LACATech Meeting Minutes – January 16, 2014

Roll Call

The LACATech meeting was called to order at 8:40am on January 6, 2014. Chad Carson conducted the meeting in the absence of both the chairperson and vice-chairperson. The following members were present for the roll call: Rocky Ringhiser (C-TEC), Rob Sexton (Granville), Michele Berry (Heath), Mark McGee (Lancaster), Chip Zolman (Mount Vernon), Angie McCutcheon (Newark City), Larry Smith (North Fork), Jack Kruse (Northridge), Ted Harrison (West Muskingum), and Jon Bowers (LACA). Representatives from Crooksville, East Muskingum, Lakewood, Licking Heights, LCESC, Southwest Licking, and Tri-Valley were unable to attend.

Others attending were Paul Kamenan (Fairfield Christian Academy), David Deibel (Granville Christian), TJ Baughman (Licking Valley), Jeremy Wise (Foxfire), Mariah Berry (Heath), Joey Alexander (LACA), Robert Rittenhouse (LACA), Justin Post (LACA), and Chad Carson (LACA).

Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes

14-16   It was moved by Larry Smith and seconded by Northridge to approve the minutes of the November 6, 2013 LACATech meeting. A unanimous vote of approval was taken.

ITSCO Update

David Hayward provided an ITSCO update. Please direct any questions about the ITSCO update to David at david@itsco.org or visit the ITSCO website at http://www.itsco.org/

eTech Updates

eTech no longer exists, has been replaced by BEMC (Broadcast Educational Media Commission). The BMEC director has requested funds from ODE to continue running the VNOC (video NOC supporting bridging of distance learning video sessions). LACA has stressed to BEMC the importance of keeping this function internal to the state of Ohio network.

Ohio K-12 Network Updates

The first half of the K-12 Network funding has flowed, the second half is expected in late March, 2014.

WAN Updates

The 470 window is now open. All wireless has been funded as priority one, and it appears that wireless will continue to be funded. Please keep in mind as you put in new services like IP video surveillance, mobile devices, and digital textbooks the impact they will have on your bandwidth and plan accordingly. The Technology Planning Tool has been rewritten and should be available within the next two weeks. This will use the same tool used for the K12 network funding applications (Cherwell) in an attempt to eliminate duplicate entry. Within six weeks all technology plans should be in the new system.

Video Services
No update available on RUS Grant. We are expecting the results to be announced this week.

Technical Services Update
Internet Filtering Discussion – No one returned any vote for the categories that should be in the LACATech level of filtering for the iBoss. It was discussed once again if this was really necessary, since no one actually uses this level of filtering. The CIPA level of filtering was set by a vote during the November 6, 2013 meeting. Everyone does a custom configuration for their
14-17 filtering beyond what is blocked in the CIPA minimum filtering level. It was moved by Chip Zolman and seconded by Rob Sexton to eliminate the LACATech level of filtering, as it is no longer required. A unanimous vote of approval was taken.

Future of LACA Email Services – Discussion took place on the future of LACA email. Should LACA continue to run an in-house Exchange server, or should LACA begin moving email to free offerings like Microsoft Office365 or Google Gmail ? After discussion, it was clear that everyone wanted LACA to continue to run the in-house Exchange server for all staff email. Office365 and Gmail are options districts are considering for student emails, but not for the staff and the conducting of district business. LACA will continue to stay informed about Office365 and Gmail and will help integrate these services however we can. This topic will be revisited periodically in future meetings to insure we are still on the right track. Chip Zolman asked about the legality of email archiving for student emails…is it required or not. This topic was discussed for a bit. LACA does not have an answer to that question. It was suggested that this be discussed with a lawyer.

Future of PRTG – LACA's PRTG server is not working out as expected. The single centralized server crashes repeatedly, we believe due to the amount of data it is trying to monitor. Options discussed were to purchase a site-license for PRTG and allow districts to set up local instances, however this comes with a pretty large price tag, nearly $20,000 per year. Other options were to use free tools like Cacti, Nagios, or SevOne. LACA will conduct a training/evaluation of these products during our next topic-based meeting on February 5, 2014.

Future of Anti-Virus - LACA is currently halfway through a 3 year agreement with eSet for the Nod32 virus protection software (agreement expires July 2015). Recently, Avast has offered their entire antivirus/firewall suite to education for free. This includes a centralized console for management as well. We discussed moving everyone to Avast before July 2015 and not renewing eSet. Chad Carson asked if anyone definitely wanted us to stick with eSet, but no one required that. There was no opposition to the idea of switching to Avast in the future. A question was asked if we thought eSet would drop their price to compete with this. We can check into this and see how low they would go. We also will verify with Avast how long they plan to offer this for free to education before making the decision to go ahead with a conversion. Currently, Crooksville is running on Avast and we have not witnessed any issues.

Old Business
PARCC Assessments – A new house bill 193 could potentially delay online assessments in Ohio by one year. Also, earlier this week new PARCC technology requirements were released that could eliminate computers that DID previously meet the standards. LACA will post information to our website under the PARCC link as we receive it. The LACA Governing Board gave LACA the ability to modify the network as necessary to insure testing can be conducted. This may involve cutting off certain heavy-hitting sites like YouTube or Netflix during testing if we need to. Please keep LACA informed of dates/times that you are participating in the pilot testing so we can monitor the network to see the impact. There was a PARCC meeting that took place last week, and Chip Zolman from Mount Vernon said he would send us the link to the recording of that presentation once it is shared.

Also, please let LACA know if you are conducting MAP testing, and whether you are doing this to an internal server or to an Internet-based server, so we can also monitor the impact that has on our network.

New Business

Technology Assessments – Jon Bowers asked if there was interest in district Technology Assessments to determine readiness for PARCC. LACA has been approached by two districts asking for such an assessment. LACA does not have the staff or resources to conduct such assessments, but LACA is willing to select a company and coordinate a group purchase if there are enough interested districts. Please let us know if your district is interested in a 3rd party assessment.

Adobe Pricing – Adobe has a new pricing model, similar to the Microsoft EES that uses your FTE count to license the Adobe Suite of products.

Movie Rights – Dave Deibel shared a link to www.teachwithmovies.org that has different interpretations of what is required to show movies or clips in the classroom for instructional purposes. Discussion took place on this topic.

FY14 LACATech Schedule - Below are the scheduled dates for the upcoming FY14 LACATech meetings.

        Regular Meeting Dates
- March 5, 2014
- May 7, 2014

        Topic-Based Meetings
- February 5, 2014   - This session will be a review of PRTG replacement products.
- April 2, 2014
- June 4, 2014

14-18   It was moved by Jack Kruse and seconded by Larry Smith to adjourn the meeting at 10:15am.

Reported by Chad Carson, Director of Technology, LACA