



ANNUAL REPORT

2022-2023

2022-23 Annual Report

30 Years of Leading Innovation

January 2023 - December 2023

This CoSN latest annual report describes our exciting work to lead innovation at warp speed. After 30 years, CoSN is excelling as a national leader in providing resources, professional learning, and connections for our members.

At CoSN23 in Austin, TX, CoSN celebrated 30 years of collaboration, bringing high-quality resources and thought leadership to the nation. CoSN leaders from past and present joined together to celebrate the past and look forward to the work ahead for our organization.

The work ahead continues to focus on cybersecurity, student data privacy, E-rate, digital equity, and generative artificial intelligence. What is different is the need to increase our pace to help districts keep up with the challenges and opportunities that come with educational technology. We are moving at warp speed.

Special thanks to our talented Board of Directors, dedicated staff, and our incredible volunteers and corporate partners who are moving ahead at warp speed as we lead for innovation in K-12.



Diane W. Doersch, Digital Promise, Senior Director of Information Technology FACTS Team, Chair 2023-2026



Keith Krueger, CAE, CoSN CEO, Washington, DC

New Strategic Plan

In the spring of 2023, CoSN launched a new [Strategic Plan for 2023-2026](#). This plan includes three strategic drivers:

1. Enabling inclusive and nimble technology leadership to drive innovation
2. Enhancing member experience to nurture belonging
3. Empowering our network to build community

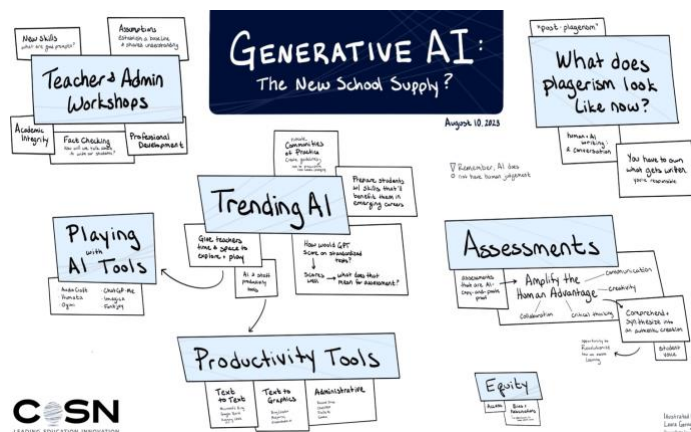
This three-year plan defines a commitment to implementing strategies to advance EdTech Leadership and strengthen CoSN. Our strategic directions guide our efforts, foster ongoing conversations, and enable us to address new and unforeseen developments proactively. CoSN views this plan as a living document.

Goal 1: Enabling inclusive and nimble technology leadership to drive innovation

In the educational landscape of 2023, **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** is ushering in a transformative wave, marked by the introduction of several key resources. One noteworthy tool is the [AI Readiness Checklist](#), a collaborative effort by CoSN and the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS). This checklist is a comprehensive guide for K-12 school districts, facilitating AI's thoughtful and unbiased implementation in education. Covering topics like Executive Leadership, Operational, Data, Technical, and Security Readiness, Legal/Risk Management, Appendices on Glossary, Policies, and a section on Contributors, it stands as a valuable resource for education institutions navigating the transformative potential of AI. CoSN's webinar, "[Empowering School Districts: An Introduction to AI Use Policy Toolkit for Education](#)," emphasized the profound impact of AI on education. CoSN leaders discussed AI's benefits and potential risks, underscoring the value of this Checklist and the need for diverse teams to review AI-generated content in school districts.

Providing even more practical AI help, CoSN was a lead author of the new [AI Guidance for Schools Toolkit](#) from the TeachAI coalition. It provides school systems with resources for the safe and responsible use of AI, including an overview of AI in schools, seven principles, real-world examples, and resources for policymakers, school leaders, and staff.

Another significant CoSN contribution are member-only AI resources, such as [ChatGPT - Above the Noise Member Brief](#), a document that, early in 2023, delved into the burgeoning buzz surrounding AI tools,



particularly ChatGPT, in K-12 education.

Complementing these tools and resources are webinars and podcasts exploring the transformative potential of generative AI, questioning whether it is the new “[school supply](#).” These resources provide a nuanced understanding of how generative AI reshapes education, its applications in various educational contexts, and its collaborative potential among educational leaders.

CoSN has also explored the intersection of Cybersecurity. And incident response while also addressing real-world applications, benefits, challenges, and the ethical dimensions of AI in cybersecurity.

Furthering the conversation, an EmpowerED edLeader webinar produced in partnership with CoSN and AASA features three innovative superintendents and the Indiana CTO Council Executive Director. The panel discusses the [challenges and opportunities of AI in education](#), offering guidance on positive uses and outlining seven essential guidelines for school superintendents and leaders to implement effective policies around AI and generative AI, such as ChatGPT.

Lastly, the [CoSN Snapshots: AI in Education](#) highlights how CoSN leaders use current AI applications. The CoSN EdTech Innovation Committee aims to compile a robust list of AI apps and resources, fostering collaboration and knowledge-sharing within the educational community. Participants are encouraged to [contribute](#) regularly to the ongoing development of this valuable resource.

CoSN is also leading in the **privacy of student data**. We are thrilled that the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has granted funds to the Consortium for School Networking (CoSN) to strengthen the financial sustainability of the [CoSN Trusted Learning Environment \(TLE\)](#) student data privacy framework seal program. The project aims to scale student data privacy support for K-12 school districts. CoSN's work includes developing a national report on student data privacy trends, engaging State Education Agencies (SEAs), and exploring the addition of a privacy certification to its CETL® program. The grant supports creating a tiered district approach and a self-directed TLE course. The goal is to make the TLE Seal a standard for student data privacy and improve district practices. CoSN has also updated its privacy toolkit, conducted webinars on AI

and security, and supplied abundant resources throughout the year, addressing practical aspects and advocating for robust data privacy programs.

Likewise, CoSN is a leader in addressing **digital equity** and has introduced the [Digital Equity Dashboard](#), a tool designed to help school districts and communities address digital equity gaps. The dashboard integrates publicly available national data sets, offering anonymized and detailed information and allowing districts to analyze data for each household within the school district boundary. It provides actionable insights for school leaders, allowing them to make informed decisions on addressing digital equity. The tool covers internet access, broadband quality, health, educational attainment, income, demographics, etc. CoSN is partnering with other key nonprofits like Common Sense Media to promote the awareness and use of this tool, hosting informative webinars and presenting at events across the country. CoSN plans to release case studies featuring partner school districts that successfully used the dashboard for informed decision-making. The dashboard was developed in collaboration with Innive, with support from Dell Technologies and Google.



Environmental Sustainability of Technology has become an increasing concern for K-12 districts due to the increased number of devices, lifespan, and costs. In light of [global sustainability goals aimed at lowering carbon emissions](#) and the significant increase in the distribution of devices to students and teachers by U.S. school systems, it has become imperative for K-12 leaders and their industry partners to place responsible stewardship at the forefront of their technology planning and implementation. With the

vast majority of K-12 classrooms now adopting a 1-to-1 device-to-student ratio, and some districts are even moving towards 2+ devices per student, the scale of technology deployment underscores the urgency to address its environmental impact. CoSN, in partnership with the SETDA, is launching a [new thought leadership initiative](#) around the environmental sustainability of technology, taking a proactive role in leading this conversation and recognizing the urgency of aligning edtech practices with sustainability goals.

Furthermore, this year's [Blaschke Report](#) delves into the critical issues facing K-12 educational institutions regarding 1:1 student device programs. As educational technology evolves, schools encounter complex challenges related to sustainability, fiscal responsibility, and equitable access. The report identifies these challenges and offers innovative solutions to ensure the long-term viability of 1:1 initiatives.



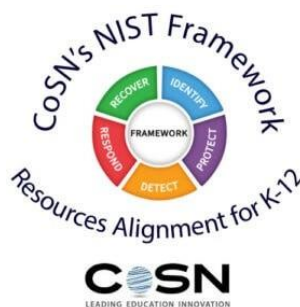
CoSN is enhancing resources to address two critical challenges for school systems. First, in [Disaster Preparedness](#), the resources emphasize the importance of proactive emergency operations plans. These plans empower IT personnel to respond to natural disasters swiftly, ensuring the continuity of learning. They address the persistent challenge of sustaining connectivity for employees and students at physical locations and remote or home setups. The second focus area concerns [Budgeting, Total Cost of Ownership \(TCO\), and Value of Investment \(VOI\)](#). CoSN provides valuable recommendations and resources to tackle this ongoing issue.



Thought Leadership Initiatives Foster Collaborative Engagement with Field Experts to Drive Innovation

CoSN's [Thought Leadership Initiatives](#) aim to streamline the lives of EdTech leaders by addressing key aspects of their daily challenges. It is impossible to list everything here, but here are a few significant highlights from the last year:

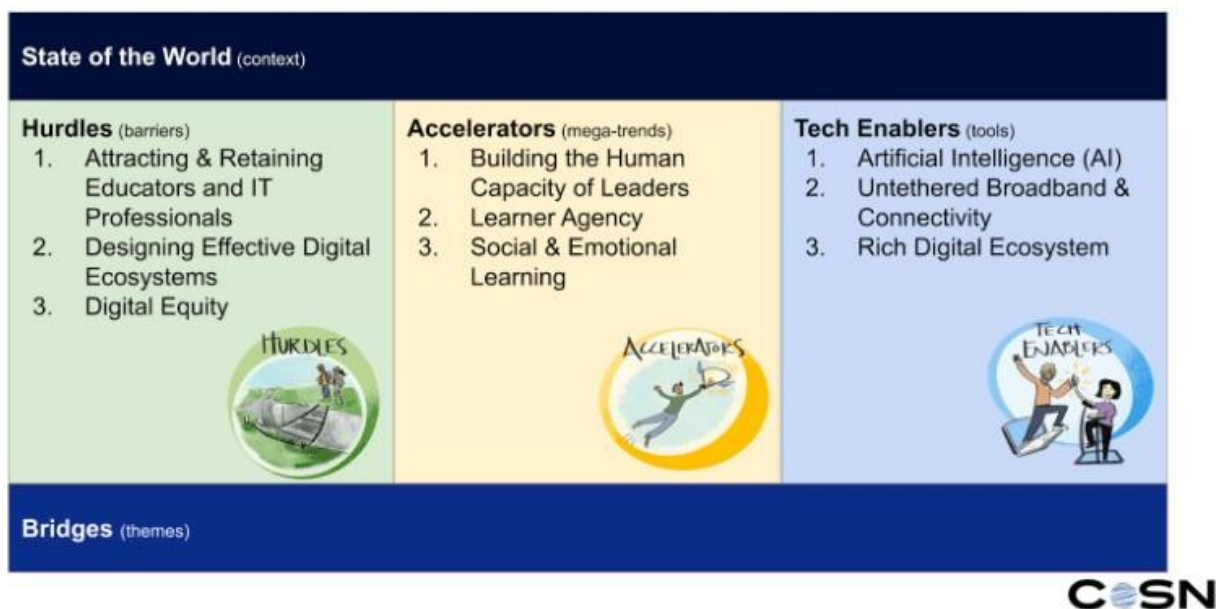
Cybersecurity is still the #1 challenge for EdTech leaders is [Cybersecurity](#). This year, the new CoSN K-12 Vendor Assessment Tool ([K-12CVAT](#)) was published, as well as the new CoSN [NIST Cybersecurity Framework](#) for K-12, providing a dedicated resource for school districts that seamlessly integrates with various free and member resources. The K-12 CVAT and Framework are only two of many cybersecurity resources available on the [CoSN website](#).



Our collaboration with AASA, through the [EmpowerED Superintendents](#), is a cornerstone of our strategy, emphasizing providing superintendents with tailored resources, such as detailed one-pagers on key EdTech topics, including our newest one

on [Artificial Intelligence & Generative AI](#). Our involvement extends to CoSN's significant contribution to AASA's superintendent certification program, and together, we honor excellence through the EmpowerED Digital Superintendent of the Year Award this year: Jim Roberts, Bartholomew Consolidated School District (IN). This partnership is a key element of a broader initiative that engages 60 superintendents and educational leaders, who collectively represent over 70% of the U.S., in activities like the edLeader Panel series, joint meetings, newsletters, and presentations addressing critical issues in education.

DRIVING K-12 INNOVATION: 2023



Innovation The newly reformed [K-12 EdTech Innovation](#) Committee aligns its efforts with the [Driving K-12](#) report outcomes throughout the year. The initiative is crafting resources for CoSN members on EdTech innovations and timely subjects. The [Driving K-12 Report](#), [broad impact summary](#), and new [Roadmap to Innovation](#) newsletter increase our members' engagement around innovation.

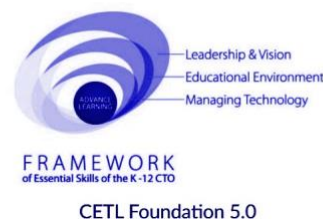
The [Network & Systems Design](#) initiative has provided new resources for E-rate preparation, disaster readiness, asset management/disposal, and a [new building checklist](#) to aid EdTech leaders in adapting to sustainable technologies that bolster teaching and learning.

Social Media in K-12 The National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) and the Consortium for School Networking (CoSN) have released a breakthrough report highlighting challenges faced by school systems on [Social Media & Ed](#). The report emphasizes the absence of dedicated verification and reporting processes on social media platforms, leading to difficulties in representing school districts accurately and reporting accounts engaging in harmful activities. The lack of dedicated processes strains school district communications and technology teams nationwide, hindering their ability to engage with families and protect students and staff from malicious and fraudulent accounts.



Professional Learning CoSN continues to provide unique professional learning for Ed Tech Leaders and their teams. The new [CETL® Practice Examination](#) is now available for candidates, offering a simulation of the official CETL® Examination. CoSN has also overhauled its [CETL® Framework of Essential Skills course](#), incorporating insights from both new and seasoned certificate holders. This update aims to improve access to contemporary resources and underscore the course's alignment with Essential Skills. It is crucial to communicate to participants that the course is not intended for exam preparation and does not align directly with the certification exam.

CETL K-12 CTO's Framework of Essential Skills Course 5.0 Self Study



Policy, Advocacy, and Funding

CoSN has been and continues to be a trusted source of information for policymakers. We work with our members, state chapters, and other organizations to educate policymakers and amplify your voices about the need for federal and state funding of cybersecurity protections, protecting student data, home connectivity, and generative AI in education.



On August 8, 2023, the White House hosted a live-streamed event titled, "[Back to School Safely: Cybersecurity for K-12 Schools](#)," where First Lady Jill Biden, Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona, and Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas invited EdTech leaders, including superintendents, to collaborate on strengthening K-12 education's cybersecurity infrastructure. CoSN's leadership and several invited superintendents and CTOs were there to support the efforts. The event featured discussions on addressing the growing cyberattacks targeting schools. The U.S. Department of Education Office of Education Technology also released three K-12 Digital Infrastructure Briefs to enhance digital security in education.

Goal 2: Enhancing member experience to nurture belonging

The Consortium for School Networking (CoSN) is halfway through its grant with the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative DAF, an advised fund of the Silicon Valley Community Foundation. The grant focuses on two priorities—recruiting/retaining diverse IT teams and building human capacity for IT leaders. We are identifying best practices, creating a clearinghouse of resources, and launching a podcast/blog series on Diversity, Equity Inclusion & EdTech Leadership.

The [Diversity, Equity Inclusion Committee](#) maintains a robust presence at CoSN2023 through continuing events, including the Women in IT Breakfast & Summit, DEI Network Meetup, Allyship for IT Leaders, LGBTQ+ Leaders' session, LGBTQ+ Reception, and the introduction of a new Inclusive EdTech Leader Summit.



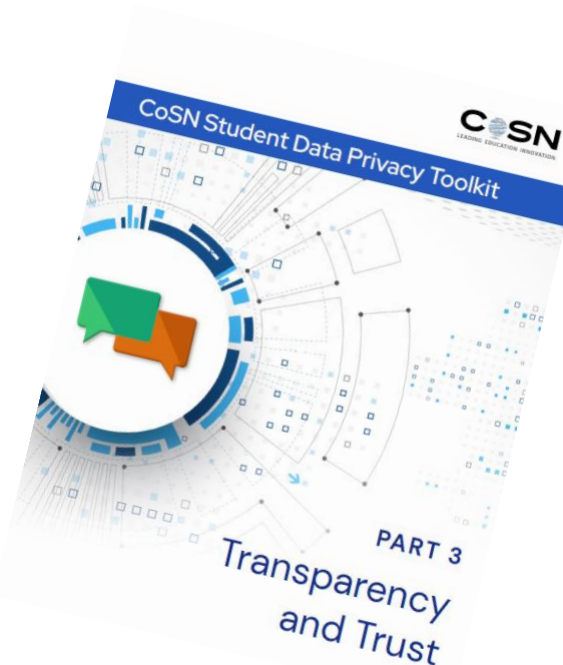
CoSN recognizes that our membership represents all abilities. To walk the talk, as we provide resources around accessibility, CoSN staff has been participating in professional learning for accessibility, building accessible documents, website pages, and presentations. This training, as well as our increased resources on accessibility, are being done in partnership with the Center on Inclusive Technology & Education Systems (CITES) at the Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST).

CoSN has updated resources on the [Accessibility page](#) of the website and started producing blogs to provide helpful information for members.

- Blog: [IT & AT: How are inclusive tech practices being tackled to support equity in your district?](#)

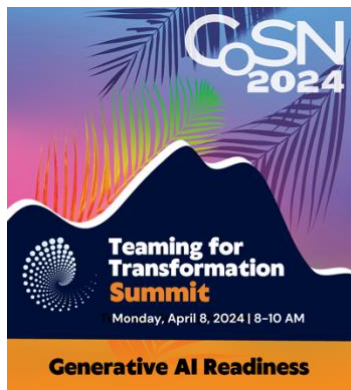
Goal 3: Empowering our network to build community

- Website improvements - CoSN's Go-To Places
 - New Resources page: Highlighting newly released resources and highlighting those that are Member Exclusive:
<https://www.cosn.org/cosn-new-releases/>
 - Complete [Resource Library](#): Tagging all resources, member-only, included here without needing access to the store through MemberSuite. (search by topic, listed by date of posting)
 - Professional Learning: new [CoSN Year-Round Catalog](#) and new [CoSN Courses & Workshops Catalog](#)
 - Regularly posting [Blogs](#) from members (search by topic, listed by date of publication)



- [Events](#): Find dates and times and register for events, courses, and workshops from the CoSN Calendar (subscribe at the bottom of the page)
- CoSN Network: While working to increase the use and engagement of the CoSN Network and in response to the fast-moving needs for EdTech leaders in the area of AI, we launched the [AI in Education](#) Community in the CoSN Network
- The [Early Career CTO Academy for EdTech Leaders](#) has tripled its participation in the last year, with over 100 people attending some of the bi-monthly collaborative meetings. We have an uptick in state cohort involvement this year (GA and NY), with many others in the wings interested in potentially joining the ranks.

Coming: At CoSN2024, we will expand on the popular DEI Meet-UP and LGBTQIA+ Leadership Forum and Reception, and Women in Technology Breakfast, with the addition of the Inclusive EdTech Leadership Summit, facilitated by Ken Shelton.

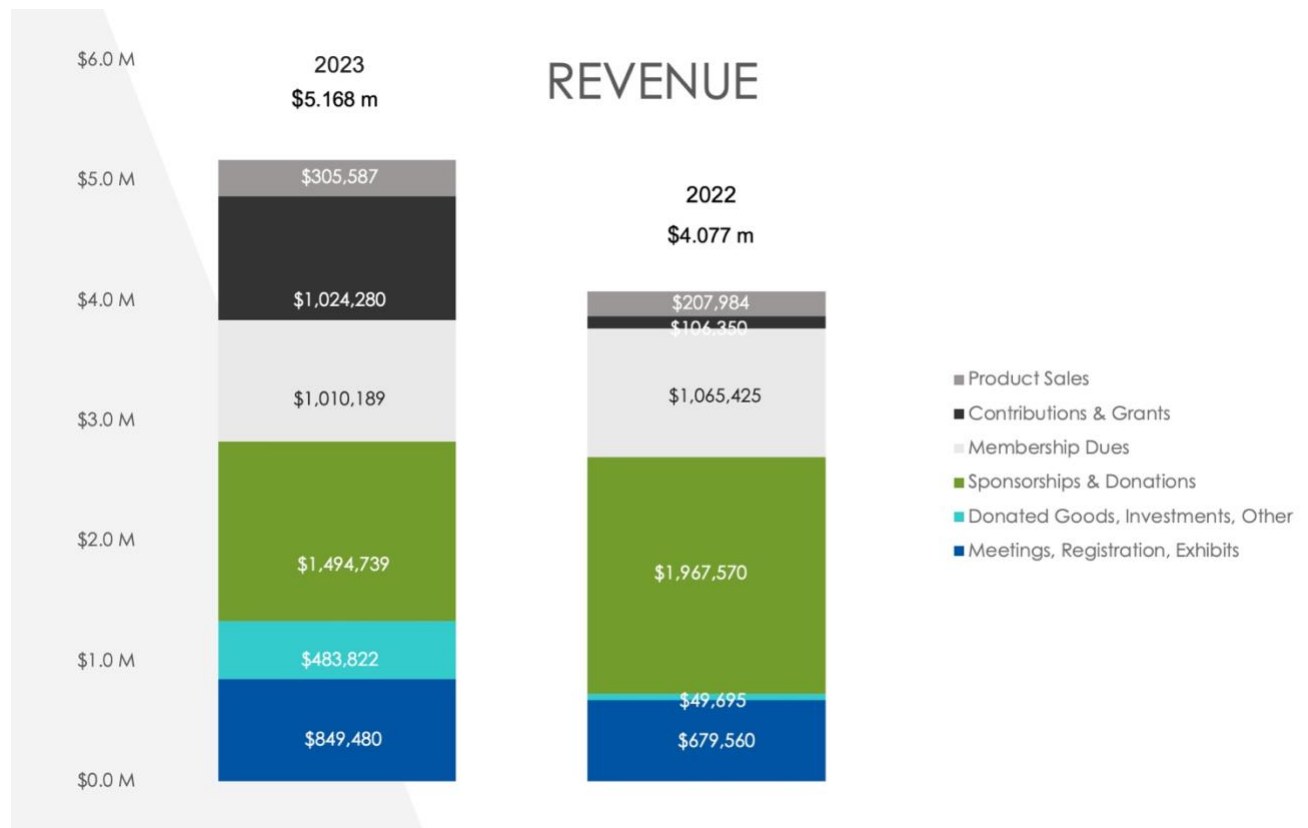


New: We have added a Teaming for Transformation Summit at CoSN2024. This dynamic event will be designed around AI for district Superintendents and key team members, including the CIO, CTO, CAO, and other leaders. This summit is a gateway to the latest resources and insights on generative AI, equipping your district with the knowledge and strategies needed to harness the power of AI for safe and effective learning. This summit will launch our strategic goal to provide more significant opportunities for EdTech Leaders to collaborate with district cabinet-level (C-Suite) members and school leadership teams.

"It is the long history of humankind (and animal kind, too) that those who learned to collaborate and improvise most effectively have prevailed." – Charles Darwin.

Special thank you to our incredible corporate partners for all their fantastic support of CoSN throughout the years.

Thanks to our amazing [Corporate Partners](#).



[Read Last Year's Annual Report](#)