



June 8, 2020 AZBSN COVID-19 Digital Access Task Force Teleconference Report

Attendees

Steve Peters, Oris Friesen, Henry Goldberg, Mark Goldstein, Melissa Armas, Tracey Beal, Kip Brodman, Jamie Brown, Michael Cohen, Steve Crooks, Jerry Crow, Mark Dallmeier, Dan Doehler, Derek Ferguson, Terence Ford, Ian Hathcock, Holly Henley, Steve Hill, Brittany Holmes, Bob Jacobson, John Kelly, Kari Lipman, Ilana Lowery, Derek Masseth, Sophia Mayberry, Frank McCormick, Mala Muralidharan, Peter Newbegin, Mauricio Orozco, Cody Pedersen, Lea Marquez Peterson, Ricardo Platt, Alan Pruitt, Tracy Rexroat, Lynda Santoro, Steve Smith, Jeff Sobotka, Graham Taylor, Nicole Umayam, Karen Ziegler

Overall Task Force and Subcommittees Meetings

Steve Peters explained the Task Force's "Planning" webpage contains information about each of the subcommittees, including their objectives, team leaders, meeting times, and links for the meetings. The subcommittees will be making recommendations that are a key deliverable for this task force.

The Education and Libraries and the Funding and Resources subcommittees have had a number of meetings, and the Technology subcommittee held its first meeting on June 2nd. The Technology subcommittee meets on Tuesdays at 9:30 am, the Education and Libraries subcommittee meets on Thursdays at 9:30 am, and the Funding and Resource subcommittee meets on Fridays at 10:00 am. Steve hopes to get the Communities subcommittee up and running in the next couple of weeks (he has been talking to Alan Pruitt and John Lucas, this subcommittee's leaders, about that).

The overall task force meetings will continue to be held on Mondays at 7:30 am through June.

Updates: State Broadband Director, AZ State Library, Telehealth BAT, ADE, ACC

State Broadband Director Update

Jeff Sobotka, State Broadband Director, reviewed his recent activities. The hotspot program (reported on at previous task force meetings) is being completed and they have arranged some private groups to support this program. Jeff continues to support the ADE in any way asked, and is working as well on E-rate applications. He is meeting with three state universities' CIOs to understand their needs.

Jeff is focused now on broadband infrastructure and associated grants programs. He has met with various service providers on the Governor's broadband proposal and federal CARES Act funding available. The CARES funding is large and directed at education and telehealth. A major infrastructure bill is being considered in Congress that could include \$30 - \$70 billion for broadband infrastructure. The Arizona Rural Broadband Development Grants program from last year continues to support significant projects such as Phoenix to Page broadband infrastructure, infrastructure for the Navajo NTUA, and Page investigation of smart cities implementations.

Arizona State Library Update

Holly Henley, State Librarian, summarized the status of the Arizona State Library redistribution of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) CARES Act funding received (discussed at previous task force meetings). In the State Library's first CARES Act phase (CARES Express grants), 65 libraries from 13 counties were selected to receive a total of 392 chromebooks, 47 video equipment packages, and 224 sanitation kits. In the second phase (CARES Expanded grants), the State Library awarded 51 grants of \$4000 each to public/school/tribal libraries for such purchases as Wi-Fi mobile hotspots, laptops and tablets, computers with video editing software, security cameras for parking lots where Wi-Fi is available, portable shelters for shade in parking lots for Wi-Fi use and material pick-up, virtual reality devices, and mobile printing services. The third phase (CARES Supplemental grants) will focus on library partnerships with museums and workforce development organizations. Additional information is available at <https://azlibrary.gov/libdev/funding>.

Telehealth Broadband Action Team

Jeff Sobotka stated the Telehealth BAT has been looking at providing telehealth solutions for the Navajo Nation spanning Arizona and New Mexico.

Mark Goldstein asked if Mike Holcomb of the Arizona Telemedicine Program can make available his spreadsheet of telehealth broadband connections around the state. Jeff responded he would have to ask Janet Major of the Arizona Telemedicine Program whether that could be publicly available.

ADE Update

Sophia Mayberry, Project Manager in the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction at the Arizona Dept. of Education (ADE), stated the ADE has released a document providing guidance on the opening of schools, which was based on input from public health officials and school district superintendents. The ADE is working on a document regarding technical support desks. They are also considering how to unify the way the CARES Act funding for education can be used.

Steve Peters commented that he would like the task force's Technology Subcommittee to coordinate with work going on at ADE.

ACC Update

Lea Marquez Peterson, Commissioner at the Arizona Corporation Commission, noted she serves on the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) Presidential Broadband Expansion Task Force. This task force will be holding a meeting on July 17th that will consider the transitioning of Universal Service Fund funding from high-cost POTS lines to

broadband expansion for rural communities (including legal issues relevant for the ACC and state legislature) as well as the establishment of state broadband offices.

Subcommittee Activities

Education and Libraries Subcommittee

Mala Muralidharan, facilitator of the Education and Libraries Subcommittee, summarized some areas discussed at the June 4th meeting of the subcommittee. The full subcommittee meeting report is posted on the task force “Planning” webpage.

The “Every Student Connected” initiative launched jointly by the national Parent Teachers Association and the US Chamber of Commerce Foundation is meant to raise awareness of the urgency for over 12 million students to be able to participate in distance learning.

The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) is working on a survey for families with students, which will have under ten questions (including questions on home Internet and device status). This survey may be distributed to parents when they register their students for the upcoming school year.

The National Digital Inclusion Alliance has constructed a Digital Navigator Model for library technical support help desks. The Arizona State Library, with funding from IMLS, will provide this call-in help desk assistance to library patrons at no charge including getting people signed up with low-cost Internet and devices, directing to online training, basic tech support, and navigating through websites/forms. Insight will discuss at this task force meeting their help-desk offering for the education sector.

The subcommittee has asked Steve Peters to invite the Danish company Labster, with which GAZEL and ATIC have had substantial meetings in the past, to present on their offerings of virtual online labs for science courses. This is particularly relevant when students have to work from home during the COVID-19 school closures. Steve Peters explained GAZEL and ATIC had written a proposal for a statewide consortium to purchase Labster virtual lab modules for Arizona educational institutions at low cost. Steve added that ASU/Google have demonstration projects underway with Labster, as do some other higher-education institutions in the state. Steve has arranged a meeting on June 9th at 12:30 pm for Education & Libraries and Technology subcommittee members to meet with Labster staff, and may also have Labster present at the June 15th overall task force meeting.

The State Master Contract is now ready for schools and libraries that wish to use it for E-rate contracts.

There are various guidelines documents available for schools and libraries reopening, including the ADE guidelines that are on their website. The Mohave Education Services Cooperative has three master contracts for PPE kits etc. Mala and Holly had a discussion with AZBio about safe reopening especially for public access computers (ideas being explored are gesture interfaces and antimicrobial keyboards). The subcommittee will create a template of information on cleaning, equipment, and PPE. The Arizona Express Pay Program (funded by the AZCares Fund for local governments and nonprofits) will provide expedited reimbursements for purchases of testing supplies and PPE etc.

Funding and Resources Subcommittee

Lea Marquez Peterson, facilitator of the Funding and Resources Subcommittee, reiterated that the focus of this subcommittee is on short-term funding and resources for Wi-Fi access, hotspots, and devices, and the long-term federal/state funding sources will be handled by the Arizona Commerce Authority broadband team. The subcommittee has created a list of foundations and potential corporate sponsors/funders (including the FDIC Community Reinvestment Act banking institutions funding for digital equity) for grant applications. Lea stated the subcommittee would like to provide its recommendations on funding sources by the end of June, and this would be intended for distribution to stakeholder communities and organizations.

Mark Goldstein, Chair of the Arizona Telecommunications & Information Council, has completed a list of 42 entities in Arizona that can provide broadband consulting or grant writing expertise to support communities and institutions that are looking for assistance in finding consultants for their COVID-19 digital access/broadband projects and funding needs. Mark posted the link to this list in the Appendix Chat. The list will be posted this week on the task force “Resources” webpage, and also be released to communities/institutions in need of such consultants. Jeff Sobotka commented that he is asked constantly for such a list of consultants, and that Mark’s list is a highly-valuable contribution of this task force and will be used for the COVID-19 crisis and beyond.

Steve Peters noted he is putting together a list of recommendations on funding priorities.

Technology Subcommittee

Steve Hill, one of the facilitators of the Technology Subcommittee, reported on the kick-off meeting of the subcommittee held on June 2nd. Steve Hill, President of the Satellite Broadcasting & Communications Association, and John Kelly, Principal of Triadvocates, will be facilitating this subcommittee.

The subcommittee will identify various technologies available or used currently for broadband Internet access, and will create a portfolio of solution options including their costs. The subcommittee will also consider options for providing end-user devices (e.g. computers) to students and families lacking them.

Presentations will be made by solutions providers at each subcommittee meeting, and the presentations will be recorded. Tom Mehlert, Executive Director of AZ StRUT, will present at the June 9th meeting on their organization’s collection, reuse, and distribution of devices to support schools and communities, as well as opportunities to expand and support their mission.

Subcommittees Recommendations Timeline

Henry Goldberg sent Steve Peters an e-mail last week suggesting the task force establish a deadline for writing a report making preliminary recommendations (based on information available at this point) to be able to impact the state government and school districts policy making that is likely to come in July as the schools open in August. Steve stated he will be meeting with the leaders of the subcommittees to develop a timeline for their recommendations.

Insight Service Desk Support Model Presentation

Kip Brodman, Solutions Architect at Insight, delivered a presentation on the Insight SLED Service Desk Support Model. The presentation is briefly summarized here, and the full presentation will be available on the COVID-19 Digital Access Task Force website.

Insight has been providing service desk support services for 20 years. The goal of their service desk support model is to provide 24/7/365 technical support for teachers, students, and parents.

There are four key areas involved with using the Insight Service Desk Support Model: 1) Implementation (takes 4 – 6 weeks); 2) Operations (clients quickly getting answers to questions on a 24/7/365 basis); 3) Tools (remote call-in support and self-service portal); and 4) Reports (reports on operations of the service desk with a single point-of-contact service delivery manager).

The Service Desk model offers various types of technical support including password resets, operating systems, Microsoft Office, Web browsers, E-mail clients, Wi-Fi, VPN, and conferencing/collaboration platforms. There are two tiers of service support offered: Essential (for teachers) and Advanced (for teachers, students, and parents). Service for non-English speaking users can also be provided. They follow legal guidelines on not sharing private information of users.

Insight has created its Service Desk for the 2nd largest school district in the country with 40,000 teachers/staff, 1300 K-12 schools, and 734,000 students. It services 2500 -4000 contacts per month from students and teachers.

Insight's Service Desk Support can be purchased by an individual school district or could possibly be contracted for at the state level. Pricing is based on the number of service tickets per month. Kip Brodman will prepare a cost model this week to share with the task force. Henry Goldberg suggested Insight indicate how costs would be discounted if the Service Desk were contracted for at the state level for multiple or all school districts.

Next Steps

The next AZBSN COVID-19 Digital Access Task Force overall meeting will be held on Monday, June 15th at 7:30 am, and subsequent overall task force meetings will be held on Monday mornings each week in June.

This week, the Technology subcommittee will meet on Tuesday June 9 at 9:30 am, the Education and Libraries subcommittee will meet on Thursday June 11 at 9:30 am, and the Funding and Resources subcommittee will meet on Friday June 12 at 10:00 am.

Insight is presenting a webinar "Getting Arizona Back to Work Safely" on Wednesday June 10th at 11:00 am. Steve Peters has sent out an e-mail to register for this.

Mark Goldstein noted the Arizona Telecommunications & Information Council will be holding its monthly Board meeting on Wednesday June 10th at 12:00 pm, and all interested are invited to attend.

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

Appendix: Chat from Zoom

From Mark Goldstein to Everyone: (7:37 AM)

[file: /Users/oris/Downloads/AZBSN COVID-19 Digital Access Task Force - Arizona Broadband Consultants V01K.docx]

Here's the AZBSN Broadband Consultants List about ready to post and release. Sent to all listed + core folk last week. No one opted out, one corrected listed and another half dozen or so thanked us for including. Good work all!!!

From Bob Jacobson to Everyone: (7:40 AM)

What you didn't hear: we're working up a USDA Distance Learning grant application in Patagonia.

From Nicole Umayam to Everyone: (7:50 AM)

CARES Act Funding available to public libraries through the State Library:
<https://azlibrary.gov/libdev/funding>

From Mark Goldstein to Everyone: (7:54 AM)

ADE Roadmap for Reopening Schools (6/20) -
http://www.azed.gov/communications/files/2020/03/FINAL-DRAFT-AZ-Roadmap-for-Reopening-Schools_6_1_20-1.pdf

From Brittany Holmes to Everyone: (7:54 AM)

The Greater Phoenix Chamber Foundation is partnered with Every Student Connected and the U.S. Chamber and will be putting out a one-pager/fact sheet, op-ed and more very soon!

From Mark Goldstein to Everyone: (8:03 AM)

Arizona Together Grant Resources & Information (AZCares Fund, Arizona Express Pay Program, FEMA Public Assistance, eCivis Grant System) - <https://arizonatogether.org/grants>

From Lynda Santoro to Everyone: (8:13 AM)

I apologize that I need to drop early from the call. thanks!

From Mark Dallmeier to Everyone: (8:14 AM)

Thank you team. I need to jump on a leadership call. I will reach out to many of you soon.

From Jamie Brown to Everyone: (8:31 AM)

Hello everyone. In case it's helpful, the National Conference of State Legislatures has posted a compilation of broadband legislation from 2020 state legislative sessions. It can be found at: <https://www.ncsl.org/research/telecommunications-and-information-technology/broadband-2020-legislation.aspx>

From Bob Jacobson to Everyone: (8:32 AM)

My apologies to the community, I have to get ready for a USDA grant-application meeting. It's really impressive how things are coming together. Be back tomorrow morning for the Tech meeting. Having no infrastructure to speak of down South, and not usually included in conversations up North, that's a big concern for us. Bob.

From Tracey Beal to Everyone: (8:36 AM)

Needing to head off to my next meeting. Great info everyone!

From John Kelly to Everyone: (8:38 AM)

Need to drop. Thanks everyone. Please think about potential presenters for the Tech Task force and reach out to me or Steve Hill or Steve Peters with suggestions.