November 11, 2015

The Honorable Tom Wheeler
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

In the Matter of Nomination for Universal Service Administrative Company Board of Directors, CC Docket Nos. 97-21 and 96-45.

Dear Chairman Wheeler:

The undersigned national education organizations nominate Dr. Sheryl Abshire of Lake Charles, Louisiana to serve on the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) Board of Directors. We respectfully urge you to appoint Dr. Abshire as the board representative for eligible schools. She is uniquely situated to serve in this position, based on her respected technical and educational expertise and longstanding experience leading implementation of complex and critically important school district technology and broadband initiatives.

Dr. Abshire’s impressive career includes decades of service to the nation’s students and their families as a teacher, librarian, principal, and technology leader. Since 1998, Dr. Abshire has served as Chief Technology Officer for Calcasieu Parish Public Schools in Lake Charles, Louisiana, the state’s fourth largest school district. As CTO, she expertly leads the district’s major technology initiatives, including designing strategies for expanding students’ broadband access, leading the district’s digital transition, and providing trusted advice about integrating technology into other district efforts to improve teaching and learning. This work includes overseeing every detail of her district’s technology plans and E-Rate applications, using an approach that models the program’s efficient and effective implementation.

Dr. Abshire also has a long record of national and state service. She ably served on the USAC board from 2010 to 2013, testified before Congress about technology and privacy issues, and has served as a rich source of information for the Federal Communications Commission. She currently serves as a Board Member of the Consortium for School Networking (CoSN). She is past President, and an active member of the Louisiana Association of Computer Using Educators, an affiliate of the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), and a member of the National Education Association, serving for many years on NEA’s Legislative Committee. Additionally, Dr. Abshire has served for over twenty years on the Board of Directors for the Teachers Retirement System of Louisiana (TRLS), is the past Chairman of the TRSL, and as the current Vice Chair and Chair of the Investment Committee, has the responsibility for overseeing and investing the $17 billion fund.

The next school representative on the USAC board should possess primary knowledge of the E-rate’s operation at the local level and possess a clear vision for strengthening the program’s
future. Dr. Abshire deeply understands every element of the E-rate, including how to achieve the initiative's updated connectivity goals and sophisticated requirements. Our organizations believe this technical expertise must be represented on the USAC Board and appreciate your careful consideration of our nomination.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Excellent Education
Association of School Business Officials
Consortium for School Networking
International Society for Technology in Education
National Association of Elementary School Principals
National Association of Secondary School Principals
National Association of State Boards of Education
National Catholic Educational Association
National Education Association
National PTA
AFFILIATION:  Calcasieu Parish Public Schools
TITLE:  Chief Technology Officer
EDUCATION:  McNeese State University
           BA, Early Childhood Education, 1972
           MA, Elementary Education, 1975
           Educational Specialist, Administration and Supervision, 1988
           University of New Orleans
           Ph.D., Educational Administration and Leadership, 2007
CERTIFICATION:
Kindergarten, Grades 1-8, School Librarian, Principal, Supervisor of Instruction, School
Superintendent
POSITIONS:
Calcasieu Parish School System
   Chief Technology Officer, 1998 - present
   Principal, Prien Lake Elementary, 1995 - 1998
   Principal, Westwood Elementary, 1991 - 1995
   Librarian/Media Specialist: 1978 - 1990, College Oaks
      Elementary, St. John Elementary, T.S. Cooley
      Elementary
      Elementary, Opelousas Street Elementary
Lamar State University
   Assistant Professor - Online Graduate Program - 2010 - 2013
McNeese State University
   Visiting Instructor, Ed Tech 245, 2015 - 2016
   Instructor, Education 660, Technology for School Administrators, 1997
   Visiting Lecturer, 1990 - 1997
   Instructor, Educational Technology 650, 1989
   Student Teaching Supervisor, 10 years
Louisiana Tech University
   Instructor, Education 489, Curriculum Enhancement with Technology, 2001 - 2011;
   LEADTech - 2001 - 2011
EXTENDED PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES:
Universal Services Administrative Corporation (USAC) - Board member 2010 - 2013,
appointed by
FCC to represent the nation's schools and libraries on ERATE matters.

Teachers Retirement System of Louisiana - Board of Trustees - 1991- present, Vice-Chair of the Board - 2010 - present, Chair of the Board - 2005 - 2008, Chair - Investment Committee - 2001 - 2004, 2010 - present

LACUE - Louisiana Association of Computer Using Educators - President, 2004- 2006, Vice President - Advocacy and Programs - 2007 - present, Program/State Awards Chair, Board of Directors

LA-CTO - Louisiana Chief Technology Officers Association - Founding member & Exec. Comm. Chair - 2005 - present

Advisory Boards - eSchool News Advisory Board - 2006 - present; Blackboard Advisory Board - 2002- present; Scholastic Administrator Advisory Board - 2002- present, Dell Platinum Advisory Council - 2009 - present, Pearson Digital Learning Advisory Board - 2005 - 2008,


Consortium for School Networking (CoSN) - National Board of Directors and Exec. Comm. 2000 - present, Chair of the Board - 2005 - 2009, Chair of the Public Policy Committee 2000 - present

ISTE Standards and Accreditation Committee - 2004 - 2013

ISTE National Technology Standards for School Administrators Writing Team - 2000 - 2013

National Science Foundation (NSF) Computational Thinking Practitioners - Workshop Leader, Chicago, IL, 2010

USA/UK International Exchange Technology Leadership Project Coordinator -1996 - present

Chairman - Louisiana State Technology Advisory Commission, 1997 - 2008

Promethean Advisory Board - 2011 - 2013

Calcasieu Parish Public Library Strategic Planning Committee - 2002 - 2003

Chairman - Louisiana Dept. of Ed. Committee to Advance Technology Standards, 1998 - 2011

Louisiana Department of Education Technology Planning Committee

ISTE National Ed Tech Standards for Students Connecting Curriculum and Technology Writing Team

Project Director: Louisiana Assistive Technology Initiative - 2007 - present, Cellular Telecommunications Industry of America - Panasonic Classlink Grant, Grant Administrator

Numerous EETT Grants, Calcasieu Parish Challenge Grant, Louisiana TLCF Professional Development Program, Drew Foundation - 1993-97


Trainer/Grant Writer/Grant Evaluator: Coronet/MTI, AT&T, Apple Computer, Pioneer

10/23/15

Louisiana Network Information Infrastructure Steering Committee - 1994
U.S. Advisory Council for the National Information Infrastructure Sub-Committee - 1994

Louisiana Association of Educators - Board of Directors, Chair - Instructional Practices Committee,
Chair - Member Benefits Committee, Chair - Legislative Committee
Louisiana - Governor Edwards - Technology Task Force, Education Transition Team Task Force
Louisiana Systemic Initiatives State Program Panel, McNeese State University Teacher Education Advisory Panel, NBC/KPLC Great Expectations/Class Act Ed Proj Bd, NTE Nat Advisory Committee

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS:
2013 National Coalition for Technology in Education & Training Community Builder Award
Louisiana Technology Council - 2012 Eward - Governor’s Technology Educator of the Year
Southwest Louisiana Economic Development Alliance - The Edge - Ed Tech Award Winner 2010
Selected as an honoree/case study for the GETideas.org Distinguished Education Leaders 2010
ISTE Public Policy Advocate of the Year - 2009
University of New Orleans - Outstanding Doctoral Student in Educational Leadership - 2008
ISTE Making It Happen Award - 2006
National Ed Tech Leader of the Year - 2003 semi-finalist
NEA - 2002 Christa McAuliffe Award
LACUE - 1999 Louisiana Computer Using Educator of the Year
McNeese State University Distinguished Alumnus Award - 1998
National Principal’s Leadership Academy - University of Delaware, 1993-1994
Inductee: National Teachers Hall of Fame, 1992
Recognized by President Clinton and Secretary Riley at a White House ceremony as the first teacher
inducted into the National Teachers Hall of Fame, 1993
1992 Phi Delta Kappa Award
1991 National Foundation for the Improvement of Education - Christa McAuliffe Fellow
1991 Louisiana Technology Teacher of the Year
1990 Calcasieu Parish Computer Teacher of the Year

PUBLICATIONS


Abshire, S. (2010, August/September). Best practices - if if you please. EDTECH Focus on K-12, 45-46.


PERSONAL
Family – Married 45 years - Andress Abshire, Senior Vice President – First Federal Bank of Louisiana
Mother of three children: Amy – Principal STEM Academy Spring High School, Spring Texas ISD Public Schools, Laura – Graduate of LSU Law School, former Deputy Chief of Staff and Legislative Director for Congressman Mike Ross from Arkansas, presently Director of Policy and Sustainability National Restaurant Association and Brian – Senior Investment Consultant Aon- Hewitt Investments in Chicago, Illinois

Community - Former board member and presently sustainer with the Junior League of Lake Charles, Past President of the Ivy League Garden Club
Community involvement includes the Cancer Society Show for Life, Christmas in April, Arts Fest, Calcasieu Parish Library Advisory Board, Condea/VISTA Community Advisory Board, Alpha Delta Pi Alumni Association Board, Women and Children’s Hospital Advisory Board, and the Calcasieu Parish Democratic Executive Committee Delegate to 1992 and 2008 Democratic Conventions