

# Connections

Volume 3: Issue 2

January 2001

*Management Council  
of the*

## Ohio Education Computer Network

*Providing Technology  
Services to Ohio  
Classrooms*

Bruce Hawkins, CEO  
hawkins@mcoecn.org

Columbus Office:  
2455 North Star Road  
Suite 1  
Columbus, Ohio 43221  
Phone: 614.995.1775  
Fax: 614.752.2940

Mt. Vernon Office:  
1365 New Gambier Road  
Mount Vernon, OH 43050  
Phone: 740.397.9510  
Fax: 740.392.1547

Visit our website at:  
<http://www.mcoecn.org>

## Technology Funding Request in the New State Biennial Budget

by Bruce Hawkins, CEO

Both the SchoolNet Commission and the State Board of Education have forwarded funding requests to the Office of Budget and Management for fiscal years 2002-2003. Both of these requests include portions for technology in Ohio schools.

SchoolNet has a new program entitled CARE (Continuing Acquisition and Repair of Equipment). This program is in response to school districts' requests to have flexibility in upgrading, replacing or repairing their current technology, or in purchasing new computers. The CARE program gives districts more flexibility in focusing educational technology resources where they have the highest need while allowing them to use a portion of the funding for technology support-staff, warranty/repair, software and other related items. Seventy percent of the CARE funding will go to new or replacement of existing computers. It is anticipated that Ohio will reach its goal of one computer per five pupils at the end of the new biennium.

The SchoolNet budget also includes a request to include Educational Service Centers (ESCs) in the ONEnet connectivity program. This program will serve over 14,000 students taught at ESC locations while connecting ESCs to the state K-12 network and more importantly to

the local districts the ESCs serve.

The SchoolNet budget will continue to support distance learning projects. This project could give students access to the courses that are not available

within the district

due to re-

s o u r c e

c o n s t r a i n t s ,

a s s i s t

t e a c h e r s

w i t h

p r o f e s s i o n a l

d e v e l o p m e n t ,

a n d

a s s i s t

w i t h

o t h e r

c o m m u n i c a t i o n

t o o l s .

T h e r e

w i l l

a l s o

b e

e m p h a s i s

o n

t e c h n o l o g y

t r a i n i n g

i n

c l u d i n g

o n l i n e

c o u r s e s ,

o n l i n e

r e s o u r c e s ,

a n d

q u a r t e r l y

t r a i n i n g

a c a d e m i e s .



The INFOhio electronic resources for students including newspapers, magazines, biographies, database of instructional content and encyclopedias have been a great asset to student learning. This program is an excellent example of how leveraging resources at a state level can be very cost-efficient. If purchased separately, these electronic resources would cost \$18.10 per student as compared to \$0.28 per student when purchased by the State.

eSchool Ohio will pilot an online E-learning environment that tightly aligns content, instruction and assessment

*(Continued on Page 2)*

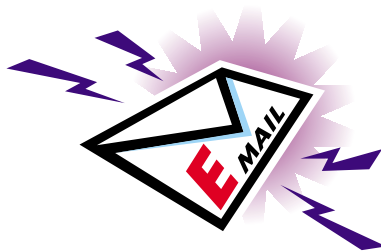
# Data for Student Learning

## Technical Update by Eric Schumm and Andrew Tompkins

The Data for Student Learning (DSL) project continues to expand. Many DA Sites are going into a pilot mode, and a few have entered production mode. Your local DA Site director can provide you with a timeline on when to expect DSL to be available to your district.

On the developmental front, work is focused on refining existing pages and adding fiscal data. We are also seeking input from JVS schools on ways to expand DSL to meet the unique needs of vocational districts. In calendar year 2001, DSL will start focusing on off-year proficiency tests and implementing many suggestions. We welcome your input and/or participation in upcoming user roundtable sessions.

For those of you already using DSL, you may have noticed a few minor changes as we work to resolve any problems or issues. This is a relatively new project and changes of this nature are an important part of the process. We really want your feedback. If you notice that something does not look correct or you have some ideas on what you would like to see added to DSL, please use the Feedback link at the bottom of each page to notify your DA Site DSL contact people. We feel that DSL is about 5% complete and with your ideas and suggestions, we look forward to working on the remaining 95%.

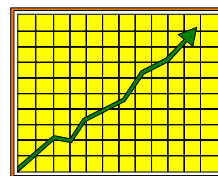


*(Continued from Page 1)*

for the 6<sup>th</sup> grade science proficiency test. Online courses will also be developed collaboratively with the Ohio Department of Education using their model curriculum. Students will learn online while taking practice tests as well as other diagnostic tools to provide immediate feedback to both the teacher and the student. Some examples of the technology resources requested in the SchoolNet proposal include technology planning, district grants, state technology conferences, tech equity, Ohio Education Telecommunications Network and interactive video distance learning.

The Ohio Department of Education also has several technology requests in their budget. Some of the technology items in their budget request include a 5% increase in funding for data acquisition sites and funding to continue the Student Management Records System (SMRS), the state student software program that is being developed by AAL in cooperation with Battelle.

The Ohio Department of Education has also requested a 2.5% increase each year for INFOhio and 10% increase for connectivity funding of both public and non-public schools. They have also asked for an increase for both internal operations and school district subsidy of the Educational Management Information System.



# Data for Student Learning

## Software Rollout by Bruce Hawkins, CEO

There has been tremendous interest from school districts in the software developed by the MCOECN to assist with Data for Student Learning (DSL). This new web-based graphical software is very user-friendly and can include statistics on student demographics, test scores, and financial data for school districts. The DSL software permits Ohio's educators not only to access, but also, to use student data that has been archived for several years. The Management Council is currently meeting with other educational organizations such as the Ohio Department of Education, the regional planning development committees, Educational Service Centers and the Data Training Institute to create a staff development program.

An important aspect of this software is that it is customer-driven. A statewide roundtable committee comprised of school district personnel will make the decision on the changes needed on this software. Each DA Site will have access to this software and collaborative arrangements between technical and educational staffs will make this software a useful tool as we continue to address student improvement.

---

# Data Acquisition Site Continuous Improvement/Incentive Plans

By David W. Rhoades

The designated Data Acquisition Sites (DA Sites) have completed DRAFT Continuous Improvement/Incentive Plans (CIPs) which were submitted to the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) in November. The Plans will be reviewed by ODE and returned to the sites for final adjustments by the end of December.

The sites have had ten percent of their funding for Fiscal Year (FY) 2001 withheld again by ODE. After the Plans are approved and implemented, the sites will review them again in April for accomplishments. If ODE decides they have made satisfactory progress toward their goals, the remaining funds will be released at the end of FY 2001.

The CIPs set forth each DA Site's area of concentration and improvement for the school year, the person(s) monitoring progress and the anticipated date of completion. It also lists the services being offered, the DA Site staff and management, other information about the site, and the member districts. Usually, the Director is designated as the person to contact for more information about the site and the Plan. Many of the Plans will be available as a part of the DA Site's web page after the first of the

calendar year.

Preparation for the CIPs began several months ago. Entity users were requested to complete electronic and/or hard copy surveys and were asked for their opinions in user forums and via email. Site staff contributed their observations about areas needing additional attention and resources for future development. Several DA Sites included references to their existing Strategic Plans. The selected areas will require sites to stretch and grow in their capacity to serve members. In most instances, additional fiscal and staff resources will be required and will be sought to support increased services.

Through development of their CIPs, sites confirmed that many of the services now offered are appreciated and expected by the users. High user satisfaction ratings are enjoyed by the DA Sites currently, but maintaining the ratings will demand continued improvements. Developing technologies will permit the offering of more user friendly and effective services. The emerging ability to extract data and to analyze it for instructional and management decisions has been eagerly received by users.

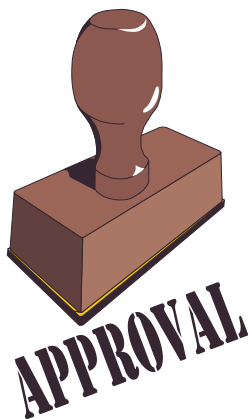
The staffs of the DA Sites and of the member districts are often frustrated by the lack of consistent information and definitions for mandated services. They want timely and definitive responses from software providers and agencies collecting data and are greatly hindered in their efforts

as software and definitions change during and after the collection process. Enhanced, definitive, timely, documentation was cited as a crucial need to support these activities.

Additional areas of great concern were the issues beyond effective control of the DA Sites. These included maintenance agreements not honored by vendors, downtime or connectivity interruptions by vendors supplying the DA Sites, and bandwidth not as great as specified. Users, staff, and management frequently requested more effective leadership by the State's departments and agencies.

Service Level Agreements (SLAs) are being explored by the DA Sites as part of the CIPs for succeeding years. Most sites are effectively practicing this concept, but have not reduced them to writing. The users report that site staff respond in a helpful and timely manner via email, fax, and telephone. They requested that SLAs be developed with ODE and others to insure better services.

Periodic review and revision of the Plans are anticipated. Each site is expected to update their Plan in the fourth quarter of FY 2001 for FY 2002. This will call for regular surveys of users and of staff. Responses to the changing service environment will be solicited. More definitive direction from ODE will be necessary. All of these activities appear to be helpful to the DA Sites, but added staff and time are required to prepare and effectively implement these Plans.



---

## INFOhio Update *by Theresa M. Fredericka*

INFOhio, in conjunction with the Management Council of the Ohio Education Computer Network (MCOECN), is pleased to again offer discounted pricing for various electronic resources to all schools in Ohio. INFOhio, through the work of its Electronic Resources Task Force, selected resources that support the curriculum of Ohio's K-12 schools and offers a wide range of products from 32 vendors.

The INFOhio Electronic Resources Price List 2001 contains brief product descriptions, ordering information and discounted prices that are in effect for school year 2001-2002. Schools will receive the printed price list in the mail after the first of the year. INFOhio's online preview, Preview 2001, makes each resource available to students, teachers and library media specialists to review and evaluate for purchasing decisions. Join the online preview at <http://www.infohio.org/er/preview2001.htm> for eight weeks between January 15 and March 15, 2001.

INFOhio, with support from MCOECN and OELMA, is pleased to announce the continuation of the Information Literacy Skills workshop series. Drs. Greg Byerly and Carolyn Brodie of Kent State University will

present fifteen Language Arts Information Literacy Skills

workshops second semester. These statewide workshops actively engage the participants so they can return to their schools and use all of the educational resources available to similarly engage their students in learning about all aspects of Language Arts. These workshops are also designed to help educators improve the ability of their students to pass the reading components of the state-mandated Ohio proficiency tests including Ohio's Draft Academic Content Standards for English Language Arts. In addition, these workshops will provide a structure for incorporating information literacy skills into the Language Arts curriculum.

The workshops are designed for 4<sup>th</sup>- 12<sup>th</sup> grade Reading/Language Arts teachers, curriculum coordinators and media specialists. Schools are encouraged to send a two-person team, e.g., the Media Specialist and a Reading/Language Arts educator. Visit [www.infohio.org](http://www.infohio.org) for more information.



Management Council  
Ohio Education  
Computer Network

Bruce Hawkins, CEO  
[hawkins@mcoecn.org](mailto:hawkins@mcoecn.org)

Columbus Office:  
2455 North Star Road  
Suite 1  
Columbus, OH 43221

Mt. Vernon Office:  
1365 New Gambier Road  
Mount Vernon, OH 43050