

Arkansas Distance Learning Coordinating Council

Arkansas Department of Higher Education
114 East Capitol – 3rd Floor Conference Room

June 1, 2006
9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

AGENDA

9:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.	Call to order Review & Approve Minutes
9:15 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Agenda Overview / Discussion Set Next meeting / Location Discuss Agenda Items for next meeting
10:00 a.m. – 10:20 a.m.	Southeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative Mr. Bruce Terry, Director
10:20 a.m. – 10:40 a.m.	Q & A
10:45 a.m. – 11:05a.m.	Monticello School District Mr. Tommy Tyler, Assistant Superintendent
11:05 a.m. – 11:20 a.m.	Q & A
11:30 p.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Lunch
12:40 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Bauxite School District Mr. Keith Baker, Principal, Bauxite High School
1:00 p.m. – 1:20 p.m.	Q & A
1:30 p.m. – 1:50 p.m.	DeQueen /Mena Education Service Cooperative Mr. Frank Scott, Director
1:50 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Q & A
2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Other Business / Adjourn

Distance Learning Coordinating Council
ADHE
June 1, 2006

Members Present: Drew Mashburn, Gary Underwood, Carolyn Ashcraft, Nancy Sparks, Steve Floyd, Belinda Kittrell, Sandra Hardage, Karen Ghoditti,, Bob Mouser Kathleen Branton, Rodney Curry, Gail McClure, Chris Robbins, Karen Wheeler

Visitors: Shirley Pickle from DLC, Becky Jester, Cathi Mullinax, Arthur Dunn, Harvey Nickols, Gordon Smith, Phillip Young from the-Education Cooperatives and Bruce Thomason, OIT.

Meeting called to order at 9:15 a.m.

Minutes from May 15, 2006: list the agenda at the top of the minutes, clean up who said what and resend to council members.

Next meeting date: June 29—8:30-12:30 at AETN in Conway—The council will hear recommendations from subcommittees. Max Kolstead should be invited as a resource for questions. Ask Max to send his PowerPoint for review by the council.

Old business: Coordination subcommittee was asked to present their revised committee report. A motion was made to bring their recommendations to the full council by Sandra Hardage and a 2nd by Rodney Curry. Motion approved..

Presentation was made by **Bruce Terry, Director of SEARK Education Coop**

The following information came from Bruce Terry's PowerPoint presentation: ECHS, ADE, ADHE and all the coops have a roll in the Early College High School partnership:

What it is:

- Secondary/post-secondary partnership
- Significant initiative addressing high school reform
- Rigorous curricular opportunities for academically advanced high school students
- Collaborative effort to promote post secondary enrollment and attainment of post secondary degrees
- Opportunity to recruit excellent students into the teaching profession

Why needed:

- Economic development is directly related to education attainment level of the citizenry
- AR ranks 49th in the percentage of citizens who have attained a post secondary Bachelor degree

- Duplication of content during the junior and senior years of high school and the freshman and sophomore years of college
- Addresses “senioritis”

Partnerships with
State universities

- ASU
- UCA
- HSU
- UAM
- UAPB

2 yr College Partnerships

- ASU Beebe
- NCC
- UACC Hope

Note: There is a committee established to work on partnerships with the 2 yr college association.

AECHS Course Offerings

- All AECHS courses are college level/college credit courses
- AECHS courses are dual credit courses

Advanced Placement Courses

- Courses offered through the AECHS are offered as Ad Placement courses if there is an appropriate AP correlation for that particular course
- All AECHS instructors must complete AP training and must incorporate AP strategies in the course delivery

Methods of Delivery:

Compressed Interactive Video

- Web-CT used as a tool
- Other emerging technologies will also be used as tools

On local high school campus as a part of the regular curriculum

Web-based course offerings will be considered

Maintain Appropriate Rigor

Highly qualified teachers

Teacher Qualifications:

- Masters Degree
- 18 hrs of graduate level courses in the teaching area
- Secondary High School certification
- Course syllabi approved by ADE for weighted credit
- College course syllabi approved by post secondary participating institution
- College assessments are utilized as a minimum standard

- Meets all AP Audit Requirements

Student Admission Requirements:

Students must complete admission requirements at the participating post secondary institution granting credit

ACT Entrance requirements:

ACT or equivalent score of 19 is required in reading and English for all non-math courses except Spanish I/II

Math Requirements:

Intermediate Algebra--ACT 16 or higher

Survey/ College Algebra--ACT 19 or higher

Pre-calculus-- ACT 22 or higher

Calculus I --ACT 23 or higher

Note Compass, computerized version of ACT may be utilized for admission purposes

Current Course Offering:

Math

English

College Speech

History

AP Psychology

Spanish

Elementary Spanish I, II

Possible-AP Biology, Chemistry, Physics B, Physics C, Earth Science

Teacher Ed Component--Introduction to Education

AP Psychology—Intro to Psychology, Child Development

There are 31 schools participating and 730 students enrolled for next year and 162 on the waiting list.

Focus the direction of AECHS to include the following:

Keep the current program with no change.

Expand current program to provide current offerings to more students.

Add a teacher education component

Add a science component

Add web based courses.

Funding issues:

Need full funding one sixth ADM per student.

Funding needs to be based on spring registration.

Program stability is an issue for staffing.

Q – (Karen Ghidotti) On the funding issue---When you say you need full funding, what do you mean?

A- (Bruce Terry)- 1/6 of ADM would work well, currently– 1/6 comes off the top—

Q – (Chris Robbins) – Are colleges getting funding from this?

A- (Bruce Terry)—Yes, they are receiving funding.

Q-(Chris Robbins)-Are they getting tuition?

A-(Bruce Terry)-Colleges charge tuition, ECHS-charges for teacher

Q (Drew Mashburn)-Is Gates still funding?

A – (Bruce Terry) \$425,000 comes from ADE

Q-(Drew Mashburn)-Where are you teaching from?

A-(Bruce Terry) From the Coop.

Q-(Karen Ghidotti)-How many years have you been doing this?

A-(Bruce Terry) 1

Q. (Karen Ghidotti) When do you think you should move from pilot

A (Chris Robbins)It shouldn't be set at one year, it gives flexibility to progress

Q (Drew Mashburn)-Was ECHS the only place that students could get concurrent credit courses?

A (Bruce Terry) – Yes, we are the only one giving concurrent credit.

Chris Robbins comment- we offer concurrent also.

Q-(Karen Ghidotti) Do you want funding to be open?

A (Bruce Terry)-I want to be able to serve more kids to offer courses to all students that sign up that year.

Q (Drew Mashburn)-Talk about serving students-the number of students –Would you provide courses if there was only 1 student?

A (Bruce Terry) We do have to meet a level of statewide availability.

Recommendation to the Council from Bruce Terry:

Terry will send us recommendations.

Presentation made by **Tommy Tyler-Asst. Superintendent at Monticello**

What is the distance learning plan overall in AR?

It will really grow, schools will collaborate and it doesn't matter where you are whether in Monticello or anywhere.

OUR coop was the first to do distance learning with a cooperative of schools. Leon McLean wrote a grant with North Arkansas Community College as the cornerstone. NACC charged one-half tuition to students in the participating schools. When the

project began Yellville had 45% of graduating seniors who went to college. At end of 4 years, there were 60% of the graduating seniors that had college hours. This program started changing the culture of the area. Med-Pro Ed was offered via distance learning and then students were transported to technical college where they were enrolled in the medical program of the college.

SEARK had the same thing happening with a slightly different set of circumstances and different partners. Only 16% of our students graduate with Bachelors Degree. We know we are struggling. If we start in high school and kids get involved with concurrent credit, it will increase the number of those going to college. A reality in our high schools is that they can start earning college credit.

What part does distance learning play in AR? A big, big part. We need to push distance learning. That's the way students learn. We need to make sure we give all those kids out in AR a taste of success and it has to be early. Give them encouragement.

Q. (Gail McClure) Mention the connections with parents and schools.

A. (Tommy Tyler) All schools are suppose to do that with parental involvement.

Q (Gail McClure) Is this happening only in your school districts?

A (Tommy Tyler) I don't know.

Q (Drew Mashburn) Are there any technology barriers?

A (Tommy Tyler) The lack of knowledge is a steep learning curve, The technology side is taken care of by the coop distance learning coordinator and ADE provides the management system connectivity. Arkansas is ahead of a large part of the country. Our network system is advanced and now affordable. We need to make a push for long term help for everyone. Be willing to support and fund these programs. They are worthwhile. Fund it off the top, if possible.

Q (Chris Robbins) What kind of support do you get from the coop's distance learning coordinator?

A. (Tommy Tyler) Great support. They installed equipment and worked with local staff. They do troubleshooting as well. It has worked well for our school, Traci Jones trained all us.

Q (Karen Ghidotti) Are you getting courses from other providers?

A (Tommy Tyler) Yes, we need core classes like math as part of 38 core units. We should pay for it and take the responsibility of sharing with another district. Aside from sharing the cost, there should be a sliding scale for tuition/concurrent credit for those in poverty.

Q (Karen Ghidotti) Would you pay tuition for courses for your students?

A (Tommy Tyler) For this type of learning for more kids, yes. I would pay if we could equip those students with skills they need to succeed.

Keith Baker- Principal Bauxite High School

Kim Lavendusky, curriculum coordinator, Karla Tackett-distance learning facilitator

This was our 1st yr to participate and a new experience for me as well. We had positive experiences. There were 15 students this year and we have 30+ next year. There was a hesitancy on my part because I didn't know how it would work or what to expect from this type of class. We've had nothing but positives to say about the experience. The staff and teachers at Distance Learning Center have been wonderful to work with. The kids have had nothing but positives. We are a AAA school, 1100 + kids K-12 and it is impossible to offer all of the courses that we could utilize through distance learning. We are excited about the opportunity of concurrent credit. We have participated with Ouachita Technical College and offered Freshman Com I and II at 6:30 a.m. The early bird classes were offered 2 days a week on Monday and Wednesday. Parents had to pay \$200 per course. By utilizing dl we can put it in our school day. We are a rural district. Last year students were enrolled in Fashion Merchandizing and French I. Next year, we will be taking upper academic level courses, concurrent courses, AP, French II, Comp I, II with ECHS, Survey of College Math and College Algebra. We are still looking for Spanish I.

Recommendations:

1. A common calendar and a common bell schedule across the state
Because of distance learning from DLC and remediation we had to go to an 8 period day. I am not real happy about it because we are losing valuable instructional time. We lost 7 minutes out of the class period and that adds up over the course of the year. But to offer the additional courses we had to go to 8 periods.
2. More course offerings –more seats available - the courses we needed were filled up.
3. More funding—for computers in distance learning classes, one to one computers are a requirement from DLC. If they didn't have the one to one it would be difficult to take test, harder for facilitators to know what is going on, and class project work is done on the computer.
4. Collaboration between providers on courses they offer. Prioritize high demand courses such as Spanish, Freshman Comp I and Comp II

Karla Tackett:

Concerning facilitators: Their roll is to take care of what the teacher needs done (ex. Take care of copies, mail, etc.). They do everything the teacher does except teach the class. The teachers have been easy to work with from the DLC. Organization is the key. If the facilitator is not organized it won't work. When the facilitator is absent we have a substitute facilitator and we call the same sub each time. Our director of technology subs as well.

Discipline issues- I go through the teacher first and the teacher takes care of the discipline, the facilitator does the paperwork, calls the principal, etc.

Recommendations for facilitators training: more hands on with the equipment, explanation of the paperwork, etc.

Q. (Karen Ghidotti)-Tell us about the facilitator training

A. (Karla Tackett): Facilitator training was excellent. They told us about discipline procedures, how the computer/software worked, how the system sounds work and what to look out for. If we had questions or, we could contact them. Other information was in facilitator's manual as a reference.

Q. (Karen Ghidotti): What about the APSCN process?

A. (Karla Tackett) The APSCN process went smoothly compared to other things.

Q. (Karen Ghidotti) Kim, you are on the curriculum end of it. Did you ever go and visit the distance learning classroom?

A. (Kim Lavendusky) Yes, I was very impressed with how orderly and organized the classroom was.

Q. (Belinda Kittrell)Did you use your system for anything other than classes such as professional development?

A. (Keith Baker) Our lab is not real large and is so small that we are not able to use it for professional development. We couldn't get all the faculty in the room.

Q. (Sandra Hardage) If you had to pay tuition for distance learning courses, would you be willing to pay for classes?

A (Keith Baker) I would not be as inclined to take the courses. We wouldn't be able to utilize as many courses.

Q (Karen Ghoditti) What if you had to pay for core courses?

A. (Keith Baker) I wouldn't want to pay for any of it, because of everything we are trying to fund in school these days. Some of our mandates are not funded. We can only stretch our funds so far. We have got to look at the "have to" first and distance learning is an additional opportunity for our students.

Q (Drew Mashburn)-The school districts get funding from the state to fund core curriculum. Would it be appropriate to go to the state to ask for more money to provide core courses via distance? Would the question not be why are you providing the course later on?

A (Keith Baker) We can offer what we have to offer but we can't offer what we want to offer. With Governor Huckabee trying to promote and bring in business to Arkansas, our product, if you will our students, must be more employable and better prepared so we've got to offer those upper level courses. We can't just get by with the core 38. Yes, we can offer the core 38 but we can't do the extras and without the extrad we can't do the additional.

Q (Chris Robbins)-Do you save money by offering distance learning courses?

A (Keith Baker) We're not saving money. We're just able to do more. We're still spending money on what we have to fund and have to offer. We're offering the basics. We are spending our money. This just gives us a better opportunity to offer more.

Q (Sandra Hardage) What will happen to Bauxite school district if the line charges are not paid by the state?

A (Keith Baker) I'm going to beg. We'll do what we have to. I'll fight to keep the program. We can only fund what we can fund.

Frank Scott-Director of DeQueen-Mena Education Cooperative

Don't make any more rules.

In 1985, DeQueen-Mena Coop had 18 school districts. We will have 13 school districts on July 1 as a result of consolidation. We have school districts sharing school to school- (Oden and Acorn). This initiative began with Lean McLean at OUR coop. In the DeQueen-Mena Coop of all the school districts DeQueen is the largest. For the small rural schools, distance learning is the answer to the needs of the school district. It is a chance to level the playing field. We need a generic look at what's going on in this state with distance learning. We need more local publicity. There are a lot of kids who aren't going on to college. Distance learning can help some of the kids who might not go to college gain the experience of concurrent classes and a have chance to succeed on the college level.

We offer professional development for teachers via CIV to teachers who live 90 miles away from the nearest 4 year institution (HSU). This year we are offering remedial classes to students. We hope to offer Algebra I in spring and Algebra II in fall.

We also want to offer Spanish to elementary through ASMSA. Foreman, AR offered Spanish to elementary many years ago.

Q (Karen Ghidotti)-Do most of your rural schools use distance learning more for core courses?

A (Frank Scott) In the case of the consolidated school districts, yes. In the others, no they are doing more enrichment.

Q (Gary Underwood) Legislators are asking what is going on and what are schools doing with distance learning. Obviously, the things that are happening at ADE's Distance Learning Center get reported. Do the things that are going on in that consolidated school district get reported?

A (Frank Scott) Yes, we do reported it to ADE.

I believe distance learning is a way of leveling the playing field. We don't always get the very best teachers unless we draw them.

Q (Gary Underwood) – Can you get a class from another state?

A (Frank Scott) I would like to do that, the idea of setting up a sister class with another state or another nation, would be good for cultural awareness among other things. We often run into a problem with colleges outside the state wanting to offer college courses inside the state. There seems to be a turf issue.

Q (Sandra Hardage) How do we begin to break down these barriers?

A (Frank Scott) Begin with a pilot? Located where I am, I get teachers from Oklahoma wanting to take professional development. And I am all for it.

Q (Gary Underwood) Are the distance leaning coordinators working well?

A (Frank Scott) My distance learning coordinator has helped get the distance learning systems working. They are important. It is 85 miles to drive to our furthest school and he has been vital to making the system work and making distance learning work. Cathi does an excellent job in coordinating. We hope to move distance learning to middle school and elementary school. Virtual tours would help expose students to new things. I have some kids in my area who have never traveled more than 55 miles from home.

Q (Nancy Sparks) How do you feel this council could help with the publicity?

A (Frank Scott) I think the Governor ought to be publicizing ECHS. I think he ought to be doing public service announcements.

Q.(Chris Robbins) Don't the community colleges have an agreement that allows the closest institution to be the one that awards the credit if there is a competitive situation?

A. (Nancy Sparks) I think they do but there are still major turf wars.

(Frank Scott) Chris, I think that's right.

Q (Karen Ghidotti) How much money do we need?

A (Frank Scott) For the next 3 or 4 years, I think we need a pot of money to draw from. In time, I think it will work out that we will have to look at a possible average level. Let's get the thing up and going. If you do ADM, some of my schools are going to be hurt by it.

Q –(Sandra Hardage) In your opinion, how much money do you think that might be and what would be included in the cost?

A (Frank Scott)–Increase funding to \$10M, don't duplicate courses. The cost should include: all course fees, school to school collaboration. And line charges should be included in stable funding and never go away. Levelize the line charges throughout the state. Don't fund by ADM. It should not come out of the school districts funding and if it does increase the school districts funding.

We need highly qualified teachers.

Q (Belinda Kittrell) An issue that was brought up earlier was a consideration of those teachers not certified by ADE but meet the requirement for the college with a doctorate.

A (Frank Scott) We need a P16 certification – surely then we can get teachers

Frank Scott's Recommendations:

- Increase funding
- Pay for the line charges
- The Governor should be more involved in distance learning
- Common bell schedule, common calendar
- Have the Telecoms hold down cost. In New Mexico, Oklahoma and Virginia, the Governor and legislature have taken the initiative to hold the cost down.
- Arkansas is always going to be rural, our area is not going to grow a lot and distance learning is one way to provide equal opportunity for kids.
- The state needs to have its own scheduling system
- The legislature needs to put more funds into distance learning.
- I like the fact that we have distance learning coordinators for help in the field.
- We need to be free to experiment so don't make too many rules and regulations

Minutes will be posted to the ADE website. However, the website is down at the present time.

Motion to Adjourn:

Motion made by Nancy Sparks and 2nd by Gary Underwood. Motion approved. Minutes approved June 29, 2006.