



Connections

Volume 5: Issue 3

November 2003

MCOECN Update *by Bruce Hawkins, CEO*

What Does the OECN Do?

By Bruce E. Hawkins, CEO

Currently, the Ohio Department of Education is working on the mandate from the budget bill (HB 95) to look at the delivery of educational services to Ohio school districts. The ODE proposal must be submitted to the General Assembly by March 31, 2004. This project, entitled Ohio Regional Education Delivery System (OREDS), has caused many of the other regional service agencies to examine their purpose, method of service delivery, and level of customer satisfaction.

One of those regional service agencies is the Ohio Education Computer Network (OECN). In 1979, the OECN provided basic fiscal software in support of the school treasurers' offices. Since that time, this role has greatly expanded. Through a self-examination process motivated by OREDS, the OECN members have come to realize that the term Data Acquisition Site (DA Site) is really a misnomer. That name implies that the sole purpose for the DA Sites is to acquire the data from their member school districts. While certainly this data acquisition is important, it is now just one of many functions performed by the DA Sites.

Perhaps a better name would be "Technology Service Centers." Listed in the chart below are some of the services provided by these centers:

In addition to these core services, these "Technology Service Centers" provide a myriad of other services to their school districts according to the requests of their member districts. Some of these services are:

- DASL (Data Analysis for Student Learning)
- Digital Academies
- Cisco Academies
- IVDL (Interactive Video Distance Learning)

The OECN provides services to over 92% of Ohio school districts. The large number of Ohio public school districts that voluntarily make the choice to belong to or receive services from the OECN is an indication of the value, quality, and importance these districts place on the services DA Sites provide. Because of the quality services and reliability provided by the OECN sites, member school districts continue to ask for expanded services. One major example would be the extension of fiber optic networks from the DA Sites to the individual school buildings. With the need for ever-increasing bandwidth to provide faster, more reliable transmission of voice, video and data, the OECN and Ohio school districts are spending millions of dollars to provide fiber networks to enhance and support their instructional programs.

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CORE SERVICES

EMIS System and Services	Individualized Education Plans
School Accounting System	Grade Book Software and Support
Staff Payroll System	Analysis and Decision Support Systems
Equipment Inventory System	Network Support (LAN and WAN)
INFOhio Library Automation & Media Booking Services	Internet Connectivity and Support
Resource Alignment & Content Delivery	Electronic Mail Delivery Systems
Electronic Resources	Professional Development
Video services such as distance learning and streaming video	Technology Support including planning, procurement, implementation, and maintenance
Lesson Plans	Educational Technology
Student Administration Systems (Grade reporting, student scheduling, attendance, discipline, transcripts)	Filtering

What Does the OECN Do? (cont'd)

Most people would agree that technology is now part of the core foundation for all educational services. It is not only important for direct classroom instruction, but it is also used indirectly as an administrative tool to help the schools operate. Examples of administrative tasks that are expedited by technology are payroll, purchase orders, budget, inventory and other fiscal activities, grade cards, student schedules, and email services.

Data Acquisition Sites, therefore, are much more than just half a million computers connected by wires. They are truly service agencies that support student instruction as well as administrative functions for school districts. The OECN supports over 4,800 separate locations and over 518,000 individual computers. This massive infrastructure and the associated support services have made the Ohio Education Computer Network an exemplary model for instructional technology throughout the nation.

As the OREDS process evolves, it is important to consider the fiscal, educational, and technological support the OECN provides to the districts. As noted in recent regional meetings, Ohio school district superintendents consider Data Acquisition Site technology service and support to be a vital part of the provision of educational services to their districts. The MCOECN DA Sites have evolved as needed to meet the needs of the districts, and DA Sites will continue to grow and change to meet future needs.

The MCOECN wishes to emphasize the following points as the Ohio Department of Education moves forward to create the OREDS plan:

- Technology provides the foundation needed for the delivery of every other service.
- The Data Acquisition Site technology centers are the only RSA positioned to deliver technology service and support to Ohio school districts.
- We advocate a governance model that empowers superintendents in the leadership of their RESA.
- The OREDS model needs to be built to facilitate effective communications within and among various service areas.
- In determining RESA boundaries it is important to consider existing investments and the cost of changing those investments.
- As a core service, technology needs to receive continued state support and funding.
- Current Data Acquisition Site services provide quality and value to Ohio schools.
- The future accountability system needs to be based on clear responsibilities and realistic expectations.

As the key technology provider for K-12, the MCOECN desires to be involved in the discussions and decisions regarding the delivery of technology services within OREDS.

From the CTO - What's In a Name?

by Andrew Tompkins

I work with a group of scouts. Once each year we reorganize the boys into new patrols. At a recent meeting we were doing just that, and I gave instructions to each new patrol to select a new patrol name. The only qualifier given was that the mascot selected had to have a patch available from the Scout Shop. A short time later a young scout walked up, and the conversation went like this:

**"Thermonuclear
fast friendly
ultra-efficient extremely
skilled educational
technology support
specialist sites."**

Me: "Did you guys agree on a new patrol name?"

Scout: "Yes. We decided to call ourselves the Three legged thermonuclear cheese ball stealing rabid raccoons."

Me: "Do you mind if we shorten that to just Raccoons? It would be a lot easier to remember."

Scout: "Is there a patch for that?"

Me: "Yes, there is definitely a patch for Raccoons."

Scout: "Cool."

Sometimes we have the same kind of name association problem with the term "Data Acquisition Site" or "DA Site." The

name does not do us justice. Yes, we collect data, if you want to think of EMIS in that fashion. But we do so much more. Fiscal services, student services, Internet access, filtering, email, INFOhio... the list goes on. And behind each of these is a cadre of very talented support staff waiting to help school districts do the job better and more efficiently. We are proud to be DA Sites, but we want folks to know that "collecting data" is but a small part of our existence.

I'm thinking of a new name, something like "Thermonuclear fast friendly ultra-efficient extremely skilled educational technology support specialist sites."

Can we shorten that to "DA Sites"? Is there a patch for that? Cool.

INFOhio's Electronic Resources Core Collection for 2003-2004

ALL public and non-public K-12 schools, educators, students and their parents across Ohio have unlimited use of these resources free of charge. All resources are available from any Internet-accessible computer, throughout school campuses and at home. The State of Ohio funds INFOhio to purchase these online resources for Ohio schools through June 2004.

Point your Web browser to www.infohio.org and click on the Core Collection resource buttons.

AccessScience

AccessScience provides the world's leading science encyclopedia, The McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of Science and Technology, online. AccessScience provides relevant, reliable, current, practical and authoritative science and technology information to support learning and research.

AMERICAN NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY

American National Biography tells the story of our nation through the lives of its people (18,000 biographies) from the well known to the infamous to the obscure.

AMICO

AMICO Library brings nearly 80,000 works of art from more than thirty important museums in the United States and Canada into Ohio's classrooms. Students can see objects beyond the museums where they live and identify a wide variety of objects that connect to their learning. The database is not just for art classes, but also for literature, history, and world culture classes.

Annals of American History

With over 2,000 primary source documents and 700 pieces of multimedia, this is an excellent resource for expanding students' understanding of the history and culture of the United States. This database provides a year-by-year documentary of American thought and action. Read the original words of more than 1,500 authors who made and analyzed American history through speeches, writings, and interviews dating back to 1493.

Britannica Online School Edition

Provides access to three complete encyclopedias that ensure consistency with classroom topics and age-appropriate language. You can find:

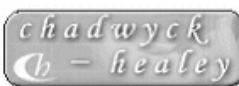
- ❖ Encyclopedia information from learning ages 6 through adult
- ❖ Pre-selected and evaluated Internet web sites
- ❖ Topic spotlights in high interest areas
- ❖ Online dictionary and thesaurus
- ❖ Curriculum activities that integrate the multiple Britannica resources, including interactive games and animations
- ❖ Thousands of full-motion video clips on a variety of subjects



EBSCOhost provides full text articles from more than 6,000 popular magazines, scholarly journals and newspapers. For a printable list of all titles go to <http://www.infohio.org/ER/EBSCOtitles.html>

Enciclopedia Universal en Español

The most comprehensive encyclopedia in the Spanish language contains over 47,000 articles plus 8,300 photos and images. It's the perfect resources for native Spanish speakers, bilingual students, and students learning Spanish.



Chadwyck-Healey's Literature Online, the leading online database for English and American literature, puts rare and previously inaccessible works together with established literature, including 20th Century English, American and African-American Poetry, English and American Drama, 18th Century fiction, numerous editions and adaptations of Shakespeare and more.



NewsBank offers a collection of full-text newspapers including more than 15 Ohio publications from big cities (Cleveland Plain Dealer, Cincinnati Enquirer) to small towns (Port Clinton News Herald, Fremont News Messenger) and more.

LANDSAT

Ohio Landsat provides satellite views of Ohio updated regularly; part of OhioLINK's Digital Media Center.



This collection is a fully cross-searchable database of the complete texts of over 100 reference titles, from English and bilingual dictionaries to dictionaries of quotations, art and architecture, history, literature, philosophy and religion, mythology, politics and social sciences, science and medicine, and more.

SANBORN

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps provides more than 40,000 maps (1847-1970) of Ohio towns and cities. This is provided by OPLIN as part of OhioLINK's Digital Media Center.



This interactive reference database is designed to develop students' research, reading, writing, language and computer skills by providing full text articles and other materials selected for their educational content, interest level, and level of readability.

The one-time entry of a username and password will be required to access the resources outside of school. For more information contact the DASite in your region or INFOhio Central at central@infohio.org, 614-752-2941 or online at www.infohio.org/about/dasites.html. Several resources are funded in part through an Institute of Museum and Library Services LSTA grant awarded by the State of Ohio.

SchoolNet Conference 2004

The SchoolNet Conference 2004 has been expanded to offer a rich and rewarding experience each of the three days. Districts can maximize the benefit of the professional development opportunities by sending different staff each day.

A full agenda of sessions and events for each audience—teachers, technology coordinators and administrators—will be offered **Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, March 1-3**, at the Columbus Convention Center. We've listened to your feedback and have expanded on offerings for 2004 that we think you'll value:

- Leadership Forum sessions will be interspersed with regular Conference sessions, allowing each of the team to experience a wider variety of sessions than was possible in previous Conferences.
- Because of the Columbus Convention Center schedule, we've had to make some changes to the exhibit hall hours. For 2004, the exhibit hall will be open on Monday and Tuesday, not Tuesday and Wednesday.

- More than 250 exhibitors are eager to discuss with you how to get the best value for your technology dollars. A special time in the exhibit hall late Monday afternoon has been designed for just for this purpose.
- We've asked participants of the Ohio LIT program and the nominees and finalists of the Technology Leader Administrators of the Year 2003 to present their winning strategies for student success.
- Education leaders just like you will be sharing information, insight and advice; helping each other solve problems, discussing situations, aspirations, needs.

**For more information, go to
<http://www.osn.state.oh.us/go/stateconf>**

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March 1-3, 2004

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