

SCR 22 Task Force on State Educational Technology
March 16, 2016
4:30 – 6:30 p.m.

***Delaware Department of Education, Townsend Building,
Cabinet Room, 401 Federal St, Dover, DE 19901***

MINUTES

ROLL CALL

Meeting was called to order at 4:30 pm by Michael Watson. Roll call was taken. We have a quorum. The following task force members were in attendance: Michele Brewer, Patricia Dallas, Tim Dukes, Kevin Fitzgerald, Colleen Gause, Matthew Korobkin, Michael League, Elizabeth Lewis, Patrick Liberato, Steven Mancini, Beth Mineo, Randy Reynolds, Megan Szabo and Michael Watson.

Absent were: Ted Ammann, D. Dusty Blakey, Bob Fulton, Kimberly Reinagel-Nietubicz, and Bryan Townsend. Ex-Officio member Wayne Hartschuh participated via telephone.

The following people also attended from the general public: Cheryl Heikes and Pam Reed. Geoff Fletcher participated via telephone.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Members were given time to review the January 11, 2016 and February 24, 2016 minutes. Motion was made by Dr. Kevin Fitzgerald and seconded by Randy Reynolds to approve the January 11, 2016 minutes as submitted. Voice vote was taken. Minutes approved by unanimous vote.

Motion was made by Dr. Michele Brewer and seconded by Steven Mancini to approve the February 24, 2016 minutes as submitted. Voice vote was taken. Minutes approved by unanimous vote.

I. Welcome

Michael Watson welcomed everyone to the final task force meeting. He thanked everyone for their hard work. Michael also thanked Pam Reed for all her leadership and work and the support she has provided to the Task Force.

II. Public Comment

No one from the general public signed up to speak during the public comment portion of the meeting.

III. Review, Discuss and Vote on Final Plan

An electronic copy of the final draft of the SCR22 State Educational Technology Task Force report was provided to the task force via email on March 10, 2016. Dr. Wayne Hartschuh asked the Task Force to thoroughly review the final draft prior to the March meeting and submit any additions, changes, or deletions to his email address by Tuesday, March 15th.

This evening, Task Force members also received a one page handout with overall recommended corrections which was compiled by Dr. Wayne Hartschuh.

Michael Watson was pleased to announce this is the last phase of the work. The goal was to review, discuss then vote on the final plan this evening. Mr. Watson stipulated from the outset that at this time there should be no substantive changes to the goals, strategies and recommendations at this time. The committees have had several opportunities over the past few months revising and providing feedback

on the goals, strategies and recommendations. Any changes need to be specifically identified so they can be documented in the minutes. If the group is in agreement with the changes in each section we will incorporate them with the final vote and update the final document.

Michael Watson led the group section-by-section through the final report starting with the Executive Summary on pages four through ten. Any adjustments that need to be made to this section of the document? Patricia Dallas asked when it says “all students,” especially in Goal 3 – Computing Devices, does it really mean Pre-K students through grade 12? Any thoughts from the committee? Dr. Wayne Hartschuh asked us to take note on Goals 3, 4 and 5 on page 6 were older goals that inadvertently got into the final draft. If you look on pages 68-70 in Appendix E they are the correct wording on the goals. There might be some wording changes that have been made since the last meeting. Patricia still wants to know if that means all Pre-K students will have one-to-one technology. Michael Watson said yes. Michael League explained it would allow the LEAs a cost share opportunity to purchase computing devices that could be used for the Pre-K students, but it would still be the responsibility of the LEAs. Michael Watson said “It is an aspiration” that when the committee said all students they really meant all students.

Beth Mineo said there was nothing about the budgetary implications on page seven about the Assistive Technology funding and believes it should be acknowledged there. Dr. Wayne Hartschuh said that is taken care of with on the one-page Recommended Adjustments handout – item 4. He inadvertently left out the budget recommendation in part A. The handout has a correction that would insert a new Budget Recommendation 2 requesting \$1,200.0 in FY18 and everything after that would be renumbered. Beth said it wasn't about the bandwidth that she was questioning. It was the recommendation coming from the Assistive Technology sub-committee that funding was needed to create a mechanism to support the acquisition of assistive technology for students with disabilities. The amount in the report is listed as “to be determined,” but it is still a recommendation without a price tag, and it is not represented in this final paragraph on page seven. Wayne said Matthew Korobkin had some verbiage in that says that budget recommendation won't come until the fall of 2016. See Budget Recommendation 11 on page 47 which reads “Strongly recommend supporting the FY18 assistive technology budget request, amount to be determined in fall 2016.” Wayne suggested an additional change be made on page 8 to the table on Budget Recommendation 11 changing the amount from “TBD” to “fall 2016.” Matthew Korobkin said that would be nice if you had room that you could also cite the language on Goal 7, Strategy 3, Recommendation 7.3.2 from the strategic plan be part of this section as well. Michael Watson asked if Beth would be acceptable to this change. Beth Mineo was happy to defer to others at this point, but she was concerned that the funding was left out of the paragraph. She said she forwarded an email to Wayne with specific recommendation, but Wayne did not receive the email. She will resend it to Wayne tomorrow. Any other concerns with the proposed change to this last paragraph on page 7? Michael Watson agreed and stated anywhere we named a funding implication recommendation we could add a sentence that speaks to that work. Michael League said he almost wanted that last paragraph to be a bulleted list. Not sure if anyone else felt the same way. No responses were given to Michael League's comment.

Dr. Michele Brewer said she sent Dr. Wayne Hartschuh an email today with some wordsmithing. Michael Watson is asking that the committee to allow the Department of Education editing rights to fine tune based on all the suggestions. However, we will not be making any substantive changes to the document tonight. He will reiterate this prior to voting on the final document.

Moving onto the Infrastructure and Leadership section on pages 11-21. Michael Watson asked if there any items to be discussed. No discussion.

Moving onto the Teaching & Learning section pages 22-37 any changes in verbiage in this section? Michele Brewer page 22 under the sub-heading Common Core State Standards and Online Assessment second paragraph. The Common Core and ISTE changes both specifically talk about the integration of technology and it is threaded throughout. She recommends that paragraph be changed to read as follows:

“The Common Core Standards and the ISTE Standards both recognize that education as it’s always been done is not enough in the digital age. They both share an emphasis on using technology, not for technology’s sake, but as a tool for mastering higher-level thinking skills, focusing on research and media literacy, creativity, collaboration, problem solving, and critical thinking.” She believes we need to be clear that these standards do indeed attach technology. Perhaps it needs some wordsmithing. What Michael Watson heard was a suggestion that in the second paragraph that there is an emphasis on both the ISTE Standards and Common Core Standard while not specifically mentioned technology, but the use of technology is a component of higher order thinking skills. All agreed that rewording that would be more appropriate. This change will be made in the final document.

Beth Mineo said the Task Force has at previous meetings discussed procurement strategies that talked about accessibility up front so we haven’t have to always do retro fits. Specifically on page 33, Goal 3 – Computing Devices, Strategy 1 statement. She wanted to know if everyone would agree to add an additional a statement to include an option to learning for students and educators. She proposes it read, “The contract should include options for professional learning, technology support, and provisions for full accessibility for the benefit of students, parents, and educators with disabilities.” There was discussion about whether she was talking about content or devices. Beth said she is specifically talking about the devices. Any concerns? Dr. Fitzgerald asked for clarification for what is expected of parents. Beth explained when things are deployed we will need parents to also understand what is expected. Dr. Fitzgerald was concerned if the State or LEA would be responsible to educate the parents on how to use the technology, especially if it was part of a negotiated contract. Beth re-read her revised suggested sentence to read: “The contract should include options for professional learning, technology support, and provisions for full accessibility for the benefit of all students and educators with disabilities.” This would deal with contract language about accessibility. All in agreement that this sentence should be added.

Page 34 – Recommendation 4.1.1. Dr. Michele Brewer believes we should add to the end of that sentence candidates...“seeking an initial license around the integration of technology into learning evidenced by the ISTE standards.” Dr. Brewer thinks if it needs to be clearer that it is for initial licenses and not for practicing teachers. Michael League said it is inherently applied. Dr. Brewer agreed, but we do need to be clear. It was then recommended that we just add “seeking an initial license.” All were in agreement.

Matthew Korobkin left the meeting at 5 pm.

Moving onto Assistive Technology – pages 38-42. Michael Watson asked if there are any changes.

Beth Mineo - page 39, the last paragraph just before Delaware Perspective reads as follows: “In the decade or so since the last strategic plan was written in 2003, Delaware’s efforts in technology have shown growth, but also they have been uneven due to a variety of factors from the overall economy to shifts in leadership and priorities. Following is a brief review.” She isn’t sure what it is referencing. Dr. Wayne Hartschuh said “it doesn’t look like it belongs in Assistive Technology so we can strike that line. Everyone was in agreement with removing that sentence.

Beth Mineo - page 41 - also wondered about adding another strategy for Goal 7. She believes they talked broadly about the compatibility of the general technology with assistive supports, but it didn’t end up anywhere in the report. Once again, Michael Watson reminded everyone that today we were not to make substantive changes to the goals, strategies and recommendations in the report. She wasn’t sure it would fit in Teaching & Learning or Assistive Technology. She further explained it’s about students with disabilities getting access to the same learning content in a format that they can use. She was asked by Michael Watson to share the following draft language that she sent in an email to Wayne Hartschuh.

Between Strategies 2 & 3 – New Strategy:

New Strategy #3 - Create and adopt uniform guidance to ensure that students with disabilities have full and timely access to the educational and assistive technologies that they need.

Rationale: Students with disabilities need contemporaneous access to the same learning opportunities afforded their peers without disabilities. It is often assumed that digital resources are inherently accessible, but that is often not the case. Moreover, those tasked with ensuring access to instructional and assessment content often encounter incompatibilities between the content and accessible delivery tools that must be resolved in order for students to gain access.

Recommendation 7.3.1: Develop and promulgate guidance that specifies expectations regarding the procurement of accessible educational technology and the processes for ensuring compatibility among infrastructure, hardware and software so that students with disabilities have contemporaneous access to the same learning opportunities as their peers without disabilities.

Michael Watson said what was articulated is already promulgated through federal law and IDEA. We clearly have a birth to 21 year mandate. There was much discussion. When Michael Watson reads number 2 the way it is currently written in the report, he feels we are addressing it through the law. Is there is a deeper recommendation that articulates an expectation that all students have that access. Beth Mineo went further explained the problems teachers have with access to devices and software getting loaded for students who are visually impaired that cause delays of up to six months before the students get access. Perhaps it could be bundled with strategies 1 and 2. Michael Watson said it is being reference in 3, but the recommendations in three are really around the funding mechanisms and not the philosophy. There is also a reference to access in 2, but without a specific action or recommendation. Therefore, Michael Watson proposed to the group that between 2 and 3 there is a way to incorporate this concept about no access barriers that could just be incorporated by **adding a recommendation 7.2.2.** to incorporate what was said to not cause a delay in students receiving the technology.

Steve Mancini said there are a lot of security concerns between LEA technology department and DTI that can cause a delay. He thinks sometimes it can take a month before it can happen. Dr. Fitzgerald doesn't believe it should be an expectation to wait a month for a student to get appropriate technology. Beth's suggestion was for guidance for service delivery. Can we enhance the process so students aren't left out? Steve Mancini said communication is important.

Based on this conversation, Michael Watson recommends we add a recommendation 7.2.2 that specifically calls out the rationale portion of this work inclusive of all students having access to the general curriculum which is a federal mandate. It should also include that it is important that it is inclusive of technology supports to be part of that curriculum. He then asked if that would be fair and more appropriate. Beth said "absolutely." Any problems with that? Michael League suggested adding to the beginning of the sentence in the new 7.2.2 Recommendation "To better meet the already existing federal mandate, we recommend" and incorporate the other information Michael Watson stated above. There were no other suggestions to this section.

Moving onto the next section - pages 43-48 which deal with funding. Any changes to verbiage in this section?

Beth Mineo – be sure to make changes to page 45 bottom paragraph that parallel page 7 changes that were made earlier this evening.

Elizabeth Lewis - Page 8 -Executive Summary – Budget Recommendation 2/3 – It seems like eRate funding is all funding sources. Make adjustment to make it clear that it is not general funds. Randy Reynolds explained that eRate funds is on the table that LEAs can match. Steve Mancini said sometimes the LEAs don't have all the money, but the match for the eRate funds allow the LEAs to receive funding. Elizabeth Lewis misunderstood the funding. Steve Mancini explained the savings could allow LEAs to get a portion of eRate money which would free up other funds they would not need to use. That money could be reinvested in building out the fiber around the state as needed.

Michael League agreed with Elizabeth Lewis. He believes page 46 it is better written than in the executive summary on page 8. Michael Watson asked if everyone was clear on this and have Elizabeth Lewis let Dr. Wayne Hartschuh know for clarity in the table on page 8. She agreed.

Pages 50-72 any changes in the Appendix sections. - None

Wayne Hartschuh asked everyone to look at Appendix E on page 68 for the current goals.

Time to vote - Michael Watson reiterated that some adjustments were made this evening and will be incorporated into this plan. He also asked when we take the vote that there is an understanding that the Department of Education will be provided and opportunity to do some editing and have editing availability, however, we will not make any substantive changes to the content in the plan itself.

Motion was made by Dr. Kevin Fitzgerald to approve the Senate Concurrent Resolution 22 Task Force on State Educational Technology Final Report with changes presented this evening and seconded by Randy Reynolds. Voice vote taken. With a unanimous vote in favor. Motion approved. Michael Watson extended a congratulations to everyone. There was a round of applause.

Any other business to address? Task Force members were asked if they wanted to make any last minute comments. Megan Szabo just wanted to just thank everyone for the hard work that has been done and making her vision move forward.

Michele Brewer asked "How will it be presented?" Michael believes what she is asking is "how do we take this plan and move it into advocacy?" We have a requirement to submit this to the legislature by March 31, 2016. He also believes it would give the task force an opportunity to get back together to advocate for the work that was done in this report. Michael Watson said he looks forward to Representative Tim Dukes to help shepherd us to promote the findings in the report with the legislature. Representative Tim Dukes suggested a concise power point be put together to present to the House and Senate Education Committees before June. Michael Watson agreed that this is a great suggestion and the Department of Education can pull that together. He also thought it would be nice if the entire task force could attend the presentation. There was a willingness from the group to help with advocacy.

Michael Watson thanked everyone once again for their hard work and believes this is a very strong document that will set the State of Delaware ahead. Delaware is leading the way. He thanked everyone for allowing him to lead them through the process.

Representative Tim Dukes said it was great seeing everyone come together to work on this project with their expertise.

Copies of the final report and minutes will be posted on the task force webpage: <http://www.doe.k12.de.us/page/2316>. A copy will also be mailed to all task force members.

IV. Meeting Adjourn

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Dr. Kevin Fitzgerald and seconded by Randy Reynolds. Voice vote taken. With a unanimous vote in favor, meeting was adjourned at 5:31 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Pam Reed, DCET Administrative Secretary
Task Force Support Staff