LACATech Meeting Minutes – March 4, 2015

Roll Call
The LACATech meeting took place starting at 8:40am on March 4, 2015. There was not a quorum present. The following members were in attendance : Rocky Ringhiser (C-TEC), Kevin Snyder(Lancaster), Keith DeVore (LCESC), Amy Norman (Newark City), Chris Irvin (Tri-Valley), Ted Harrison (West Muskingum), Kim Watson (North Fork), Randy Miller (Lakewood) and Jon Bowers (LACA).

Others attending the meeting were David Dewese (Fairfield Christian Academy), Jeremy Wise (Foxfire), Timothy Ballard (Newark Digital Academy), Joey Alexander (LACA), Robert Rittenhouse (LACA), David Stein (LACA), and Chad Carson (LACA).

Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes
There were not enough members present at this meeting to have a quorum.

ITSCO Update
Amy Palermo provided an ITSCO update. Please direct any questions about the ITSCO update to Amy at amy@itsco.org or visit the ITSCO website at http://www.itsco.org/.

Ohio K-12 Network Updates
K-12 Network Subsidy – The 2nd half of the $1,800 subsidy per instructional building should be received at the beginning of March. Please let Jon Bowers know if you receive a notice regarding this. It does appear this will renew for next year, at the same amount. All ITCs have been moved to a 10GB circuit, which completes this year's large project from the K-12 Network.

WAN Updates
470s - Please let Jon Bowers know if you are waiting on a quote from LACA for your 470 bids. Email is no longer erate eligible next year, so it will move from the ISP contract to the Service Level Agreement (other services offered by LACA). If you get any services from LACA, you still get email free.
Alternate Path to the Internet/ Core Upgrades – LACA is working to get a secondary Internet connection to an alternate provider other than Oarnet. This will most likely be Time Warner, and will be a 10GB link with 1GB of purchased Internet access. Our current link is a 10GB Horizon link to Oarnet, and we purchase 1.5GB of Internet access.The plan is to grow usage on these links in parallel, so they will be roughly equivalent.   This should help offer stability when DDOS attacks come in from the Internet targeted at certain IP addresses. We will have a completely different block of public IP address space on this new link. It would be highly unlikely that a DDOS attack would come at two separate IP ranges from two different providers at the same time. Being dual-homed to the internet will require some upgrades to our network to implement. We are in the process of putting our proposal together for new core equipment over the next 2-3 years, with the first step being put in place summer 2015.
Time Warner Links – All district circuits to LACA have been moved from ELAN to point-to-point links. This was a large project we have been working on over the course of the school year, and it is now complete.

Video Services
LACA and ECOESC have been awarded a RUS grant to purchase a video bridge. This bridge has 20 available HD ports. LACA is currently dependent on BEMC for bridging of the 60+ classes we offer per day, but this bridge will allow us to take a portion of this service in-house. First priority will be given to classes that bridge between LACA locations, 2nd priority to classes between a LACA customer and an external customer, and 3rd priority for external to external customers. We are working on a 2nd grant with Battelle for Kids which could expand this capacity from 20 to 65 ports, and include streaming services.   This will also provide us with scheduling software to automate bridged connections, which we are currently dependent upon BEMC to provide.   Jon Bowers brought up the fact that many students who leave school to get college credit cause the district to lose funding for the time the students are away from school. There are options to provide college credits through video, keeping the high school students on your school grounds and not affecting your funding.

Technical Services Update
Avast Antivirus Update Discussion – Discussion took place regarding Avast vs. ESET. We have discussed this in the past, but have not had a LACATech business meeting with a quorum to vote on it.   The group consensus from those present at the meeting was, no one is opposed to moving from ESET to Avast. Chad Carson will send an email to the group to reach out to those who were not present, asking if they have any issues moving from ESET to Avast. This will go to the governing board for a vote next week, without an official motion from the LACATech group. Malware issues were brought up, and Antivirus companies do not do a good job of stopping malware. It was asked if LACA could look into a group purchase of a malware product like Malware Bytes. We will do some research and present options at the next meeting.
Email Archiving – This is just a reminder that LACA has the Barracuda Email Archiving service in place, and with this appliance, we can also archive Gmail, Office365, and other locally-managed Exchange servers for all of our customer districts. Contact Chad Carson if you are interested in email archiving.
Chrome and OWA - Chrome v37 has eliminated an API function call named showModalDialog that OWA depends upon to open the TO, CC, BCC, and Address Book functions when composing a new message. There are registry-editing workarounds that can be found on Google to bypass this problem, but plans are to eliminate these temporary workarounds as well in Chrome on April 30, 2015.   It does not look like there will be a patch to fix this from Microsoft. From some online research, it also does not appear Exchange 2013 fixes this issue, either. It is very likely that OWA will no longer work with Chrome after April 30, 2015. Rocky Ringhiser mentioned an add-in for Chrome called "IE TAB" that lets you open a Chrome tab that acts like IE. Chad Carson will investigate this as a possible workaround.
Progress Book Browser Requirements – LACA is now on Progress Book Suite version 14.7.0 which only officially supports IE 10 or 11, Firefox 35 or later, Chrome 39 or later on Windows. A document was distributed to the group with full information for all platforms and browsers. Chad Carson will email to the LACATech distribution list so all members have a copy.
Ohio Alerts – Ohio Alerts is an alerting system developed by NOACSC, the ITC in Lima, Ohio. It has been free for Ohio Schools to use, however, they will soon be charging $0.50 per student for the service. Ohio Alerts works over Texting and Email only…it does not place voice calls. **NOTE: This is a correction…during the meeting it was stated that Ohio Alerts DOES do voice calls, but this is not the case. Ohio Alerts works over texting and email only.**
Stromasys Virtual OpenVMS Project –The testing of Stromasys did not go well. The product does work, but it is a fraction slower to process reports than the old physical Alphaserver hardware.   This was viewed as a step backwards. Instead, LACA purchased an ES45 Alphaserver that is MUCH faster than our old Alphaserver 4100 and transitioned to that hardware to run USAS/USPS for the Treasurers offices.   We purchased a spare standby ES45 that can be used as a backup in case of hardware failure on the primary system.

eTranscript Project Update – Jon Bowers spoke on the eTranscript project, which is free for your district. This allows students to request transcripts, which will be sent electronically to higher education institutes. The product is now ready for use, and does require using DASL. There is a cost to send a student a printed transcript, but this can be printed locally right from DASL so there should be no need to pay eTranscript for a printed transcript.

Software Answers Demo – On March 16, 2015, LACA will hold two demo sessions for Software Answer's Virtual Classroom (an LMS that is integrated into DASL/PB) and DataMap (a student progress monitoring tool into which testing scores can be loaded). The sessions are 9am-11am and 1pm-3pm. If you are interested in attending, please register at:

http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07eakuwva68b1e3401&llr=mzmrj9dab. If LACA gets two large districts interested (approximately 6000 students) it becomes cheaper to buy a site license for the entire consortium rather than individual per-student licensing.

LACA Maintenance Window Discussion – In the current LACA Service Level Agreement, LACA has a standing weekly maintenance window of Thursday night, 4:00pm – midnight. There have been multiple instances where we have had to abort maintenance due to events going on during this window. This window no longer appears to be a viable option. After much discussion, it was decided that the new window will be Thursday nights, 11:00pm until 6:00am.

Old Business
PARCC Assessments – A little discussion took place on PARCC. Testing has been going well overall. The majority of problems have come from the tests themselves (questions formatted wrong, options within the testing software that did not work, etc). Bandwidth, connectivity, and devices have not been an issue.

New Business
Chris Irvin asked if we could provide information on the changes to erate and voice over IP. LACA will ask Lori German if she would be able to provide an update to LACA members.

FY15 LACATech Schedule - Below are the scheduled dates for the upcoming FY15 LACATech meetings.

        Regular Meeting Dates
- May 13, 2015 (moved from May 6)

        Topic-Based Meetings
- April 1, 2015
- June 3, 2015

The meeting ended at 10:10am. There was no official adjournment because there was not a quorum present.

Reported by Chad Carson, Director of Technology, LACA