

CUSD Information Systems Department

Report to the CUSD10 Board of Education

Prepared by Susan Homes

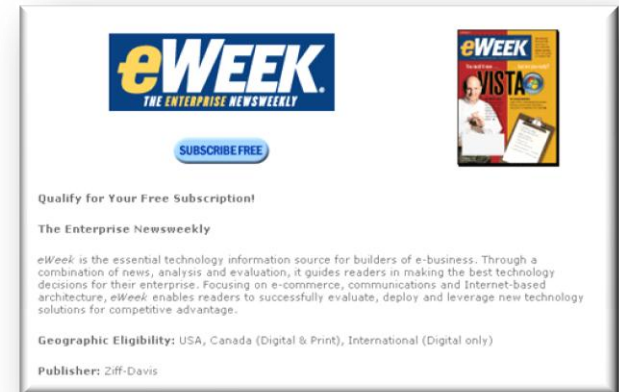
Director of Information Systems

July – October 2007



General Information

- I have completed the paperwork for final reimbursement for our **2006-2007 e-Rate** allowable expenses. The district should be receiving approximately \$65,000 over the next 6-8 weeks. In addition, the district received just over \$50,000 in direct discounts on e-Rate allowable bills from Charter, Sprint and Nextel during the 2006-2007 school year. In all, the district's e-Rate benefit for the 2006-2007 year was just over \$115,000.
- 3Com, manufacturer of infrastructure equipment (switches, routers, etc.) is planning to **write another article** featuring CUSD10's choice of its X506 firewall/IPS product. The article which will spotlight the district as well as our vendor, WJR Technology, will be published in eWeek.
- CHS Video Production teacher Jeri Arnold worked with Laidlaw Bus Company recently in producing a **video focused on bus safety**. Representatives of Laidlaw were on hand the day of filming to assist as consultants and actors. Mrs. Arnold's class has completed the production work and has distributed four copies of the final educational video to Mr. Perry Hill, Assistant Principal at CHS. The central Administration office will view the video and make it available for CUSD10 schools. Thanks to the generous work of Mrs. Arnold's class and Mr. Hill's help in facilitating the distribution.
- The district has been awarded a gold **Hermes Creative Award** for its website. The *Hermes* award is presented to website owners and represents sites that have "exceeded the high standard of the industry in terms of quality, creativity and resourcefulness."



General Information

- The district's Internet Safety website (www.kahoks.org/safeweb) was recently featured as a recommended resource on **WebEnglishTeacher.com**. The developer of the site contacted me to announce their inclusion of our website. We are listed, along with national Internet Safety websites CyberSmart!, NetSmartz, Wired Safety, Center for Safe and Responsible Internet Use and iSafe! This was quite a honor!
- The **Illinois School Code has been amended** to require the inclusion of Internet Safety instruction for all public, K-12 students. A copy of Public Act 095-0509 is attached. The district has been including Internet Safety instruction in the classrooms for the past two years so we are well prepared to handle these new legal requirements. The Information Systems (Technology) Department is in the process of offering Internet Safety t-shirts for sale to students and staff during the month of October. We will offer several opportunities during the year for staff to purchase t-shirts. We were able to sell over 500 t-shirts last spring. Our message, "*Do you know who you are talking to?*" has been a strong inspiration for all involved to talk about the importance of staying safe online.
- I completed a voluntary survey for the FBI that asked for information about any types of **cyber security attacks** the district has experienced over the past several years. Fortunately, we have been able to maintain strong security on our network and only one minor incident has occurred in the past 24 months when an exploit on our district calendar created minor appearance issues. The incident was promptly discovered and code on the page strengthened within 12 hours to solve the problem.
- During July and August, 2007, the **Department of Information Systems moved** from the main floor of the Administration Building to the second floor. Payroll, insurance and the Accounting Supervisor are now housed in the previous Technology office on the first floor.

General Information

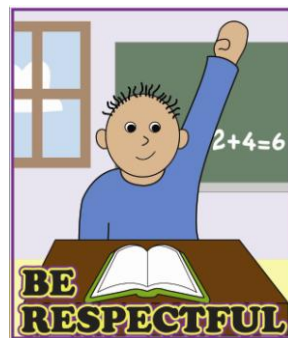
- I recently completed the **2007-2008 interim technology plan**, which is required by the State of Illinois and the federal government to enable us to apply for 2008-2009 e-Rate funds (even though our current 3-year technology plan doesn't expire until June 30, 2008). The application process for 2008-2009 e-Rate program begins in early November. A new three-year plan will be completed during the period October 2007 – February 2008.
- **Dorris Intermediate School has a new computer support specialist.** After Sharon Putz accepted the position as Assist. Supt. Julie Brown's secretary, the search for a new computer support specialist began. Lesley Grady was hired to fill Sharon's shoes at Dorris. Lesley came to the district with three years of experience working with technology in the Belleville 118 school district. She has been a great asset to my department as well as to Dorris and CUSD10.
- I met with the two new **keyboarding** teachers at Collinsville Middle School in mid September to discuss goals and objectives for success in the 8th grade keyboarding classes. In addition, information was sent out to the K-6 building principals and computer support specialists to review the keyboarding curriculum expectations. I plan to offer a keyboarding workshop for elementary teachers during the January Institute Day (January 22) at Collinsville High School to provide refresher instruction to elementary teachers on developing and sustaining keyboarding skills in grades 4-6.



Lesley Grady and Dorris teacher Lavern Oatman help serve up some fun at the Reading Counts Rams tailgate party for students.

General Information

- The Department of Information Systems has been involved with the **Character Education work** of the district. We have facilitated the development of the character traits logos (seen below) as well as cartoon logos for K-4, coloring pages and posting of the monthly trait logos on the district and school web pages.



General Information

- At the August 13 Teacher Institute, three teachers were presented with “**e-Educator of the Year**” awards. I hope this award will become an annual tradition in Unit 10. The e-Educator of the Year awards program was an idea I came up with several years ago. I was finally able to put the finishing touches on the award criteria. The award is a small gesture to say THANKS to those teachers who have embraced technology and are working hard to make it work for them and, more importantly, for their students. The greatest thing about the award is that nominations are submitted by teaching peers or direct supervising principals. Many teachers and principals took the time to submit a nomination. The first three award recipients were: CHS teacher Jeri Arnold, Renfro teacher Stacey Lauenstein, and Dorris Intermediate teacher Deb Colyott. I am including my presentation remarks about each of these three women below:



The first recipient is a young woman who began her career unboxing computers at the high school. A little known fact...she was actually the first computer support specialist in the district. She went on to become a teacher at the high school and earned her master's degree over the past few years. She has endless enthusiasm, a can-do attitude and has developed an outstanding video production program that is one of the finest in the area. She has led many teacher training sessions over the years and volunteers to assist other teachers as needed during the year. Her classroom is full of motivating quotes and lots of fun video-related artifacts. She spends hundreds of hours of her own time assisting with the production of videos and most recently, helped facilitate a team of students and equipment to project the 2007 CHS graduation to parents and guests in the Fletcher Gymnasium. Her program has grown to one of the most popular in the school and students are encouraged to do their very best work in her room. This coming year she will be establishing a video studio and will work to develop video announcements throughout the school. I'm proud to present the first **e-Educator** award to CHS business teacher Jeri Arnold.

Our second recipient also has enthusiasm and a smile that won't stop. She has participated in many district technology training opportunities over the years, including the Area 5 TLC grant. She was an early adopter of technology in the classroom. She helped develop the district's technology scope and sequence plan. She was instrumental in developing a unit that all first grade teachers in the district can use to meet the technology benchmarks. She worked during the

General Information

summer of 2006 to help put the scope and sequence benchmarks and activities online. This recipient effectively utilizes her classroom computers every day for student activities. Her first graders are proficient users of software and the Internet. One of her parents writes, “through the mainstreaming of technology in the classroom, my son has gained a greater understanding and has enjoyed learning. I highly recommend the use of technology in the classroom on a broader scale. The thought of having my son be able to learn like this provides a greater success rate for remaining engaged in school.” Her principal writes, “She has used her own personal time and found sites for the various grade levels that taught author’s purpose and genre to help improve the school’s ISAT scores. She has led her grade level in developing strategies to teach the learning standards.” Please help me congratulate our second award recipient, Stacey Lauenstein.

Our final recipient is a true digital immigrant. Before computers arrived in her school eight years ago, she had never even worked on one. Over the years, according to her computer support specialist, “she has taken every technology class offered in the lab and on in-service days.” She has an absolute passion for the use of the equipment as a teaching and learning tool for her students. She integrates technology into every aspect of the academic curriculum...from writing to science to math to social studies and beyond. This teacher was part of the LITES grant program in her building and, as a result, continues to use a pod of computers effectively with her students. Two of this teacher’s students wrote letters about the newspaper they helped create in this classroom about the American Revolution. One of the students writes, “our newspaper on the American Revolution was good because it taught us how to use Publisher more efficiently. It also helped us learn the format of a newspaper. I learned a lot of things about the American Revolution and Publisher that I never knew before. I really liked working with a partner.” Another student writes about their love of “Fizz and Martina,” two characters in the “Lights, Camera, Fractions” software program that allow students to work in groups to solve math problems.

This recipient’s principal writes that this teacher “believes students can be motivated to take an active role in learning through the use of technology and states that often students get excited about learning when technology is incorporated into daily lessons. She believes technology excites students through polished and finished products. Students feel amazed and proud of their work and how great it looks when using technology. Her interactive, student-centered style, her love of students and genuine appreciation of their success makes her the perfect candidate for **e-Educator of the Year**. We couldn’t agree more. Please help me congratulate **e-Educator** Deb Colyott.

Hardware and Infrastructure Update

- Nineteen district teachers were accepted into the 2007-2008 **Classroom Multimedia Project**. During the summer months, each of these teachers' classrooms were outfitted with an electronic whiteboard, ceiling-mounted projector, speakers and DVD/VCR unit. Teachers completed lengthy applications (including letters of recommendation) to participate in this pilot program, which was a target of the 2005-2008 district technology plan. During the school year, teachers are required to complete additional training and will serve as mentors to future program participants. Pilot teachers included in the 2007-2008 school year are CHS teachers Kyle Gordon, Katrina Knebel, Dawn Lewis, Barb Lindauer, and Renee Schiber; CMS teachers Tanjanika Foster, Dana Larson, Kelli Louden, Ryan Stolcis and Kimberly Walters.; Dorris Intermediate teachers Deb Colyott, Barb Esker and Amber Zurliene; Kreitner teacher Carol McFall; Maryville teacher Lynn Ashcroft; Renfro teacher Stacey Lauenstein; Summit teacher Greg Hobbs; and Twin Echo teacher Christine Danowski. One Maryville teacher, Carmen Loemker, was also selected but because of her appointment to Dorris as assistant principal, her classroom equipment was relocated to the Maryville computer lab.
- Initial feedback from the program has been extremely positive. The following quotes from participating teachers underscore the importance they give to this new technology.

I love it! I have already used it everyday in my classroom. We just did bar graphs and I was able to bring up the graph paper and show the bar graph on the screen. My students have been able to come up and answers math problems on the board and they love it. I am excited to use the x and y graph and teach plotting points. [CMS teacher Kelli Louden]

One big benefit for using the equipment is that I can demonstrate on the board the actual screen of the computer to show them what to do on their individual PC and everyone can see it! The sound allows every student to hear United Streaming movies and other programs not just the ones sitting near the monitor. The interactive board allows us to use Math internet games together or in teams unlike the individual pc screens. A great feature for our class has been the Create Image page feature and I have been using the World and US maps to draw and label to teach Continents, oceans, etc. [Kreitner teacher Carol McFall]

Hardware and Infrastructure Update

By utilizing this new technology within our classroom, we have noticed that the students diagnosed with ADHD or Asberger's Syndrome have an easier time staying on-task. By allowing them to write on the portable Interwrite Board, they seem to be in awe that their writings show up on a big screen for the class to see. They can even change the color of the ink in the click of the "marker" to better suite their mood. [Dorris teacher Amber Zurliene]

I have used the equipment to show video segments from United Streaming on issues dealing with this month's character trait "responsibility". Students are eager to come to the board to share their solutions because they can choose the effects they want, such as the color of the pen, using the highlighter, stamper pad, etc. I scan worksheets and project them onto the board which saves time because I don't have to write the problem on the board - it's already there. I highlight parts of problems which help students learn what is important and what is extraneous information. I save time by not having to erase the board. In addition, I can also go back to a previous example with a simple click. If a student has a question about a previous example, I simply click the back arrow and there it is!! The interactive components of the Interwrite system will engage my students. We will be able to graph different equations using different colored pens and discuss the properties that make them similar yet different. We will create probability activities with dice that roll, coins that flip, and spinners that spin. Using tangrams, we will be able to discover properties of irregular shapes with ease. [CMS Math teacher Kim Walters]

I feel that this project was a great opportunity to make my classroom more technologically advanced. The second graders feel very comfortable around the new equipment. On our first day of school during our discussion of the equipment, they spontaneously began comparing and contrasting the electronic whiteboard to a flat panel television that you hang on a wall! They related it to the flat panel TV because you can watch movies on it but said it was different because you can see your shadow when you walk in front of it. This led to a discussion of how the projector works with the board. They have learned that there is a bulb that needs to warm up in the projector (they watch for the image to appear on the screen) and a fan that cools the bulb off (they listen for it when the projector is turned off). They have been asking wonderful questions about the projector, board, and pad (like "Will the bulb burn out?" and "Will the batteries run out?") and have been very interested about how it works. I have used the board every day since it has been up and running. It is easy to find ways to integrate it into our lessons. The challenging part is finding time to prepare all of the fun multimedia for the students. They love to see the writing change color and watch the pen move while I am using the school pad. I love it! [Twin Echo teacher Christine Danowski]

Hardware and Infrastructure Update

The [Interwrite Software](#) is being used daily with the students for further reinforcement of their academic skills. We have used several programs that have allowed students extra practice in language arts and math. During Hurricane Dean, the class mapped and watched videos showing the track and damage from this powerful storm. They were able to see the eye and were able to label the parts of the hurricane from the weather.com radar page. Several students pointed out how they felt like meteorologists on the television. They were very proud of their work. On a lighter note....the students were thrilled to be a part of my classroom. At times, special education students might have a low self-esteem. Since the installation of our equipment, the students are walking the halls letting everyone know that they have the best classroom at Summit. Recently, a third grader informed the classroom, "Being in Mr. Hobbs' classroom is totally SWEET!" The other students said that they were happy to be in the classroom and would be learning a lot more than the others. I am so proud to be allowed the privilege to work with these students. I am proud to be a part of the Collinsville school district. This district has worked to provide the best in technology! The community should be proud of the Administration, Technology Director, Computer Support Specialists, and Teachers. These individuals have succeeded in making our district one of the "Gems in Technology!" [Summit teacher Greg Hobbs]

[Here are a few things we have done](#) or are doing in my classroom. Yesterday, for example, I started off with a current events PowerPoint, went on to a Word document in which terms important to our lesson were scrambled. Students came up to the board and unscrambled the words, using the Interwrite pen. This could be easily erased and refreshed for each class. Next it was another power point. Then it was on to some note taking. When a student was called out of class to the office, I used that opportunity to print the pages he had missed so he didn't miss out on any notes. Today I am using the graphic organizer portion of the gallery in our discussion of the current section of our chapter. It's a web type organizer, I think the Interwrite calls it something else. But anyway, groups of students will develop an idea web for their assigned topic and then share it with the class by reproducing it on the board. I am going to try to use the Text option and see how that goes. At the end, I will print out each group's idea web so each student will have a copy of all of the topic webs done in class that day. [CMS teacher Dana Larson]

Hardware and Infrastructure Update

I am using it everyday. I love it! We have been working on writing and it has been a great tool. So far, I have had students use the Interwrite board to proofread sentences together and display students' "good answers". The students enjoy learning how to work the pen. It takes a few times to get it. I also have been showing them how to use the interwrite tools: the highlighter, undo button, eraser, stamps, etc. This week students have been using www.dictionary.com to look up their vocab word of the day. I call 1-2 students up to the board and they lead the class through the website to find the correct definition, synonym, and antonym. Then they "highlight" the answers for the class. The equipment is a great addition in the classroom. [CHS teacher Katrina Knebel]

The kids are mesmerized by instruction that involves the board. It captures their attention because of its size and seemingly magical abilities. They love to interact with it to mark answers to quizzes or questions, move the images around, and view its many illustrations such as maps or number lines. As a teacher I am spoiled already to have such technology to turn to help my students learn in such an interactive, motivating way. [Dorris Intermediate teacher Barb Esker]

The students are more attentive than ever when I use the board for a lesson. I use it everyday for Calendar Math. The leader of the day gets to fill in portions of a document I created specifically for Calendar Math. They are extremely competent at clicking on the pen, changing ink colors, using the eraser to correct mistakes, and using the arrows to move the image up higher! Whenever I turn on the projector I immediately have their attention! I also use the timer daily for Minute Math. They love to see how fast they solve the equations! We have used the map features and I have created some new stampers for graphing. I showed some of the features to several parents at Open House. [Maryville teacher Lynn Ashcroft]

Just wanted to share a math lesson the kids loved! I made a Place Value table and put it up on the board. Students practiced reading and writing large numbers through the trillions and took turns writing the numbers on the table on the interwrite board. They practiced erasing, clearing, and changing pen ink color, etc. They had a blast! [Dorris Intermediate teacher Deb Colyott]

Hardware and Infrastructure Update

Other projects completed between July and October 2007 included:

Approximately **100 new computers** were ordered and installed at Dorris Intermediate School over the summer to replace computers still running Windows 95.

Wireless network access was added to the Special Education offices and conference room at Webster Elementary School. The IS Department is currently working on installing wireless Internet access at the Unit10 Administration building as well as the main office areas at Collinsville High School.

Multimedia equipment was ordered and installed in the **newest science lab** at Collinsville High School.

Existing **multimedia equipment for two special education classrooms** was permanently mounted at Dorris Intermediate School.

The Charter Communications **fiber network** to Kreitner Elementary School was completed in early August.

The **computer lab at Hollywood Heights Elementary School** was completed rewired and reconfigured.

New servers were installed at Maryville and Renfro Elementary Schools.

The **existing server for the Comalex Café Enterprise system** (meal debit card system) was reconfigured and strengthened with RAID hard drives at Collinsville High School.

Hardware and Infrastructure Update

A new 24-station **laptop lab** was installed at Renfro Elementary School.

A new **video production unit** and six additional video cameras were purchased for the video production program at Collinsville High School.

One of the **32" monitors** at Collinsville Middle School was reinstalled in the Health classroom adjacent to the library.

Software Update

The Information Systems Department agreed to **beta test Tipping Point's latest X506 Firewall/IPS software**. This latest release includes additional LDAP functionality (to better track Internet users by login name) as well as multiple profile levels for Internet filtering, spam filtering and a host of additional features. Because we will be in beta test for the software, 3Com and Tipping Point have promised constant supervision of the system and immediate patches in the event of software problems. We have been a beta test site for the X line for over 3 years. Thanks to our willingness to assist as a beta site, we have been able to use this product and software free of charge.

The department has completed the conversion to a **district-wide Schoolmaster installation**. Training has been provided to the necessary teachers and staff members. The new grade book component of Schoolmaster (Web Classroom) has been installed and teachers provided with the necessary training from CHS, CMS and a pilot group from Dorris. The grade book program used widely by the district over the past 10 years (Grade Machine) is being discontinued by its publisher. We will be recommending all teachers convert to the Schoolmaster grade book by the start of the 2008-2009 school year. Training will be scheduled as needed.

The separate CHS and CMS **Edline** accounts have been consolidated now that Schoolmaster has been centralized. A pilot group of Dorris teachers will be using the Schoolmaster PASS online access system to begin allowing online access to grades and attendance for parents of 5th and 6th graders.

Teachers have been provided written guidelines for using a new online resource for delivering science, early literacy and limited social studies lessons called **Teacher's Domain**.

Teachers at Collinsville High School have received communication about utilizing student **United Streaming** accounts.

Software Update

The preliminary **Thinklink** online assessment has been administered to students in grades 3-8.

The use of **Study Island** for grades 2-6 has begun.

The Information Systems department has facilitated the **MAP online assessment** testing for special education students again this fall.

A new telephone broadcast system has been put into place for the district's 12 schools. Principals and secretaries received thorough training on the new **SchoolReach** product and many have already started using the system to contact both staff and parents. The new broadcast system is similar to those being used by many area school districts to increase home/school communications. Renfro principal Jeanie Nicolussi attributes a dramatic increase in parent attendance at a PTA meeting to use of the new system. Principals can pre-record messages to send to all student home phone numbers and then set the date and time of launch, or in the case of an emergency (or weather-related school closing), launch an immediate message from their telephone or from the *SchoolReach* website. Reports in the *SchoolReach* database provide crucial feedback regarding number of calls placed, number of calls picked up by answering machines and calls not answered. The system automatically redials unanswered numbers in 15-minute increments.

The IS Department will be working to finalize configuration of a new email archival system using **GWAVA's Retain** product on October 11, 2007. This software program will allow the district to more easily access archived email records to be in compliance with federal discovery laws passed early in 2007.

Software Update

The **KidPix software** in all elementary K-4 buildings was upgraded to version 4.0 over the summer. This program is part of the district's K-12 Technology Scope and Sequence plan.

Information Systems Department employee Kyle Donovan completed the creation, programming and training of several moderated **online forums** for the district: a foreign language forum at CHS, a teacher mentoring forum, a teacher evaluation forum and a special education forum. These forums allow for registered accounts with the ability for students and staff to share their thoughts, questions and answers online. In addition, Kyle also helped launch a new **web-based technology repair ticket system** at both Dorris Intermediate and Collinsville Middle Schools.

The district will be installing **Browse Control** software at Collinsville Middle School this fall. This software allows teachers in a computer lab setting to centrally control the computers of all the stations in the room. If a teacher wants to keep students' attention in the front of the room during demonstration or discussion, he/she can use the software to stop the students from using their individual computers and/or the Internet at will. This software has been used successfully at Collinsville High School.

Professional Development Update

Between July and October 2007, some of the **technology-related professional development** activities have included:

- An Internet safety presentation at the Western Illinois University Summer Technology Experience conference by Susan Homes and Sherry Murphy.
- Schoolmaster District Version training for targeted staff members and certified teachers.
- Grade Book, Web Classroom and Edline training for CHS and CMS teachers.
- Grade Book and PASS training for pilot Dorris Intermediate School teachers.
- SchoolReach training for district administrators and key building secretaries.
- ThinkLink training for district administrators, computer support specialists and teachers.
- StudyIsland for computer support specialists and teachers.
- WiggleWorks training (reading software) for Twin Echo teachers.
- Attendance at the University of Illinois-sponsored Technology Feast (3-day workshop) by IS technical staff.
- Multimedia Classroom project (day-long) training by pilot teachers.