Minnesota Internet2 Day

Overall event:
http://informns.k12.mn.us/MN_K-12_Internet2_Day.html
http://informns.k12.mn.us/Internet2_for_MN_Schools.html

Planning: Our original plan was to have a room full of soon-to-be evangelists (teachers, tech coordinators, administrators) connected to a few key remote speakers. Our regional coordinators throughout the state thought we would get a bigger audience if we had 10 "hosting" sites and one overall hosting /coordinating site which was TIES. This was helpful in creating energy to get the event off the ground but it also had a level of complexity with 10 sites and 11 incoming speakers. Luckily, we were able to invite speakers from the Internet2 community who have experience, humor and grace for these types of events. This move from one central location to several sites was a positive step in creating a state-wide community.

Website: I found that you need to get a program agenda posted right away. Even though, it's subject to change, it makes it become a reality and people can start planning. We asked for bios and session descriptions from each speaker. We also had the event streamed and archived. The website served as a great cross promotional tool because of the other 10 other sites involved.

Logistics of the event: We had the tech team, regional coordinators and speakers log in to the chat room during the event. This served as a "green room" for the speakers as well as a "back stage" area for the tech team and tech coordinators. We also had the speakers dial in to a "green room" before we moved them into the main conference. This proved to be very effective because the speakers could watch the event and listen for their cue.

Program: At one time, we talked about a half day program that included some hands-on time working with the Polycom. I would have liked to have 2 stations set up in the building so people would have the experience of calling each other.

We started our day with a roll call, followed by speakers from MN, the International Wolf Center, SeaTreks, and the Internet2 community. At the end of our day, each site muted and spent time talking to their group about next steps. Then we all gathered together again to re-cap. During this time at TIES, many participants wanted to see how to set up a Polycom so we showed them and some were able to make a call. At the end of the day, we talked about our next state-wide project which is to host a mini MegaconferenceJr in the Fall.