

Connections

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*Management Council
of the*

Ohio Education Computer Network

*Providing Technology
Services to Ohio
Classrooms*

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The Management Council Testifies Before House Committee *by Bruce Hawkins, CEO*

The Management Council testified before the House Primary and Secondary Education Subcommittee of the House Finance Committee on House Bill 94 on March 6. Bruce Hawkins, Chief Executive Officer of the Management Council of the Ohio Education Computer Network, told the subcommittee that he understood the complex financial situation the legislature was facing this year and he appreciated the modest increases to the Ohio Education



Computer Network line item. This proposed increase to the 23 Data Acquisition Sites around Ohio would be approximately 2% in each year of the biennium. He also expressed appreciation for the basic support to INFOhio and Union Catalog which provide vital school library resources to both public and non-public schools in Ohio.

In the testimony Hawkins also asks for reconsideration of some other technology initiatives which are having a positive impact on Ohio schools. For example, the electronic resources that are provided by INFOhio were eliminated in the Executive Budget and in the initial version of House Bill 94, the

Education appropriations. These electronic resources provide Ohio schools with two online encyclopedias, the full text of 217 magazines and newspapers, an elementary reference resource, and an American biography database. These are resources that are selected and reviewed by educators working in the field and are not available through general Internet searches. Currently, there are over 2.2 million searches/downloads yearly from these resources. From a financial standpoint, if a local school district would provide these resources, the cost would be over \$18 per pupil as opposed to purchasing them from INFOhio through the Ohio SchoolNet budget at a cost on a statewide basis of \$0.28 per pupil. This is an example of how state purchasing can drastically reduce the cost of technology services in Ohio schools.

The testimony also supported ONEnet – Ohio's K-12 Network Operation and Support which was eliminated from the SchoolNet budget request. ONEnet has been a cooperative initiative of several state agencies including the Ohio SchoolNet Commission, the Ohio Department of Education, the Department of Administrative Services, the Ohio Education Computer Network, the Ohio Education Telecommunications Network, non-public schools and large

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Continuous Improvement Plans for DA Sites

by Bruce E. Hawkins, CEO

In a manner similar to the Continuous Improvement Plans for school districts, the OECN is establishing CIP's for each of the 23 Data Acquisition Sites. These plans have been reviewed by a team consisting of Ohio Department of Education personnel, a BASA staff member, a SchoolNet staff member, a representative from the Legislative Office of Education Oversight and representatives from the Management Council of the OECN. These teams are developing a list of core services that all DA Sites are to provide to their districts. These services will be included in the DA Site CIP for the 2001-2002 school year which is to be submitted to the Ohio Department of Education by July.



Data Acquisition Sites offer a wide variety of services around the state due to the local control of individual DA Site boards and the different needs of various school districts. However, there are core services that are offered by each Data Acquisition Site such as EMIS system and support, school accounting systems, staff payroll systems, Internet connectivity and support, INFOhio services (including electronic resources, media center/library automation, and Union Catalog), student administrative services, professional development and training on DA Site applications and services, WAN implementation and maintenance, electronic mail delivery systems, and equipment inventory systems.

An essential ingredient in this Continuous Improvement Plan for DA Sites is the input from the school districts being served. Since the school districts are both the owner and the customers of the DA Sites, there will be an emphasis on customer satisfaction with the services being delivered. The purpose of this process is to strengthen the organizations as they deliver services to the school districts of Ohio.

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urban school districts. The combined funding for the current biennium has been nearly \$58 million for both the equipment and telecommunication connectivity. The SchoolNet request for ONEnet for the next biennium is \$6.3 million in the first year and \$3.4 million in the second year. This request is for maintenance and support of a system that is currently up and in operation. It is a wise use of state tax dollars to protect the current investment by making sure the maintenance and support are continued for ONEnet which is delivering voice, video, and data communications to Ohio schools.

There are many difficult decisions the legislature must face as they finalize the biennial budget. The Supreme Court cited technology as an equity issue in providing an education in Ohio's schools. The Management Council encourages the legislature to consider technology initiatives as both an equity issue and as a necessary skill for students who are preparing to enter an ever-changing world.

Two New Professional Organizations

by Andrew Tompkins, CTO

We are pleased to report progress on two new professional organizations. These organizations were created to represent the interests of EMIS Coordinators and Technology Coordinators in Ohio schools.

The EMIS Coordinator organization is known as the Ohio Association of EMIS Professionals (OAEP). This

organization was created to promote education and support for school district personnel responsible for the accuracy of EMIS data. The steering committee for OAEP plans on distributing information about the organization at the regional EMIS meetings this spring.

The Technology Coordinator organization is known as the Ohio

Association of Technology Professionals in Education (OATPE). This organization was created to assist in professional growth and advocacy for any school district staff working in the area of technology in Ohio schools. The OATPE steering committee is working on general registration and shared information at the OEDSA Conference in April.

Data for Student Learning Update By Andrew Tompkins, CTO

The Data for Student Learning (DSL) project is a software system being developed by the MCOECN. The purpose of DSL is to make access to data easier. We hope this system can help school personnel identify student needs and assist them in improving the educational process. The DSL software is designed to take data from legacy systems for student, proficiency, EMIS, and fiscal and load this data into a database. A very user-friendly web interface to this database allows for searching and displaying the data.

A recent poll shows twelve DA Sites have DSL running in production mode for all of their member school districts.

The Data for Student Learning project continues to grow. A recent poll shows twelve DA Sites have DSL running in production mode for all of their member school districts. Five other DA Sites are in a pilot mode with several of their districts. DA Sites are actively working on gathering data from various legacy data systems.

All sites are providing excellent customer feedback and ideas to make the software better. DSL Technical Roundtable meetings are group meetings held for the purpose of discussing improvements to the software. Participation in these meetings continues to grow as well. In addition to staff from the DA Sites, we have enjoyed visits from several other agencies that are

interested in this project including the Ohio Department of Education, Ohio SchoolNet, JVS districts, and several Educational Service Centers. We are pleased with the participation and interest at the meetings.



Several changes and additions have been made to DSL. The web page has been redesigned for easier navigation. There are several new reports, including Civil Rights, Gifted, EMIS Cross-check, EMIS Student Search, and SIS Student Search. Fiscal data is now available on a limited basis in the DSL database. Fiscal screens include the ability to view vendor and check history data. Several additional features for DSL are under development. These items in progress include a report writer system, a scheduling request module, off-year testing data, links to INFOhio resources, and fiscal account lookup and account history.



We are especially pleased with the results of a partnership with Dr. Douglas Clay from Cleveland State University. Dr. Clay has helped us create six new graphs for statistical analysis of student

proficiency information. These new graphs include Percent by Year, Subscale by Year, Frequency Distribution by Year, Percent Aggregate, Subscale Aggregate, and Frequency Distribution Aggregate. Even more exciting is the ability to create these graphs for views from multiple districts down to a specific course and instructor.

We recognize the potential DSL has for our schools and are excited about the progress the Data for Student Learning project has made in such a short time. We encourage districts to check out DSL. For more information, please contact Andrew Tompkins at tompkins@mcoecn.org.

Reminder: Teachers Can Purchase Computers Without Paying Ohio Sales Tax!

In the 1977 biennial budget, the State Legislature established a sales tax break for teachers on their purchase of computers and other technology equipment. That biennial budget bill provided a sales tax exemption for the "sales of personal computers, computer monitors, computer keyboards, and other peripheral computer equipment to an individual who is licensed or certified to teach in an elementary or secondary school in the state for use by that individual in preparation for teaching elementary or secondary students."

Most computer stores are familiar with this tax exemption that Ohio educators receive.

INFOhio Update: Statewide Resource Sharing

by Theresa M. Fredericka, Executive Director

The day when any resident of Ohio can borrow anything that circulates from any library in Ohio at any time at the click of a mouse is drawing closer. Statewide Resource Sharing, a centralized, web-based system, will allow any patron with a valid library card to find and request items from any participating library. The system also offers daily material deliveries to and pickups from each participating library.

To ensure success of this initiative, a Technology Task Force researched and selected the software that would best enable the diverse library automation systems in Ohio's public and school libraries to communicate with each other. Jean Banks (NOACSC), Lois Lequeya (LNOCA) and Tony Marshalek (NEO-IMC) represented INFOhio and K-12 libraries on the team.

The software selected allows for a single, common search interface to be used among the various library systems. The two data standards that make this possible are Z39.50 and SIP@. DRA/MultiLIS is



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already Z39.50 compliant to acquire SIP2. Once installed, all DRA/MultiLIS libraries will meet the required technical standards.

This spring the prototype system will link two public library systems (DRA Classic and SEO Dynix) and the INFOhio DRA/MultiLIS system. NOACSC will participate in the test for INFOhio. General implementation plans to bring libraries online, as well as adding other automation systems, will be announced later.



INFOhio continues to work with its state partners to turn the dream of Statewide Resource Sharing into reality for all K-12 schools that want to participate. For more information visit the State Library website at <http://winslo.state.oh.us/publib/swrs.html>.



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