly the cost of buying a replacement Polycom system.

USD Helpdesk Updates – LACA is recommending not converting any districts over to the USD Helpdesk provided by the state at this time. There are enough issues with the software that are still not resolved for the ITCs that it does not make sense to bring districts on as well.

Student Staff Coverage – Technology coordinators were informed that Student Information System staff support at LACA is down by 1 ½ employees due to medical reasons. Other staff are helping to cover and answer questions. LACA will be hiring a temporary employee to assist with SIS support during this time.

Gagglenet – Districts were asked if anyone still used Gagglenet through the GN.LACA.ORG domain set up a few years ago, as LACA is receiving a bill for the use of the domain. Both C-TEC and West Muskingum still use student accounts through this system. LACA will pay the bill and split the cost between the two districts.

Unfinished Business
ITrap review has been pushed back due to the number of other projects currently in the works.

New Business
Next LACATech meeting date will be April 5, 2006 at 8:30am in the LACA Conference Room. No other new business was discussed.

Adjournment

06-17   It was moved by Denny Souder and seconded by Sondra Wilson to adjourn the meeting at 10:45am. A unanimous vote of approval was taken.