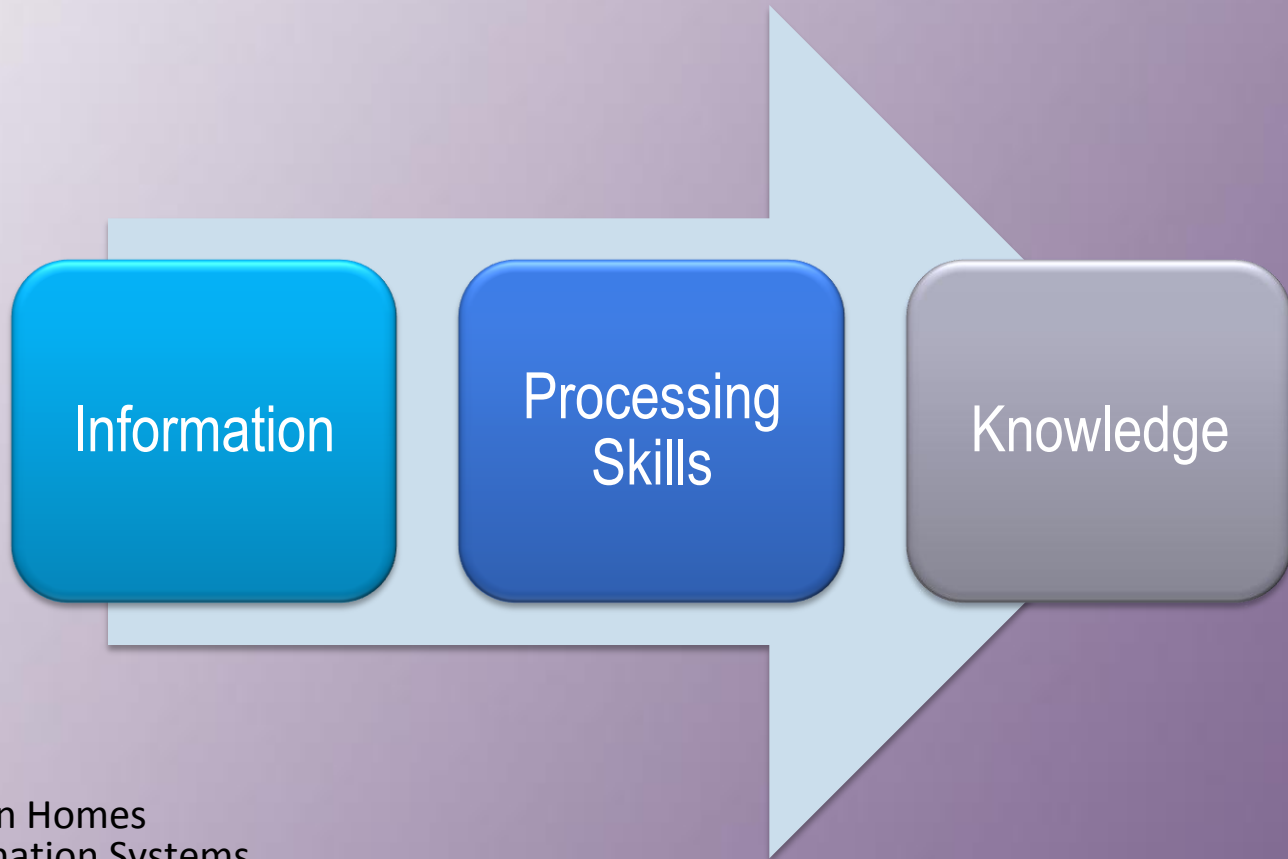


CUSD Information Systems Department

Report to the CUSD10 Board of Education



Prepared by Susan Homes
Director of Information Systems
November 2007 – February 2008

General Information

- I met with CHS and CMS media specialists (Tracey Schmidt and Michael Hayman) regarding the future of centralizing the **Athena library** circulation system as well as needed information for the per capital library grant.
- The **Madison County CTE office** requested the use of one of the CMS computer labs to provide their annual county-wide training on November 13. In the past, they have been extremely pleased with the service provided by our district as well as our “beautiful facilities.”
- Work continued on the **2008-2011 District Technology Plan**. This plan, required by the state and federal government is due in Springfield on March 1. The four major areas of the plan include: Curriculum and Instruction; Professional Development; Parent and Community Involvement and Technology Deployment. A great deal of data analysis goes into the plan revision each three years. As part of the data collection process, we had Unit 10 staff, parents and students complete online surveys. These results are on file in my office for review.
- The 2008-2009 District **e-Rate application** was filed with the federal government. This annual program helps the district offset the costs of telecommunications and Internet access. The amount of the district’s 2008-2009 e-Rate application is \$159,225.
- Mike Kunz and I **were interviewed by Network World magazine** in late December for an article in their January issue. I have attached a copy of the article for your information. **See attachment**
- Coloring sheets have been designed by the graphic design artist for the elementary children in support of the **Character Traits of the month**. I have attached samples of each of these designs. **See attachment**
- Student Information Systems Supervisor Karen Muller has been working to prepare and upload the data required for the **ISAT testing**, which begins in late February.

General Information

- I have been electronically working with the Highland School District to provide resources and assistance with **Internet Safety**.
- The district will again host three (two technology-related) accredited, graduate-level courses through **The Connecting Link** this summer at Collinsville High School: Integrating Technology into the Classroom (6/9 – 6/13); Microsoft Word: Impacting Teaching & Student Learning (6/16 – 6/20); and Creating a Safe Learning Environment (7/14 – 7/18). The technology classes will be taught by CHS teacher Kelli Ponce and the curriculum class will be taught by CHS teacher Mary Lee Muniz.
- The NCLB federal legislation requires that all students be **proficient in technology** by the end of their 8th grade year. There is currently no defined method for accessing this proficiency and the state has provided little guidance. I have been approached by the Area 5 Learning Technology Center about piloting an 8th grade proficiency test for approximately 300 of our current CMS eighth graders. I will be talking with Dr. Ellington and the LTC to determine if this is something we can pursue during the later part of the current school year.
- A copy of the **fall staff newsletter** is attached for your review. **See attachment**
- I have been working with the area media to **increase positive stories about our district**. I have been sending weekly updates to the area newspapers regarding district activities. In addition, we have had television coverage by both Fox Channel 2 and KSDK Channel 5 in the past 60 days. Channel 2 covered the Sport Stacking Exhibition held at CMS and Channel 5 covered the surprise announcement to Eric Flohr about his selection as IPA Principal of the Year.

Hardware and Infrastructure Update

Over the past four months, we have facilitated the acquisition and installation of the following hardware/infrastructure systems:

- **Test scanner** for CHS – similar to a “Scantron” scanner, this scanner allows teachers to scan student test forms quickly and send the results directly into the teacher’s electronic grade book. The software with the scanner also provides excellent, easy-to-read test results data.
- **Email archival system** – to meet the needs of the federal e-Discovery requirements, we have installed a new archival email system that will store copies of all incoming and outgoing email for up to two years. The system also allows users to access their own individual archive account to retrieve copies of previous emails, including those they may have deleted.
- **Web cameras** were installed in two locations to facilitate distance learning. The first two cameras were installed in Sandee Dust’s CHS classroom and at Taylor Miller’s house. You might recall that Taylor was the student who lost her battle with lifelong cancer recently. The camera provided a way for Taylor to stay connected with her classmates and feel a sense of belonging at a very difficult time. It also allowed her classmates to feel they were part of her life. After our success with the installation between Sandee and Taylor, we installed a web camera in Linda Zoll’s classroom at CMS. This camera has allowed students to communicate with a soldier in Iraq (ELL teacher Peggy Reyes’ son). They have been sending him letters and gifts over the past year, but this allowed the students to actually “meet” Julio visually. This has been an inspiring experience for both students and teachers alike. **See attachments**
- Caller ID service was added to elementary schools and intermediate school for increased safety and security on January 22, 2008.
- 30 new Dell computers were installed in the **library at CHS**. The existing computers from the library were repurposed for elementary classrooms.
- A new portable **Dell laptop lab** (30 laptops) was installed at CHS to meet the growing need for access to computers 4 in the high school classrooms.

Hardware and Infrastructure Update

- 14 new Dell computers were installed in **the Electronics classroom** at CHS.
- A new portable Dell **laptop lab** (25 laptops) was installed at Renfro Elementary School to help provide more balanced access to computers for our largest elementary school population.
- Two **electronic whiteboards** were installed: one in the computer lab at Renfro and one in the computer lab at Twin Echo.
- A new **Palm Pilot assessment program** (hardware and software) was put in place for Early Childhood and PreK teachers thanks to funding and training provided by the Special Education Department.
- A new **DVD duplicator** was purchased and installed for the Video Production Program at CHS.
- Two new **vibration-reducing mounts for multimedia projectors** were installed in DIS teacher Deb Colyott's and Twin Echo teacher Christine Danowski's rooms. These teachers were part of the multimedia classroom project this year; however, due to excessive vibration from the heating/cooling units in the ceiling of their classrooms, we had to install different mounts that would help reduce the associated vibration of the projected image for students.

Software Update

Software systems work has continued on the following products:

- The district's electronic parent communication system (**SchoolReach**) was programmed to allow for nightly updates of student data. Training was conducted for the secretary in each building responsible for processing the necessary Schoolmaster file each afternoon.
- The **ThinkLink** Assessment tests were administered to students in grades 3-8. Teachers continue to receive support and training on this program. A copy of the teacher responses for a recent ThinkLink survey I conducted is attached. As you will see, a very high percentage of staff wish to continue using this product next year. I found an 87% correlation between ThinkLink testing and ISAT results for the CMS pilot group from last year. We will be analyzing the results for this year's ThinkLink test and ISAT to see if that correlation is true (or improved) for 3,000 students (as opposed to 250 in 2006-2007). **See attachment**
- Use of **Study Island** has increased significantly over the course of the year. Study Island is an online resource available to teachers to support Illinois standards in the classroom as well as for students' work at home. It appears to be an excellent resource for our district in terms of meeting the individual needs of students as they improve their mastery of our state standards.
- CHS Network Technician Derek Turner and part-time technician Kyle Donovan authored a new **online computer reservation system** for the schools. In addition, they have been fine-tuning a new online technology repair ticketing system aimed at teacher use for CHS, CMS and Dorris. Assistant Network Manager Wil Ross has begun work on a new **online repair ticketing system** aimed at IS department members for escalating trouble tickets to the district-level.

Software Update

- The district is investigating a **data integration system** from Agile School Portals that would allow us to pull important data from multiple databases (such as Schoolmaster, Grade Book, Café Enterprise Debit Card system, Athena library circulation system) into a single user interface that would make early intervention of student issues easy to detect. The Edwardsville School District implemented this system earlier this year with much success. A committee of principals from CHS, CMS and Dorris as well as a number of central administrative staff will be reviewing the product on March 13.
- A license for **SmartMusic** was purchased for the CHS Piano lab. This product allows a student to attach a microphone to a musical instrument (or a headphone in the case of vocal students) and play along with the computer. The software analyzes the students' playing and provides remediation and assistance to improve music skills as well as provides professional accompaniment as students practice (see attached letter). The purchase of the school license allows students to purchase the software for home use at a price of only \$25. This product was requested by Melissa Gustafson-Hinds, Jeffrey Valperets and Lisa Neal and was a bargain at only \$100. **See attachment**
- Karen Muller has been working with CHS to facilitate data exporting for **the WIN and Online ACT** assessment products.
- 3Com/Tipping Point Corporation has extended of our **annual firewall vaccine software** subscription for another year at no charge due to our continued willingness to beta test their X506 firewall/IPS device.

Professional Development Update

Professional development activities over the past four months have included:

- Training for district health staff on **Schoolmaster, Microsoft Excel** and **Microsoft PowerPoint** (conducted by IS Department members Karen Muller and Chris Pendleton).
- Interwrite **electronic whiteboard training** for Maryville Elementary School (conducted by Susan Homes).
- **FrontPage web design training** for Summit and Jefferson Elementary Schools (conducted by Computer Support Specialist Ruth Hawkins).
- **E-Rate training** workshop attendance by Susan Homes in Litchfield on November 5 and December 13.
- Presentation of Internet Safety workshop entitled, "**UCanBSafe2 – Finding Light on the Dark Side of the Internet**" at the Illinois Education and Technology Conference in Springfield on November 15 (presented by Susan Homes and Computer Support Specialist Sherry Murphy).
- Facilitation and technology-related training at the January 22 CUSD **Institute Day**.
- Presentation of workshop session entitled "**Delivering High Stakes Data to the Classroom Teacher**" at the Missouri Educational Technology Conference (presented by Susan Homes).
- **Word 2007** training conducted for CHS business teachers and a number of Administration/Special Education building support staff.
- **Excel 2007** training attended by IS Department members Karen Muller, Chris Pendleton and HR secretary Sharon Putz.