CoSN
LEADING EDUCATION INNOVATION

CONSORTIUM FOR SCHOOL NETWORKING

Strategic Plan 2019-2022

Executive Summary of Key Research Findings

The Consortium for School Networking (CoSN) retained outside expertise to help inform and facilitate the development of an outcomes -oriented and measurable strategic plan.

As critical components of this planning effort, we conducted the following research phases:

- **Qualitative interviews** with 35 CoSN stakeholders (16 volunteer leaders, 16 staff and contractors, and three external industry thought leaders)
- **Environmental scan** with in-depth analysis and comparison of five competitor and peer organizations (two membership organizations, three education non-profits)
- **Benchmarking interviews** with four membership organizations of comparable staff size and relative proximity to the field that have experienced recent periods of organizational growth
- **Iterative working sessions** with both the CoSN Board and strategic planning task forces to refine the strategic plan; conducted January- April 2019

In the process of analyzing the full breadth of research inputs collected during the course of this project, a selection of key findings and strategic implications surfaced. Highlighted below are the key situational insights meant to inform the development of CoSN's strategic direction. Full research findings and analysis were provided under separate cover.

- CoSN is perceived as **the premiere thought leadership organization serving education technology professionals**
- **CoSN's strength lies in its industry expertise and thought leadership** initiatives, but the organization could **benefit from a clear and cohesive vision and strategy**
- Members are generally **satisfied with the quality of CoSN's content**, but opportunity exists to improve the member engagement experience by **making content more easily accessible and modernizing its delivery**
- **Technology is expected to continue to disrupt and shape the environment CoSN and its members operate in** (e.g. artificial intelligence, virtual reality, data analytics, privacy and data security, interoperability, infrastructure requirements, etc.)
- **Barriers exist that limit the equitable use and application of technology in the classroom**, and CoSN has a responsibility to address them
- **Intentional measures need to be taken to address the lack of diversity** in the field of education technology
- **Strategic partnerships play a critical role** in ensuring CoSN's ability to meet the needs of its membership and the field at large

CoSN senior staff distilled key themes and findings, including and in addition to those highlighted here, from each of these project phases, along with ongoing input from CoSN Board leadership, to develop a strategic framework that documents the future strategic direction of CoSN.

Strategic Foundation: The Plan's Organizing Principles

The strategic plan begins with the organization's strategic foundation, which includes three elements detailed below: Challenge, Vision, and Mission.

CHALLENGE

The critical challenge that CoSN as an organization seeks to address. This statement represents the fundamental problem which CoSN exists to help solve.

Technology is an essential element of learning, yet the use and application of it is inequitable.

VISION

CoSN's definition of future success. This statement represents a compelling description of the envisioned future and should be aspirational as to "what the organization wants to become."

CoSN is a community of visionary technology leaders empowering every learner to achieve their unique potential in a changing world.

MISSION

CoSN's fundamental reason for being – its core purpose. The purpose defines "why CoSN exists" and "what business CoSN is in," and serves as the basis for important decisions.

CoSN provides current and aspiring education technology leaders for PreK–12 with the community, knowledge, and professional development they need to create and grow engaging learning environments.

Strategic Drivers and Initiatives: Establishing Direction

The plan's strategic drivers serve as broad statements of where the organization will place extraordinary focus over the next three years, in advancement of and guided by CoSN's Challenge, Vision, and Mission. The strategic drivers are supported, in each case, by a set of initiatives that further define specific areas of work to pursue within the plan horizon.

As the premiere educational technology association, CoSN will develop, engage, and empower a diverse and inclusive community through innovative practices and partnerships to drive value for PreK-12 technology leaders. CoSN will strengthen its mission-aligned partnerships with associations, foundations, and corporate partnerships, and advocate for public policies aligned to its goals to support its implementation of this strategic plan.

Building on the CoSN Framework of Essential Skills, CoSN will grow member value through the following strategic drivers and initiatives:

PERSONALIZE MEMBER LEARNING	DRIVE INNOVATION	FOSTER EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION
Develop and deliver timely programs, products, and services to meet members needs	Provide thought leadership to incubate and drive innovative practices	Address systemic barriers by leading and inspiring change

PERSONALIZE MEMBER LEARNING

As technology continues to advance and change the needs of schools and learners across the country, education technology leaders will need additional resources to stay up to date on industry trends and best practices.

Over the next three years, CoSN will continue to meet the needs of its membership and the field at large by developing and delivering timely programs, products, and services to meet the needs of:

1.1 Experienced, as well as aspiring, educational technology leaders
1.2 State chapters
1.3 Institutional member district teams
1.4 Private and public sector partners

Outcomes and priorities discussed among CoSN's Board and leadership related to personalizing member learning, for further consideration as staff develops implementation plans to execute this strategy, include:

- Achieving membership growth, with explicit targets set around district size and states (particularly those without chapters or no institutional members at present)
- Growing and scaling the Early Career CTO program, with potential expansion to other programs targeted toward aspiring district technology leaders
- Assessing the health of all CoSN chapters, to identify areas for additional support and resources (particularly new, state-focused resources to deliver greater value)
- Leveraging data to understand how institutional members use CoSN resources today and determine member needs/ preferences for the future
- Measuring awareness and perceptions around CoSN

DRIVE INNOVATION

Fundamental to CoSN's success is the expertise and thought leadership it provides the field to ensure education technology leaders leverage innovative techniques and technologies to enable all learners to achieve their potential.

CoSN will expand its visibility, effectiveness, and impact as a thought leadership to incubate and drive innovative practices through:

2.1 Incubating emerging technology-enabled practices
2.2 Expanding the adoption and execution of transformative leadership practices through innovative programs and networks
2.3 Leveraging networks of the CoSN community to engage and adopt innovative leadership practices
2.4 Leading bold thinking and action to transcend educational inequities by improving learning through effective uses of technology

Outcomes and priorities discussed among CoSN's Board and leadership related to driving innovation, for further consideration as staff develops implementation plans to execute this strategy, include:

- Leveraging CoSN's network (new and existing) to expand the research of the Driving K12 Innovation Report to increase access, reach, and impact
- Developing and distributing case studies and other content on emerging technology practices, transformational leadership practices, and other innovative topics
- Developing and implementing a collaborative virtual space for technology leaders to share knowledge, expertise, and best practices asynchronously

FOSTER EQUITY, DIVERSITY, & INCLUSION

Technology plays an ever-increasing role in providing high quality education to PreK-12 students, but its use and application is inequitable. As an industry leader, CoSN has a role in ensuring equitable access to technology, while promoting diversity in the field to better represent the audiences whom education technology leaders serve.

Over the course of this strategic plan, CoSN will address systemic barriers by leading and inspiring change through:

1.1 Advocating for the expansion of equitable access to learner-centered use and application of technology
1.2 Recruiting, mentoring, and supporting diverse professionals aspiring to education technology leadership positions
1.3 Intentionally growing diversity and inclusion in CoSN committees, leadership, partnerships, and governance

Outcomes and priorities discussed among CoSN's Board and leadership related to fostering equity, diversity, & inclusion, for further consideration as staff develops implementation plans to execute this strategy, include:

- Developing tools and resources that promote equitable access to learner-centered use and application of technology
- Supporting and encouraging policies, proposals, and funding at the federal, state, and local level that foster digital equity for learners
- Developing and implementing a continuum of professional advancement to facilitate a systemic and sustained effort to promote diverse leadership amongst the CTO community
- Facilitating and promoting networking and community opportunities for special interest groups

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