

Toward A Sustainable TEP

December 2008

Since its inception, TEP has been a membership organization that has been funded primarily through dues based on student enrollment. Initially, this applied only to Franklin County schools, but in the last year or so, it was decided that this should apply to all members, regardless of county location. TEP has also been awarded a number of grants over the years from the DOE and other sources. While some of the benefits of TEP membership have intangible benefits – networking, camaraderie – others have had financial implications. TEP has offered Internet service (discontinued), discounts on software licenses, classes for its members, participation in grant activities, and, legally-vetted documents.

The TEP budget has been small over the years, designed to cover the salary of a part-time coordinator and nominal supplies. However, over the past year or two, TEP members have decided to grow the organization and, to that end, have hired a director for 21 hours/week. A substantial budget, in the order of \$50,000 per year, has been suggested to both support this position and to leverage growth in a number of areas.

With the current membership of 13 districts and school systems, financial support from membership dues alone would have each member paying \$2.84 per student, a significant increase over past years. To keep this figure below \$1.50 per student TEP could charge a small fee for services provided to both members and non-members. TEP currently spends about \$140,000 on software licenses per year. If a surcharge of 15% were applied to these purchases for members, TEP would bring in an additional \$21,000 while still providing significant savings. The proposed non-member rate is 22.5%. The other half of the budget would come from membership dues.

There are a number of areas into which TEP could expand:

- Recruit new members (Note: Union 28 has joined; Athol-Royalston has declined.)
- Partner with other related organizations (HEC, MESPA, LPVEC) to provide additional benefits to our members
- Expand the software discount program
- Initiate a hardware discount program
- Initiate an internship program with local businesses
- Develop a corporate sponsorship program (might require becoming a 501(c)(3) and changing our relationship with GCC)
- Apply for additional grants (for what purpose?)
- Sponsor a Tech Fair
- Develop hardware solutions for sale: e.g., MEC Joe box (Firewall)
- Develop software solutions for sale: e.g., database apps. to improve productivity
- Become Application Service Provider (ASP) e.g., Moodle?
- Provide consulting services: e.g., technology assessments (TCO?), E-rate, video conferencing, technology integration

- Develop and offer on-line courses to promote compliance with ISTE-Teacher/Admin standards
- Initiate Technology Roundtable Series: New technologies, legal issues, etc.
- Purchase and rent out a portable video-conferencing workstation
- Form a new educational collaborative with an emphasis on technology.
- Become an ISTE affiliate

The next step is to discuss this document and then to gauge member interest in the above list of options in order to prioritize implementation.