December 7, 2020 AZBSN COVID-19 Digital Access Task Force Teleconference Report

Attendees

Steve Peters, Oris Friesen, Henry Goldberg, Mark Goldstein, Robert Alvarado, Marni Anbar, Tracey Beal, Andrew Bevington, Melissa Boydston, Gene Carl, Michael Cohen, Jerry Crow, Alexandra Dominguez, Milan Eaton, Terence Ford, Ian Hathcock, Steve Hill, Shereka Jackson, Kari Lipman, Tarma Liranzo, Ilana Lowery, Derek Masseth, Sophia Mayberry, Georgina Monsalvo, Mala Muralidharan, Peter Newbegin, Mauricio Orozco, Cody Pedersen, Lawrie Prickett, Tracy Rexroat, Paul Ross, Michelle Simon, Jeff Sobotka, Karen Ziegler

Task Force Recommendations Report and Participants Survey

Task Force Recommendations Report
Steve Peters stated the task force recommendations report is finalized and posted on the task force website report landing page. Kathy Kramer of Insight has been working with Steve on a cover letter and press release. The press release should be sent out soon. Steve will send a cover letter to task force participants that they can use and personalize to send the task force report to their contacts.

Task Force Participants Survey
Steve reminded task force participants to fill out the Google Form he sent to provide their organizational and contact information so he has up-to-date information for all participants.

Updates: State Broadband Director, AZ State Library, ADE, Sun Corridor Network, AZ Technology Council

State Broadband Director Update

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

Jeff met with Milan Eaton on the E-rate program for schools.

The Telehealth Broadband Action Team (BAT) met last week, and there will be applications for federal grants forthcoming.

The State Broadband program has applied for a federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant.

The City of Yuma hired a broadband consultant to determine directions for moving forward based on three model options.

Jeff continues to work with the Arizona Dept. of Transportation on the I-17 and I-19 fiber deployment projects.

The State Broadband Working Group, which involves various state agencies, will be having their December monthly meeting soon.

Jeff has been meeting with major service providers and the Governor's Office to talk about important broadband issues.

Steve Peters asked Jeff if he could distribute our task force report to his contacts, and Jeff responded that he would do that.

Arizona State Library Update

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

Mala is following the bi-partisan Congressional Problem Solvers Caucus work on a federal COVID-19 Relief bill (HR6074) that includes $10 billion for broadband funding. Mark Goldstein commented that it is not yet clear how this $10 billion would be allocated to federal and state broadband programs. Mala is also tracking Senator Markey's proposal for $2 billion to close the homework gap.

Mala is working hard on getting the Navajo Nation's 42 Chapter Houses recognized as libraries so they can be be eligible for E-rate funded Internet access, and hopes this can be accomplished in the upcoming year. Once they are approved by USAC they are shovel ready to begin the work. The State Library will provide access to the Navajo Nation to several electronic resources and is working on getting staff trained to use these resources and guide patrons on using them.

There are various new programs that are being considered to be eligible for E-rate funding next year including cybersecurity and child protection CIPA software, school bus Wi-Fi, and extension of Wi-Fi beyond school/library parking lots. Mala noted that "E-rate to the Home" is included in the federal COVID-19 Relief bill, and the funding and mechanisms need to be clarified. There is also work to revise the base collection of Universal Service Funds and on revising the federal Broadband Map.

The Arizona Broadband for Education Initiative has resulted in more than 1500 miles of fiber being built so far using the $8.3 million in state matching funds that were provided. The remaining $2.7 million in state matching funds is available for this E-rate cycle for schools and libraries fiber buildouts.

The Arizona State Library Connect-Arizona portal Wi-Fi Map (discussed at previous task force meetings, www.connect-AZ.com) is being widely used with about 1200 views per day. Last week a number of sites providing free Wi-Fi in Mesa were added. This Wi-Fi Map is being effectively marketed by School Connect, Common Sense Media, and through our task force website and report. The AZLibTapProgram tech support is also well used, with staff assisting patrons with a range of questions including Internet service discounted offers.

The Arizona State Library published guidelines for the Library Services & Technology Act (LSTA) 2021 grants, which include mini-grants available to libraries of $4000 for Wi-Fi hotspot lending and $4000 for Wi-Fi expansion projects.

.ADE Update

Sophia Mayberry, Project Manager in the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction at the Arizona Dept. of Education (ADE), reported on recent ADE activities.

ADE has had productive meetings with Jeff Sobotka and the Governor's Office, and has an upcoming meeting with the Sun Corridor Network.

ADE is starting to put together a broadband legislative priorities list for state and federal purposes.

ADE has reconvened their schools reopening task force to consider the current needs of schools.

The ADE Technology Task Force subcommittees (discussed at previous task force meetings) are getting ready to issue reports on the results of their work.

Sun Corridor Network Update

Derek Masseth, Executive Director of the Sun Corridor Network (SCN), reported on recent SCN activities.

The SCN is now actively collaborating with the Arizona Dept. of Education, Arizona Commerce Authority, the Arizona Dept. of Transportation, and the Governor's Office. The goal is to provide as much connectivity to as many students as possible.

Work is continuing on upgrading the SCN optical core network (discussed at previous task force meetings).

The SCN is continuing to expand the EduRoam service to the Navajo Nation, Cochise College, and in Page. The SCN is proposing to take on the role of coordinating EduRoam service for all K-12 schools, libraries, and educational institutions in the state that can be licensed (the cost for this coordination is estimated to be $126,000).

The SCN is involved in grant proposals for fiber along Highway US 89 from Flagstaff to Page.

Jeff Sobotka commented that he has felt Arizona's overall involvement with Internet2 has been smaller than it should have been, and Derek Masseth's leadership with the Sun Corridor Network is moving Arizona to a higher level.

Arizona Technology Council Update

Mark Goldstein, ATIC Chair and Arizona Technology Council (AZTC) Executive Committee Member, reported that the AZTC 2021 Public Policy Guide was published recently. Mark wrote the broadband sections for this Public Policy Guide, and received inputs from our task force participants for this. It is a 64-page document that discusses issues and proposes recommendations for state and federal policies. See the Appendix Chat for a link to this document.

Mark noted the AZTC MedTech Committee is presenting a "Public Health, People, and Policy Roundtable" on Tuesday December 8th that is focusing on telehealth. See the Appendix Chat for information on this and how to register.

Mark also noted that he is presenting a next-generation wireless overview to the IEEE Computer Society on Wednesday December 9th. See the Appendix Chat posts from Mark and Jerry Crow on how to register for this.

Paul Ross Central Phoenix Private Intranet Presentation

Paul Ross, CIO of Phoenix College, delivered a presentation on a consortium of partners exploring options to design a private Intranet connecting the most vulnerable students in Central Phoenix to their schools with high-speed broadband. Following is a summary of key points from the presentation titled "A Network of the Future for a Workforce of the Future". The full presentation will be posted on the task force website.

Paul has been in Phoenix for about a year and is involved with all aspects of technology at Phoenix College. In this past year, a lot has happened to attempt to address the critical digital divide issues highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 crisis has shifted education from schools to home-based learning, and students without Internet access are significantly challenged even if they are provided computers.

On May 14, 2020, the City of Phoenix authorized $2 million in funding (from its CARES Act funds) to support distance learning and Wi-Fi access for underserved areas. Phoenix College, Phoenix Union High School District, the Arizona Commerce Authority, the Greater Phoenix Economic Council, the City of Phoenix, and other partner school districts have formed a consortium to construct wireless network infrastructure and provide devices that overcome the digital divide for students at the partner educational institutions.

To date, accomplishments include: provided 800 tablets with two years of free Wi-Fi hotspot connectivity to families with school-age children in public housing; issued 5000 hotspots and 70,000 devices in Central Phoenix, extended Wi-Fi on city buildings by installing Wi-Fi access points and antennas on roofs or exterior walls, and deployed Wi-Fi to parking lots and Wi-Fi access to school buses in local areas.

They have used various data sources (e.g. the US Census American Community Survey, FCC, Reduced School Lunches data, ADE) to identify the student needs for Internet connections and computers. For example: 39% of the census tracts in Maricopa County have greater than 50% of the population below the poverty line; 3% of the census tracts in Maricopa County have greater than 50% of the households that have no Internet subscription: 7% of the census tracts in Maricopa County have between 25% - 53% of the households that have no computer.

The consortium is exploring multiple wireless technology options to provide broadband Internet access from underserved residential areas to the schools: fixed wireless (point-to-point and point-to-multipoint), CBRS Private LTE, Wi-Fi6, as well as EduRoam service (enables students with home-based credentials to access different educational networks from different locations). The consortium has issued an RFP where responses were due by November 24th for mobile technology companies to design a wireless private Intranet for the Central Phoenix school districts. A short-term proof of concept will be deployed in a 4 square mile area around the Cartwright and Alhambra elementary school districts. The long-term solution will cover the

Phoenix Union High School District and 13 elementary schools (an area of 250 square miles), and in the future will extend to other school districts (e.g. Paradise Valley and Glendale). They will leverage the financial capabilities, physical assets, and staffing of multiple organizations to implement this, and will be applying for funding sources such as the Workforce and Innovation Opportunity Act for training staff.

Steve Peters asked if mesh network technology is being used in this network, and Paul responded that it is being looked at to connect different buildings on the Phoenix College campus.

Steve stated that we have Paul's contact information and he would like to create opportunities for task force participants to collaborate with their consortium such as conducting virtual roundtables. Paul stated that he has read our task force report, found it very comprehensive, and has shared the report with his peers.

Jeff Sobotka stated the project is innovative. He asked if the network is designed to be CIPA-secure to only be used for educational purposes, what the estimated costs are for this network, and how it will be sustained financially. Paul responded that existing Internet connections for the school districts are already CIPA-compliant, the project costs are estimated roughly to be $120,000 - $600,000 per square mile, and they will be exploring ways to financially sustain this network including training in the community colleges for providing maintenance of the network.

Steve Peters and Derek Masseth noted that the Sun Corridor Network could have a role to play in this consortium network and would like to discuss this with the consortium partners.

Next Steps

The next AZBSN COVID-19 Digital Access Task Force overall meeting will be held on Monday, December 14th at 7:30 am. Following that there will be a task force meeting on December 28th (no meeting on December 21st).

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

Appendix: Chat from Zoom

traceybeal to Everyone (7:32 AM)
Hey Friends! This is a video made by a faith community who is giving one million dollars for computers for school districts in the City of Phoenix!
https://f.io/0K2zEKJA

Mark Goldstein to Everyone (7:35 AM)
The Arizona Technology Council's MedTech Committee is presenting a Public Health, People, and Policy Roundtable on Tuesday, 12/8/20 from 3:30-5:00 PM MST focusing on telehealth and related issues now in the spotlight more than ever. The use of technology in managing the public health response has played out on the media through daily reporting, data visualization, and the use of contact tracing. I'm on the panel and will focus on how Arizona's public policy, university programs and regulatory progress enable and drive telehealth initiatives, how gaps in broadband availability continue to impact rural, tribal and underserved communities, and what is underway and still needed to remediate these gaps for healthcare patients, professionals, and institutions.

No charge for AZTC members (including ATIC Board members) to attend and $20 for non-members. Details and registration available at https://www.aztechcouncil.org/event/dec20medtech/.

Georgina Monsalvo - Stand For Children AZ to Everyone (7:36 AM)
Georgina Monsalvo gmonsalvo@stand.org 520-275-8278

traceybeal to Everyone (7:36 AM)
Tracey Beal: tracey@schoolconnectaz.org 602 670 6513

Mark Goldstein to Everyone (7:38 AM)
I'll also present a Next-Gen Wireless Overview & Outlook to the IEEE Computer Society Phoenix on Wednesday, 12/9/20 from 7:00-9:00 PM online exploring the underlying emerging technologies, protocols & standards, market trends & opportunities in a deep dive presentation covering all of today's wireless essentials. There is no charge to attend with pre-registration at https://ewh.ieee.org/r6/phoenix/compsociety/.

Sophia to Everyone (7:38 AM)
Sophia's here from ADE sorry I'm late.

Mark Goldstein to Everyone (7:45 AM)
Arizona Technology Council's 2021 Public Policy Guide covering state and federal issues and recommendations is now available for download at https://www.aztechcouncil.org/public-policy/

Jerry Crow to Everyone (7:55 AM)
Anyone who is interested in hearing Mark's presentation at the Phoenix Chapter of the IEEE Computer Society meeting on Wednesday night: you may register here https://goldstein2020.eventbrite.com/

Jerry Crow to Everyone (8:03 AM)
The IEEE meeting is free.

Lawrie Prickett to Everyone (8:22 AM)
Is it possible to share GIS files for school mapping?

Malavika Muralidharan to Everyone (8:24 AM)
: Paul, The State Library's Digital Inclusion Librarian created the WIFI availability map which is currently at www.connect-AZ.com showing locations where Free Wi-Fi is available. We are adding more to this everyday.
We would love to work with you mala@azlibrary.gov

traceybeal to Everyone (8:25 AM)
Very, very exciting!

Alexandra Dominguez to Everyone (8:27 AM)
Have you considered seeking financial support from the state to scale/expand this to other parts of the state?

Mark Goldstein to Everyone (8:28 AM)
Brookings article on What to expect from a Biden FCC on Section 230, net neutrality, and 5G from 12/3/20 available at https://www.brookings.edu/blog/techtank/2020/12/03/what-to-expect-from-a-biden-fcc-on-section-230-net-neutrality-and-5g/ FYI.

Paul Ross to Everyone (8:35 AM)
https://censusreporter.org/
https://www.census.gov/engagement-navigator

Marni Anbar to Everyone (8:35 AM)
possible toget Paul's slides in the summary?

Tracy Rexroat to Everyone (8:36 AM)
Slides are great!

Malavika Muralidharan to Everyone (8:36 AM)
Thanks all