LACATech Meeting Minutes – May 4, 2016

Roll Call

The LACATech meeting took place starting at 8:35am on May 4, 2016. The following members were in attendance : Michele Berry (Heath), Kevin Adams (Johnstown), Amy Norman (Newark), Jack Kruse (Northridge), Jeff Cameron (Southwest Licking), Chris Irvin (Tri-Valley), Ted Harrison (West Muskingum), Larry Smith (North Fork), Tim Owen (Lakewood), and Jon Bowers (LACA).

Others attending the meeting were Dave Dewese (Fairfield Christian Academy), David Deibel (Granville Christian Academy), Tim Ballard(Newark Digital Academy), Jeremy Wise (Firefox), Kim Watson (North Fork), Justin Post (LACA), Charles Gillogly (LACA), Robert Rittenhouse (LACA), Joey Alexander (LACA), and Chad Carson (LACA).

Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes

16-17   It was moved by Larry Smith and seconded by Jack Kruse to approve the minutes of the March 2, 2016 LACATech meeting. A unanimous vote of approval was taken.

WAN Updates

K-12 Network Updates – All funding for the K12 Network has been distributed. LACA has received the funding for the non-public schools and is in the process of mailing out checks. This funding has been renewed for FY17, so you can count on the same level of funding next year that you received this year.

ISP Update – The 471 submission deadline has been extended to May 26th. LACA suggests attending the workshops conducted by Lorrie Germann to keep up-to-date on all information related to federal funding.

Alternate Path to the Internet – The alternate path to the Internet directly through Time Warner Cable has been up and running live as of March 10, 2016. This 10GB path is completely redundant to the 10GB path we have to OARNet. We currently purchase 3GB of bandwidth from OARNet, and 1GB of bandwidth through Time Warner. As we need to purchase additional bandwidth, we will buy from Time Warner until we even it out, then alternate between the links as we add more bandwidth. We are required to send at least 51% of our traffic through the state provided OARNet link, so we will balance accordingly to meet this requirement. We control traffic by routing the 208.108.138.x subnet out one link, and the 208.108.139.x subnet out the other. The last octet of the IP address matches the 10.x.0.0 subnet in use in your building (I.E. 208.108.138.30 is the public NAT address for all devices in 10.30.x.x, 208.108.138.40 is the public NAT address for all devices in 10.40.x.x, etc.). Each building in our network may be assigned to either the corresponding 208.108.138.x address, or the corresponding 208.108.139.x address. LACA may change these periodically to balance out traffic on the two Internet links. If your district purchases any Internet services that restrict access based on IP address, please provide both the 208.108.138.x and 208.108.139.x addresses that match your buildings to your vendors. This will avoid issues in the future if LACA staff changes which NAT address you're your building is using.

Planned Core Network Upgrades for Summer 2016 – LACA will be upgrading our Internet firewall and our data center core network over the summer. We are currently in the planning phase with Cisco to determine which firewall/software combination will meet our needs. We are capacity planning for 20GB within the next 5 years. Part of the planned upgrade is a Next Generation firewall that will give us application level visibility in our network. This will show data about which

applications are in use and the percentage of bandwidth each application uses. We will also have much more control over what is allowed or denied.   We are planning to bring up the new core data center network side-by-side with the current one, and migrate people over to the new core slowly. This migration will require some downtime on a building-by-building basis to move connections to the new core, but sufficient notice will be given to each of you so we can do this at the least disruptive times.   We will also be starting an upgrade plan for the aging 3560 Cisco switches we place at each building to terminate the Time Warner fiber connections. These will be replaced by Cisco 3650 switches which will allow collection of Netflow statistics, also giving much more visibility into the makeup of the traffic flowing across your link to LACA. The end goal of the upgrades is more granular visibility into the traffic patterns of our network, and to make that available to both LACA's Network Team as well as technology coordinators at each district. We will be adding mini-servers attached to our 3650s to perform bandwidth testing/monitoring to insure we are getting the full bandwidth we pay for from Time Warner.

Technical Services Update
Single Sign On Update – Testing of Classlink has been on-going for about 30 days. Districts are finding this is most beneficial at the K-4 level, rather than at the High School level. The authentication piece can be done to both Active Directory as well as Google.
Video Surveillance as a Service – LACA has been in talks with XTek regarding video surveillance as a service using a product called Digital Watchdog. On April 20 we had a demo of the capabilities of Digital Watchdog. A few district technology coordinators were present. This system is not camera-dependent, so if you have existing cameras, they can be migrated over to Digital Watchdog, which will give you much better search capabilities on the video being captured. There is a one-time license fee to add an existing camera to Digital Watchdog server. LACA would most likely purchase these licenses and retain ownership of them. Licenses could then be re-distributed to other member districts on an as-needed basis as districts already running the service make new camera purchases. LACA will arrange a future presentation for Superintendents and building principals, who we believe will be the primary users of these video systems.
Johnson Controls Proposal – LACA was approached by Johnson Controls, who many of our customers use for HVAC and door access systems, with a proposal to house the reporting servers here at LACA.   They believe doing so would provide a more economical way to deliver this service, as well as better management and monitoring of one large virtual server farm rather than individual servers scattered throughout the buildings.   LACA is working with Johnson Controls to plan out how such a service would look and what it would cost to our member districts. This plan will then be presented to superintendents and maintenance supervisors for consideration.
Argosy View – LACA is researching Argosy View as an alternative to OnBase (document imaging service currently used by a few LACA customers). We believe Argosy View can offer better scanning, indexing, and searching of documents at about ½ the cost of OnBase.
Avast Anti-Virus – Avast has begun offering their Cloud Based service for free to K12 Education as well. Joey has been experimenting with this. There is some loss of features vs. the on-premises version, such as the workstation-based firewall, but there are also some management features that are better than the on-premises version. Districts can go to the Avast website and apply for a Cloud license to begin experimenting with it.   LACA will not be doing a large site-license for the cloud, because the cloud version does not offer a way to separate customers. Everyone would see everyone else's workstations under a blanket LACA license.   The license expires 1 year after the date you apply for it, so we recommend waiting until June/July to request a cloud license. That way, if you begin using it, it will expire in the summer rather than during the school year.
Technical Training – On April 6 LACA conducted two sessions of VLAN and Subnetting training. We are looking to offer this again for those who could not attend. Chad Carson will send out an email to gauge interest and decide on a date. We are also willing to conduct training on other topics as well. PRTG and iBoss Reporter were suggested as topics we could cover at the June 1 Topic Based meeting date. If you are interested in these topics please let us know.

Ransomware Open Discussion – We had open discussion of the Ransomware (Cryptolocker, CryptoWall, etc) malware. At least 6 member districts have been hit by this over the current school year, some multiple times. The best insurance against this type of attack is a GOOD backup. Short of that, if you are hit, your only options are to accept the data loss, or worst case, having to pay the ransom to unlock your files if they are critical.   Discussion took place about LACA offsite backups and their vulnerability to Ransomware. The Ransomware cannot encrypt the backups that exist on the server, since it is offsite and not directly accessible through a "share" like files on your local servers would be. However, we currently have retention policies on the off-site backups set (by default) to retain the most recent backup of a file, and one version back. If you do not catch an infection for a few days, in theory, it could overwrite a portion of your good backups with crypto-locked backups.   For districts relying on the LACA backups as a PRIMARY backup source, we should look at extending those version limits to at least 7 versions, maybe more.

Chad will send out the current settings to each district using the offsite backups for review, and we can look at extending those retention times if necessary.   If you are hit with Ransomware, depending on the version, you MAY be able to find a method to unlock it for free online. Older variants have been cracked and can now be reversed. If you find you cannot unlock your files, it is recommended that you keep a backup of the encrypted files and retain that for a few months. It is possible that a free unlocker for that variant may become available in the future, at which time you can unlock your encrypted files if you still have a copy.

Offsite Backup NAS Option – Joey Alexander asked the group if they would be interested in LACA housing some low-cost storage NAS space that districts could use as a target for backups using their own backup software. All this concept would provide is disk space, nothing more. There was interest in this idea, so LACA will put together a service and pricing to be shared with the group at a later date.

Customer Service Survey – The annual customer service survey is available on the LACA website. Please take a few minutes to complete a survey and let us know how we are doing.

Second Annual Licking County IT Forum – This meeting will take place at C-TEC on May 11, 2016. The focus of this meeting will be Cybersecurity, and there will be three speakers from the security industry there to present. Jon Bowers sent information about this meeting out to the LACATech Listserv, but Chad will re-send another one as well. Everyone is welcome, even those outside of Licking County.

New LACA Employee – LACA has hired Jonathan Stoehr as another member of our Network Team. His first day is May 9th. Jon comes to us from the Mid-East Career and Technology Center. We will formally welcome him to the group at the September 7 meeting.

INFOhio Update
This school year, the Ohio Department of Education had discretionary funding that allowed INFOhio to continue to offer BookFlix and Storia, but that funding will be unavailable for the next school year. Unless funding is restored, students will lose access to BookFlix and Storia. If your students depend on them, please take five minutes to contact your state senator and representative. Let them know your students depend on these digital tools to improve their reading skills. Please ask them to restore INFOhio's funding in the Midyear Budget Review.*FY17*

Upcoming Meeting Schedule
Below are the scheduled dates for the upcoming FY17 LACATech meetings.
<u>Regular Meeting Dates</u>
- September 7, 2016
- November 2, 2016
- January 11, 2017
- March 1, 2017
- May 3, 2017

<u>Topic-Based Meetings</u>
- June 1, 2016
- October 5, 2016

- December 7, 2016
- February 1, 2017
- April 5, 2017
- June 7, 2017

16-18   It was moved by Kevin Adams and seconded by Jeff Cameron to adjourn the meeting at 9:57am..
A unanimous vote of approval was taken.

Reported by Chad Carson, Director of Technology, LACA