



# Connections

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## MCOECN Update *by Bruce Hawkins, CEO*



### Gates Grant to Buy Tech Training for Ohio Administrators

Ohio schools are the recipient of a \$3.6 million grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The purpose of this grant is to provide Ohio school administrators an opportunity to expand their leadership skills to support and use technology for continuous improvement in their districts.

Beginning in 2002 and continuing through June 2004, Ohio will extend technology training opportunities to school administrators across the state through Leadership for Integrating Technology, a three day training program. The state will be able to provide participants with a laptop computer and software through these grant funds, benefiting more than 2,300 principals and superintendents from public and non-public schools statewide.

This grant was a cooperative effort by many individuals and organizations including Ohio Governor Bob Taft, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), the Ohio SchoolNet Commission (OSN), the Buckeye Association for School Administrators (BASA), the Ohio Associa-

tion of Secondary School Administrators (OASSA) and the Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators (OAESA).

Participants will be asked to pay a nominal, one-time fee to participate in the three-day training, and districts whose administrators complete the series will receive a laptop computer to practice the skills learned through this course. The Management Council salutes the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for their commitment to education through a three-year, \$120 million commitment. The foundation seeks to reach an estimated 83,000 principals and superintendents in all 50 states. This is certainly an exciting opportunity for Ohio's administrators to learn more about technology.

### FISCWeb - A New Look at the District Financials

Have you ever wanted to make current financial reports of your district available to your superintendent, building administrators, board members, or other individuals through any internet web browser in a secure password-protected manner? Would you like to have a repository of current financial reports for your district that are always available and can be electronically accessed and searched for specific items, dollar amounts, check numbers, etc.?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions perhaps FiscWeb is a service you need to explore with your OECECN Data Acquisition Site (DA Site).

FiscWeb is an imbedded capability of the OECECN state software, and can be utilized with the USAS, USPS, EMIS, and/or SAAS packages. What this service entails is the creation of a password-protected web page that can be utilized to access current (or archived) reports for your district. If this repository is built for current reporting, the reports will be generated automatically nightly for districts that select to utilize this service.

Because the access provided using this method is to reports only, individuals granted access to this service are being given safe read-only access to your district's data. It is possible for the DA Site to perform extensive customization of the types of reports provided through this service. Basically, any report that can be generated using the OECECN state software can be made available for review via FiscWeb. Access can also be customized so that different users have different reports available to them.

The reports are made available in Adobe Acrobat Portable Document Format (PDF) files that can be correctly displayed and printed on all types of computers. Access to these reports does require the free Adobe Acrobat Reader software, which is available at no cost from Adobe's web site.

Contact your DA Site for additional information and assistance!

**Management Council**

**Ohio Education Computer Network - <http://www.mcoecn.org>**

# 21st Century School Library at SchoolNet

by Theresa M. Fredericka, Executive Director

School librarians were transformed into cyberlibrarians in the 21st Century School Library exhibit as they demonstrated to educators from around the state how to use the powerful tools of the information age to enhance academic achievement.

As part of the 21st Century School House presented at the School Net Conference, February 3-6, 2002, the exhibit allowed librarians to showcase:

- the benefits of library automation
- the ease and universal accessibility to curriculum related, age-specific electronic databases
- the impact of teaching with multimedia educational resources, and
- the necessity of integrating information literacy into the curriculum by linking the library, internet, and electronic resources to classroom instruction.

We'd like to express a special thanks to those who gave their time and energy to make this exhibit a success. As individuals and as a statewide community, we must all promote school libraries and continue to make them a vital part of schools in the 21st century and beyond.

As one volunteer put it: "I continue to be amazed by those who don't know about the [INFOhio] electronic resources. There were two teachers from an independent school who were just so excited by the resources—they couldn't believe that these riches were there for anyone. They also didn't have a librarian and walked away realizing what a librarian could bring to them."



First Lady Hope Taft joined the SchoolNet Conference in the 21st Century School Library to read from "B is for Buckeye" to a group of Wilson Hill Elementary students. Mrs. Taft is pictured with L4SL representatives (from left to right): Roxane Oakley, State Library of Ohio; Carla Southers, Ohio Department of Education; Mrs. Taft; Theresa M. Fredericka, INFOhio; and Gayle Geitgey, Ohio Educational Library Media Association (OELMA).

The 21st Century School Library Exhibit was sponsored by Leadership for School Libraries (L4SL). L4SL is a collaborative effort of the Ohio Department of Education, the Ohio Educational Library Media Association (OELMA), INFOhio, and the State Library of Ohio with a mission to provide leadership to Ohio's School Library Community through the integrated efforts of state-level entities.

## MCOECN Training Opportunities by Duane Baker and Andrew Tompkins

One of the primary goals of the MCOECN is to assist DA Sites by providing ongoing staff development opportunities. These training opportunities come from various sources, including our VAR partners, Ohio SchoolNet, cooperative purchasing, and sessions developed and hosted by the Management Council. Over this past year there have been events on Compaq/VMS system futures, converged networks, human resource development, cost analysis, and various courses available through SchoolNet Tech Academy sessions. In addition, the MCOECN VAR recently negotiated and organized a round of cooperatively purchased training vouchers. DA Sites who purchased these vouchers can use them for individual staff development at multiple sites throughout Ohio.

The MCOECN is sponsoring a series

of short professional development activities called **Training Tuesdays**. These sessions, held on Tuesday mornings from 10:00 am-11:00 am are each geared to a specific audience. Some are targeted for DA Site personnel, and others are designed for specific school district personnel. These sessions are all delivered via videoconferencing at four locations, and some will also be webcast.

A complete schedule of dates and additional information on upcoming **Training Tuesdays** events can be found at the MCOECN web site [http://](http://www.mcoecn.org/)

[www.mcoecn.org/](http://www.mcoecn.org/) using the **Training Tuesdays** link. To participate in any of these scheduled events please contact your local DA Site.

The MCOECN VAR and the Ohio Educational Data Services Association (OEDSA) will partner to bring the OEDSA Fall Conference to the Worthington Holiday Inn on September 17-19, 2002. Four separate tracks will be offered covering Technical/Systems Management, Technical/Networking, Student Administration Systems, and Fiscal/State Software. Plan to attend this exciting training event!

### Upcoming Training Tuesdays Sessions:

05/21/2002

**Broadband Infrastructure Considerations**

06/18/2002

**Interactive Learning and its Role in Your School Building**

07/09/2002

**Interactive Learning Applications Used in Today's Schools**

# HB 482 – Not Good for Ohio’s Schools by Bruce Hawkins, CEO

The views expressed in this editorial are those of the CEO and do not necessarily represent MCOECN policies and positions.

## Editorial

HB 482 is a “Non-Compete” legislation that would prohibit governmental entities from providing technological services that are available from private businesses or industry. Schools are constantly asked to “do more for less.” By working together with the effort of such programs as ONEnet, schools receive internet connectivity at a much reduced rate through the combined efforts of the Ohio Department of Education, SchoolNet, the Ohio Education Computer Network (OECN), the Ohio Education Television Network (OETN), non-public schools, large urban school districts and the Department of Administrative Services (DAS).

If HB 482 were to pass, schools would be required to purchase such services from the private sector, even though the cost would be significantly higher. How would this legislation impact such programs offered by INFOhio, OECN, and SchoolNet today? Technology is changing so rapidly that it is hard to imagine how it might impact the future of technology development in our schools. But the real advantage in collaborative programs such as ONEnet comes not only in the cost savings to schools, but in long-term savings that come from the adoption of standards that facilitate communication and collaboration in Ohio schools. Under 482, these collaborative efforts would be disallowed, leading to disparate islands of incompatible vendor solutions – a virtual “Tower of Babel.”

## Knox County, Mt. Vernon Students Get Work-Based Experience



Students in Mrs. Gregg’s Employability/Work Ethics Program of Knox County have enjoyed the opportunity to apply classroom knowledge to a work-based experience and earn some financial reimbursement to apply to activities that they have chosen for this year.

The project affords instruction in areas of team building, organizational skills and task analysis. Students helped

with the dynamics for layout and design of work line and rubrics to measure steps of completion.



Knox County Educational Service Center paraprofessionals assist MH students to fold, attach labels and assemble the MCOECN newsletter.

Find email addresses for Ohio educators at:  
[www.oecn.k12.oh.us/WhitePages/oecn\\_ph.html](http://www.oecn.k12.oh.us/WhitePages/oecn_ph.html)

## OECN Forums - Try Them Again for the First Time!

*by Bruce Hawkins, CEO*

For more than ten years the Ohio Education Computer Network (OECN) has provided various means of facilitating communication among participating K-12 educational constituencies throughout Ohio. In the days prior to the internet explosion this was done through a product called *DECnotes*, in which various electronic conferences were established.

Several years ago the OECN migrated this service to a product called *Forum*, which is web-enabled. The URL for accessing the public OECN discussion forums is <http://forums.oecn.k12.oh.us/forums/oecn/dispatch.cgi>.

First-time users need to create their own username and password to be able to post messages in the discussion forums, but you can read the discussions without any type of authentication.

There are forums available for teachers, treasurers, and superintendents. In addition there are forums dedicated to specific OECN applications such as EMIS, USAS, or USPS. These areas can be great repositories of valuable information to help you more effectively perform your job functions.

If you haven’t tried the forums in a while, try them again ... for the first time!

# Update on Data for Student Learning by Andrew Tompkins, CTO

We have several very exciting items to share regarding our Data for Student Learning Project. First, we recently completed a survey of the Data Acquisition Sites to determine just how much DSL is being utilized by our member school districts. The numbers have exceeded our expectations! Our survey results indicate that twenty-two DA Sites are offering DSL services to over 570 Ohio school districts, and more than 400 of these districts are actively using DSL on a regular basis. This means that over 79% of the school districts in Ohio have access to data through our DSL software, and this number continues to grow! Thank you for supporting our Data for Student Learning Project!

**Over 79% of the school districts in Ohio have access to data through our DSL software...**

Over this past year we have added several features to the system, such as the SWAN grade and attendance entry system. We also added the ability to graph and analyze off year testing results for Stanford-9, OOPT, and ITBS tests. In addition to these features, we have recently added a course request module to allow students to make pre-scheduling course requests through a web-based course request screen. We are constantly striving to improve DSL based on input and ideas from Ohio educators. Please keep your suggestions coming!

We are eager to announce three new features that will be available very soon. The first new feature is item analysis. DSL will allow districts to load their item analysis data, which is an aggregated summary of how their students answered the specific questions on each proficiency test. This feature will allow districts to look at results for each question and make possible determinations on how to improve performance. In addition to item analysis, we will be adding two additional off year tests. These are the McGraw-Hill Terra Nova and OPBA tests.



Finally, we have good news regarding our DSL-Plus Project, which is the conversion of our McSIS (Campus America) student data software system to the DSL web interface. The key to a good student data software package is the scheduler, and the scheduler may well be the most difficult component to convert. After several months of work, our software developers at the NOACSC Data Acquisition Site are reporting success in our scheduler conversion project. The scheduler functionality is nearly complete and the developers are beginning a period of heavy testing and tuning of this new software.

We will keep you informed as we move forward with the development of our new student data software.



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