



LACATech Meeting Minutes – March 7, 2007

Roll Call

The LACATech meeting was called to order at 8:35am on March 7, 2007. The following members were present: Denny Souder (Granville), Michele Berry (Heath), Jesse Lyon (C-TEC), Beth Speith (Lakewood), Dave Calloway(LCESC), Chris Cashdollar (Licking Heights), Sally Sperry(Mount Vernon), Sondra Wilson (Newark City), Larry Smith (North Fork), Jeff Cameron(Southwest Licking), Chris Irvin (Tri-Valley), Mike Carter (Johnstown), and Sandy Mercer (LACA). Tom Larkin(Maysville) arrived at 8:50am. Representatives from Northridge and West Muskingum were unable to attend.

Others attending were Tom Jacob (Excel Academy), Paul Kamenan (Fairfield Christian), Jill Merry (St Francis), Dave Stenson (St. Francis), Dave Deibel (Granville Christian), Megan Robinette(Newark City), Jon Bowers (LACA), Dave Stein (LACA), Joey Alexander(LACA) and Chad Carson (LACA).

Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes

07-10 It was moved by Beth Speith and seconded by Michele Berry to approve the minutes of the December 6, 2006 LACATech meeting. A vote of approval was taken.

eTech Update

Amy Estep was conducting the Licking County Technology Coordinator's meeting today as well, and did not attend today's meeting. There was no Etech update.

ITSCO Update

An ITSCO update was given by Amy Palermo. Please direct any questions about the ITSCO update to amy@itsco.org or visit the ITSCO website at <http://www.itsco.org/>

Ohio K-12 Network Updates

Video Services – H.323 Technical Support Training for ITC staff is scheduled for 4/3 and 4/4. eTech will be migrating from VC Wizard to Riverbend Software for videoconference scheduling. LACA will provide training on the new application for Video Lead Teachers and others interested this fall. eTech is also investigating the implementation of distributed Gatekeepers across Ohio to aid in the implementation of a statewide dialing plan.

Renaming of the TFN – The Third Frontier Network (TFN) has been officially renamed to the Ohio Super Computer Network (OSC).

K-12 Committee Updates – Please be sure to complete the ETech Potential Services survey before the March 30 closing date. The links to the surveys can be found on LACA's main homepage, in the announcements section. These surveys cover five areas (Webcasting and Streaming, Video Bridging, Intrusion Prevention Systems, Spam Filtering, and Other). The K12 Network committee is implementing a state-wide spam filtering appliance (IronPort). This is intended to weed out a large percentage of the incoming spam for all ITCs, and the filtering level will be set less aggressively to insure no false positives. LACA has some concerns with this as LACA will have no access to reports, or no ability to release blocked messages. This could result in blocked e-mails that LACA has no control to fix.

WAN Updates

LACA advised districts to review their 471s to be sure you reference the correct 470 form. There will be 14 additional buildings coming onto Time Warner fiber this year, and three Newark buildings that will be removed. LACA's new negotiations with Time Warner reduced the cost of 10mb circuits from \$850 per month to \$800 per month. Time Warner is also installing a 2nd gigabit Ethernet connection to LACA running over a diverse path, as all district connections are dependent upon the current single gigabit link. These negotiated items are verbal and not yet in writing, but should happen soon. SOMACs T1 pricing came in at the same price as last year - \$400 month. This pricing is guaranteed for one more year.

Technical Services Update

Internet Filtering – Chad Carson distributed copies of a document developed by Joey Alexander outlining the correct procedures to create custom filtering categories, insure they are being blocked or allowed, and adding new sites to custom categories. The Adobe website has been blocked by the “Free Software Downloads” category and has caused some headaches in getting Adobe Reader software. It was moved by Denny Souder and seconded by Beth Spieth to globally exempt the www.adobe.com website from the 8e6 filtering for the “LACATech” policy. A unanimous vote of approval was taken.

07-11

Helpdesk – Everyone was reminded that the Helpdesk is available, and they should begin sending helpdesk requests to LACA for items that are not a hard network down. The helpdesk interface can be accessed at <http://helpdesk.usd.oecn.k12.oh.us/CAISD/PDMWEB.EXE>

07-12

StorServer District Backup Service – Chad Carson presented an overview and pricing on the proposed District Backup service, where districts would backup data to the LACA StorServer. It was moved by Tom Larkin and seconded by Michele Berry to recommend to the LACA Governing Board the District Backup Service for FY08, realizing the benefits this off-site data storage service would provide the schools. A unanimous vote of approval was taken. Pending Governing Board approval, Chad Carson will work with a few districts to pilot a few servers to evaluate the service. Jeff Cameron asked about the possibility of LACA housing district-owned servers in our data center for the purposes of disk-to-disk backups. LACA would not manage these servers, but only provide rackspace and power. LACA will look into this request.

Windows Vista Discussion – Sandy Mercer shared with the group that none of LACA's services have been tested and certified for use with Windows Vista. We do not recommend upgrading until we receive word from vendors and state agencies that their software will work on Vista. Larry Smith pointed out that SOME computer purchases now have new hardware designed for Vista, and they cannot be reliably downgraded to XP. Districts will need to be mindful of these things as new purchases are made.

Internet Explorer 7.0 Discussion – When a website's security certificate is questionable, the new Internet Explorer 7.0 screen is much more intimidating to users than the old IE6 used to be. This is causing some concern and confusion among parents accessing the Progress Book parent site. In the interest of saving money, LACA has always run a “self-signed” certificate authority, and provided scripts to allow a user to permanently accept the LACA Certificate Authority to avoid those security warnings. However, as our customer base expands, LACA will be looking into getting the necessary certification from Verisign (or a similar agency) to avoid this problem in the future.

Other Discussion

DASL Updates – Over 1/3rd of LACA buildings are converted to DASL. Maysville and Foxfire will be converted March 13, 2007. That will be all until Summer 2007. There are 298 buildings on DASL statewide.

Progress Book Updates – Sandy Mercer demonstrated the new Parent Access website to the group.

SSDT Human Resources Kiosk – Sandy Mercer demonstrated the new HR Kiosk product to the group.

D3A2 Update – Sandy demoed the D3A2 website and the ability to search for resources tied to state standards. Sandy pointed out that in many of these applications, there is the ability to

create a district portal, with calendars, announcements, etc. Districts should be mindful of these features and try to standardize on where this information should be relayed.

LAMA Update – Development on the LAMA project has come along quite well, but it is still not 100% ready for district use. LACA hopes to have this completed by the April 7, 2007 LACATech meeting and will choose a pilot district(s) at the next meeting. A demonstration of the current LAMA product as it stands today was held following the LACATech meeting, and we received very useful feedback from those who stayed to see the demonstration.

Record Retention – The MCOECN is planning a legal presentation on the new eDiscovery (record retention) federal requirements. Denny Souder will be attending to represent the LACATech committee.

Web Applications – More and more LACA applications are moving to the web-based model, which still centralizes the data storage and programs here at LACA, but moves more of the processing to the client workstations. As more applications move to this model, it will create more needs for access to local computer resources by users (ability to store downloaded files, etc). Just be aware of this as we move forward into future service offerings.

Unfinished Business

Group pricing was shared for SynchronEyes, First 2 Know, and Public Schoolworks. Districts were asked who was interested in participating in group purchasing for SynchronEyes and First 2 Know. Pricing for Public Schoolworks has already been negotiated and LACA could not obtain a better price. Jon Bowers will use this information to attempt to leverage better pricing from SynchronEyes and First 2 Know.

New Business

Study Island Intervention Software – LACA asked who was interested in participating in group purchases of this software, and will be contacting the vendor for pricing.

Tom Larkin requested a better method of distributing technical requirements for LACA applications to the Technology Coordinators. LACA will work on a better method for this.

Next meeting date will be April 4, 2007 at 8:30am.

- 07-13 It was moved by Denny Souder and seconded by Tom Larkin to adjourn the meeting at 11:20am. A vote of approval was taken.