

NASCIO NOMINATIONS 2022

STATE CIO OFFICE SPECIAL RECOGNITION
NORTH CAROLINA

EXPANDING IT STRATEGY STATEWIDE: NORTH CAROLINA INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY STRATEGY BOARD

INITIATED 2019

COMPLETED 2021

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NCDIT  NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF
INFORMATION
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

North Carolinians want transparent government with services that are easy to access and confidence that their data is being used responsibly and managed safely. They expect to engage with government in real-time and on multiple platforms. To do this, we must fully leverage the people, process, and technology at our fingertips. Jim Weaver, Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Information Technology (NCDIT) and State Chief Information Officer (SCIO), is working hard to make this a reality for all North Carolinians.

The SCIO has broad oversight and direction setting responsibilities, but our governmental structures do not encourage engagement from all stakeholders or provide the visibility necessary to effectively manage the state's IT. To address this challenge, we have moved toward a statewide governance structure that allows for buy-in from multiple stakeholders through the establishment of the IT Strategy Board (ITSB) in 2019. The ITSB is comprised of 11 voting members with representatives from the executive branch, the University of North Carolina System, the North Carolina Community College System, and private sector members appointed by both the governor and the legislature.

Joining the state in early 2021, Secretary Weaver immediately saw the potential of the ITSB and worked to re-engage board members on the top three priorities outlined in the [Statewide IT Strategic Plan](#): broadband and digital equity, cybersecurity and privacy, and digital transformation. To address these priorities, the ITSB established a Digital Transformation Committee and a Cybersecurity and Privacy Committee. While not in existence for very long, these committees have accomplished a great deal including:

- **Cybersecurity Education Pathways Program** – Through the ITSB, the North Carolina Community College System, University of North Carolina System, and NCDIT have partnered to create programs to increase the number of credentialed cybersecurity professionals to meet industry demand.
- **Digital Transformation Roadmap** – The Digital Transformation Committee has established the state's first overarching roadmap, which provides the state with a single document outlining what we are trying to accomplish and how we are going to get there.

As our world becomes increasingly interconnected, understanding our constituents' needs and perspectives is more important than ever. The ITSB and its committees represent a cross-section of key stakeholders and experts who can help the state better understand and meet the needs of our constituents. The ITSB is aiming to create and elevate a common voice advocating for IT across the state.

IDEA

The North Carolina State Chief Information Officer (SCIO)/Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Information Technology (NCDIT) is responsible for setting the state’s IT strategic direction. Historically, the business of government was managed in silos, which created boundaries, inhibited efficiency, and compromised security. Each agency traditionally operated as an independent organization instead of collaborating effectively as a statewide enterprise, and this situation made developing enterprise strategies very challenging.

To be successful, state leaders need to communicate across boundaries, finding ways to share and collaborate to effectively meet the needs of our constituents. To achieve this, we have moved toward a statewide governance structure that allows for buy-in from multiple stakeholders through the establishment of the [IT Strategy Board \(ITSB\)](#).

Governor Cooper recommended the creation of the ITSB in 2019, and it was subsequently signed into law as part of [G.S. §143B-1337](#). The ITSB is comprised of six standing members and six rotating members who are appointed by the governor and the legislature. The State Auditor also serves as a non-voting, standing member. The six rotating members currently include a former

legislator and representatives of the health care industry, private universities, and the technology industry.



The legislation establishing the ITSB was passed in late 2019, and the board held its first meeting in early 2020. The pandemic hindered progress by the board. In addition to the broader upheaval caused by the pandemic, NCDIT had significant turnover in the SCIO position, with three secretaries in 2020. When Secretary Weaver joined in early 2021, he brought much-needed stability to the position. He immediately saw the potential of the

ITSB and sought to re-engage its members, recognizing their vast experience and expertise. Setting a regular meeting cadence and harnessing their expertise to support the state, the board members have placed their early focus on two of the state’s top strategic IT priorities: cybersecurity and digital transformation.

IMPLEMENTATION

North Carolinians want transparent government with services that are easy to access and confidence that their data is being used responsibly and managed safely. They expect to engage with government in real-time and on multiple platforms. To do this, we must fully leverage the people, process, and technology at our fingertips, including the vast knowledge and expertise of the ITSB.

The top three priorities outlined in the [Statewide IT Strategic Plan](#) are broadband and digital equity, cybersecurity and privacy, and digital transformation. To address these priorities, the ITSB established a Digital Transformation Committee and a Cybersecurity and Privacy Committee, which both inform our strategies at a statewide level and help the SCIO prioritize the myriad initiatives required to enhance the state’s constituent engagement efforts.

The committees established by the ITSB have an advisory role, focused on setting direction and strategy. The committees make recommendations to the full ITSB for consideration, including whether to invest new or reallocate existing resources in technology, shift the investment of resources from lower-priority to higher-priority technology needs, adjust administrative policies or procedures within NCDIT specifically or state government broadly, and modify or enact statutory (legislative) policies.

Both the Cybersecurity and Privacy and the Digital Transformation committees were designed to help address complex problems that impact the entire state. They provide a platform for collaboration across jurisdictions and industries, allowing the state to leverage subject matter expertise and gain buy-in.

Cybersecurity & Privacy Committee

North Carolina has adopted a whole-of-state approach to cybersecurity to prevent and prepare for incidents and support affected entities when they occur. Cybersecurity and privacy have gained

<p>Cybersecurity & Privacy Committee</p> <p>Members represent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Private sector• NC University System• Local government cybersecurity experts• National Guard• NC Community College System• State agency cybersecurity experts including State CISO
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importance as the pandemic has shifted more government services online and given rise to expectations of connectivity and service that are only increasing. State governments are positioned on the frontlines of protecting citizens as they engage with critical services.

In 2021, the ITSB established the Cybersecurity and Privacy Committee to assist in the development of our whole-of-state approach to cybersecurity. Comprised of representatives from the University of North Carolina System, state agency chief information security officers,

N.C. Local Government Information Systems Association, National Guard, and private organizations, the committee is tasked with prioritization of cyber needs, helping set the state’s cybersecurity

strategies and ensuring that the whole-of-state approach is comprehensive and effective. The committee advocates for legislative policies that will help promote statewide cybersecurity and privacy and is developing a workforce development/training and education framework for cybersecurity and privacy. The committee is also establishing partnerships with educational institutions for training and support to respond to incidents and provide on-the-job training.

Digital Transformation Committee

North Carolina is focused on changing the way the state delivers services, resources, and information to meet the expectations of its customers, whether residents, visitors, or businesses. This digital transformation is about enabling frictionless services anytime, anywhere, and on any device.

In 2021, the ITSB established the Digital Transformation Committee to develop strategies to empower constituents by delivering easy-to-use technology that meets their needs. The committee is incorporating user stories and customer journeys as it develops strategies to build and enable platforms, products, and services that deliver a simple, integrated, and personalized experience of government to all constituents and businesses. One of the key goals is to stimulate inter-agency coordination and collaboration toward common solutions. While any number of areas within state government will benefit from this transformation, the committee has focused on four key areas: identity, a constituent portal, service transformation, and data. The committee has created a roadmap that outlines strategies for these areas over the next 18-36 months.

Digital Transformation Committee

Members represent:

- Health care industry
- Higher Education
- State government business and IT leaders
- Tech industry experts
- Private citizens

IMPACT

With an increased focus on collaboration and strategy under Secretary Weaver, the ITSB has developed into a productive body that is already making a lasting impact on the state. The board members are actively engaged and have a strong interest in promoting the work of the committees and making sure that the General Assembly has the information it needs to make informed IT decisions. Board members have helped develop and socialize IT budget requests, necessary legislative changes, and additional provisions required to make the committees' work a reality.

The Digital Transformation and the Cybersecurity and Privacy committees continue to grow in both size and influence, adding working groups with more subject matter experts from a variety of fields to address new topics and concerns as they arise.

With the engagement of the ITSB and establishment of the committees, the state has gained:

- Awareness and engagement across multiple levels of government
- Support and collaboration between state government entities
- Insights, knowledge, and best practices from the private sector

The government and industry leaders on the ITSB and advising the committees provide the state with an incredible depth and breadth of expertise. They consistently provide a variety of perspectives, allowing for novel approaches and more informed decision making. The engagement among members has also laid the groundwork for major new cross-boundary collaboration opportunities.

Highlights of the committees' work include:

- **Cybersecurity Education Pathways Program** – There is a shortage of cybersecurity professionals in North Carolina. According to [Cyber Seek](#), an initiative funded by the National Initiative for Cybersecurity Education, North Carolina currently has approximately 21,000 unfilled cybersecurity positions. The ITSB is working to increase awareness and create opportunities in this space, including the Cybersecurity Education Pathways Program, which is a partnership between the North Carolina Community College System, University of North Carolina System, and NCDIT to increase the number of credentialed cybersecurity professionals to meet industry demand. The program is in its infancy but is designed to leverage the strengths of cybersecurity educational programs, such as Fayetteville Technical Community College's award-winning Cyber Defense Education Center and the University of North Carolina at Wilmington's Center for Cyber Defense Education, along with public and private partnerships. The goal is to remove barriers to entering the cybersecurity field to meet the needs of North Carolina employers.
- **Digital Transformation Roadmap** – Constituents expect to engage with government in real-time and on multiple platforms. We are working on modernization and digital transformation

initiatives to build and enable platforms, products, and services that deliver a simple, integrated, personalized experience of government to all citizens and businesses with the state. The Digital Transformation Committee established the state's first overarching roadmap, which provides the state with a single document outlining what we are trying to accomplish and how we are going to get there. This includes how we will promote enabling infrastructure and system integration, stimulate inter-agency coordination and collaboration toward common solutions, and improve awareness of and easy access to secure state systems for all constituents. The roadmap was drafted by members representing the tech sector, higher education, state agencies, healthcare, and the SCIO's office.

Capitalizing on the ITSB's engagement, Secretary Weaver is establishing additional committees to address other subject matter areas. The most recently established committee is focused on developing a prioritization methodology for IT budget requests. The methodology will be introduced in time for our upcoming legislative session in which the General Assembly will set the budget for the next biennium. This committee will have a major impact on how we budget and plan for IT in the state. Members will represent both the executive and legislative branches, allowing for buy-in across branches and establishing an objective way to weigh, compare, and prioritize funding for IT across state government.

The ITSB and its committees represent a cross-section of key stakeholders and experts that can help the state better understand and meet the needs of our constituents. The ITSB, under Secretary Weaver's leadership, is working to create and elevate a common voice advocating for IT across the state.

With the help of the ITSB, we are working to ensure that technology makes government more responsive, efficient, and effective not only in how we interact with North Carolinians but also in policy decision-making and services that do not always interface directly with the public. We are excited by what the ITSB has been able to accomplish in such a short time and look forward to expanding its role and influence in the future.