



Infrastructure Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes

April 25, 2025

Attendees

- Doug Casey — Connecticut Commission for Educational Technology
- Kerri Kearney — Manchester Public Schools
- Ryan Kocsondy — Connecticut Education Network (CEN)
- Sam Nanayakkara — CT State Community College @ Tunxis
- Rob Wilson — Goodwin University

Welcome

At 10:30 AM, co-chair Kerri Kearney called the meeting to order and welcomed Advisory members. Kerri provided an overview of the meeting agenda and then asked Doug to provide highlights of the Digital Opportunity Competitive Grant program.

Digital Opportunity Competitive Grant

The Connecticut Commission for Educational Technology has begun taking notices of intent (NOI) through its Web site for the Digital Opportunity program. The Commission is investing \$5M of its \$9M allotment through the federal Digital Equity Program to fund initiatives that will help residents get the devices, connections, and skills they need to flourish in society. The program favors sustainable initiatives that will benefit a large number of residents. The NOI period is intended to identify likely applicants and the regions they serve and will close the week of May 5. The formal application period will begin in mid-May. A recorded overview of the NOI process and broader Digital Opportunity program is available at www.CT.gov/DigitalOpportunity.

A brief discussion took place, including Ryan Kocsondy's suggestion of having a statewide team to assist with [Eduroam](#) configuration and deployment to help students get online outside of school. Sam Nanayakkara underscored the value of this proposal, given the need for K – 12 and college students to stay connected. Sam also emphasized the potential of the Digital Opportunity investments to support workforce development. On that note, Doug mentioned the recent [federal executive order](#) calling for investments in artificial intelligence for K – 12 students and to deepen worker skills. Doug underscored the investment on projects that build statewide capacity rather than sunk costs in hardware. welcomed Advisory members to serve as application reviewers as long as they are not applying for funding through the program.

Cost-Savings Opportunities

In January, the Advisory provided input on cost-saving approaches that would help schools maximize their technology investments. Since then, Doug convened a working group of K – 12 technology leaders to look at specific opportunities. Through a series of meetings, the group discussed different approaches to budgeting and how they classify investments. The lack of consistent budgeting structures across districts presents a barrier to identifying shared investments. Data shared through the [State's Education Finance System \(EFS\)](#) is also at such a high level that identifying specific cost-savings opportunities remains a challenge.

Members of the working group narrowed down next steps to include having a standard “build” of student computers statewide. Doing so would enable school leaders to engage resellers and hardware manufacturers to compete for both a low price point and value-added services such as tagging and configuring devices with software prior to delivery.

Advisory members supported this idea, with Kerri, Rob, and others encouraging a multi-year commitment to benefit from volume investments. Year over year, more districts would likely participate as they refresh their device fleets. Other cost-savings opportunities include cooperative purchasing of software, facilitated by tools such as the LearnPlatform usage inventory. Manufacturers and ed tech companies most likely to offer cost savings agreements would be the “fast followers,” those with quality products that are willing to offer aggressive pricing to gain market share.

Newcomer Resources

Since the January meeting, Kerri developed a draft resource guide for new school technology directors. Her intent was to offer information and resources that often take years to acquire through informal channels and that can help accelerate new leader onboarding. Doug praised the initiative and offered to post the guide on the Commission's Website after additional review and edits. Members discussed the value of developing a mentorship program to support new technology leaders.

CEN Conference

Ryan shared highlights on the upcoming annual conference, taking place May 7 – 8 at the Connecticut Convention Center. Registration totals remain strong, surpassing last year's early figures with more than 700 participants already. The keynote speaker is Kari Byron of MythBusters.

Doug thanked the Advisory members for their participation and contributions. The meeting concluded around noon, with several members staying briefly to discuss additional collaboration opportunities.