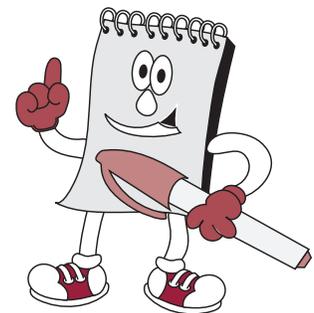


Presentation Tips (From Eastland-Fairfield Career & Technical Schools)

Opening the floor for questions at the end of a presentation can be a daunting prospect. The speaker often feels as if he is no longer in control. Remember to follow these steps to set the stage for a great Q and A session:

1. Indicate how you will recognize questions (for example: As you say "Are there any questions?" raise your hand to signal how audience members should voice their question).
2. Gesture with an open hand to the audience member.
3. Listen carefully to the ENTIRE question.
4. Repeat the question.
5. Answer the question.
6. If you would like to encourage the audience member to ask another question, keep eye contact with that person all the way to the end of your answer.
7. If you DO NOT want the audience member to ask you another question (especially if that person is negative or hostile), break eye contact with the individual before finishing your answer. Find another pair of friendly eyes to end with.
8. Start process again with raised hand for the next question.

To learn more about delivering effective and powerful presentations, contact Kelly Fuller with Eastland Fairfield Career & Technical Schools at 614-836-4541 x371.



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Connections

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Regionalization of Services to Ohio's Schools

By Bruce E. Hawkins, CEO

Over the past two biennia, there have been attempts to regionalize the services that are provided to Ohio school districts.

Recently, Representative Arlene Setzer, Chairwoman of the House Education Committee, introduced House Bill 115. This bill makes several changes to the current delivery system and codifies the opportunity for any school district, community school, or educational service center to receive services from any OECN Data Acquisition Site. Although this has been the practice for the past 15 years, the inclusion of this language re-emphasizes the importance of local choice in the delivery of services. This bill also enables school districts to continue with the services from any of the 23 Data Acquisition Sites.

The Ohio Education Computer Network is celebrating its 25th Anniversary this year and over the past 25 years, the infrastructure within the Data Acquisition Sites has included investment in the hundreds of millions of dollars. To arbitrarily assign a school district to a new Data Acquisition Site would be very difficult due to the liability (e.g., debt on equipment and infrastructure) and assets (equipment and software) the districts have in their existing networks. The language in this bill gives them the opportunity to move to another Data Acquisition Site, but does not force districts to move. The Management Council of the Ohio Education Computer Network is appreciative of this adjustment from previous legislative efforts.

The Management Council is also pleased that the language in this bill included a statewide EMIS Advisory Committee. In order for the EMIS data collection system to function properly, the districts need to understand the requirements that are imposed upon the Ohio Department of Education by both federal and state regulations, and the Ohio Department of Education needs to understand the implications at the local level for implementing EMIS

changes. By having an open dialogue, we believe there could be a better understanding and increased functionality of the EMIS software. The Management Council applauds Chairwoman Setzer's efforts in making these changes.

There are some details in the bill that need to be clarified. For example, it should be clear how the existing DA Site subsidy and building connectivity funding is distributed. For example, if the \$8 million to Data Acquisition Sites goes through the regional centers and they charge a 4% management fee, the DA Sites would be providing the same services at a \$320,000 reduction in income. The Management Council will recommend the DA Site subsidy and building connectivity funding continue to flow directly to the Data Acquisition Sites and to local districts. Other programs such as grants, technology initiatives, and other cooperative educational ventures within the region should go through the regional network to facilitate the cooperation of such efforts.

Secondly, the Data Acquisition Sites strongly believe that they add to the educational opportunities of the school districts they serve. Therefore, a representative from the Data Acquisition Site should have representation on the education technology advisory council in this legislation. There will certainly be initiatives from this council that will require the services of Data Acquisition Sites; therefore, it would facilitate the function of this council if the Data Acquisition Sites were represented. The Management Council of the Ohio Education Computer Network supports the legislation in House Bill 115, and we are appreciative of Representative Setzer's adaptations to earlier proposed regionalization legislation.





INFOhio Budget and Electronic Resource Update

Theresa M. Fredericka, Executive Director

Since you likely benefit from INFOhio's products and services daily, you know how students and educators make use of INFOhio. Maybe it's helping students answer research questions and collect information for term papers and other assignments using INFOhio's Core Collection. Maybe it's the hundreds of items you circulate today to excited readers using MultiLIS or Sirsi K-12 automation software or even the overdue notices you print for those still learning to be good library citizens. You know about INFOhio.

However, INFOhio is still a small part of Ohio state government, a few small line items in a multi-billion dollar budget. In spite of our best efforts, not all legislators understand the role INFOhio plays every day in the lives of our students. Nor do they see our vision of how INFOhio can do even more, if we are given the resources we need. Help provide that awareness. Contact your state representative and senator now. Let them know the benefits INFOhio provides to the students and teachers you serve. Thank them for their past support. Invite them to visit your school to see your

library program in action, including how INFOhio helps you provide excellent library media services that enhance student learning and love of reading. Explain how we can do more with more resources and more state support for a program that cost-effectively serves every student in our state.

To help, INFOhio has updated our Legislative Action Plan on the INFOhio Web site. Just click on Library Staff then Legislative in the left menu. The new plan is near the top of the page. The direct URL is <http://www.infohio.org/LibraryStaff/LAP2005/Intro2005.html>.

Use of the Electronic Resources Core Collection continues to increase, 31% over this time last year. INFOhio continues to promote use to Ohio's K-12 schools and now to Ohio's Colleges of Education. Working with both OhioLINK and the Institute for Library and Information Literacy Education (ILILE), informational packets were distributed to all the college of education faculty in Ohio's colleges and universities. The message was

that by working together we provide world-class information resources for today's students and tomorrow's teachers.

Throughout the year the Electronic Resource vendors continually enhance their products by adding content, new features and more. Schools can keep informed of these changes and improvements via the "Product Updates" available on the left hand navigation section of the INFOhio Web site. Here are just two of the newest updates:

- SIRS Discoverer recently added four pre-recorded training modules that provide an introduction to the database and overviews of special features and educator resources.
- And now with just a few clicks of the mouse, Britannica provides educators quick, easy access to all state curriculum standards and benchmarks, with links to supporting encyclopedia articles from Compton's Encyclopedia by Britannica.

Email and Sensitive Data ~ Do Not Mix!

With the growing utilization of electronic mail (Email) as a communications tool, there are security concepts that users need to be aware of. One of the most important of these is this: Email and sensitive data do not mix!

Email was designed to be a quick and easy means of communicating with others electronically. When initially designed it was intended for limited communication between trusted users within a research network. As implemented today throughout the Internet, these design premises are no longer true.

Unless the user takes special precautions Email can be easily intercepted and read at numerous Email transport locations between the sender and intended recipient. Further, even if the Email is sent in a secure manner, sensitive data can be compromised by the reader accessing the message in an insecure manner. Because of this it is recommended that sensitive data (e.g. - social security numbers, credit card numbers, bank account numbers, etc.) are never included in Email messages. As more school districts implement Email notification to employees (e.g. - for direct deposit payroll notifications, etc.), or to parents (e.g. - student progress reports, etc.) it is important that sensitive data is not included in these Email communications.

In order to transport sensitive data via Email some users attempt to password-protect files in order to protect the privacy of information. However, this too is not a panacea. Password-protection of files will shield the sensitive information during transport, but these Email messages cannot be scanned for viruses, worms, etc. Therefore, this methodology may put the recipient in greater jeopardy of having his or her computer infected.

The preferred methodology for disseminating sensitive data is via an SSL-encrypted web page as is done by financial institutions and organizations performing financial transactions online. SSL-encrypted web pages were designed for sharing sensitive data.

The safest way to protect sensitive data is to not disseminate it via Email. If your school needs to share sensitive data electronically, consult with your DA-Site for advice.



Why ONE Network?

It may be hard to believe, but the K-12 ONEnet network will soon be six years old. Funding for the state network was part of the 2000-2001 state biennium budget, which came into law July 1999.

By technology standards six years is a lifetime, so it may be a good idea to review just "why" we endorse one common Ohio school network.

The reasons for having one common K-12 network can be summed up in five words – privacy, security, quality, cost, and equity. The first two are similar and very important. The state K-12 network is used to transport information about students between schools, DA Sites, and the Ohio Department of Education. It is not only vital but required by law that student-identifiable data elements be kept private and secure. The privacy of data and the security of children require these very important attributes.

Quality is another major driver behind ONEnet. Adopting well-known standards for equipment and interconnectivity allows the network to provide greater level of reliability. This will become even more important as the industry moves towards applications such as IP telephony and IP video, which require greater network quality. A managed private network allows for end-to-end managed quality of service (QOS). This might be nearly impossible with a patchwork of multiple network providers.

Cost is an ever important factor in everything we do, and that includes technology for Ohio schools. The ONEnet network helps to facilitate group purchasing of fiber connectivity, communications circuits, Internet bandwidth, and equipment. These group purchasing efforts help schools manage the expense of technology. Furthermore, the private K-12 network allows schools to communicate within an Ohio intranet without incurring per-minute or per-megabyte charges that may otherwise exist in public networks.

The final driver for the ONEnet network is equity. Our state has high-wealth areas, economically disadvantaged areas, and everything in-between. Technology provides very important tools for education, and it is important that these tools are made available regardless of financial need. ONEnet has provided equitable funding to all schools to help minimize the gaps caused by disparate local financial resources.

Privacy, security, quality, cost, and equity – five good reasons that we continue to endorse state support of the K-12 ONEnet network.



Enhanced Features for Special Services Education Module

A new release of the Special Services Education Module (SSEM) software has been recently announced. SSEM is the special education software package that works in conjunction with the DASL and McSIS student services software from the Management Council as well as the ProgressBook software from Software Answers.

SSEM Version 3.0 brings some major enhancements, requested features, and additional user functionality. Updates include better maintenance utility, newly enhanced forms, a window that displays the save status, auto page numbering, drop-down lists to assist in item selection, data sharing between forms, a new form finalization process, and enhanced functionality for Macintosh computers.

This new release also brings enhanced EMIS reporting capabilities. Now users of SSEM can capture EMIS data for special services students directly off of the special education forms. This feature adds a great deal of efficiency and convenience for school personnel.

Version 3.0 is currently undergoing final testing at several SSEM pilot sites. The general release is expected to occur in mid-April.