Greater Arizona Educational Leadership

AZBSN — Arizona Broadband Stakeholder Network

Arizona Telecommunications and Information Council

COVID-19 DIGITAL ACCESS TASK FORCE

Meeting Zoom Transcript

July 11, 2022

This meeting is being recorded, theoretically we'll be able to capture at the back to Kirk, gender today quick

quick question, Aaron of the tour and it's easy for us to find or click on it, we can see where the

are putting together a master calendar. And we'll put all of the dates in there so that everyone can see it. We realized fairly quickly last week that we needed a handy, handy dandy tool like that. So we'll we'll put that together and make that available to everyone. And as soon as we have the firm for the other two locations with the dates we will make, we will make that available to this group. Also, just very quickly, the the team, some of the folks who are on the team that I'm bringing in our data architects who will be doing predictive analytics and modeling to create a statewide digital atlas, Atlas and index. And we're doing a resource mapping. We already built it, but we have a resource mapping tool. So part of that will be our identification of folks from across the state who are doing the work regardless of sector and the service that they provide. But undergirding that is an ecosystem where people can provide feedback we can we can engage directly with people, but more importantly, that that folks can self identify as points of contact and leaders in their respective organization. So that we don't miss anyone, we don't want to rely just on our understanding of what we think might be happening. We want a mechanism by which people can say, Wait, I'm right here, and I'm doing this great stuff. And there will be a mechanism for people to share as

well as access. This meeting is being recorded. Yeah, we're being recorded. And then the other thing I wanted to mention is We've also recently been awarded a small grant from the Arizona department of health services that's working on the Arizona Health Improvement Plan that will be specifically for continuing our work with tribal connectivity and promoting telehealth, you know, for 25 years, we've done not only over a single phone line, but helped bring t one lines to Coronado and all over the place. So we look forward to helping continue that process and getting all of the tribes connected, getting access to technology so that with that telecommunications connectivity and technology, they've got access to health care. So it's a pretty exciting time. And part of that grant will also be of course helping to work with people on funding sources for those things. And I look forward to working with Jeff, as soon as we get more information on the IGA details to again, continue doing the outreach that we've done specifically with regards to grant writing, so we can really help people write some some wonderful grants to get access to what they need to get their communities connected. Thanks.

Okay, moving on. As I mentioned, Kelly is not available today. So, Sophia, do you have anything? Are you online? Hello.

Yeah, I'll just give kind of the highlights from the newsletter that Kelly sent out last week. If you guys aren't on our newsletter, definitely subscribe. But they we've been sending around some information on the state cooperative purchasing program to kind of see, gauge the interest of schools and help move that along. We think that's one way our office could definitely help schools in the technology department. And then they also send some information out about the upcoming August 8, technology Town Hall, and then it's computer science professional development week coming up soon, and there was information in there about that. I think that's all our updates, and I will put the link to subscribe to their newsletter in the chat.

Okay, thank you. Okay, next, my one. I don't think you're online. Well, yeah, I don't think you're online. Derek or Gabriel Are either of you online today. Hi, Steve. Hi, everyone. This is Gabriel. I don't have anything new to report. Okay, thank you. And Wes, you online Rory. My one. I'm here. So we got Some good news. In fact, this is interesting information. Apparently there's a, we're trying to find out this is statewide information or county wide, but I'm sorry, or federal. Apparently schools have an exemption for towers. So if the school wants to put a tower up, zoning can't stop that we still have to apply for building permits, which we're in the process of, but any school district seems to in the state seems to be able to put up their own towers, their own tower systems now, we ran into some problems in Forest Lakes, and finally got through that we've got which means Forest Lakes finally moving forward, Pima, I'm sorry, Holbrook, the towers should be constructed at the end of the month. We're just waiting for concrete to dry and then we'll start installations. solenoid is the same way we're filing building permit paperwork next day or two. And so that means that we can accelerate this process significantly, instead of getting tied up in a lot of paperwork. We were was holding us back. So things are moving forward much more quickly than they were.

Right. Thanks. Sorry. Anything else on final mile project?

That's all the ones that we're handling. There's a couple other companies handling to other areas, but I don't have their information.

Okay. I'm having a real technology. problem today. Anyway, moving on. So I apologize. You folks from Microsoft, Are you online this morning?

Yes, I'm here. Yeah,

there's that. Ryan? Is Ryan here. Yeah. And is Alan on line two?

I'm not sure. I haven't seen him in the group. So if you are Alan, please say hello. But if not, I will do my best to to cover everything. Okay, I

apologize that we're going to be a little more short on time. But let's go ahead and do this. I don't want to, since I'm going to be gone for a while. Let's go ahead and do your presentation. I'm going to stop sharing and allow you to share if you have anything to share this room,

right. I will I'm looking right now. So to please tell me. I'm used to Microsoft Teams. Okay. Can you see that? Equity? Great. Okay, well, first of all, thank you all for having me. My name is Ryan Palmer. I'm a global digital equity strategist on the Microsoft airband team. And today, specifically, I'm here to talk about our airband digital equity data dashboard, which, which is a one of a kind, dynamic tool, that public tool, so it will be accessible to everyone very soon. We just wanted to get with you all before it becomes public to give you a preview, and some

information. And then when it goes public very soon, we'll make sure you're aware of that as well. But what what this is, is a dashboard that we've created, what we noticed was there's a lack of meaningful digital equity data out there. And we know with not only the digital Equity Act, but even the beat program, there are digital equity planning requirements. I believe. Aaron just spoke about that a second ago, that's gonna be a really important part of the digital Equity Act and the bead program. And we've been meeting with a lot of state broadband directors, and others and you are very fortunate to have a great organization. I will say when I see the structure in Arizona, it seems to be far more advanced than what I see in a lot of other states every everyone's unique. And I've been really impressed with with Jeff, when we met with him in the past and seems like you all are really ahead of you know, have a good system in place to hopefully use these funds in a meaningful way and really have a sustainable impact. And that's what this dashboards here to help. Do. We've learned through meeting with other state broadband directors that there's just a lack of resources and a lack of understanding of digital equity data. So what we've done is pulled data in from many public sources, which I'll show you right here. Into this dashboard. If see data sources here we pulled that 20 different data points so far into this dashboard. Many from the census community survey we have the FCC is reports of broadband now report and Microsoft's own internet usage data that we've made public a couple years ago. And then what we do is that is not right. Okay, sorry. I lost my correct screen. Okay, sorry. And so what it's really as you just hop right in. And so, obviously, we're going to want to look at Arizona, you can go into any state. And what it does is it pulls right up this dashboard, which allows you to get a visualization and understanding of different digital equity data. One thing we make clear, I told you, there's 20 different data points, we don't define at Microsoft, what it what data is important for your digital equity analysis, we let the user do it. So this allows you to take up to five of those data points at one time and layer them on top of each other. And you get a view down to the census tract level, but also the county and state level of where the areas areas with highest digital inequities exist based on those factors that you decide. So it comes preloaded here, but which which is great, and it gives you an idea. So it's just like an election night map. So here where you see orange and yellow, those are the census tracts with the highest levels of digital inequity and counties in Arizona based on these factors. And we know there's 15 126 Different census tracts. So you can see here based on the factors that were chosen, here 25 years or older without graduating high school households without a desktop or laptop, with hassles, that internet subscription broadband of any type, a percentage of people not using the internet or broadband speeds and annual median income spent on broadband, a percentage of income spent on broadband, these census tracts in Apache County, I hope I'm saying that right. And also Navajo County are those based on those factors have the highest areas of digital inequity. And you can tell, because each input you select, generates an index value between zero and one for each census track relative to all the others in this state. So one being the most need based on on that factor. And then then they're calculated up so the maximum you can have a view are the worst most census tract with the most need for all these factors, you would have a five total of five here. So 3.9, when you add those up, is how these census tracts got, you know, ranked as the highest levels of inequity and income over here and see what's driving well, 20.9% of people over 25 in the census tract, do not ever have not graduated high school 88.1% don't have a desktop or laptop. And that's really daunting. 87.9 don't have a broadband subscription. So

this is this shows you an important thing to see, here's a scatterplot right here. So it's the higher the dot represents the census tract, the higher it is, the higher levels of digital inequity. And then the x axis right now is for population. So bigger populations are on the right, as opposed to the

left. And I think another important feature, if you ever, whenever you're using this, it's helpful. Go up here and click on this question mark. And it gives you those bubbles to explain what's going on, and how to understand and use the dashboard. So I'm going to real quick just to give you it. And please stop me anytime there's any questions, I'd be happy to ask. I'm going to clear so you can show you how to do it. So if I want three factors I like to use you don't have to use five or 25 or older without graduating high school. Device. percent sorry, household, that desktop or laptop. And then the Microsoft usage data, which is right here. But Senator people by counting not using internet broadband speeds.

Brian, can I interrupt for just one second? Please, please? First of all, I'm back online. Right? Actually have sounded? Yeah, I don't know what the hell happened. But I apologize to all of you about that. Secondly, Ryan, there was some comments in the chat about the Lincoln. And I think you probably mentioned this, that this is not public yet. But I do know that you want some feedback today from people from this meeting. So just

thank you appreciate that. As soon as I'm done here, just second, I'll put the link in the chat, I would just ask that it's you all use it. But don't put it out anywhere publicly tweeted, or whatever else you might do until it's public. But we absolutely one of the reasons we were excited to preview this for you all, if you do have feedback, whether it's a way to make it more usable, are different data sets. So I should note, it's important to note, these are the data inputs we have now, we're not locked in forever, we plan and we will be updating it adding more data as appropriate as we learn about more public data. And you can see here, if you go to input, press on that you can get a list have a link to all the different data sources. So we take it directly. This is all public data, and all in all accessible for you to do your own analysis in a different way. And I said I'll put the link in there. So what I put in these three factors, and it shows here, basically these areas up here are where there's highest levels of digital inequity and it's often easy at this level to see some of the rural urban trends that are out there. But what's also important to do is you can go county by county, and this is where you get really dig in at this census tract level. So, I'm going to come down here to, can you tell me what county is Phoenix in, it'd be a good one to look at. Okay. Sorry, I just said

Maricopa,

Maricopa got it right here. So we got to Maricopa County, click on that it immediately zooms right in. And you can see census block by Census block areas with the biggest need and different colors. And then, you know, you really can zoom in and get all the way to the street level. So if I want to understand why this census block was instant, Spark doesn't have data, say I want to understand what this block over here, sorry. Is what it is I can I can hover over second, you get the specifics about the population, the demographic breakdown of who lives in that state, and you can zoom in there and get it and really get a better idea of what's going on in that county. And you can even zoom in closer. In some areas, it's helpful to see what are the street names and you know, in more populated areas, at times two, you can really get a better picture. So it's just another way of looking at the data, I'm gonna go back to the state level, is there any way you all would like to look, or anything in particular, that would be of interest to you. And like I said, I'll email the link, or I'll put it in the chat here in just a second. So we can see you can play with it. And we would love feedback.

So there's a question about our zip codes included on those tracks.

You cannot, you cannot sort by zip code, you can do census track, county, or state. So you can't you can't go in and, and search by zip code. Another important factor here, let me try to see if I can do this. So if you see right here on the x axis, I told you we're looking at population now left to right. But you can now also come in here and sorted by let's see what like percent Hispanic or Latino, to give a picture, okay, now we know more to the right has a higher percentage of Hispanic Latino. And then the higher to the top closest has high levels of digital inequity based on the factors that we selected here. So it's another way to distort the data and get a better understanding of what's going on. And once again, we have these state broadband directors who are out there preparing their digital equity plans, which were do the initial ones to NTIA on the 12th. And then we have, you know, there's a lot more preparation and things going on. And we want to empower not only the policymakers, but anyone who's on a local level, who cares about these issues, to be able to get in and get a better understanding what's happening in their community. So they can craft the plans, the digital equity planning, whether it's about devices, affordability, workforce development, and digital skilling, whatever their biggest needs are, so they can have this data to to anchor their decision making and their policies and data. And that's really what this is all about. And we've had great feedback so far for some other states, also from some of our federal agency partners who we've been sharing this with. And they've been excited about the potential for this to once again, just provide data and provide another tool for states who are making some of the tough decisions to make sure they're allocating these funds appropriately. And so they'll be successful. So I hope that helps Steve, and I'm happy to answer any questions. And like, sad right now, while we're sitting here, I'll, I'll go put this in the chat.

So there were several people who had some comments and questions are in the chat.

So it's, I'm in there now. So I see the question is updated dynamically as a fiber build out is happening, it's updated as there's better debt, public debt. So anytime, whether it's FCC data, when they when they have their maps, you know, complete or whether it's updated Census Bureau data, when it can be incorporated. It will be, but it won't be it'll be, you know, but it won't be like daily, you know, whenever the data is available publicly, we will be adding it to the dashboard.

So Paul Ross, you had a comment that you're working on some stuff, you might want to share that.

Oh, are you still there?

Yeah, I was just gonna say I can provide Ryan with some suggested. Next steps. I've seen a lot of data sources like this previously through the Census Department, through the census navigator through the ACS. There's lots of there Different sources out there right now that are pulling basically the same datasets. I think there's this, this presentation of it is another nice way to present it. But I think there's some layers and some levels that are missing, that will really make it far more usable than what it is right now, Ryan, I mean, I applaud the efforts and applaud the direction. But I think it needs additional layers and additional data sources to truly bring it about to be a far more useful data set. Otherwise, these are very much the typical datasets that you would see that uh, that the NTIA is using the at the FCC, FCC is using and others. Because I must say that with the ACS data, I mean, I think I've almost got that memorized for for Arizona and other areas in the country. Because you spend enough time in it, you really know where all the breakouts are. So maybe we can chat later, about ways that that can be made a whole lot more useful. For I would say practitioners at the local and state level.

Because there's a there's a granular story that needs to be told. And it's currently not being told. Because there, there's some overlays missing, and you got to get the overlays. Because with those overlays, now you can start to tell the story far better than what is currently being displayed.

Paul, I really appreciate that. And I welcome that. And that's why we wanted to meet with you all today. And we want to we want this to be as useful for especially people on the local level to be able to use this any way we can make it better. I'll reach out to you if that's okay. And of course, I'm going to share here in just a second share the link. And I would love to get your input in anyone else, please.Thank you. You're welcome.I'm trying to look to the other questions here.Are zip codes, including the tracks, right?Yeah, now they're just just done. I mean, it's not, you can't organize. Right? I'm not. Yeah, no, unfortunately. So

so for the group. I've been consulting with Microsoft and local community for almost 16-17 years. I got a preview of this about three months ago. And I thought, you know, first of all, it's democratizing information. And, Paul, obviously, you have a great sophisticated understanding of this, I think there's gonna be a lot of potential uses of this kind of data, especially as it's evolved and modernize. We don't even know how you guys are going to use this. But whether it's justifying your grants or measuring and tracking accountability of the work you're doing in the communities and measuring progress, I think there's a lot of different ways this can be brought to bear. I've just I was incredibly excited to see that Microsoft has done this as kind of a service to enhance the overall effort in our communities. And I just was really excited that Steve, you allowed Microsoft to have this time, but we definitely wanted to have follow up conversations with a lot of you to see how this can be made it even more useful that than it is just the beginning stages here.

Okay, and one of the other one of the real quick input. Hey, Paul, did did, did Ryan, get an idea of who you are and what you're doing? That might help him a little bit? If you give me a quick 30 seconds on what you're doing over there?

No, I didn't say that. But basically 30 seconds, Ryan, I'm working with the City of Phoenix and multiple school districts leading an initiative here in central Phoenix. I've been working on projects and the digital divide has to heavily for the last two years, and had an interest in this area for at least five years or more datasets, I live in data, I've got a lovely Excel spreadsheet that can no longer save as Excel. It's got to work in Excel binary format, because I'm using so much data. So I'm looking forward to being able to connect with yourself and John.

Great. And Paul, when we do that, I'll make sure we also have our experts from Microsoft AI for good data data lab to build this then smart data scientists behind this. I'm just the stuff stuff shared attorney. So we'll make sure we bring them along as well. So we can all get on the same page. I really appreciate that.

Believe me, I've worked with lots of attorneys as well. And I believe everybody has a piece to play from procurement to attorneys to the practitioners in the field. So thank you for your involvement because it does truly require all those talents to come together.

Much appreciated. Thank you and I see a question here about Have we looked at the USAC open data we have gone back now to see, you know, is there a way that specifically ACP data can, can play a role as we get a better understanding of who's subscribing to the affordable connectivity program, and how it can be if it can be incorporated with the data we have. So it's something that our data science team is looking at now. And I should have noted the beginning,

I'm definitely very familiar with USAC data. Because I spent the last I've been at Microsoft for five months, but I spent the last seven years managing the telecommunications Access Policy Division at the FCC. So the USF division. So I've been also like Paul, and everyone on this call been, you know, passionately working on these issues for a number of years now. And I'm really excited about this historic moment we're in with all the public broadband funding and hope we can do everything we can do to get it right.

Any other questions or comments? So I want to say a couple of things. So today, Ryan provided us a brief overview of this tool. And as we indicated earlier, that there's this is still a work in progress, and probably will be forever. Because everything changes so quickly. But I do have in the email that I sent out and will in the reminder that the follow up to this meeting will include Ryan's contact information. But the other thing that I want to say is, and we didn't really have time, today, but Microsoft is engaged in a lot of other digital inclusion initiatives and activities. And so we want to maybe even next week, Ryan, and I'll follow up with you. And I know Miley is on vacation right now. Maybe next week, or I'll be gone the following week. But we can do another follow up. Because one of the things that I talked to, I don't Ryan, I don't know, if you were on that call with, with Miley, we were one of the things we discussed was that Microsoft, as you all know, is huge. And there are lots of different pieces to the puzzle. And one of the things we talked about was how can they help us to navigate Microsoft, and to find all the different programs, or at least many of the different programs and resources through Microsoft, specifically, those things that are either related to broadband, or digital inclusion? So we'll follow up with you, Ryan, and my way and, and your team about that.

Right. I look forward to that. And I just added the link. I meant to send it to everyone before but I think I just sent it to Paul somehow. So I put it back out there. Just now there's there's the link.

Okay. And I can I will include that in the notice the follow up to this meeting?

Yeah, once again, please play around with it. We'd love feedback. But also please, just until it is public soon. Keep it within this group.

Okay. Thank you. Any other questions or comments for Ryan? Any other announcements for today? I take that to be a no. So, again, my apologies. I'm sorry, this was so discombobulated this morning. I don't know what happened with my, my sound and my computer. It just, we, as we know, technology happens. So I appreciate those of you who stepped up to just that was good Kirk and others to carry on with the meeting in my absence. So we will be meeting next week. We will not be meeting the following week and I will send meeting invitations this morning. So with that, if there's nothing else I'm going to stop the recording and anybody who wants to stay online for a while to Kibbutz please do so. Excellent. Thanks, Brian.