

Arkansas Distance Learning Coordinating Council Meeting Minutes – June 29, 2006

Location: AETN, Conway, Arkansas
9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Members Present: Drew Mashburn, Carolyn Ashcraft, Nancy Sparks, Belinda Kittrell, Sandra Hardage, Karen Ghidotti, Kathleen Branton, Rodney Curry, Gail McClure, Chris Robbins

Visitors Present: Cathi Mullinax, Arthur Dunn, Harvey Nichols, Phillip Young, Bruce Thomason, Guy Fenter, Tracie Jones, Dee Cox, Rick Nance, Philip Young, Lisa Russell, John Davis.

Karen Ghidotti called the meeting to order at 9:40 AM.
Minutes from May 15 were approved; motion by Gail McClure and 2nd by Nancy Sparks.

Minutes from June 1, 2006 were approved by motion from Gail McClure and seconded by Sandra Hardage; 2nd was made by Carolyn Ashcraft.

Meeting Agenda:

9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Call to order Review & Approve Minutes
10:00 a.m. – 10:20 a.m.	Dawson Education Service Cooperative Sandra Hardage
10:20 a.m. – 10:40 a.m.	Q & A
10:45 a.m. – 11:05 a.m.	Western Arkansas Service Cooperative Guy Fenter, Director
11:05 a.m. – 11:20 a.m.	Q & A
11:20 a.m. – 11:40 a.m.	<i>Lonoke School District</i> <i>Sharron Havens, Superintendent (not confirmed)</i>
11:40 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Q & A
12:00 p.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Other Business
12:30 p.m.	Lunch / Adjourn

The Council members agree that the next meeting should be dedicated as a work-session, with no formal presentations by stakeholders, Council members, or guests. The work-session was scheduled for August 4th from 8:30 AM to 2:30 PM at the Arkansas Science and Technology Authority.

Presentation #1:

Dawson Education Service Cooperative Presentation by Sandra Hardage:

The Dawson DL program began in the Fall of 2005.

A summary of the program is as followed: Assisting career action planning for any student in any school district anywhere in the state; the definition for “Career Clusters” is as followed, as stated by Sandra: “Career Clusters represent a grouping of occupations and broad industries based on commonalities.”

Sandra provided a summary of the sixteen (16) career clusters. Not all of the area clusters have been developed to date. Every district must offer three (3) programs of study from the sixteen (16) clusters. The sixteen (16) Career Clusters are an organizing tool for schools to offer a broader, more durable preparation for the world of work.

The goals of the Career Clusters are the following:

- High academic attainment
- Successful transition to post-secondary education and training
- Preparation for success in careers
- Promote/support economic development to increase productivity
- Enhance career development outcomes

Student and community benefits of Career Clusters are the following:

- Help develop workplace, academic and technical skills
- Build links to the community
- Add relevance to the curriculum
- Provide real-world learning

The frameworks for Career Clusters are a) cluster level, b) pathway level, and c) career specialties.

Career Clusters via distance learning expands cluster offering at the LEA and offers opportunity for additional programs of study for the LEA.

Sandra Hardage provided data on the following:

- Top ten (10) growth industries, 2002-2012
- Top ten (10) growth occupations, 2002-2012

A video entitled “Student Showcase 2005-2006” was shown as part of Sandra’s presentation. The video revealed the need and successes of the Dawson DL program. The video also revealed samples of the students’ work.

Link to Dawson Center for Distance Learning: www.dawson.dsc.k12.ar.us

Q and A:

Gail McClure: Are other Arkansas Coops sharing in this offering?

Sandra Hardage: Not every Coop is offering career clusters.

Karen Ghidotti: How is this program funded?

Sandra: The DL program is funded through the Arkansas Department of Education as a demonstration project.

Conclusion of the Dawson Coop presentation

Presentation #2:

Western Arkansas Service Cooperative presentation by Mr. Guy Fenter, Director and Mr. Harvey Nichols, DL Coordinator

Guy Fenter, Director of the Coop provided introductory information pertaining to their DL program and then introduced Mr. Harvey Nichols, the Coordinator of their DL program as the presenter.

Their DL program is currently composed of 22 school districts, with a wide diversity in range of needs. Fort Smith and Van Buren school districts were the first two districts to implement CIV capability within their coop area. By the end of this year ('06) each of their areas schools will have implemented CIV. A few of their area schools leverage DL to a high degree where others are still in the investigative stage of utilization.

The Western Arkansas Service Cooperative offers schools concurrent credit through their partnership with University of Arkansas at Ft. Smith. This program has been recognized nationally as an effective model. The program offers the following 4 course offerings: College Algebra, Freshman Comp 1 & 2, and World Civilization 1 & 2. Eight districts have committed to participate in these course offerings in coming school year.

Their program is unique in that the instructors are teachers from the U. of A. Ft. Smith campus, and the courses include college students in the classrooms. These classes meet 3 days a week with high school students in study hall the remaining 2 days. This structure helps ensure academic rigor for the DL course offerings.

Mr. Nichols stated that as budgets begin to tighten, there is a need for the sharing of DL teachers across the state and between state DL programs. His recommendation is to transition some of the state's demonstration projects into non-demonstrated status.

Presentation #3:

Sharon Havens, Superintendent of Lonoke School District was unable to attend for that presentation.

Cathi Mullinax was asked to provide the council with data on the numbers of teachers and students that are utilizing distance learning.

Motion made to adjourn by Sandra Hardage and 2nd by Kathleen Branton. The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 AM.