

PAT Meeting

January 8, 2025 2:00pm

The meeting began with a discussion about the importance of upcoming gatherings for higher education and ECHS administrators. The group recognized the value of these events in building connections among participants. Introductions highlighted the extensive backgrounds of Steven Sanchez and Ricky Williams in education, while Annie Willmon joined late due to campus water issues, expressing her commitment to supporting students in IT and cybersecurity pathways. Tammy Dunn shared her school's transition to an early college high school and the introduction of IT classes, emphasizing the need for collaboration to address challenges faced by such institutions.

David Bowman provided updates from a meeting with the federal program officer regarding an ongoing research study, confirming that it is progressing well despite concerns about low enrollment in IT courses. He expressed optimism for increased enrollment in the spring semester due to recent interventions. Tammy shared a success story of a student transformed by the Student Tech Summit, illustrating the event's positive impact on student motivation and engagement. Eric Arpelar noted students' desire for more hands-on activities, while the group acknowledged the need for improved student attendance and engagement in future events.

The discussion shifted to the effectiveness of the current mentoring program, with concerns raised about student engagement and industry connections. Suggestions included focus groups to gather student insights and innovative strategies to enhance participation. Tammy highlighted challenges faced by her rural school, including geographical isolation and limited resources, while Annie raised issues regarding middle school career exploration classes. The meeting concluded with discussions on dual credit course access, legislative updates, and plans for the next meeting on March 12, emphasizing the importance of collaboration and advocacy for educational resources.