SR-PLN IT Committee Meeting Minutes

October 27, 2020 | 9:00 AM CST / 10:00 AM Eastern

Location: Zoom

Plan of Work Updates Report

Item 1 - Customize our existing grant repository in Teams into sub-categories based on the various technologies (AI, ML, AWL, etc..). Members will contribute grant opportunities as they are identified.

Karen DiCicco, Ashwani Srivastava

- Folder already existed for "Grant Opportunities". Need to create categories, all team members need to contribute content.

Item 2 - Refine the Best Practices document related to IT security, post COVID-19. Share these best practices with other PLN committees, directors and administrators to help promote security awareness.

Brian McGhee, Dwayne Hunter

- No report available

Item 3 - Create whitepaper for the Directors in reference to non-compliant software acquisitions.

Rhonda Conlon, Jason Shoemaker

- No report available

Item 4 - Software list for use by the IT Committee. Divided into categories and business use cases. Institution agnostic if shared with others outside the committee. Create a Teams channel for this purpose.

Brian Watson, Karen DiCicco, Jason Shoemaker

- Folder "Software" created.
- Karen DiCicco already posted the list for UAEX. It is broken into categories. She asked if we also wanted to include our inhouse developed software - all said yes.
- Brian suggested that the doc be a spreadsheet instead that each institute can contribute to. This would eliminate the multiple documents. He will create it.
- The question was asked - What is the goal of this item?
  - The main goal is to have a list of what our peers are using for reference purposes. This will aid others as they are evaluating products or trying to locate a solution.

Item 5 - Participate in the SR working group for best practices in virtual program delivery, challenges, and evaluation / impact reporting. (Description available in notes)

Jonathan Davis, Dwayne Hunter

- No report available

Other discussion items:

- Diana asked if anyone was using Ally for Blackboard. No one else in the group is using Blackboard so no one is using Ally. Diana explained that Ally was an accessibility scanner for LMS and Websites. Brian recommended SiteImprove because of their grading component. UAEX's current product is Monsido and it also has a grading component. Unfortunately, both products get expensive when adding to the page count. Ally is unlimited pages, subdomains, and that includes pdfs.

- Diana also asked if anyone was using Zoom Phones. No one else in the group is. Diana explained that we rolled out MS Teams VOIP at a research location of ours as a pilot and that hasn't gone too well. We are now looking at going with Zoom Phones and it looks very promising. We will keep the group posted.

- Brain Watson - Asked if anyone else had been keeping up with StarLink. Karen DiCicco was the only one who had. She has signed up but hasn't heard anything. Brian said he was going to sign up for a few locations. They are still in the upper northern part of US and in Canada. Karen said there was an article about them expanding into Texas and piloting a small group.

- Steven Garner - PLN representative. He reported that they went over the conference survey results in the last meeting. He said the TED talks were well received, most seemed to enjoy them.

- Ashwani - asked if anyone had any experience with WIFI on a farm scale.
  Brian Watson said he did a farm plot about 2 acres. He does recommend the Ubiquiti mesh APs they are using but not the YETI power station kits and the included solar panels. He is looking into upgrading to a solar package like the highway dept uses for signs. Rick Hayes chimed in that Ubiquiti mesh APs are great and cheap.

- Ashwani reported that they did virtual Extension planning sessions across Texas that went well. They have recently moved from Moodle to Canvas. He is piloting a Canvas platform just for Extension programs. He will keep us posted on the progress.

- Karen shared with the group that UAEX will soon be going through a domain change from UAEX to UADA. Diana contributed that we were not that concerned with the technical side, more concerned with the marketing and branding side (which will be handled by communications).

- Ashwani reported that they have been going through a college name change and will soon have to go through a domain change as well.

- Dr. Owens - Small farms virtual conference coming up. He would appreciate any suggestions for virtual event best practices, please send them his way. Ashwani said that concurrent break out rooms with preassigned participants are a big issue. All participants must have a Zoom account or it won't work.

Upcoming Meetings:
- February 2, 2021
- April 20, 2021
- July 20, 2021