

## **Working Draft of the Strategic Plan for CEN**

V03: 09/20/2013

New Commons

CEN is one of the three networks operating under the Nutmeg umbrella. The other two networks are the Public Safety Data Network (PSDN) and the State Enterprise Network. Recent state legislation has mandated the go-forward role of the Nutmeg Network to forge, among other objectives, a closer cooperation and seamless functioning among the 3 sub-networks. The process that produced this plan (and the priorities the process produced herein) was well under way before the recent legislation was passed. It will take some time for the new legislation to be analyzed for implementation needs and the recently reconstituted Commission on Educational Technology (CET) to get organized. There are many major issues for the Nutmeg Network to address including governance and branding. At some future point, there may be one plan for the Nutmeg Network (and not a separate CEN plan). In the meantime this plan focuses only on CEN because the priorities of 2014 have to be achieved including getting the municipalities connected.

In this plan three terms require definition. A member organization is the entity such as a college or municipality that purchases access to the network. An end user is anyone who benefits from using the network. The community is composed of all the people involved in shaping or using CEN at any level.

### **CEN Mission**

There will be a robust, state-of-the-art broadband network providing cost-effective network and open-access services among Connecticut's educational, library, government, civic, and economic development organizations to facilitate the delivery of essential educational and community services for today and for greater opportunities tomorrow. CEN operates as a connected community to provide fundamental access for people such as students, researchers, faculty and citizens.

## Conditions analysis

*Immediate conditions...fully present with impact felt*

### Connectivity and capacity

- Need for better connectivity among libraries
- Growing demand for access to the networks (CEN and Nutmeg)

### Governance and community

- Impact of legislative changes in the 2013 legislative session on the expanded mission of CEN
- What role does CEN play in creating digital citizens in CT?
- Determine who the sponsor and champion is for everything CEN wants to get done

### Content and substance

- CEN must do for content development and access what it did in building the technology network by creating an “advanced content delivery system”

### Getting the word out

- Growing awareness that CEN is becoming more than an ISP by providing other services on the network
- Both the local and state perception about the role and use of the CEN network has to be changed through marketing
- There is confusion around who can get on the network
- Include network use data – both numbers and applications

### Resource mobilization

- Increase revenue to do more for members; get more money to do more things...articulate cost-avoidance (cost savings) and efficiencies created
- Municipalities and schools get together to redirect resources and work together by making a co-investment

*Emergent conditions...on the horizon with impact yet to be fully discerned*

### Connectivity and capacity

- 100 gigs at UCONN will allow for and yield larger, global research projects, which fuels economic growth
- The need to continuously build the “Information superhighway,” by adding more on and off ramps

### Governance and community

- Going forward, need to consider forming and using topical governance advisories such as one each for libraries, municipalities, researchers, faculty and others
- Address digital divide as we move to having access to content-rich information

### Content and substance

- Network users (beyond higher education) are less technology savvy and require more hands-on assistance
- Mastery testing for K-12 will be done online, which requires CEN delivering more bandwidth
- K-12, teacher evaluations to be done online, which requires CEN delivering more bandwidth
- Broadband access will become a bigger engine and driver for economic development
- Municipalities are moving from locally hosted to nationally hosted systems, e.g., for disaster management and efficiencies
- As we throw more new stuff online, the assumption has to be that we can do it

### Getting the word out

- Synergies among the networks – CEN, Public Safety Data Network and the State under the umbrella of Nutmeg; if we can do more with more, we can be more inclusive about all the networks working together

### Resource mobilization

- We have to look at forming delivery partnerships, and diversify them in order to survive

### *The collective impact of the stated conditions on CEN's work*

- Sustainability and support will come from mobilizing champions, budgeting and marketing. Champion has to be a trusted advisor to high level of government. Understand: is this network just a cost? Emphasize the network is a capacity building tool for – an important part of our lives.
- CEN has impact on economic growth
- Create public awareness by using sponsorship and creating momentum to push messaging forward...leverage what is going on

- Governance requires rethinking and expansion
- Determine impact on those using the network by understanding how the learner uses the network
- We need financial and personnel support to implement this plan
- How do we close the digital divide? What is CEN's role in closing the divide?
- Transparency and measurability of the networks is required to know what each network is doing so it all becomes one network

### ***Guiding principles to shape the future of CEN***

Long-term, all of the CEN guiding principles, listed in the section, are of equal importance. In this plan, the principles are divided into two buckets: those requiring extra attention in the near term and the other principles.

#### *The principles requiring the most attention in the next 12 to 18 months (July 1, 2013 to December 31, 2014)*

1. Tap diverse leadership skills of members and use more than one leader to glue stuff together, get advice and expand advisory groups where necessary.
2. Connect diverse members to each other so they come to experience themselves as a community so they work better together. Communicate by externally pushing out information. Show case-uses and best practices so members can learn from and collaborate to develop capabilities.
3. Continuously create the “advance value-added services center” to strengthen the capacity of the network. Work together to discern what services to put on the network...need to continuously show the value-added.
4. Collaborate for innovation by using common problem-solving methods to yield efficiencies; save money as well as accelerate applied innovation

#### *Remaining guiding principles*

- Handle the creative tension of delivering the distinct priorities to each CEN segment as well as the common priorities of all members

- Increase internal capacity building to work together to achieve peak performance by operating as an unfolding open system without bottlenecks
- Create digital opportunity for all citizens
- Ensure access anywhere, anytime, 24/7
- Ensure the interoperability of all the other technology networks

## Strategic Goals and Initiatives

In implementing the initiatives listed, CEN plays one of 4 roles: doer, partner, convener or facilitator. The roles are noted with each initiative.

*Goal 01: Continuously upgrade CEN technology to keep it viable for continuously evolving community needs*

FY 2014 Initiatives	FY 2015 Initiatives	FY 2016+ Initiatives
Eliminate older equipment not supported by new BTOP grant ( <i>doer</i> ).	Produce a plan for upgrading backbone of the CORE to 100gps ( <i>doer</i> ).	Every school and library gets a gigabyte ( <i>doer</i> ).
	Do a study of connectivity to support multiple connections into larger school districts (Partner with SDE) .	Implement 100gps ( <i>doer</i> ).
Develop a 2 year plan to connect, in phases, municipalities to the network ( <i>partner with GMIS</i> ).	Study/find a solution to last mile to schools so they get connected to student’s devices/records ( <i>convener</i> ).	
Implement the plan for municipalities connecting to the network – this initiative rolls into 2016 ( <i>partner with RPO</i> ).		
	Develop a pilot “early adopter” program for municipalities that are ready to go	

	<p><i>(Partner with GMIS).</i></p> <p>Help towns save money by sharing services such as: software hosting, email, town applications (e.g. finance, tax assessor, tax collector), disaster recovery sharing, VOIP systems, GIS – can be provided by towns sharing a center of excellence...vendors providing cloud like services – rolls into 2015 <i>(partner with GMIS).</i></p>	
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*Goal 02: Develop leadership group to build a community leverage network and be responsive to members needs*

FY 2014 Initiatives	FY 2015 Initiatives	FY 2016+ Initiatives
Develop organizational leadership teams composed of people in sub-committees to pursue: goals...vision, synergy, marketing, sustainability, collaboration <i>(facilitator).</i>	Mobilize users to establish a feedback loop to ensure continuous improvement by getting suggestions and doing evaluation <i>(facilitator).</i>	
	Build a network of users activities to do databases & needs analysis <i>(facilitator).</i>	

*Goal 03: Advocate and facilitate the broader adoption/use of existing technology and emerging innovative technologies*

FY 2014 Initiatives	FY 2015 Initiatives	FY 2016+ Initiatives
<p>Create better awareness through marketing and communication of what exists today through user groups, peer groups, white papers, member conferences, etc; focus on multiple opportunities to ensure 2 way communication (<i>doer</i>).</p>	<p>To better serve members, bring in 3 new partners with innovative technology, both hardware and applications, e.g., cloud solutions (<i>partner</i>).</p>	
	<p>Develop a protocol for sharing services; determining what goes on the network and what entrepreneurs can “sell” on the network (<i>doer</i>).</p>	
	<p>Break into different groups of decision makers and end users and respond to their priority needs. For each group of “users” develop best practices for how to utilize and implement existing and emerging technologies. Some service examples include (but not limited to) Telepresense (high definition video conferencing), threaded email, a catalogue of services and applications (<i>facilitator</i>).</p>	
	<p>Develop a partnership with the office of Economic and Community Development</p>	

FY 2014 Initiatives	FY 2015 Initiatives	FY 2016+ Initiatives
	to determine what CEN can do, as a partner, to accelerate the growth of the Connecticut economy ( <i>partner</i> ).	

*Goal 04: Make accessible a wide variety of educational resources that will facilitate increased usage...*

FY 2014 Initiatives	FY 2015 Initiatives	FY 2016+ Initiatives
	Help users have access to next generation technology training and professional development using statewide platform ( <i>convener</i> ).	

*Goal 05: Enhance network connectivity to the best resources available regardless of location....*

FY 2014 Initiatives	FY 2015 Initiatives	FY 2016+ Initiatives
Prepare a digest of what other regional networks offer/sell across the US and then survey members to see what they want to buy from the inventory; CEN serves as the broker/connector of national resources with member organizations ( <i>doer</i> ).		

### *Ongoing Initiatives*

- Establish connection to other regional networks for using services above the network
- Upgrade connections to our peering partners where necessary

### *CEN as playing a role, but not taking the lead*

- Develop universal mobile application capability such as e-textbooks
- Design and implement a resource delivery platform including curriculum repository and a content management system
- The statewide, student information system (Power School) with a possible focus on creating a data warehouse

### **CEN Capabilities to Develop and Leverage**

- Last mile connection to every school district, (but don't have staff capability to do anything with it)
- Gig-U capability at UCONN
- Model 21<sup>st</sup> century towns
- Process for prototyping R&D and innovation

### **Ongoing Strategic Questions** (to continuously keep in mind as the plan is implemented)

Keep these questions in mind because the answers will impact the on-going discussion among CEN stakeholders as they continuously shape their understanding of the external conditions, principles and initiatives and the plan is implemented:

- How to support different classes of users with different needs?
- All services do not have to emanate from CEN: how can members offer services to each other?
- What to do to educate members so they get increased benefits from the network?
- What can we do to stay fully customer-focused?
- Nobody knows what we do: how do we get the word out more? Build support for both current and potential members?
- What capabilities can members add to the network?
- Given CEN cost models, what does it save the state in overall costs?
- What are some of the early wins, e.g., creating efficiencies for municipalities to take action on before the plan is final?
- What's the sustainability of the network? How does CEN sustain/service the growing inclusivity?
- How to package up examples of uses such as best uses of mobile apps?
- In what ways can CEN do more as there is a growing inequity as all towns are not equal financially?

## **Roles of the Ongoing Planning Committee (after July 2013)**

- Define and guide the continuous strategic planning process
- Continually gather external intelligence that can impact – adversely or affirming – CEN and the plan
- Identify the right mix of people to engage in other forums
- Provide feedback on the implementation of the plan