

October 8, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure to nominate Dr. J. Todd Finnell to serve as a director for the Universal Service Administrative Company. In my role as Executive Director of the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA), I have had first-hand experience of Todd Finnell's extensive background in education.

Todd Finnell currently serves as the Superintendent of Schools for Imperial County Office of Education (ICOE), a role to which he was elected in 2014. Prior roles at ICOE include Assistant Superintendent of Technology Services, Chief Executive Officer of the California K-12 High Speed Network (K12HSN), Executive Director of TechSETS, Senior Director of Learning Technologies, and Teacher/Counselor in Alternative Education. The K12HSN is a statewide program operated by ICOE under grant from California Department of Education which supports network access for school districts throughout California.

Relying on the experience gained at ICOE in forming and managing the Imperial Valley Telecommunications Authority – a joint powers authority-- (1999-current), Dr. Finnell led the ICOE's effort to win the role of administering the K12HSN from the California Department of Education in 2004. The program administers K-12's participation in the California Research and Education Network operated by the Corporation for Education Network Initiatives in California (CENIC). Once awarded, in September 2004, Todd Finnell and the Imperial County Office of Education effectively led this important work on behalf of the California Department of Education, both from a budgetary perspective and from a service delivery perspective.

Dr. Finnell holds a Professional Clear Administrative Services Credential, a Pupil Personnel Services Credential, a Multiple Subject Professional Clear Teaching Credential, a certificate as a Certified Chief Technology Officer, and a certificate from the ACSA Personnel (HR) Administrators Academy. Dr. Finnell received his doctoral degree in Educational Leadership (Ed.D.) in 2014 and his Master of Arts (M.A.) in Education 1995. Dr. Finnell also possesses experience teaching in elementary classrooms, instructing university students in a teacher preparation program, and serving as Vice President for Student Services, Technology and Research for Imperial Community College District (2010-2014).

In California, county offices of education serve as regional support agencies. The Imperial County Office of Education operates a budget of over \$120 million annually and has more than 600 employees.

As is revealed by his success in county-wide and state-wide efforts, Dr. Finnell is skilled at working collaboratively across agencies. Dr. Finnell has received various awards including: The Innovation in Technology Award from the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association, the Exemplary Research and Practice Award from San Diego State University, the Brian L. Talbott Award for Innovative Technology and Collaboration, the Technology in Learning Leadership Award from CUE (formerly Computer Using Educators), and the Gigabit or Bust award from CENIC. He has served on the CENIC board, and the boards of multiple other "technology in education" organizations.

Todd Finnell has keynoted and presented on many topics including "EBS Deployments by Educators" at the National Educational Broadband Service Association conference and "Getting Technology Right: The Current Challenges and Innovations in Education Technology" for the California County Boards of Education Fall Conference.



## California County Superintendents Educational Services Association

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Todd Finnell embodies essential leadership traits; honesty, integrity, competence, optimistic visions for the future, and service-driven leadership. He thinks about implications of decisions and ponders the road far ahead of the immediate challenge. His technical skills are very strong. His soft skills are equally well-developed. Most importantly, Dr. Finnell has a deep commitment to the welfare of students, school staff, and the communities they serve.

Schools nationwide derive critical benefits from the federal telecommunications subsidy programs. Todd Finnell understands and cares about the role of these programs and their value to education. He also understands complex budgets, project implementation and the challenges of leading large staffs. He will make an excellent member of the Board of Directors for the Universal Service Administrative Company.

Please contact me if I can provide any additional information.

Sincerely,

Peter Birdsall  
Executive Director