

**Minutes of a Meeting
of the
Texas Computer Cooperative
Management Committee**

A meeting of the Management Committee for the Texas Computer Cooperative (TCC) was convened on Thursday, February 21, 2008, at 9:30 a.m. in the LaSalle and Medina Rooms of the ESC-20 Conference Center. Dr. Terry Smith, Chair, presided and the following attended:

Mr. Adrian Garcia	Education Service Center, Region 1
Mr. Eduardo Infante	Lyford C.I.S.D.
Mr. Jose Cantu	Education Service Center, Region 2
Dr. Julius Cano	Education Service Center, Region 3
Mr. Robert Wells	Edna I.S.D.
Dr. Steve Hyden	Education Service Center, Region 5
Mr. Scott Campbell	East Chambers I.S.D.
Ms. Nancy Oliver	Education Service Center, Region 6
Mr. Jack Ellis	Brazos I.S.D.
Ms. Nancy Holcombe	Education Service Center, Region 9
Dr. Pat Pringle	Education Service Center, Region 13
Ms. Belinda Putska	Schertz-Cibolo U.C.I.S.D.
Mr. Robb McClellan	Education Service Center, Region 14
Mr. David Smith	Education Service Center, Region 15
Mr. Larry Taylor	Education Service Center, Region 15
Ms. Leigh Ann Glaze	San Saba I.S.D.
Ms. Holly Lee	Education Service Center, Region 17
Mr. Wayne Blount	Sands C.I.S.D.
Ms. Nancy Dunnam	Education Service Center, Region 18
Ms. Pam Harper	Ector County I.S.D.
Mr. John McCauley	Education Service Center, Region 20
Mr. John Huey Andrews	Education Service Center, Region 20
Ms. Beverly Meyer	Education Service Center, Region 20

Item No. 1

Establish Quorum of at Least Seven
Members Present

Dr. Smith confirmed that a quorum was established. He welcomed the attendees and asked those present to introduce themselves. He also asked the committee to consider attaching this meeting to the CCRS meeting in February for next year.

Item No. 2

Approve Minutes of the Meeting of June 26, 2007

Dr. Smith asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes of June 26, 2007. There were none. Dr. Hyden made a motion to approve the minutes and Dr. Pringle seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

Item No. 3

Report from RSCCC Liaison – Nancy Holcombe

Ms. Holcombe, as the RSCCC Managers Liaison for the TCC, reported that the managers had voiced some concern for the TxEIS product timeline related to acquiring hardware specifications. They had also requested:

- Ability to host TxEIS at ESCs, districts, and on the ESC-20 mainframe
- Keeping the product cost effective and efficient for small schools
- Additional training on parent portal and grade book
- Working toward SIF compliancy by developing some demographic elements

Ms. Holcombe added that the managers expressed kudos to ESC-20 for leading the state in the development of TREx.

Item No. 4

Status of RSCCC Business

Mr. Andrews reported that the status of the RSCCC Business is generally quiet. His staff is primarily working on enhancements from the Prioritization List from the ESCs. They are also working on some substantial enhancements such as contracts in Requisition and Student Activity Fund accounting.

The latest update was sent out February 20th and included the extract for submitting the fingerprint file to SBEC.

Mr. Andrews announced that the number of districts using RSCCC Business increased from December 2006 to December 2007 by 38 districts (from 684 to 722), a gain of 5.5%.

Item No. 5

Status of Grade Book and Parent Portal

Mr. Andrews reported that as of last November there were over 300 districts using txGradebook, which represents approximately 15,000 new end users. There were also more than 120 districts using txConnect (parent portal). The general response to the grade book has been:

- Less work for district administrative/technical staff
- More intuitive, requiring minimal teacher training
- Districts converting from WinSchool like it better
- Districts switching from GradeSpeed have mixed opinions

ESC-20 staff are gathering requirements on the ‘bells and whistles’ desired:

- Display more students on the screens
- Develop more reports

Mr. Andrews said his staff were also reviewing enhancement requests for the grade book and would prioritize those to see which changes they could include in the April release. He will send that list to the ESCs. He also plans to release a more substantial update this summer.

Mr. Andrews explained that with more end users, even a small percentage having issues is taking more staff time to research and resolve. The product is still relatively new, and he wants to strengthen ESC-20’s staff expertise as well as other ESCs so they can assist with district support.

Item No. 6

Status of RSCCC Student

Mr. Andrews reported that the latest Student update was released on February 20th and included:

- FitnessGram extract and instructions
- Changes for TREx

He discussed the issues his staff has faced in trying to obtain clear specifications for FitnessGram and in dealing with TREx issues which have resulted in TEA delaying mandatory implementation.

Mr. Andrews said his staff is working on integrating the Solstar scheduling product into RSCCC for the April release. They will also be making changes in PEIMS for reporting the Optional Flexible School Day. These changes will have to be made in RSCCC, iTCCS and TxEIS. He would like to hold down the number of changes for next year, keeping the system static during the conversion to the web.

The number of districts using the RSCCC Student applications increased from December 2006 to December 2007 by 155 (from 403 to 558), a gain of 38.5%. He predicted that this number would have another significant increase in the next school year.

Mr. Andrews stated that he has received a number of requests for additional interfaces with third party products. This diverts development attention away from our primary product. The development of imports can be very complex as we are responsible for the integrity of the data coming in. It is

difficult to have the resources to respond to all of these requests.

Mr. McCauley added that SIF, which is a national standard for data interchange between systems, may address this issue. He wants to look at SIF for the TxEIS product, as it is better suited to web based applications, although the expense of deployment may make it difficult to implement for smaller districts. It will require servers and staff to manage them. He explained the messaging and agents used with the data interchange, and said he would pursue it after Phase I of TxEIS.

Mr. McCauley also reported that the Optional Flexible School Day was approved by TEA and will be in the Data Standards for next year. It is an alternative method for collecting attendance. The reporting changes will also be used for the High School Equivalency Program and for Virtual Schools. We will not be able to incorporate the necessary changes into the student information system by the beginning of school, but will modify PEIMS to have the 500 record series needed for reporting. Next year we will be modifying the student accounting systems to accommodate this change. Mr. Andrews added that it will be complex, as the attendance is collected in minutes and this will have to be incorporated into the superintendent's report.

Mr. Andrews also added that the large number of districts converting to RSCCC is part of why we are receiving interface requests (if a district had one before). Ms. Putska asked what software the majority of the conversions were coming from. Mr. Andrews responded that it was mainly WinSchool. Mr. Wells related that a third-party vendor had promised that his product would interface with RSCCC when in fact it did not. Dr. Smith added that ESC-20 traditionally has not considered requests unless they come from a district or ESC.

Mr. Andrews reported that staff had taken the TCC Booth to conferences for Midwinter and TCEA and will be at TASBO in March. It was our first time for TCEA, which is a large convention, geared primarily to technical staff.

Tech Fiesta will be held at ESC-20 on April 17th and 18th. The registration fee is \$125 (\$145 after March 15th). Registration includes refreshments, snacks, lunch and shuttle service from conference hotels. Participants can begin pre-registering for sessions the week of February 25th and attendees can print out their schedules. There will be sessions to promote the TxEIS

product. Mr. McCauley explained that being able to sign up for individual sessions was new this year and will allow ESC-20 to plan better. Dr. Smith explained the non-compete policy for use of ESC-20 conference rooms and Tech Fiesta vendors. We are now getting questions from TEA as competing vendors attempt to go over our heads and complain to the agency.

Item No. 7

Status of TxEIS

a. Approval of New Logo

Mr. McCauley reported on the status of the TxEIS product. He directed the committee to the logo on page 8 of the agenda packet, stating that we will pursue trade marking it. Dr. Cano made a motion to approve the logo. The motion was seconded by Ms. Dunnam and passed unanimously.

b. Revised Timetable for Conversion of Business & Student Systems

Mr. McCauley reviewed the timeline on page 9 and explained the two phase approach, with Phase I being converting the RSCCC from a client server to a web platform “as is” during the first two years. Phase II will incorporate requirements from iTCCS and other statewide feedback, which TASBO is assisting with, over the following two years.

Mr. Andrews announced that he would show the committee an overview of the product and that it would be reviewed in more detail next week with managers and consulting staff from the ESCs. He added that we have developed a new security module and have converted the functions of the DBA utility to JAVA.

Mr. Andrews reported that the initial conversion for PEIMS was completed at the end of January. This included acceptance testing and approval. Then modifications to the converted source code began at ESC-20. These should be completed by the end of February and include:

- Integration of the new security system
- Changing reports to work as Web pages
- Removing toolbar and icons from PEIMS pages
- Changing the look and feel
- Modifications to support browsers other than IE

This process will be repeated with the Business and Student applications. This week the contract for the Business programs was signed, the source code sent to the vendor, and a technical phone conference was held. Conversion of the Student programs is scheduled to begin in July. Release programs and documentation will need to be written and training for the ESCs scheduled. Districts will then begin migrating to TxEIS. No database conversion will be necessary, but the existing security system may need to be

converted or re-created under TxEIS. Mr. Andrews showed the committee an example of how a PEIMS screen looks on the current RSCCC product, the Metex converted product and the final TxEIS product.

Mr. McCauley said that districts wanting to wait for TxEIS in order to avoid an additional conversion if they are on WinSchool should be informed that there is no data conversion from RSCCC to TxEIS. The screens and reports are very similar so there is no new learning curve. However, the district's user base will expand due to accessibility over the Web.

Ms. Putska asked if the migration of Business and Student would be at the same time. Mr. McCauley responded that it would, although we will try to beta test the PEIMS and the Business applications in districts that run those applications only. Because TxEIS will be on version 10 of the Sybase database, districts cannot have a mix of TxEIS and RSCCC. Ms. Harper asked how this product will affect iTCCS users. Mr. McCauley said that at the end of Phase II, the iTCCS districts should look at TxEIS and that eventually RSCCC and iTCCS will go away. Mr. Garcia asked if the difference between TxEIS and TxEIS+ was the back end. Mr. McCauley said there would be a change in the database, but he wants the database structures in RSCCC and iTCCS to become one. Ms. Harper said that her users would like some input into the product. Ms. Lee asked if the end of life for iTCCS would be one to two years after Phase II. Mr. McCauley said that it would. Mr. Garcia asked if the Sybase database would handle large districts. Mr. McCauley responded that we may look at MS SQL Server at some point. Mr. Campbell asked what TxEIS+ will have that TxEIS doesn't. Mr. McCauley mentioned modules such as Cafeteria, Work Order, Position Management, and Bid Package.

Mr. Andrews reminded the committee that users will not need to migrate at the beginning of a school year, but could make the switch at any time. Most of the training will be technical and deal with the setup. ESCs will need to decide if they want to host the product or set it up at the districts. They may want to look at the cost of hosting in terms of hardware and staffing. The hardware specifications will be developed over time as it is difficult to know what it will take at this point.

c. Review of PEIMS Module

Mr. Andrews demonstrated the TxEIS product to the committee, covering the log on, applications, PEIMS screens, navigation, reports and Security System. He explained the

integration with Active Directory, as well as the ability to create and assign staff to roles. Mr. McClellan expressed concern regarding budgeting for hardware. Mr. Andrews agreed that specifications will be needed in time for the 2009-2010 fiscal year budgets. Mr. McCauley explained that TxEIS will use JBoss, which is similar to IIS and the setup would be similar to that of the grade book and parent portal. There may be a conflict with IIS and JBoss running on the same server. In response to a question about extending the migration timeline beyond the 2009-2010 school year, Mr. Andrews explained the resource burden of maintaining dual programs. Dr. Smith suggested that ESCs may decide on hosting in the context of hardware and budget. Mr. McClellan agreed that ESCs could consider hosting as a transition for those districts that cannot afford the hardware right away. Ms. Lee added that districts could use Priority 2 funding through e-rate to purchase servers.

Mr. Andrews discussed Sybase licensing for TxEIS, explaining that districts will need to upgrade to Version 10 when migrating to TxEIS. Under the new OEM with Sybase, it will be significantly more expensive to purchase a license compared to purchasing under Version 9 and upgrading later. Version 10 has more capability for handling larger districts. Mr. McCauley added that we do have the capability to stress test and we will.

Item No. 8

Consider Recommendations of Pricing Committee

- a. iTCCS Proposed Budgets for 2008-2009

- b. Request Approval of Funds for iTCCS Server Upgrade

Mr. McCauley reviewed the *Budget Summary for iTCCS Operation* with the committee, projecting an increase in revenue over the current year. This is primarily due to a projected 4% salary increase, increased software and hardware maintenance costs, and conversion of Cognos from version 7 to version 8. Revenue projections include user fees based on enrollment increases only and revenue from microfiche and interest income. The target fund balance is 20% of the previous year's expenditures, which is \$1,232,105.

Mr. McCauley recommended upgrading the server this July from 662 MIPS to 824 MIPS. Justification for the upgrade includes:

- New grade book districts
 - Pflugerville ISD
 - Leander ISD (attendance)
 - Lyford ISD
 - Lake Travis ISD
 - Edinburg ISD (one campus)
 - Comal ISD
 - San Felipe Del Rio CISD (two campuses)
- Addition of Comal ISD for student and business applications

Total expenditures are projected to increase for 2008-09 due to:

- 4% increase in payroll costs
- Vendor software costs-non IBM (\$37,105)
- Database software costs (\$89,000)
- IBM hardware costs (\$111,000)
- IBM software costs (\$113,400)
- Addition of DBA position to support Oracle conversion

Projected expenditure decreases include the elimination of one vacant programmer position in Support Services and reduction in IBM server lease payments of \$221,000. Other expenses from fund balance in July 2008 include software/hardware upgrade requested this fiscal year (\$357,792) and power generator purchase approved last year and currently in implementation (\$150,000).

Mr. McCauley reviewed the chart outlining the iTCCS server upgrades done over the last seven years (page 12) and the breakdown of the server upgrade costs (page 13).

Mr. McCauley explained the *2008-2009 iTCCS Pricing Structure* with the proposed 0% increase and the *2008-2009 iTCCS Pricing Model* showing enrollment increases or decreases by district and resulting in a 3.07% overall increase to the cooperative.

Mr. McCauley presented the *iTCCS Budget*, which is a zero balanced budget (pages 16 and 17) and reviewed the Fund Balance Worksheet. The projected fund balance is \$1,045,981, but will be reduced by the \$507,000 if the upgrade is approved. He also stated that traditionally the fund balance increases due to over collection and under expending.

Ms. Putska made a motion to approve the iTCCS budget and requests for funding as presented. Mr. Smith seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

c. RSCCC Proposed Budgets for 2008-2009

Mr. McCauley is projecting a \$41,376 increase in revenue over the current year. This is due to a 4% projected salary increase and the addition of one Systems Programmer position for technical support to the regions. Revenue projections include an increase in user fees and revenue from special programming requests. This will result in a 2% increase for Business (\$1,803.05 per district) and for Student (\$651.69 per campus).

Total expenditures for 2008-09 are also projected to increase from the current year due to the 4% increase and the additional

Systems Programmer position. The target fund balance (15% of the previous year's expenditures) is \$387,936

Mr. McCauley reviewed the *RSCCC Pricing Model*, which listed the number of Business districts and Student campuses based on last April's counts, the current pricing and what the increase would be by region. He anticipates an increase in users, which will bring in additional revenue. In June, Mr. McCauley has typically recommended lowering the pricing based on increased projections. This year, he would like to use the additional revenue to build up the fund balance for technologies emerging over the next several years.

Mr. Wells asked if the additional position was due to increased users. Mr. McCauley replied that it was in part, but also due to additional applications such as the grade book and parent portal. Mr. Wells asked about the future of this position when RSCCC is no longer supported. Mr. McCauley said that several staff and positions would be eliminated through natural attrition and the cost would decrease due to merging of programming staffs. We have also added staff members to the TxEIS project.

Mr. McCauley reviewed the proposed *RSCCC Budget*, stating there were no significant increases over the current budget other than the salary projection and that the proposed budget is balanced. Mr. Wells asked about the marketing line item being reduced to zero. Mr. McCauley explained that marketing is now covered in the TxEIS budget. He then reviewed the current fund balance projections, stating that the committee may need to address the 15% cap on fund balance in the future in order to amass more fund balance for future enhancements. Dr. Cano made a motion to approve the RSCCC proposed budgets for 2008-2009. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wells and carried unanimously.

d. TxEIS Proposed Budgets for 2008-2009

Mr. McCauley reviewed the *TxEIS Budget*, stating that we would not expend all the contracted services appropriation this year because the conversion of the student applications would not begin until September. Therefore, he has moved \$770,000 back into fund balance. He explained that all expenditures for TxEIS come from fund balance. Dr. Smith reminded the committee that the funding was made possible due to the generosity of Austin I.S.D. and Region 13. He stated that we do not want to go back to asking for money up front to do things – we need to be looking down the road to the future. Mr. Campbell asked if the committee should increase the 15% cap on fund balance. Dr. Smith said it would be an action item in the near future. He reviewed the fund balance worksheet, showing fund balance at \$10 million plus what Mr. McCauley has moved back, and stated that we would need it

when we begin to add functionality. Dr. Pringle questioned the interest income being the same as last year. Mr. McCauley said he did not know at this point what it would look like. Mr. Smith made a motion to approve the TxEIS proposed budget for 2008-2009. The motion was seconded by Mr. McClellan and carried unanimously.

Item No. 9

Review Financial Reports

Mr. McCauley reviewed the agenda attachment, *iTCCS Financial Report*. He stated that we would collect the \$30,445 in uncollected revenue and more by year end. As of February 7th there is \$717,150 under expended, mostly due to unfilled vacancies and contracted services. This will decrease through the rest of the year as maintenance contracts are renewed and vacancies are filled.

Mr. McCauley reviewed the agenda attachment, *RSCCC Financial Report*. He explained that the \$31,293 showing as over collected is due to the flow through of Sybase licenses. There will be more realized revenue when ESCs are invoiced for additional districts reported in December. The \$423,803 under expended is due mostly to PowerBuilder programming vacancies. There has been no use of fund balance this year.

Mr. McCauley reviewed the agenda attachment, *TxEIS Financial Report*. He reported that the realized interest as of last month was \$94,000. He also pointed out expenditures for the Denim Group, who is reworking the JAVA code, and reiterated that the \$3 million expenditure balance will be reduced by the \$774,000 moved back to fund balance.

Item No. 10

Review Accounts Receivable Report

Dr. Smith asked the Committee members to review the Accounts Receivable Report as an on-going information item.

Item No. 11

Other

None

Adjournment

Dr. Cano made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Dr. Hyden. The meeting of the Texas Computer Cooperative Management Committee adjourned at 12:05 p.m.