



August 3, 2020 AZBSN COVID-19 Digital Access Task Force Teleconference Report

Attendees

Steve Peters, Oris Friesen, Henry Goldberg, Mark Goldstein, Juan Balderas, Aubry Barnwell, Tracey Beal, Melissa Boydston, Kirk Busch, Jerry Crow, Alexandra Dominguez, Terence Ford, Steve Hill, John Kelly, John Lefante, Tarma Liranzo, Ilana Lowery, Derek Masseth, Sophia Mayberry, Jennifer Mellor, Mala Muralidharan, Peter Newbegin, Cody Pedersen, Ricardo Platt, Alan Pruitt, Michelle Simon, Jeff Sobotka, Dan Stormont, Karen Ziegler

Updates: State Broadband Director, AZ State Library, Public Safety, ADE

State Broadband Director Update

Jeff Sobotka, State Broadband Director at the Arizona Commerce Authority (ACA), reviewed his recent activities.

Jeff is working with the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) on their RFI to consider potential public-private partnerships to install and/or operate broadband conduit along major interstate and highway routes. Working with the Arizona Commerce Authority, ADOT is exploring partnerships that would lead to the development of middle-mile fiber-optic infrastructure across Arizona, creating more affordable opportunities for wired and wireless broadband connectivity in rural communities. Jeff stated they are looking for best business models/ideas for this. A kickoff call for the RFI process was held on July 30th and about 170 people participated. There will be an RFP that follows after this RFI process is completed and evaluated. Jeff placed a link to the RFI in the Appendix Chat. The Governor's GEER Fund allocation of \$40 million for fiber conduit along I-17 from Flagstaff to Sunset Point and along I-19 from Tucson to Nogales is an initial step that catalyzes this process. Utah installed a lot of fiber along its highways and has been able to successfully leverage this.

The ACA is working with the Sun Corridor Network on its evolution.

ACA is involved with the Economic Development Administration (EDA) grants for Arizona related to COVID-19 with projects underway in Yuma County, Springerville, the Verde Valley, and Douglas. These projects are focused on infrastructure for economic development. The EDA has released \$1.2 billion for this program nationally of which about \$40 million is available for Arizona and other states in its region. Grant applications must be submitted early before the funding is used up.

Arizona State Library

Mala Muralidharan, E-rate Administrator for Public Libraries at the Arizona State Library, reported on Arizona State Library activities.

Nicole Umayam, Tracey Beal, Mala, and Ilana Lowery have been working on constructing a user-friendly version of the State Land Department map of publicly-available free Wi-Fi hotspots around the state. This map is ready to launch and Mala placed a link to it in the Appendix Chat. Steve Peters commented that because this map is constructed as a Google Map it can be embedded on any website (including our task force website). Jeff Sobotka stated this Wi-Fi hotspots map is valuable and must be publicized. Ilana Lowery, Arizona Regional Director of Common Sense Media, noted her organization will be publicizing the availability of this map. Mala stated this map will be publicized by Univision to its Spanish-speaking audience. Mala added that printed information about this map will be made available to schools and libraries. Mark Goldstein remarked that the City of Tucson is investing \$3 million in public Wi-Fi (see link in the Appendix Chat).

Mala stated she is working on a tribal inclusion panel and that Nicole is working on an FCC Digital Inclusion panel. Mark Goldstein noted that the FCC extended the deadline for tribes to apply for EBS educational broadband spectrum – see link for this in the Appendix Chat.

Public Safety Update

Karen Ziegler, Public Safety Program Manager at the Arizona Dept. of Administration, reported on her recent activities.

An RFP was released in July for a statewide IP backbone network called the Emergency Services IP Network (ESINet) to support the state's next-generation 911 network. Karen expects a good response to this RFP.

The FirstNet project is working on call routing capabilities for new towers on the Navajo Nation in northeastern Arizona.

Karen is also working with Springerville/Eagar on applying for an EDA grant.

ADE Update

Sophia Mayberry, Project Manager in the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction at the Arizona Dept. of Education (ADE), stated (as noted at the last task force meeting) the main thing their office is working on is how to support the Governor's recent executive orders relating to supporting schools' distance learning plans and the impact of delaying school openings on school funding. The ADE Technology Task Force is reviewing what other states are doing to address the digital divide over the long term.

Valley of the Sun United Way Technical Support Initiative

Melissa Boydston, Vice President for Community Impact of the Valley of the Sun United Way, discussed their new technical support initiative for schools. Their organization has been aware of the need for technical support and digital literacy training for schools. To address this, they have reached out to their corporate partners to obtain volunteers that can provide IT technical support to schools so students can be connected during the COVID-19 crisis. These volunteers are providing tech support to students and families in six school districts through August 17th.

Subcommittee Activities

There were no meetings of the Technology, Education and Libraries, and Funding and Resources subcommittees last week so that work could proceed on the task force preliminary recommendations document.

Technology Subcommittee

John Kelly, co-leader of the Technology Subcommittee, noted that at the subcommittee's meeting on August 4th there will be a presentation by Nokia on what they are doing in various states to provide technology solutions for last mile access and overall broadband infrastructure.

There will also be a discussion at this meeting about the work being done for the task force recommendations document. John and Mark Goldstein have been working on a menu of technology options for different geographies, including features and pros & cons.

Arizona Technology Council Public Policy Guide

Mark Goldstein reported the Arizona Technology Council is working on drafting its 2021 Public Policy Guide. It has been publishing this state/federal policy guide for about eight years to provide technology-based recommendations for legislators and communities.

Mark writes the broadband policy sections of this public policy guide, which address transportation/digital infrastructure, education/workforce, universities/higher education, and telehealth. He requests inputs for this from people active in Arizona's broadband community. Mark noted recommendations coming out of our AZBSN COVID-19 Digital Access Task Force will significantly influence this work.

Task Force Preliminary Recommendations Document

Steve Peters presented his work on drafting the task force's preliminary (Phase One) recommendations document.

Steve overviewed the sections of this document which include an introduction section, explaining the focus on digital access rather than only Internet access, and recommendations under various categories. The recommendations categories include:

- Technology and Infrastructure
- Technical Support
- Professional Development
- Privacy and Security
- State and Community Digital Access Planning
- Digital Resources Access Portal
- Digital Content and Resource Sharing
- Funding and Resources Support
- Safe Operations of Schools and Libraries

Steve is trying to complete the document this week. He will send out a link to his draft document today or tomorrow to selected people on the task force including the leaders of the subcommittees soliciting their feedback. After editing the document based on this feedback,

Steve will distribute the revised document to the overall task force for comments. Steve will work with Insight to put the document in a format suitable for publication.

Next Steps

The next AZBSN COVID-19 Digital Access Task Force overall meeting will be held on Monday, August 10th at 7:30 am. Future overall task force meetings will depend on the status of the recommendations document.

This week, the Technology subcommittee will meet on Tuesday August 4th at 9:30 am. If meetings are held this week of the Education and Libraries and Funding and Resources subcommittees, the task force will be notified.

Henry Goldberg and Oris Friesen will write up a summary report of today's task force meeting.

Appendix: Chat from Zoom

From Jeff Sobotka to Everyone: (7:44 AM)

EDA Grant

<https://eda.gov/coronavirus/#:~:text=The%20Coronavirus%20Aid%2C%20Relief%2C%20and,for%2C%20and%20respond%20to%20coronavirus.> ADOT Broadband RFI

<https://azdot.gov/business/programs-and-partnerships/p3-initiatives>

From Mark Goldstein to Everyone: (7:48 AM)

Here's the City of Tucson info on free public wi-fi investment at

https://tucson.com/news/local/tucson-is-expanding-free-public-wi-fi-to-areas-most-impacted-by-pandemic/article_58e44dc0-63ad-50c1-b752-5fca02acce8a.html

From Malavika Muralidharan to Everyone: (7:48 AM)

AZ WIFI Map <https://go.azsos.gov/wifi>

From Mark Goldstein to Everyone: (7:49 AM)

FCC Extension of 2.5 GHz EBS Rural Tribal Priority Window to 9/2/20 landing page at

<https://www.fcc.gov/25-ghz-rural-tribal-window> & mapping app at

<https://fcc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=4287bc078a5e4c7dbd291d78e0534ca7> where you can zoom in on geography of interest.

From Malavika Muralidharan to Everyone: (7:58 AM)

Tribal Outreach Session 2: Best E-rate Practices Shared by Tribal Schools

(A Community-Led Discussion)

Wednesday, August 5, 2020

3:00 p.m. ET

Register

From Malavika Muralidharan to Everyone: (7:59 AM)

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/985944579049027344>

From traceybeal to Everyone: (7:59 AM)

We need to add this to our map! Yay, Melissa!

From Malavika Muralidharan to Everyone: (8:00 AM)

Session 3: Best E-rate Practices Shared by Tribal Libraries
(A Community-Led Discussion)

Thursday, August 6, 2020

3:00 p.m. ET

Register <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/754005899704588048>

From Ilana Lowery to Everyone: (8:01 AM)

@traceybeal Yes, great addition to the map!

From Mark Goldstein to Everyone: (8:09 AM)

[file: IRC PPT Holding Zone 2020 V03.jpg]

From John Kelly to Everyone: (8:09 AM)

thanks Sophia

From Mark Goldstein to Everyone: (8:10 AM)

Here's my next-gen wireless overview graphic core to some of the Tech Committee's wireless tech discussions, though we will cover other tech like fiber, cable, dsl, and such as well.

From Jennifer Mellor to Everyone: (8:28 AM)

sorry all, I need to jump on another call. This is a great report. Will it be shared with the group?

From John Kelly to Everyone: (8:34 AM)

Support the concept of Community Digital Access Action Teams but it is NOT a good acronym. :-)

From traceybeal to Everyone: (8:35 AM)

Such great work this Task Force has been doing! I so appreciate you all! Need to jump off for another call.