FINAL REPORT OF THE KIDS.US EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

PURSUANT TO CONTRACT MODIFICATION NO. SB1335-14-CN-0016 MOD 0001

Presented by:

Neustar, Inc.

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Background

In 2002 the United States Congress passed the Dot Kids Implementation and Efficiency Act ("Dot Kids Act") which called for the creation of a kids.us domain, to serve as the basis for a third level namespace that would exclusively feature content that was appropriate and educational for minors. The goal of the namespace was to serve as a walled garden that would promote positive experiences for children and families using the . It would provide a safe online environment and help to prevent children from being exposed to harmful online content. To meet these aims, kids.us was established as a restricted namespace, subject to a strict policy framework that included:

- Content restrictions prohibiting mature content, pornography, inappropriate language, violence, criminal activity, hate speech, drugs, weapons, gambling, alcohol, and tobacco;
- A prohibition on hyperlinking outside of the kids.us zone;
- Tight restrictions on the use of two-way messaging services;
- A requirement to offer educational and informational content;
- An initial content review of all domains under kids.us;
- Restrictions upon data collection for children under 13 based upon the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA); and
- The requirement to comply with advertising standards set by the Children's Advertising Review Unit (CARU).

The framework also featured a process for reviewing content and classifying content violations according to a three-tiered approach based upon the severity of the violation. For each tier the framework designated specific enforcement processes and procedures for notifying the registrant and taking down infringing content.

In 2011, following a dramatic decline in the usage of the third-level namespace, Neustar petitioned the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) to suspend operation of the kids.us domain name, and the associated namespace, on the grounds that it was not fulfilling its intended purpose. Despite various efforts to revitalize the kids.us space through grassroots promotion and deep discounts on the cost of registrations, at the time that Neustar requested its suspension there were only 651 kids.us domains under management. Additionally, there were only six active websites: nick.kids.us, nickjr.kids.us, pbskids.kids.us, smithsonian.kids.us, trampoline.kids.us, and trampolines.kids.us. Furthermore, each of these sites had a more robust presence elsewhere on the web.

Conversely, by 2011, the web had seen a huge growth in competing content on other platforms that was safe and educational for children, as well as the development of new technologies that allowed parents to better control their children's internet usage without needing to stay inside the kids.us zone. These developments undercut the feasibility and desirability of restricting minors'

internet usage to a single namespace like kids.us. The movement of users away from kids.us at a time that the web was otherwise burgeoning suggested that the operational and policy frameworks for kids.us no longer aligned with the way that the internet was being used or with the business plans of providers of child-friendly content.

On June 27, 2012, Neustar received modification #12 of its contract to administer .us from the Department of Commerce. Modification #12 suspended the kids.us domain effective 30 days after the date of the amendment. Registrations or renewals of new kids.us third-level domains were no longer accepted, and content on the kids.us homepage was updated to provide information to the public about the suspension. Existing registrations were allowed to lapse if they expired within the year 2012. A $50 reimbursement per domain was provided to registrars that were responsible for longer-term registrations, with the encouragement that part of the sum be passed on to affected registrants. Existing names were also logged and reserved, to allow the prior registrants the first right of registration if the namespace was reinstated.

On February 28, 2014 the Department of Commerce re-awarded Neustar the contract to operate .US. Under the new contract, Neustar was tasked with instituting a Kids.US Education Advisory Committee, comprising experts in online education and child development, to consider the experience of the kids.us namespace and develop recommendations for whether and how to reinstate the kids.us namespace.

Members

On March 28, 2014 Neustar announced the formation of the Kids.US Education Advisory Committee and published a request for Expressions of Interest for participation on the Committee. All responses were received and reviewed by Neustar by April 30, 2014. On May 30, Neustar announced the following members of the Kids.US Education Advisory Committee:

- Tammy Wincup, Chief Operating Officer, EverFi
- Tom Barrett, President, EnCirca
- Stephen Balkam, CEO, Family Online Safety Institute
- Anne Collier, co-director, ConnectSafely.org, and executive director, Net Family News, Inc.
- Heather Dahl, Author, The Cynja

The following Neustar representatives were also assigned with supporting and participating in the work of the Committee;

- Becky Burr, Chief Privacy Officer
- Les Chasen, Software Engineer
- Mike Spencer, Social Media Specialist
- Terri Claffey, Senior Policy Advisor, External Affairs
- Stephanie Duchesneau, Public Policy Manager

Deliberations

The following questions were brought forward for consideration by the Education Advisory Committee:

- Should the kids.us namespace be reinstated with its preexisting policy and operational framework?
- What were the experiences of other providers of online educational content, particularly those that sought to operate "walled gardens"?
- What creative use cases could operate within the preexisting framework, while revitalizing public engagement with the space?
- What new challenges exist in the online education environment that should be taken into account if bringing back the kids.us space?
- What changes in online trends and regulations could affect the kids.us namespace?
- What ways could Neustar achieve similar goals of promoting safe and positive experiences for kids on the web outside of the existing kids.us zone and policy framework?

The Education Advisory Committee held six meetings to discuss the foregoing questions and develop recommendations regarding the kids.us zone, as well as other ways to further the initial goals of the Dot Kids Act within the .US Top Level Domain. A high level overview of the discussions held at each of the meeting is provided below. The full minutes from each of the meetings are provided in Exhibit A.

June 13 Meeting of the Education Advisory Committee

Background information was provided about the history of kids.us from the passage of the Dot Kids Act through the suspension of kids.us in 2012. Neustar representatives gave an overview of the purpose and goals of the Committee. The Committee moved into a discussion of other walled gardens, all of which showed a similar failure to gain traction. The group discussed recent trends in internet usage that ought to be taken into account if kids.us was reinstated including the expansion of mobile and application-based content. The possibility of creating an intra-school blackboard to showcase achievements of American schoolchildren was raised as an idea for further discussion.

July 16 Meeting of the Education Advisory Committee

Discussion returned to the possibility of developing an intra-school blackboard. Focus shifted to tailoring the space toward STEM educators including fostering web development by kids. Concerns were raised about how to handle WHOIS information, if kids were going to be using the space directly and proxy and privacy registrations were barred. The prohibition on hyperlinking was discussed and Committee members concluded that that restriction may be too limiting and deter engagement with the space by children and potential advertising partners alike.

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Possible test beds were discussed, including the possibility of initially targeting the space toward homeschoolers.

August 11 Meeting of the Education Advisory Committee

The Committee established that any initiative should focus on holes in the online education space, as opposed to areas that were well-resourced, such as the provision of online material and lesson plans for teachers. The student data space was discussed as a persistent void in the online education space, as school districts continue to rely upon arcane and disaggregated methods for recording and tracking student progress. The group surveyed the experience of InBloom a technical resource for student data storage which, despite significant funding and experienced leadership, was wound down due to an unsupportive policy landscape.

September 8 Meeting of the Education Advisory Committee

The Committee surveyed ideas raised to date: promoting positive online experiences for children and families and fostering a safe online environment for children. It was agreed that, while these ideas merited further exploration, none of them were likely to thrive within the framework of a third-level namespace, nor under the preexisting policy restrictions. For these reasons it was agreed that kids.us should continue to be suspended and that resources would be better allocated toward initiatives elsewhere in .US. Members agreed that the soon-to-be-formed usTLD Stakeholder Council could serve as a forum for continuing discussions about how to promote safe, positive, and educational experiences for kids within .US.

October 2 Meeting of the Education Advisory Committee

The Committee reviewed discussions and findings to date including the challenges that have historically faced kid-oriented walled gardens on the internet and policy-related challenges facing online education initiatives today. On the basis of past discussion the Committee decided to recommend that the kids.us zone remain suspended, but that their findings be brought forward to the usTLD Stakeholder Council for further consideration of how similar goals could be advanced in .US. The group agreed upon a timetable for next steps in preparing and reviewing the Final Report.

Recommendations and Analysis

Recommendation 1: The kids.us domain and the associated namespace should remain suspended.

As a first stage in its deliberations, the usTLD Education Advisory Committee sought to come up with a means of using kids.us that could operate within the existing framework while revitalizing its usage, which had grinded to a halt prior to its suspension. This would entail reinstatement of kids.us as a third-level namespace subject to all policy restrictions implemented pursuant to the Dot Kids Act.

The usTLD Education Committee arrived at some possible use cases that included:
1. Creation of a Sandbox for K-12 STEM learning;
2. Creation of an inter-school bulletin board platform for sharing content created exclusively by American schoolchildren;
3. Creation of a platform in which kids could learn about STEM fields and experiment with web development;
4. Creation of an educational and informational network geared toward homeschooled children;
5. Creation of a platform for storing student data; and
6. Utilization of the space by youth organizations set up with a white-label registrar solution.

These ideas are outlined below, followed by a discussion of their interrelation with the existing policy framework for kids.us.

Creation of a sandbox for K-12 STEM Learning: The Kids.us DNS namespace could be used as a sandbox for children in k-12 education programs. Neustar and the usTLD Stakeholder Council could develop () policies that are open enough to allow for continual innovation while providing for protection of children. Kids under the supervision of guardians and educators would be able to register personal domain names within kids.us that they can use to extend their STEM education and safe education on the Internet. The sandbox environment should also be used to promote continual innovative programs such as those recommended in the following recommendations. The sandbox environment could promote continual innovative programs such as those recommended in the following recommendations

Creation of a virtual bulletin board to showcase content created by American schoolchildren: The kids.us zone could be reinstated as an inter-school bulletin board platform that exclusively featured content created by American schoolchildren. Content could be reviewed and cleared for publication by school districts and access limited to students, teachers, school administrators, and parents and family members. The space could feature competitions to determine the best or most creative content across different fields. Contests could take place at the school district level, the classroom level, or amongst individual students and feature awards and prizes to drive engagement and participation.

Creation of a platform to encourage and support STEM learning, particularly in the field of computer science: Kids.us could host web education materials to teach kids about STEM, particularly computer science. Content could include informational and educational materials related to STEM, examples of STEM careers, and games that taught students about coding or other STEM fields. The zone could then have a space where students could work on their own web development projects and showcase the pages that they had created to family and friends.

Use the homeschool community as a test bed for educational initiatives: The community of homeschoolers and the organizations that support them could be used as a possible test application of any initiative around kids.us. These communities and organizations are typically heavy users and early adopters of digital education content and products and could benefit from the existence of safe educational network or platform.

Set up youth organizations with "white label" registrar solutions to facilitate domain registration and web development for their memberships: Youth organizations like the Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts of America could be set up with "white label" registrar solutions that included hosting and web templates. Promotion of the registrar-in-a-box model could foster early engagement of kids in coding and web development. This could also create the basis for a carve-out for the existing prohibition on privacy and proxy registrations, for organizations that they could verify the registrant as part of their membership.

It was ultimately decided that, while many of these initiatives could be contorted to operate within the existing policy framework, they would be hindered by it. Further, some of these use cases suggested a need for new policies that were not accounted for in the preexisting framework, such as implementation of a firewall or creation of a carve out to the prohibition on privacy services within the .US Top-Level Domain. These considerations are outlined below:

Limiting use to a single "walled garden" does not account for changes in technology and in internet usage by children.
Given the burgeoning of kid-friendly content elsewhere on the web since the initial creation of kids.us, as well as the existence of new technologies and tools to allow parents to monitor and control their kids' internet usage it is no longer reasonable to assume that a child's engagement with the web can or should be limited to a single namespace. Kids today rely heavily on the web as well as mobile internet use for entertainment and educational purposes. These usages could not reasonably be consolidated into a single namespace.

Prohibitions on hyperlinking would inhibit utilization of the space by kids.
The appeal of a space where kids could learn about web development and showcase their skills would be undermined if kids were unable to link outside the zone to their favorite websites and content.

Prohibitions on hyperlinking would prevent the development of partnerships.
The success of kids.us would rely upon strong content partnerships. Today, most prospective partners, be they educational publications and media or digital education providers, would have an established presence elsewhere on the web. These entities would be much less likely to partner with kids.us or to make it a principal or major part of their digital presences if they were barred from linking back to their primary web presence, to their micro sites, or to their social media pages.

Proposed initiatives do not require the operation of kids.us as a third-level namespace.

None of the ideas brought forward by the Committee required or benefitted from the operation of the space as a third-level registration zone, subject to a traditional registry-registrar model. Each of these initiatives would be more likely to succeed on a single website or platform.

Proposed initiatives might require the development of new policies or restrictions not accounted for in the existing framework.

Members of the Committee agreed that it was more important to target kids than teachers, parents, or other groups due to an abundance of online education resources available to teachers.

Allowing kids themselves to be responsible for posting or developing content could create a need for a firewall to ensure that only trusted and authorized users were granted access. This could require new policies for kids.us that included guidelines for access and posting rights and a system for verifying individuals' identities. Further, the prohibition on the use of privacy/proxy services across the .US TLD would render it unsafe for kids to partake in the registration of domain names.

Initiatives related to student data have been set back by the existing policy framework.

The failure of otherwise well-supported initiatives like InBloom due to growing policy concerns around the collection, storage, and usage of student data currently stands in the way of needed innovation in the student data field. However, until clearer policies are developed within this field new entrants to the student data market will face similar impediments.

Recommendation 2: Neustar, in collaboration with the usTLD Stakeholder Council, should seek to promote safe, positive, and educational experiences for children online guided by the operational principles identified by the Education Advisory Committee.

The Kids.us Education Advisory Committee stands behind the goal of promoting safe, positive, and educational experiences for children online. Neustar and the usTLD Stakeholder Council should seek to create or advance initiatives that promote these goals. This work should be guided by the following operational principles identified by the Education Advisory Committee.

An initiative should not duplicate or detract from preexisting efforts in the private sector.

Any efforts by Neustar or the usTLD Stakeholder Council to promote safe and educational experiences for children online should focus on gaps in the existing online education market or, otherwise, support, aggregate reinforce existing initiatives. Today, there exists a wealth of high-quality content targeted toward students and children as well as private sector and open source initiatives that align with the original goals of the kids.us namespace. Efforts within .US should not duplicate or compete with these initiatives.

An initiative should be cost-effective from an operational perspective and affordable to end-users.

One of the weaknesses of the kids.us namespace related to its cost-ineffectiveness. Stringent policy requirements, while well intentioned, added costs to users that they did not incur in competing spaces.

Any new initiatives aimed at children in the .us space should be lightweight and affordable from an operational perspective. Likewise, the cost for its users, whether they be publishing or consuming content, should be low to make the space accessible to all.

June 13 Meeting of the Kids.US Education Advisory Committee

Attendees

- Tammy Wincup – Chief Operating Officer, Everfigma
- Tom Barrett – President, Encirca
- Stephen Balkam – CEO, Family Online Safety Institute
- Anne Collier – co-director, ConnectSafely.org, and executive director, Net Family News, Inc.
- Heather Dahl – Author, the Cynja
- Becky Burr – Chief Privacy Officer, Neustar
- Mike Spencer – Social Media Specialist, Neustar
- Terri Claffey – Senior Policy Advisor, Neustar
- Stephanie Duchesneau – Public Participation Manager, Neustar

Members of the usTLD Education Committee introduced themselves.

Terri Claffey provided background about the Dot Kids Implementation and Efficiency Act of 2002, which established the kids.us namespace as a safe space for children online. At the time of its creation, there was little good content for children online and the existing content was poorly organized. Kids.us was seen as a way to provide high-quality content for children and keep them away from dangerous sites. The kids.us namespace peaked in 2004, with 23 active websites and 1,505 domains under management. By 2012, however, the namespace down to 632 registrations and 6 active websites, all of which had another domain with richer content.

Neustar tried a number of campaigns to attract interest in the site including free pricing for content review and visiting with prospective organizations. These efforts were unsuccessful. The organizations were already running successful websites on other domains and maintained that the restrictions on the namespace, particularly the prohibition on hyperlinks, were too restrictive. As a result, Neustar petitioned NTIA to suspend the website as it was not meeting its intended purpose. NTIA suspended the domain in 2012.

Ms. Claffey and Becky Burr explained that the purpose of the Education Committee is to generate new and innovative ideas to use the kids.us namespace within the current law. The Committee was also encouraged to share ideas about other ideas Neustar could explore to further its commitment toward STEM initiatives.

Tammy Wincup asked whether there was a requirement for kids.us pages to be placed behind a login page. Ms. Claffey responded that there was no registration requirement governing the kids.us namespace.
Ms. Wincup suggested that while a walled garden may be unsuitable for some uses, in other parts of the online education system there may still be a desire for walled spaces.

Anne Collier discussed two types of walled gardens that emerged in the early 2000s. The first was funded by kid-friendly advertising and centered upon proprietary content. The second was subscription-based and provided access to solid content from partners including Highlights Magazine and the Big Blue Bear. Though well-intended, both prototypes failed to take off and were eventually wound down. Later, Lego developed Lego Universe, a virtual world designed to be a safe space for kids. This site, too, was shut down because of the difficulty of implementing safety constraints while fostering creativity. More recently, some schools have been able to create proprietary networks that are highly interactive and successfully mimic open spaces on the web.

Stephen Balkam raised a number of political internet trends that ought to be considered, including the expansion of mobile and application-based content over URL-based web domains.
Ms. Wincup emphasized that the US space should not compete with existing digital learning initiatives, but rather aggregate and advance outside efforts, which are highly disaggregated.
Ms. Claffey provided more details about the process of reviewing and monitoring content. There were very few instances of inappropriate content in the kids.us space; most policy violations consisted of external hyperlinks.

Tom Barrett suggested that the space could be used to showcase academic achievements of American schoolchildren and display kid-created content. The space could be segmented by school district or by schools, and backed by a search engine or directory. Contests and other inter-school initiatives could be used to drive usage and connect schools.

Ms. Burr raised Neustar's idea to develop a white-label registrar solution for use by non-profits to manage their communities at lower costs and with additional support and hosting solutions.
Ms. Collier suggested that any walled space would be subject to questions of how to restrict access. Mr. Barrett echoed the need for better certainty that children have vetted online spaces.
Ms. Burr suggested that constraints could be implemented locally by allowing schools to define consent and participation requirements, but that this could restrict engagement levels.
Ms. Claffey presented information about the timeline of the Committee. Ultimately, the Education Committee will present its recommendation to the usTLD Council. The target date for this recommendation is October 2014. Ms. Claffey will poll members about a good time for the next meeting which will take place in early July.

Ms. Burr discussed Respect Network, a personally-controlled online information storage system and alternative to existing single log-on system launching this June as a possible partner.

In advance of the next meeting Neustar and Committee Members will research what platforms and templates are currently being utilized by school districts to support their content.

July 15 Meeting of the Kids.US Education Advisory Committee

Attendees

- Tom Barrett – President, Encirca
- Mike Spencer – Social Media Specialist, Neustar
- Terri Claffey – Senior Policy Advisor, Neustar
- Stephanie Duchesneau – Public Participation Manager, Neustar
- Les Chasen – Director of Registry and Identity Engineering, Neustar Inc.

Terri Claffey introduced Les Chasen to the members of the Education Advisory Committee. Stephanie Duchesneau provided an overview of the topics covered during the June Education Committee meeting, including historical background of the kids.us zone and the goals of the Committee. Ms. Duchesneau reviewed the idea raised by Tom Barrett during the June Meeting, to use the kids.us zone as a tool for schools, to serve as a virtual blackboard for content created by American schoolchildren.

Mr. Chasen agreed that the creation of a platform for one-way publishing by schools and other educators would be a valuable use of the kids.us space and would serve the goal of fostering positive experiences for kids online. He added that the space could be tailored for educators within the fields of Science, Technology, Education and Math (STEM). The space could host web education materials and online games to teach kids about STEM, particularly computer science. The zone could then have a space where students could share the content that they had created while participating in the computer science coursework.

The Committee discussed how to incentivize schools to participate in the space. Mr. Barrett stated that the primary motive would be educational. Committee members agreed that students and educators could both benefit from the existence of a space devoted to educational content and the opportunity for kids to learn about and execute upon positive and appropriate uses of domain names.

The Committee discussed who should be the primary users and registrants within the space. Mr. Chasen believed that the space would function best if used directly by teachers and students, rather than at the school or district level.

Ms. Claffey raised concerns about existing WHOIS requirements if kids were going to be registering directly within the space. Members of the Committee agreed that the provision of WHOIS information and prevention on privacy and proxy registrations would not be appropriate in this context. Members of the Committee agreed that kids should not be the registrants and there should be an adult point of contact associated with all registrations. Mr. Chasen suggested that educators could be set up as the registrant, enabled to make subdomains on behalf of kids in

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their online classrooms, as well as to approve content to ensure that it was appropriate for the space. Ms. Duchesneau added that Neustar was looking into the feasibility of setting up organizations like the girl scouts as registrars to provide registrations for their members, which could serve a similar intermediary function.

Ms. Claffey stated that special programs should be set up with partners to facilitate and encourage teachers' use of the zone. Mr. Barrett said that Encirca would be willing to help out in this regard.

The Committee discussed other policy restrictions that could affect this use of the zone. Mr. Chasen suggested that the restrictions on external hyperlinking and interactive technology may be too restrictive to get kids engaged in the space. Ms. Duchesneau reminded participants that the Committee was also welcome to consider ways to facilitate positive experiences for children within .US.

Ms. Claffey suggested that Neustar could set up a test bed, setting up this application for a small number of schools within .US but outside of the kids.us zone. This could determine whether it was feasible to operate it under existing kids.us restrictions, or what policy changes would have to be requested. Ms. Claffey asked the group for suggestions for possible test beds. Mr. Chasen suggested that homeschoolers and associations that serve them could be a good test application. Ms. Duchesneau asked the group what partners and examples the Committee could look to in building the space. Michael Spencer discussed Neustar's existing partnership with the Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana and Everfi to promote STEM education for young women in Kentucky and Indiana. The initiative provides a temporary platform to learn about programming through games and online coursework.

Ms. Duchesneau suggested that educators would have to pass through a verification process before participating, and suggested that the group further consider identity verification at subsequent meetings. Mr. Chasen added that having Neustar provide centralized servers for the space could also provide some control to take down inappropriate or infringing content.
In advance of the next meeting, members were asked to consider the following:

- What entities or networks would serve as good test beds for this initiative;
- What digital education providers, platforms, or initiatives Neustar could partner with to build the site; and
- What policy guidelines and rules should apply to the space, if a test bed was developed outside of the existing kids.us policy framework?

The Committee determined that it should meet again within the next two to three weeks to continue these conversations. Ms. Duchesneau volunteered to circulate a Doodle Poll to Committee members to set up the next meeting.

August 11 Meeting of the Kids.US Education Advisory Committee

Attendees

- Tammy Wincup – Chief Operating Officer, Everfi
- Tom Barrett – President, Encirca
- Stephen Balkam – CEO, Family Online Safety Institute
- Anne Collier – co-director, ConnectSafely.org, and executive director, Net Family News, Inc.
- Heather Dahl – Author, the Cynja
- Mike Spencer – Social Media Specialist, Neustar
- Terri Claffey – Senior Policy Advisor, Neustar
- Stephanie Duchesneau – Public Policy Manager, Neustar

Stephanie Duchesneau provided an overview of the topics discussed during the July meeting of the Kids.us Education Advisory Committee meeting, including the idea to use the space as an aide for STEM educators.

Tammy Wincup suggested that the online education community did not face a lack of resources for teachers to exchange lesson plans and that the kids.us space should focus on differentiation. Ms. Wincup believed that having a space where kids were engaged directly in content development provided a better opportunity for differentiation within the space. Ms. Duchesneau agreed that the site should be focused predominantly on kids as users, but that some intermediation, whether through teachers or otherwise was valuable to provide an additional layer of assurance that it would remain a safe space.

Anne Collier recommended that the group look to examples where other schools are driving protected uses of user generated content. Ms. Collier raised the example of a private school that was allowing its students to use a private Minecraft server. Ms. Collier heeded that even these narrow uses brought up complex questions about who should be allowed access to these protected spaces. The Committee discussed the tradeoff between providing kids with privacy and security and providing parents with sufficient transparency into their children's behavior online. Another example that was raised was the teen platform previously offered by Second Life, where educators could offer restricted uses for their students; in this case, any additional users of the space would have to undergo a background check to access the platform.

Heather Dahl suggested that the space should first establish an objective that aligned with the needs of the educators, schools, associations or individuals that would be using it and develop the details of the platform with that use case in mind. The Committee discussed the absence of services being provided within the field of student data. Currently, education-related data is

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highly localized and tracked in an "archaic" fashion. While there is some aggregation of this data at the state and federal level by the Department of Education through to the voluntary cooperation of school superintendents the industry lacks a trusted, third party provider to store, aggregate and make use of student data. This is due, in large, to concerns about data misuse and privacy concern.

The case of InBloom was brought up. InBloom was a technical resource where educators could store fine-tuned data about individual students; this data was then warehoused and could be used to provide information about the progress of individual students, as well as to track the effectiveness of larger-scale educational initiatives. The initiative, however, was recently shut down due to concerns about data security and privacy, and the passage of legislation in certain states to prevent teachers from providing student data to such aggregators.

The Committee returned to a discussion of the tools that were currently being used by homeschoolers, to try to identify any holes that existed in the marketplace, or potential partnerships. Two platforms were discussed: Connections Academy and K12, Inc. Ms. Wincup said that she would circulate more information about these and other resources to the Committee following the call.

The discussion turned to what role kids.us and Neustar, more generally, could play within the field. Two possible roles were discussed: providing a safe platform and other infrastructure for these services and providing benefits in terms of public marketing and visibility.

Michael Spencer suggested that a possible service that could benefit the online education field would be to provide a dashboard where different services and content could be rated by parents, teachers, and other educators.

The group decided to meet again in approximately three weeks. Ms. Duchesneau said that she would circulate a Doodle poll to identify the next meeting time.

September 8 Meeting of the Kids.US Education Advisory Committee

Attendees

- Tom Barrett, Encirca
- Stephanie Duchesneau – Public Policy Manager, Neustar
- Michael Spencer – Social Media Specialist, Neustar

Stephanie Duchesneau provided an overview of the minutes from the previous meeting.

The members of the Education Advisory Committee present on the call surveyed the ideas and initiatives proposed by the larger group to serve the goals of the kids.us space: promoting positive online experiences for children and families and fostering a safe online environment for children. Ideas surveyed included the proposal to use the space as an inter-school blackboard, as a tool to connect and engage homeschoolers, as well as to fill the gaps existing in the student data space.

It was agreed that, while several of the ideas brought up advanced these same goals, they could not thrive within the existing policy framework of the kids.us space, given the complications that being unable to hyperlink outside the space would create both in terms of drawing in potential partners and in providing users, whether they be teachers, parents, or students, the best available content. Further, it was established that these initiatives did not require or work best as a conventional domain name space that relied upon a registry-registrar model.

The Committee members discussed the changing trends in internet usage by children since the passage of the Dot Kids Implementation and Efficiency Act of 2002 ("Dot Kids Act") that brought about the kids.us space. The dramatic increase in internet usage by children between 2002 and 2012 did not bring about increased engagement with the kids.us space; instead, this period saw an equally dramatic decline in engagement with kids.us. Conversely, the burgeoning of content targeted specifically to children elsewhere on the web has made the consolidation of content for children into a single zone unrealistic.

In light of these considerations, Mr. Barrett and Ms. Duchesneau agreed that it would be advisable to continue the suspension of the kids.us space. Even if certain proposals could be contorted to operate within existing requirements, the policy restrictions around kids.us would be an inhibiting factors and not one that best advanced the original goals of the Dot Kids Act. The participants agreed that it was better to apply the expertise and work of the Committee to thinking of the best ways that the same goals could be met within .US, rather than being restricted at the outset. The participants agreed to raise these positions with the wider group on the next call.

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Mr. Barrett raised the fact that .KIDS had been applied for as part of ICANN's New gTLD Program. Ms. Duchesneau provided more context on the applications including the applicants, Donuts and Amazon, and the registry model that would be deployed by both. The group is eager to see how the TLD is ultimately launched, and what types of users it is able to attract.

Mr. Barrett asked whether one of the goals of the new usTLD Stakeholder Council that was being formed would be to advance the work of the Committee on an ongoing basis. Ms. Duchesneau responded that one of the first tasks of the Council would be to consider the initial recommendation of the Kids.US Education Advisory Committee, but that these goals should indeed come into play in the longer-term work of the Council. Ms. Duchesneau raised the fact that Neustar was still seeking a representative from the Kids.US Education Advisory Committee to participate on the usTLD Stakeholder Council to continue conversations to continue to push the work and goals of the Committee forward after the Committee puts forward its final recommendation. Mr. Barrett expressed an interest in participating on the usTLD Stakeholder Council; Ms. Duchesneau said that she would follow up with more information about the Council.

Participants agreed that the next call should be scheduled within the next two to three weeks.

October 2 Meeting of the Kids.us Education Advisory Committee

Attendees

- Tom Barrett – President, Encirca
- Heather Dahl – Author, the Cynja
- Mike Spencer – Social Media Specialist, Neustar
- Terri Claffey – Senior Policy Advisor, Neustar
- Stephanie Duchesneau – Public Policy Manager, Neustar
- Les Chasen – Engineer, Neustar

Stephanie Duchesneau took roll call and provided a summary of the minutes from the last call.

The committee surveyed its discussions over the past months for the purpose of developing recommendations for how to proceed with kids.us. Case studies of other restricted, kid-oriented content online; ideas proposed for how to effectively utilize kids.us; and policy and internet usage trends affecting online education initiatives today were discussed.

The committee agreed that the best course of action was to recommend that the kids.us zone remain suspended. It was agreed that none of the potential use cases raised to date would be well-served by the existing structure of a third-level namespace, nor by the existing policy framework. The decision was also informed by the limited success across most "walled gardens" targeted toward providing educational content for children and the unfeasibility of limiting today's kids' engagement with the internet to a single zone, given the expansion of the web and mobile- and application-based content for children.

The committee recommended that Neustar continue to explore how it could promote safe and educational experiences for kids within the .US TLD, but that such efforts would be better-targeted outside of kids.us. It was agreed that the forthcoming usTLD Stakeholder Council could provide a forum for continuing discussions around these goals, including further exploration of the ideas advanced by the Education Advisory Committee.

Ms. Duchesneau provided an overview of the next steps entailed in the preparation of the final report of the Education Advisory Committee. The group agreed to the following timeline and delineation of responsibilities:

Ms. Duchesneau would prepare a Draft Report for circulation to the wider committee by Wednesday, October 8.
The whole Education Advisory Committee would review the report and provide edits, additions, and other feedback no later than Friday October 17.

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Ms. Duchesneau would incorporate all edits and feedback into a single draft and recirculate to the group by Monday, October 20.

The group would hold a call on the week of Monday, October 20 to discuss the final report and any outstanding concerns.

Ms. Duchesneau would prepare the final report in advance of the October 27, 2014 deadline. Ms. Duchesneau agreed to circulate a doodle poll to establish a meeting time for a call to be held on the week of October 20.

October 21 Meeting of the Kids.us Education Advisory Committee

Attendees

- Tammy Wincup – Chief Operating Officer, Everfi
- Tom Barrett – President, Encirca
- Anne Collier – Founder, NetFamily News
- Heather Dahl – Author, the Cynja
- Mike Spencer – Social Media Specialist, Neustar
- Terri Claffey – Senior Policy Advisor, Neustar
- Stephanie Duchesneau – Public Participation Manager, Neustar

The group kicked off discussion on the draft report circulated by Stephanie Duchesneau two weeks prior. Three recommendations that were previously made over email were raised for discussion. First, Tammy Wincup has suggested that the report should call out more clearly the requirement that efforts to promote positive and educational experiences for children do not replicate or compete with existing efforts in the online education space, and that they should, instead, focus on holes in the marketplace or on aggregating and supporting existing initiatives.

The members of the education advisory committee agreed that this was one of the early assumptions that the group's work had relied upon. Ms. Wincup supported the general language proposed by Ms. Duchesneau to address this suggestion, but believed that it should be incorporated as an overall operating principle, rather than called out as an initial suggestion. Ms. Duchesneau volunteered to incorporate the suggestion into the draft report.

Discussion moved to a second suggestion proposed by Tom Barrett to ensure that the space was affordable, both from an operational vantage point and to end users. The group agreed that affordability and accessibility to end users should be prioritized, and that this recommendation could, likewise, be incorporated as an overarching operating principle.

Ms. Wincup suggested the report should make clear that the principal recommendation of the group was to maintain the suspension, and that the various use cases proposed were secondary to this. Anne Collier agreed, adding that this recommendation was clearly supported by all related examples of restricted namespaces that had been explored by the group. Ms. Wincup suggested that the report could be reframed to emphasize the primary recommendation and clarify that it was ultimately determined that the various use cases should not be advanced within the kids.us namespace. Ms. Wincup also stressed that Neustar should focus equally on how its infrastructure and technologies could be used to support existing efforts in the online education space, rather than over-focusing on the specific use cases, for which similar efforts and initiatives may already be underway.

Mr. Barrett asked whether further information should be provided about an alternative policy framework should be provided within the recommendations. Ms. Duchesneau responded that the policy framework would likely depend on whether a particular use case was taken up by the Education Advisory Council, as each proposed use case would have unique requirements. Ms. Duchesneau volunteered to modify the existing draft to account for the suggestions and discussions undertaken on the call.