

# Meeting Notes

## SEDE Steering Committee Meeting – July 1, 2025

**SEDE Steering Committee Members Attending:** Sandra Watson (Chair – AZ), Michael Graney (Vice-Chair, WV), Clint O’Neal (AR), Kurt Foreman (DE), Hope Knight (NY), and Sophorn Cheang (OR).

**CREC Staff Attending:** Bob Isaacson, Ken Poole, Leif Olson

Mike Graney opened the meeting at 12:03 pm and thanked everyone for attending. After his introductory comments, he asked Bob Isaacson to cover the items in the agenda.

Bob opened with a recap of the May SelectUSA SEDE meeting, noting that 29 states and one territory had registered, showing growing participation in SEDE. He added that feedback he had received was positive with some suggestions to further improve networking opportunities. Committee members expressed an appreciation for the meeting, emphasizing the value of the discussions and connecting with colleagues.

Kurt Foreman commented that the “around the room” format took too long and suggested using a pre-meeting poll to gather input in advance, with results shared in a 5–8 minute summary. Bob asked if the group would be interested in breaking into discussion groups by topic generated by the poll. Hope Knight expressed support for that idea. Bob concluded the discussion by noting that the Committee will meet again prior to the next SEDE meeting to finalize an agenda and discussion format.

### **Current Activities**

Bob provided an update on CREC’s current activities supporting SEDE:

- All state strategic plans have been uploaded to the SLEDS database which is accessible on the SEDE [website](#). Bob noted that users will not need to log-in to access these plans.
- The state organizational structures update is complete. These profiles offer an overview of each state economic development organization. CREC is forwarding each state’s profile to the respective state for confirmation of the information.
- Updates to the state incentives database are underway, including exploration of expanded features including performance and project information. This additional

information will provide better information on which programs are active and how they are being used.

- The SEDE website is being refreshed to provide a more modern appearance and better functionality.
- A Fall 2025 webinar will focus on rural workforce attraction and development. Leif noted that this has been a priority topic for SEDE members.

### **Future Activities**

Bob reviewed upcoming projects planned for the remainder of calendar year 2025 and early 2026:

- A state economic development staff salary report is planned for calendar year 2025 (CY25). He noted that CREC will focus on collecting data from public sources before contacting individual states. Kurt noted that in some states, economic development functions are split between organizations including some operating within non-public entities. This separation may make data collection more challenging but offered to assist in clarifying the issue.
- A new state economic development expenditures database is targeted for calendar year 2026. State economic developers are often asking for budget comparisons and while the analysis isn't apples-to-apples, CREC hopes to improve the information available to states.

Bob noted that the current and future projects are all designed to improve information available to the SEDE network to improve state operations and overall economic development program performance.

### **Fall/Winter SEDE Meeting**

Bob opened a discussion on location options for the Fall/Winter 2025 SEDE meeting, noting West Virginia and New York as two states that indicated interest in hosting.

Hope Knight presented two options in New York:

1. Albany, the state capital, could include a tour of [NY Creates](#), a public-private partnership in semiconductor research currently undergoing a major expansion.
2. New York City, with numerous venue options, potential for a backstage media tour, and tickets to a Broadway show the evening before the meeting.

Mike Graney voiced strong support for New York and deferred offering West Virginia given the ease of NY travel and potential changes in his organization. Bob confirmed that Albany

and New York City would be the two options offered to Steering Committee members in an e-mail preference poll.

Sandra Watson asked about timing; Hope suggested early fall with Sandra noting mid-October or early November might be best given that Arizona will be hosting [SEMICON West 2025](#) October 7 – 9.

**Action Item:** CREC will follow up with Steering Committee members via email to solicit their location preferences and meeting dates. The meeting agenda will be discussed in a future Steering Committee meeting.

### **SEDE Investments**

Bob provided an update on SEDE's investment position. He noted that FY26 investment notices were sent to 34 states and territories with nine responding as of July 1 with investments totaling \$45,000. He added that CREC is following up with a soft-touch approach for remaining states.

Bob also asked about the potential for SEDE sponsorship guidelines. Hope Knight supported sending a general note to all state leaders requesting that they share any sponsorship guidelines and vendors that might be interesting in partnering with SEDE. Clint O'Neal expressed concern about bringing in service providers with sales agendas, but was open to mission-aligned partners who could provide data, insights, or national trends or provide services to all states like construction companies. Sandra Watson agreed and offered examples of national companies, like Amazon, that may be more appropriate partners.

Ken Poole suggested polling members with two questions:

1. Do you have existing sponsorship guidelines?
2. Would you nominate a firm that aligns with SEDE's values for sponsorship?

Ken also noted that investments statements had only been sent to active states, and that CREC welcomes guidance on engaging others. He added that K.C. Belitz (NE) recently announced his resignation.

Sandra proposed that when CREC schedules meetings with new state leaders, the Steering Committee be informed in advance or immediately after. Members could then follow up with a short personal note to offer support and SEDE's perspective. Bob thanked the group, adding that peer outreach was a major reason for the growth in participation.

Sandra concluded that collective follow-up from multiple Steering Committee members demonstrates SEDE's unity and professionalism.

**Action Item:** CREC will follow up with all state leaders requesting sponsorship guidelines and suggestions for possible vendor sponsorship partners. CREC will request assistance from Committee members in helping to identify and reach out to states that are not currently (or have not recently been) active to offer support and encouragement.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:32 pm.

### **Summary of Key Information, Decisions, and Actions**

- SelectUSA SEDE meeting was highly successful; future formats may include pre-meeting polling and breakout groups.
- State strategic plans are now available in the SLEDS database (no login required).
- Organizational structures and incentives databases are being updated.
- State salary report will be developed during the summer and fall of 2025.
- State expenditures database updated is planned for 2026.
- Fall webinar topic: Rural Workforce Attraction & Development.
- Fall/Winter SEDE Meeting location options narrowed to Albany and New York City; Steering Committee members will be polled for preference.
- Sponsorship guidelines will be explored, with an emphasis on values alignment. An e-mail to SEDE leaders will be sent asking for sponsorship guidelines and vendor suggestions.
- Steering Committee members encouraged to assist with outreach and follow-up as state leadership changes occur.