Wednesday December 2, 2015 – Phone – 9:30 a.m.

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**Obviously, as time marches on, the digital divide has closed substantially in Minnesota and across the United States. More people have access to faster Internet and cheaper devices than ever before. Yet, as is to be expected, there are always more challenges on the horizon when it comes to digital literacy, education, connectivity and access.**

**What, to you, are the greatest current drivers of the digital divide in Minnesota, whether it be regarding education, Internet connectivity, cybersecurity, computer ownership or whatever else?**

A focus on digital inclusion. There is still statewide, libraries provide desktop access for people.

The digital divide is around smart phones where they aren’t quite smart enough and desktops are necessary. A disconnect between what they need and what they have. Libraries can give people desktop access when they need it.

Every public library has at least one public computer and internet access.

“The divide has gotten much finer”, it’s more “shades of gray,” if you will.

“The gaps are narrowing but getting deeper.”

Libraries do have better Internet access than some homes.

Libraries help people with digital literacy on a daily basis. The St. Paul project is a great example on the far end. Some libraries have computer labs to help people.

“One of the hallmarks of a library is if people need help they don’t get turned away. “

Some libraries are providing production and coding literacy as well.

Not significant investments in tech upgrades. Minecraft is being used. Scratch, a coding thing, web-based. Lots of web-based service. Speed is a need for growth.

Digital literacy: the Electronic Library of Minnesota, ELM. Now has computer tutorials. That is a new tool.

Empowering people to do some learning.

**Is there anything you would like to add?**

One issue we didn’t touch on: the role of ESL. Many libraries are figuring out ways to help that need. An area where there’s a need.

Northstar Project = St. Paul library program. The issue is being addressed in many different