

Log-on



November 2004

Mifflin County School District Technology Department

Issue 18

Technology Update

*by Hunter French
Network Administrator*

Since the last edition of our Log-on newsletter, many things have changed in the Information Systems Department. Many of you have noticed at least some of the changes we made over the summer such as the webmail and PC operating system upgrades. However, there have been numerous other changes.

InteGrade Pro

Did you know that we began the first phase of deployment for the District's electronic grade book (InteGrade Pro) during the first marking period? The initial deployment was limited to roughly twenty users so that we could work out any problems and begin developing a documentation and training process. The second phase of the installation is currently underway and involves the addition of ten users at each of our middle and high schools. The third and fourth phases of the procedure will occur later in the school year and will introduce more users and increase the functionality of the system.

Title I Reading Programs

The Information Systems Department assisted with the implementation of the Academy of Reading and Imagination Station programs for Title I students. These systems are the District's largest foray into real-time data driven education.

Additional Support

In an on-going effort to improve the service you receive from our department, several changes have been made. Two additional staff members, Gina Snyder and Micah Mussey, have been added. Gina is the new Help Desk Support person. She is the first person you talk to when you call the department. Micah has been hired as a Computer Support Specialist. You may have seen him working on computer and network problems in the schools. We have also just introduced a new Information Systems work order system (*see our article on Track-It!) that will give you more information about the requests you submit. We are redoubling our efforts to provide you with excellent support.

SASI

We are also looking forward to a year that continues to improve upon the work we have already begun with the SASI student management system. Barb Brouse and Dawn Edmiston have been hard at work, addressing your concerns and implementing proactive measures to reduce any future problems. The use of the SASI system is now District-wide and we can expect the data that this system produces to be used in a variety of ways to assist our faculty and students. The most visible of these uses is in the Tetradata data mine that is currently being implemented by the TIU.

Finally, we are aware of the impact that technological change has on our District. We are encouraged by the rapid adaptation that both faculty and staff have made to the new equipment, software, and procedures that we have deployed. Our goal is to assist you in educating and administering the students of this District and we are glad that you are partnering with us to implement the technology necessary to accomplish the District's mission.

Buchanan Think Tank

by Jane Scheuchenzuber and Jan Coldren

Every morning at approximately 8:00, twenty-nine students and three teachers begin to arrive at the computer lab at Buchanan Elementary School. The students get their headphones, go to their assigned computer, log on and begin to use a variety of computer programs. Each program targets a skill important to the development of that individual student. The students are participating in a program called "Think Tank". The purpose of the program is to give the students additional practice in pre-reading skills. The targeted skills include letter identification, rhyming, identification of beginning, middle or ending sounds and attending to and discrimination of speech sounds or words.

Think Tank was started by Jan Coldren, Speech/Language Therapist, and Jane Scheuchenzuber, Title I Reading Specialist. Initially there were four students, two first graders and two second graders, and two teachers. The program has since grown to include fifteen kindergarteners, seven first graders and four second graders and three third graders. There are more students on the waiting list. The program was only able to expand because another teacher, Kim Bossinger, Title I reading Specialist, volunteered to help with the program. Ten fourth and fifth grade students have now volunteered to help younger students.

The students who come to Think Tank initially used software that was already available on the lab computers. In January, Think Tank received some additional software courtesy of MC 2000.

Mrs. Coldren and Mrs. Scheuchenzuber wrote a grant to MC 2000 requesting funds to purchase four copies of Earobics, a computer program that targets a variety of phonological awareness skills. They were notified that they had received the funding and implemented Earobics into the already existing program enabling them to target skills that could not, before the grant, be addressed technologically.



▶ District Schools participate in Technology Showcase

Five first grade students from Union Elementary School represented their class in the PAECT Student Showcase held annually in the East Rotunda of the capitol building. Students Rebecca Peachey, Jordyn Glick, Nathan Loudenslager, Daniel Kauffman and Anthony Schifano demonstrated their Tooth Tally internet project. They were accompanied by Susan Peirce, their teacher and Kristen Wood, their student teacher.



Lieutenant Katherine Baker Knoll talks with students

In this project, the class tracked the number of teeth they lost over a four month period and compared results with other first grades across the country. The students corresponded via email and web sites. This project was used as a starting point and was correlated with dental health, creative writing and graphing. The students created booklets that included graphs comparing the teeth they lost as a class with the other first grades across the country. They also wrote imaginative tooth fairy stories and informative stories about proper tooth care. Much of their work can be found on their tooth project website at <http://www.mcscdk12.org/curr/ToothTally/BellevilleToothTally.htm>



Indian Valley Middle School seventh graders took on the competitive challenge of training their classroom teachers to “hook up” and “operate” an LCD projector and computer. Through various tasks and levels of contest, six finalists emerged to take the grand prize of the competition - the opportunity to attend the Technology Showcase to “strut their stuff.” This is how these students accomplished this goal:

- ▶ Students first learn how to set up and operate an LCD projector with a computer.
- ▶ In groups of two, students design and develop a teacher training module using the format of an instructional training manual, PowerPoint Presentation, or a video.
- ▶ Under the direction of their English teachers, students write a persuasive letter/advertisement convincing the seventh grade teachers that their individual project is worthy of utilization in teacher training.



Groups compete during a school assembly. Manual writers compete against manual writers, PowerPointers against PowerPointers, and video producers against video producers to see which modules allowed the quickest teacher set up and utilization times.

Kayla Pomeroy, Brooke Wagner, Elise Dutcher, Kayla Royer, Michelle Terry, Taylor Richard, Tiffany Rauch,

Tara Marks, Kassaundra Price, Tabitha Johnson, Tyler Hower, Malachi Wert, Merrill Hesketh, Adam Bailor and John Knepp attended the showcase and demonstrated their projects. They were accompanied by their teachers Steve White and Mrs. Stryker.

by Edna Snook

► **InteGrade Pro**

The deployment of the InteGrade Pro electronic grade book is now in its second phase. Ten additional faculty members of each middle and high school will be added to the system and faculty trainers will assist these new users in learning the system. If you are interested in participating in the roll-out, please contact your building principal. If you have any questions regarding the InteGrade program, contact Hunter French or one of the InteGrade faculty trainers.

IVMS: Steve White & Edna Snook; *LMS:* Chris Bowers & Bret Monsell; *IVHS:* Nicole Singer & Peg Fisher; *SMMS:* Kelley Dixon & Lani Reese; *LAHS:* Doug Reddy & John Bell

► **Microsoft Work At Home**

Do you work on school-related things at home using Microsoft Office? If so, did you know that the District can provide Microsoft Office for you? As part of the District’s licensing agreement with Microsoft, we are able to provide license for staff and faculty to work at home.

To qualify for the program, you must sign an agreement with Microsoft stating that you will use the software to work on school-related things and you will not distribute the software to anyone. If you are interested, you can submit a request via Track-It! and the agreement letter will be emailed to you. When you receive it, print it, sign and initial it, and send it to Hunter French at the Administration Building via inter-office mail. You will then be sent the CD-ROMs for either Microsoft Office 2003 or Microsoft Office XP. The CDs are yours to keep for as long as the District remains a part of the current licensing agreement. Hurry! Supplies are limited and when the CDs are gone no more will be purchased this school year.

► **Track-It!
The New Work Order System**

Have you ever submitted a technology work order and then wondered if we ever received it? Have you ever seen Bill or Micah in your building and wondered why they didn’t stop by to fix your problem? We know you have! We have recently implemented a new work order system called Track-It! to address these, and other concerns.

Track-It! is a web-based system that allows users to enter and track their own work orders. Now, you can submit any repair or supply requests to the Information Systems Department electronically.

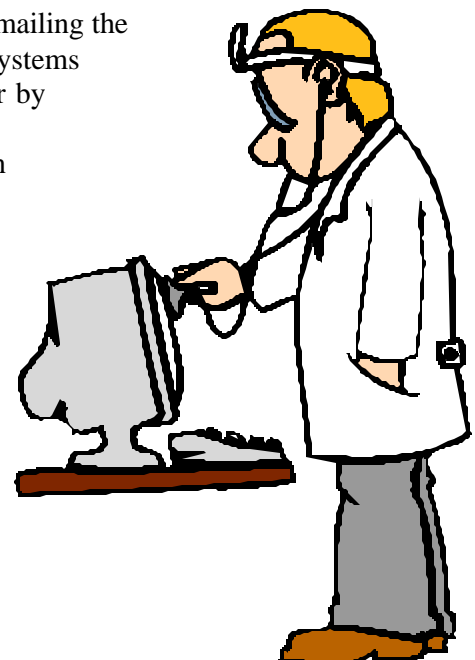
Once a request is submitted, you are issued a “work order number.” This work order number allows you to check the status of the work order and see information such as the technician assigned to the work order, the estimated date due, and the resolution (once the ticket has been closed).

A link to the Track-It! system is located on the Information Systems site on the WWW and on the INTRANET. Just look for the Track-It! icon and



click on it. Track-It! is only available from District computers – you cannot use it from home.

Documentation for Track-It! is available by emailing the Information Systems Department or by clicking the documentation link on the INTRANET.



Our Goals

Our goals are to provide staff with up-to-date information regarding all areas of technology, share helpful hints and ideas, showcase teachers and students and communicate staff development plans. Any questions or suggestions can be directed to **Karen Galbraith * 248-6480 or gkg26@mcsdk12.org**