A Word from MC's CEO

Each new year brings with it both reflections and visions — reflections of the year just passed and visions of what the new year may bring. Last year was a strong year across the OECN, moving every Ohio entity off the legacy fiscal system and on to new tools for payroll, accounting, and inventory. We've been a nationwide leader in the Pandemic EBT program and the OECN Education Job Board is being used all across the state.

Looking ahead to this new year, the security and resiliency of the OECN is better than ever and is strengthening every day. Additionally, the 200GB (middle mile) project to expand OECN capacity is well under way — most ITCs have the Packet Lite gear installed, and the Juniper gear to complete the equation is arriving in 2023. We will continue to advocate for Ohio to receive a fair and full allocation for federal broadband funds in the new year. Collaboration among ITCs and the Management Council is expanding, perhaps related to the outstanding Executive Leadership Series by the Center for Creative Leadership that has engaged so many ITC leaders. As this is an odd numbered year, the new biennium budget will get resolved by June 30, and as it is currently crafted, it looks favorable for the OECN. For 2023, all signs point to another fantastic year across the OECN partnership — and we are looking forward to it.

– Geoff Andrews

No-Match Grant Opportunity for Your School Libraries to Grow Their Collections

This holiday season, give the school libraries you support a gift that will keep giving for years to come: help them win a no-match grant to enhance their collections! The State Library of Ohio invites libraries to apply for a collection development grant to purchase books by Ohio authors and books recognized by Ohio-based book award programs. The Celebrating Ohio Book Awards & Authors (COBAA) Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant program is a unique opportunity to enrich library collections with books having an Ohio connection. The maximum grant award is $2,000 per eligible institution. COBAA grant proposals must be submitted via the State Library website by midnight, January 17, 2023. Using the online grant application process is required.

The 2023 COBAA Book List contains nearly 2,000 eligible books. The awarded federal funds must be used to purchase titles from the COBAA book list. To learn more about the COBAA grant and apply at the State Library of Ohio's website, click here.

Management Council Implementing Redundant Data Center

The Management Council's redundant data center is designed to enhance the services provided to our ITC partners. As the use of the Management Council's hosted data center services continue to grow, providing redundancy ensures continual access to these critical business resources. The implementation of the redundant data center is in process with operational capabilities being phased in throughout the remainder of this fiscal year.

Hosted data center services are just one of many ways that the Management Council and ITCs work together to improve operational efficiencies and reduce costs. The redundant data center provides scalable, highly available infrastructure that can be used for services such as server hosting or off-site backup.

By utilizing the private statewide fiber network from the Ohio Academic Resources Network (OARnet), the Management Council and ITCs have a high-capacity, highly redundant connection to access hosted data center services. As this connection does not use the public internet, it not only reduces cost, but offers additional security that provides protection for the critical business resources and data hosted by these services.

Questions can be directed to the Management Council's Data Center team (dc-info@managementcouncil.org).

Ohio Connectivity Champions Assist Cleveland Digital Equity Coalition

During the pandemic, the Cleveland Digital Equity Coalition (CDEC) handed out over 2,300 T-Mobile hotspots to students throughout Cleveland through the program, *PCs for People*. The hotspots were due to end service on December 31, 2022, and the CDEC needed assistance notifying the families of the program's end and help in determining qualification through the [Affordable Connectivity Program](#) (ACP). The Ohio Connectivity Champions were asked to assist in reaching out to those families, and refer them to the CDEC [Digital](#)

[Navigators](#),who help the families sign up for ACP. During the months of October and November, the Champions attempted to contact all 2,300 households, often multiple times, by either phone or email, to notify them of the program end. Families were thankful for the free service from the CDEC, as well as the lead on ACP. The Champions were successful in reaching over 750 families on the phone and hundreds more through email.

Advocacy Update

The end of the calendar year marks the end of the 134th General Assembly and the start of the 135th General Assembly. Elections in November yielded no major changes to the top political offices in the state. At the Statehouse, Speaker Cupp will be replaced by Speaker Merrin (R – Monclova Township), while President Huffman (R – Lima) was re-elected to his second term as Senate President. Ohio House and Senate Republicans added seats in both chambers, securing a super majority (3/5) and veto override powers.

During lame duck, Sub SB 178 took center stage in the House and Senate Primary and Secondary Education Committees. Sponsored by Senator Reineke, Sub SB 178 aims to reform the function and responsibilities of the state education offices. Under this bill the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) would be transformed into the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (DEW). The bill would also remove many of the Ohio State Board of Education's and Superintendent of Public

Instruction's roles and responsibilities (including the rules making process for the Management Council) and transfers them to DEW once a candidate is selected.

Sub Sb 178 signifies a drastic shift in how education is overseen in Ohio. The bill sponsor, and other proponents, cite declining statewide test scores, lack of leadership/accountability, and lack of career technical education support as their key reasons for supporting the bill. Opponents primarily raised concern over the timing of this bill, specifically the addition of a 2,100-page amendment during the final days of lame duck. Ultimately, the bill did not make it out of the Ohio House and failed to become law. There is a high probability Sub SB 178 resurfaces as a priority bill for the Ohio Senate during the 135th General Assembly.

For more information on Sub SB 178 or other pending legislation, please see the [Management Council bill tracker](#). In the new year, the bill tracker will be periodically updated and more material added, including meeting notices and news articles. If you have questions or any other ideas to supplement the bill tracker, please reach out to Ben Cech at ben.cech@managementcouncil.org.

Tanzu Migration Project Completed

VMware Tanzu The Management Council Data Center team recently wrapped up the VMWare Tanzu Kubernetes migration project, which moved all ITC-hosted Redesign applications to a brand new Tanzu infrastructure.

VMWare Tanzu offers many advantages, such as easier management of multiple Kubernetes clusters, as well as full Kubernetes product support from VMWare when any issues arise. As part of this project, the Management Council team gave each ITC their own hosted Kubernetes cluster.

In the older hosting environment, all ITCs were hosted in one shared Kubernetes cluster. Management Council-hosted customers control their deployments using VMWare's vRealize Automation product, which offers an easy-to-use graphical interface, allowing non-technical staff to manage deployment and maintenance of Redesign applications.

Full information about Management Council Redesign hosting can be found at the following Confluence link.

https://community.mcoecn.org/x/HIKjBw

Empower Educators in Your Districts Through the INFOhio ICoach Program

The INFOhio ICoach program is for PreK-12 educators in schools and districts who are interested in learning how to integrate INFOhio's digital content and web tools into instruction and share their knowledge with other Ohio educators. Recently, INFOhio expanded the ICoach application and training period to make it more flexible for busy school staff.

ICoach applicants complete up to fifteen hours of online, asynchronous training using INFOhio Learning Pathways. In addition, they connect with current ICoaches and those in training to discuss and reflect in Open Space. Upon completion, new ICoaches earn contact-hour certificates and a digital badge. Learn about the benefits and value of the program from ICoaches themselves in the INFOhio ICoach Spotlights, a recurring Teach With INFOhio blog series.

INFOhio ICoach Program

- Grow your professional network with a community of INFOhio trainers across the state of Ohio
- Add to your training toolkit with INFOhio's free digital content and web tools that support Ohio Learning Standards
- Share the power of INFOhio with educators, parents, students, and more

Want to know if you have any ICoaches in your districts? Visit the ICoach page and scroll to the map to see where the more than 330 ICoaches are located. Encourage educators in your districts to visit the ICoach page and fill out the application. If you or your schools have questions about the ICoach program, contact us at support.infohio.org.

MC Store Info and Updates

The Ohio Education Job Board now offers a single sign-on feature that provides users a single portal to manage profile information, apply to jobs posted from SchoolSpring or PowerSchool's Applicant Tracking solution, and save jobs to apply for when they are ready.

The agreement with Dropbox Sign (formerly HelloSign) has been renewed! The new agreement begins in January 2023 and the accounts are available pro-rated monthly to the end date of July 2024.

Questions about the Management Council Store or products offered there? Please reach out to Madison Ernst (madison. ernst@managementcouncil.org) or Jessica Madison (jessica. madison@managementcouncil.org).

Ohio Educational Technology Conference (OETC)
February 14–16, 2023

The Ohio Educational Technology Conference (OETC) will be held February 14-16 at the Greater Columbus Convention Center in Columbus. This conference is designed to cultivate partnerships, promote collaboration, deliver high-quality information, and make technology accessible and enjoyable for educators.

The Management Council and INFOhio will host Ask-the-Expert sessions in the booth for ITCs and INFOhio partners. There will be seating for attendees and a projector/screen for presentations. Information on signing up for presentations and manning the booth can be found HERE.

ITC Appointments and Transitions

As we start a new calendar year, we pause to recognize a few ITC director appointments and position transitions.

Doug Marrah has started his roll as the new executive director at TCCSA; his predecessor, Stu Workman, has transitioned to the roll of fiscal support specialist. Effective

January 1, 2023, Angie Underwood will step down as executive director, making way for Adam Truex to assume the position. Angie will fulfill the assistant director role.

Congratulations to these ITC professionals on their new appointments.

OECN United Conference: Creating Bonds, Building Knowledge

The Management Council and ITC Conference Committee are excited to announce the first annual conference for ITCs, by ITCs — *OECN United Conference: Creating Bonds, Building Knowledge.* The goal of the conference is to provide opportunities for learning, networking, and bonding for ITC team members in all areas of operation. There will be roundtable discussions and breakout sessions centered on technology/security, fiscal/HR, SIS/EMIS, INFOhio, and other topics pertinent to ITCs.

This inaugural conference will be held Thursday and Friday, March 30–31, 2023, at the Cherry Valley Hotel in Newark, Ohio.

Breakout session presentation proposals are being accepted until January 20, 2023. For more information or to submit your proposal, visit: bit.ly/oecn-united. Registration will open the end of January.

For more information, contact or Kellie Gainey (kellie.gainey@managementcouncil.org) or Jessica Madison (jessica.madison@managementcouncil.org).

Upcoming Events / Meetings...

1/18........... MC/ITC Directors Meeting
1/19........... MC BOT Meeting
2/14-16 ..... OETC Conference
2/21-23 ..... MC/ITC Training – CCL
3/15 .... MC/ITC Directors Meeting
3/23 .... MC BOT Meeting
3/30-31 ..... OECN United Conference
4/18-20 ..... MC/ITC Training – CCL
4/18-21 ..... OASBO Annual Conference & Expo
5/4 .... MC/ITC Directors Meeting
5/4 .... MC BOT Meeting
5/5 .... Membership Meeting

MC will be Closed in Observance of...

1/16........... MLK Holiday
2/20.......... Presidents Day
4/7............ Good Friday
5/29.......... Memorial Day
7/4............. Independence Day

Happy New Year!

Next newsletter: April 2023