

EduTech Steering Committee - RIT Inn & Conference Center - October 1, 2010

Members Present:

Bruce Amey, Avon

Joe Backer, Letchworth

Bob Leiby, Manchester-Shortsville

Greg Macaluso, GVEP

Maria Ehresman, Williamson

Mike Glover, GVEP

Jim McNeil, WFL BOCES

Camille Sorenson, EduTech

Members Absent:

Tim Hayes, Geneseo

Joe Marinelli, WFL BOCES

Terry MacNabb, Waterloo

Guest: Lisa Roberts, EduTech

Camille started the meeting by welcoming Greg Macaluso, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction & School Improvement at from Genesee Valley Educational Partnership (GV BOCES) as the newest member of the committee.

Test Scoring Update – Lisa Roberts

- **Regents Scanning:**
By June 2011 NYSED directive is that 6 regents answer sheets be scanned. Answer sheets can only be scanned once at either the district or RIC. Piloted project last June with two districts and it was successful. Helps eliminate teacher errors. Have commitments for 10-15 districts to begin in January. June 2012 all 12 regents that are administered must be scanned.
- Mike Glover said they are hearing at the district superintendents meeting districts should purchase their own scanners because they are moving to on-line testing. State would like testing to move towards what is happening at the college level.

Districts will have to decide the logistics. A district can share equipment with other districts, purchase their own, or use the RIC.

Discussion has taken place about a regional scanning center. Logistics and timing and cost offset by the aid. Scanning is the easy part. Labor intensity begins when something is wrong with the answer sheet and someone has to physical look at, verify, and edit. If you are going to share, logistics and schedules would have to be worked out. Each district needs to look at the logistics and costs (one-time approx \$9,000 aid able, with most of the cost being software).

In the pilots, one primary and one secondary person were needed. Individuals need to have some technical and PC skills and be comfortable browsing the network and moving the files. One district had a teacher do the scanning and the other had a data person do it.

Bruce Amey: If the scanner is in-house with the software, the district would receive the scoring results immediately for report cards. In house, would you then have the data analysis piece sooner – yes. You get the discrepancy report right away when scanned in house.

Maria Ehresman: Couple of years ago found numerous teacher errors. If you put in the student data system, they up load automatically and removes the human error. Split 50/50 – some are buying because they want to remove the discrepancy and the other wants the results sooner.

Mike Glover stated we are in a transition phase because scanning will be obsolete in 3-4 years. Maria Ehresman mentioned that all technology is obsolete in 3+ years.

Camille mentioned to the committee that EduTech can precede anyway the districts and region want to.

Joe Backer asked if districts are under a timeline for the January regents and when would the SAA have to be signed. Lisa Roberts explained that a pre-install meeting would need to take place in October or November. At this point cannot add more than an additional five districts for January.

This is all from SED's drive to standardize answer sheets. EduTech is actively involved with SED in developing the answer sheets.

Bruce asked if there was a person at EduTech who could design these forms for districts. Lisa - Will all depend on the workload in the department.

Camille said we all very much agree that the look of test scoring process will change dramatically over the next five years.

- Data Coordinator Meetings

Role of coordinator needs to change because responsibilities are changing. Coordinator needs to load teacher data along with student data so that the two can be tied together. The state has recommended that the districts download this unique ID into the payroll system. Export out of that package and put in student info system. So another dept that needs to be involved in process.

Another change this year is moving the data to the warehouse. Districts need to be more pro-active in regards to their data. Data Coordinator needs to be a person who can own the process from beginning to end.

Joe Backer mentioned that it is frustrating from the Superintendent's position because they think everything is going wonderful, but from the data side it is a mess. How does it get communicated to the Superintendent that they are in trouble? Camille answered that Lisa reports the situation to Camille who in turn goes to the Superintendent.

Mike Glover mentioned that districts need to be proactive, but reality is the smaller districts just can't handle all of this. He likes the fact that EduTech staff send out notices and reminders. When having several duties in district, it can get lost so the reminders are helpful.

Bob Leiby asked that as we look down the road for these unique ID's, are we going to need to change payroll systems or productivity systems. Not sure every payroll system will be able to adapt. Do we need to be looking at a different financial system? Camille mentioned there are not as many financial systems as there are student systems. In the EduTech region 41/47 use Finance Manager.

Maria Ehresman thinks the answer is that if you have something in place that you can make work for the next couple of years, she would stick with it.

Camille told the committee that SED does have periodic vendor meetings and will let vendors know the direction the state is heading in. Lisa said Student system to be certified. On the financial side, state is beginning to look at what everyone is using if different than the main three.

Data Coordinator needs to be or have someone who has the authority to work with staff within the district.

EduTech needs the names of the data coordinators. If EduTech is contacting the district reps, they will copy in the superintendent. That is the role of the data coordinator who can let the superintendent know. If you are contacting CSE Chair, also copy in the data coordinator.

Districts need to complete form for test scoring letting them know who does what.

Updates - Camille thanked the committee for helping them manage customer expectations. It has been a crazy year, largest year ever in purchasing. In the past our 40,000 sq ft warehouse is full in May, and empty in September. This year it is still full. First 3 months of this year equal last year.

- Test scoring appreciates the districts helping us to meet SED deadlines. Getting the exams quickly to us helped us to process and get to SED on time. Work load used to be level. Now we have huge spikes in April, May, and June. So we bring in part time FTEs to help process during these heavy peak periods. Our head count is down because every time someone retires we look at their workload and more often than not have not replaced FTE.
- Medicaid and ERate: Worked with a lot of districts to help them maximize their filings to get every penny that we can for them. Hosted Medicaid SED compliance training meetings.
- Students: Number of districts changing systems.
- ClearTrack IEP system developed by another RIC. RICs are not in the business for developing software systems. They have said that in a few years it will become more difficult for them to continue to support the system. More than likely in a couple of years we will be notified that they will end the life of ClearTrack. More districts are moving to IEP direct.
- Finance Manager will be putting out a major release in the next year.
- LAKENet installed a new content filter this summer. Has the ability, as a service, for a district to fine tune their filtering themselves. New version of GroupWise on web mail.
- Instructional Technology: Worked very closely with the instructional technology staff in the organization to make sure we have training.
- Project Coordinators have been swamped with orders and districts have understood in working with us.
- New: Regents scanning, support QueCentre, email archiving out this month.
- EduTech is looking at ways we can help with SmartBoard maintenance.

Bruce Amey brought up the ability to go through the “Right to Know” training on AccelerateU. No fee for this year, but will track and charge on a per usage basis next year.

Bob Leiby mentioned the bullying, sexual harassment, etc. training through Global Compliant Network. Saves time and effort.

District Technology Organization, Backup – Maria Ehresman

- When we last met in May, Jeff Ginsberg gave a presentation on what you want to be aware of when your staff and/or technology staff leave.
- This summer Williamson made a change in the organization of their Technology department.
- Maria handed out a matrix of major technology areas that the district worked on over the summer to ensure support and problems solve “best practices”. Williamson had EduTech support on most of the servers and their infrastructure and they added EduTech shared support.
- The district worked with EduTech to ensure that all systems continued to operate smoothly. Going forward, the district is ensuring that all major technology items have a primary and secondary support person and that major items (i.e. passwords are unique and documented).

Business Continuity Planning – Camille Sorenson

- Recap of where we are in Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity Planning. If there were to be a disaster of some sort, how can we continue to operate for our 47 districts and two BOCES. It is a balancing act, how much redundancy do you want to pay for. We have two paths out to the internet and our network reroutes if one path goes down. We have improved our backup process and offsite storage process. If you are on an EduTech student system, finance or cafeteria system every night your system is backed up remotely on our server. We have worked on testing, restoring the backups to ensure continuity. We will have installed a redundant storage unit in our LeRoy office by the end of the year. We are continuing to assess the environment and our testing cycle.

Questions

- Bob Leiby asked that as we head into another budget year, any stimulus packages?

Mike Glover's feeling is that EduTech has been very in tuned to the district's financial situation and very customer based. The organization has moved in the right direction. Don't see a cavalry coming. Going to be a tough year and think we should prepare for the worse.

Next meeting:

November 5, 2010, 8:30 a.m., RIT Inn and Conference Center