

ARCC - A - TECT

"PLAYING A PART IN BUILDING BETTER SCHOOL DISTRICTS"

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Volume 10, Issue 5

www.arcc.org

September/October 2006

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Mel Hejda x111
Cathy Erickson x113
Cindy Olson x101
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PAYROLL/STAR

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Welcome
Back to School!

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Next Board Meeting: October 12, 2006
Hermantown Admin Bldg, 4307 Ugstad Rd; Hermantown
10:00 a.m.

YOU ARE ALWAYS WELCOME TO ATTEND

Here We Go Again-

The opening of the school year is always exciting and certainly one of the busiest times of the year. It is also a good time for me to thank all of ARCC's member districts/owners for their continued support of the organization. Although ARCC has been serving our member districts for 31 years we are still looking for ideas on how we can improve on the services we provide and thus I invite all of you to contact me with any ideas you may have. Good luck with your 2006-2007 school year and thanks again for your continued support.



Thank You Kathe, Welcome Vicki -

Kathe Johnson will be leaving the Deer River School Board and thus will be leaving the School Board representative seat she holds on the ARCC Board. The ARCC Board and I will miss Kathe and we thank her for the years she served on the Board.

Although Kathe will be missed, I am excited to welcome Vicki Jerry to the ARCC Board. Vicki, who is also a Deer River School Board member, was appointed by the ARCC Board on August 17 to the seat vacated by Kathe. Vicki's appointment will be until the next ARCC Board elections in 2008. I sincerely appreciate the willingness to serve and the effort put forth by Vicki and all of the other ARCC Board members listed in the heading of this newsletter.

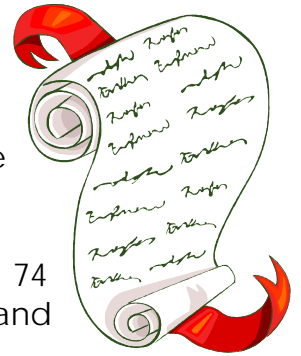
- Marv Roberts

E-RATE COLUMN - Cindy Olson

The New Phone Book is Here.....

Just like Steve Martin in the movie "The Jerk" I get excited every year when I see the E-Rate Eligible Services List. It (hopefully) means that the government has committed itself to another year of E-rate funding.... Schools and Library Division (SLD) released the list on July 28th for the mandatory public comment period.

The major change in the eligible services list is its size. Last year it was 74 pages. This year it is 45 pages and 20 of these pages include a glossary and index!



Some new language in the Internet Access category state that requests for funding for Internet access can NOT include anything beyond basic conduit access to the internet. It can not include point to point connectivity for data, video or voice applications. These services must be provided by an eligible telecommunication carrier.

In the Maintenance of Internal Connections category they have again stated that any contract that exceeds basic maintenance of eligible network equipment (repair and upkeep, wire and cable maintenance, basic technical support and configuration charges) will be totally ineligible. This means that if you are seeking E-Rate funding for maintenance of network equipment you MUST have your service provider separate that quote from any other technical support services you might be considering.

Voice over IP services are the ongoing subject of proceedings at the FCC to determine its eligibility. Pending FCC action with respect to this service, it is considered ineligible for E-Rate funding. If you are receiving VOIP phone services, you should work with your service provider to cost out that portion of your bill and remove it from your E-Rate request.

For districts requesting E-Rate funding for e-mail services, SLD is clear that you must allocate out costs for ineligible portions, including calendaring functions and collaboration tools, even if there is not a separate cost for these items, you must take some steps to allocate a reasonable cost out of your request.

For districts requesting E-Rate funding for web hosting, SLD has clearly stated that you can only request funding on the cost of hosting the site and may NOT include costs for ineligible features like software applications and content editing features. Again, even if there is not a separate cost for these items, you must take some steps to allocate a reasonable cost out of your request.

If you would like to review the draft of the 2007 Eligible Services list in full, here is the link on the Schools and Library web site:

<http://www.universalservice.org/res/documents/sl/pdf/eligible-services-draft.pdf>

FINANCE - Jeff Yeager, Mel Hejda, Cindy Olson, Cathy Erickson

June Vouchers Payable– Jeff Yeager

SMART Finance is capable of reporting accounts payable automatically with a few simple steps:

- 🍊 Enter the June FY2006 vouchers during July/August/September with period 200612 and date 6/29/2006. (This step records the expenditure and sets up the accounts payable.)
- 🍊 Run a Period Balance Report (A/P report menu) to display the accounts payable list. This report should agree with the balance in B-0X-206-000 (A/P Control) for June 30, 2006.

How do June 2006 vouchers get paid? Let the system pick up the open vouchers with the July, August or September payment generation for check printing. SMART Finance posts the payment to the accounts payable account in FY2007.

Save the Adopted (Original) Budgets– Jeff Yeager

Remember to save a copy of the original budget as Adopted07. Lock the Adopted07 budget after it is imported. Lock all budget codes prior to FY2007 to prevent changes. Please call or email Kris or Jeff if you need assistance.



Safe Schools (Crime Levy)– Jeff Yeager

Use Finance 342 to report expenditures and revenues. Close the accounts to Reserve Fund Balance 449. This reserve is allowed to be deficit.

MDE UFARS Reporting Dates– Jeff Yeager

- Initial upload of audited or unaudited data is due no later than September 15, 2006.
- Final upload of audited data is due no later than November 30, 2006.
- Budget Publication should be done by the earlier of November 30, 2006 or 1 week after the board accepts the audit.
- Compliance Table is due at MDE no later than November 30, 2006.
- Audit report (paper copy) is due at MDE no later than December 31, 2006.



Levy Sessions - Cathy Erickson

ARCC will be hosting two Levy Sessions after attending the MASBO Levy Session. Districts can sign up for the session on Monday, September 18 at the Northeast Service Cooperative in Mt. Iron or Tuesday, September 19 at the Dry Dock in Duluth. The Dry Dock is located off the Midway Road south of Duluth (exit 246 on Hwy 35). Both sessions will be from 9:00 am to Noon. Districts can sign up by contacting Cathy Erickson at cerickson@arcc.org or 1-800-232-1387, ext. 113.



Operating Referendum Workshop Registration – Mel Hejda

ARCC finance staff will be facilitating an Operating Referendum workshop on Monday, September 18, 2006, at the Northeast Service Cooperative in Mt. Iron. The session is scheduled from 12:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. The agenda is as follows:

Law Bulletin D - School District Referendum Revenue Authorization Procedure, Presenter – Mel Hejda, ARCC

Virginia School District's Experience with Their Failing Referendums and the Recent Passage of \$800 per RMCPU, Presenters – Superintendent Phil Johnson and School Board Member Dennis Hendricks

Referendum Spreadsheets Available on the MDE Website, Presenter – Bob Porter, MDE Program Finance

Levy Impacts and Other Pertinent Topics, Presenters - Northland Securities, Inc.

Registration was sent out earlier. Please feel free to contact us if you missed the registration but would like to attend.



Summer Cleanup

Summer cleanup was again a success. About 1/3 of the districts were able to take advantage of the opportunity to use the ARCC lab and work one on one with ARCC staff.

Hours Worked Reminder

Please have your 3rd quarter hours worked report completed by Oct 26th. Let Carol know when your file is saved and ready for her to submit to MN DEED.



BRAIN TEASER:

Don't cheat! Because if you did, the test would be no fun. I promise there are no tricks to the test. Read the sentence below and count the F's in that sentence. Count them ONLY ONCE. Do not go back and count them again.

FINISHED FILES ARE THE RESULT OF YEARS OF SCIENTIFIC STUDY COMBINED WITH THE EXPERIENCE OF YEARS.

See the answer on page 9



STUDENT - Kerry Chaffey, Teri Henderson, Dale Nielsen

MARSS Updates – Kerry Chaffey

There are several new items in MARSS for FY07. The biggest changes include the reporting of service hours on certain students and reporting ESY students. This is due to the change in how special ed billing will be handled...they will now pull much of the information from MARSS reporting. **It is imperative that the Special Ed Department in each district is communicating with the MARSS person timely and effectively. If not, it may impact your funding!** Below is a very brief overview of service hours and ESY.

Service hours will be reported for selected Special Ed Students:

- EC
- HK
- Shared Time (SAC=16, 17 or 18 and Special Ed Evaluation Status = 4 or 6)
- SAC 27 and Special Ed Evaluation Status = 4 or 6 or

Students enrolled in one of the following sites:

- Multidisciplinary Teaching Model or
- Inclusive Program or
- Students grade 10-12 participating in a Transition Disabled program or
- Program Cooperative Teaching Model site or

Students whose membership is based on credits earned or a combination of seat based time and credits earned and receiving special education services. Which include:

- Independent Study
- Project Based
- Online Learning

The Special Education Case managers will need to work closely with the MARSS Coordinator to ensure accuracy. It is going to require EXCELLENT communication in all areas to make this a success.



Reporting ESY Students – Kerry Chaffey

Students required or recommended through an IEP to participate in Extended School Year (ESY) will be reported in MARSS as a partial record. The items below are a few of the reporting requirements

- Hours will need to be split according to fiscal year
 - July 1, 2006-June 30, 2007 will be reported in FY 07
- Grades EC and HK are not valid for ESY
- Can not have a learning year and ESY record within the same district
- Service hours include direct and indirect hours
- ESY records should be ignored when determining the last location code and status end codes for the enrollment records in the regular school year

Again, the Special Ed Case Managers will need to communicate with the MARSS Coordinator to ensure the appropriate students are in MARSS.

Marilyn spoke about the FY07 MARSS changes in our Annual MARSS meeting in March 2006. There were also sessions in August 2006 offered by MDE in which all MN districts were invited to attend...and we hope you had the opportunity to attend.

ARCC will be providing a review session on all the FY07 MARSS changes on September 26th at the Northeast Service Coop in Mt Iron, MN. The MARSS Coordinators received an invitation to the session in August.



Hidden Elements – Teri Henderson

How often have you tried to create an Ad Hoc report only to spend most of your time trying to find the elements you want to report on? Or maybe you avoid creating an Ad Hoc report altogether. You are not alone!

I've come across a nifty file that will make creating an Ad Hoc report so much easier ... and maybe even enjoyable! It is called the Campus Data Element Reference Guide. The guide will show you the data elements, folder levels, tab name and the location in Campus.

If you are interested in getting a copy of the guide, please email me at thenderson@arcc.org and I will get a copy off to you right away. Share it with anyone who might be creating an Ad Hoc report.

CAMPUS DOCUMENTATION – Teri Henderson

ARCC will no longer be putting Campus documentation on our website. Documents are updated now and then and it's sometimes difficult to keep up with them as we don't always get notification that they've been changed.

Infinite Campus has a website that has the newest update documentation. Not only is there current documentation but there are other bits of news and information that you may also find helpful.

Go to the URL <http://mambo.infinitecampus.com/portal> and register for a username and password if you have not already done so.

We strongly recommend you register for access.

Microsoft to Rollout Internet Explorer 7 for Windows XP – Jim Livesay

This article is primarily for districts using [Infinite Campus](#).

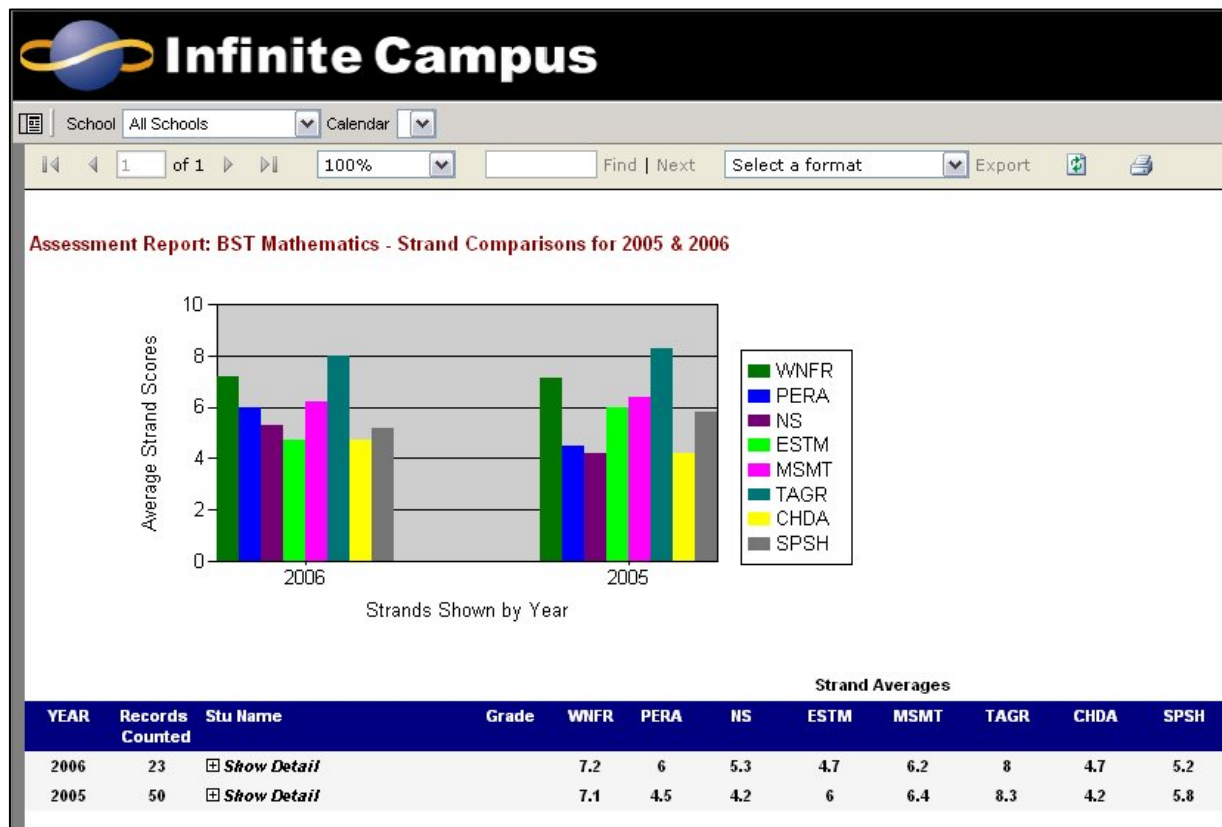
You may have received emails from Microsoft, or read web pages or magazine articles referring to [Internet Explorer Version 7 Beta 2 or 3 for Windows XP](#) (<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/ie/default.mspx>), encouraging you to try the new version out. While most users will find few if any problems with this version, [Infinite Campus](#) has recommended that we hold-off implementation until its staff has certified it. In fact, I personally tested IE 7 Beta 2 and did find some problems within the Campus application that I reported to Campus.



Furthermore, according to one web article, Microsoft plans to *automatically* push IE 7 to Windows XP users when the browser update is ready for general release later this year. The article also contains a link to a *tool blocker* that you can download to prevent the *automatic* delivery of IE 7 as high priority update via the Automatic Updates. To read more about this update and the tool blocker go to http://news.com.com/Microsoft+tags+IE+7+high+priority+update/2100-7350_3-6098500.html?tag=nefd.lede

Infinite Campus - Assessments - Dale Nielsen

Wouldn't it be cool if you could get this report from Infinite Campus?



You're looking at 'the real deal' here, STRAND AVERAGES from Minnesota Math tests over a 2-year period. This report was not 'faked-up' from sample data. It came from real, live BST strand data. So what, right? You can already see graphical representations on MDE's website. True, but it's aggregated data that has been sanitized to a certain degree. Having the ability to distill aggregated data down to individual student detail is what's exciting. Taking this a step further, how useful might it be to look at other potential correlations with assessment outcomes? For instance, economic indicators, free & reduced ...even the climate (i.e. When I was younger, I couldn't concentrate well enough to test well in the fall because of severe hay fever caused by high pollen counts)?

Taking a moment for critical thinking here, "yeah, that's nice, but this stuff is all OLD data." The age of data that is used for analysis in assessments is a really important factor as a measure of how useful that data may be. The older the data, the further we are from being able to help students in need. Let's face it, the data we're fiddling with for BSTs, MCAs, ACTs, MAPs, SATs and others is **O-L-D** data. It's fine for No Child Left Behind compliance analysis on Average Yearly Progress and the like, but by the time you're in receipt of the scored data, it's literally old history. You've already been weighed, measured and found in want. All you can do is say "I hope we don't repeat THAT mistake again".

I know that there are lots of you who like to report assessment outcomes on report cards and transcripts so perhaps a new reporting tool like the one illustrated above would help to answer that need in a more informative way than we now have. An important point to keep in mind is that the report shown above is derived from a COMPLETE (not partial) set of assessments data.

Assessments . . . What if? - Dale Nielsen

What if assessments took place and reported results in REAL TIME? Go ahead, dare to dream. For example - What if quizzes provided both teachers and students instant feedback? How would instant feedback help a teacher? How about a student? I think that having questions answered while a topic is still fresh is a common goal and that just about everyone can see value in delivering education in the most efficient means available. From a teacher's perspective one might ask, "How well did I answer that question?" From a student's perspective one might ask, "Why didn't I think of that?" The whole idea here is that we could use those 'missed successes' in a formative, rather than a punitive fashion to the benefit of both teachers and students.



It's only 'pie in the sky' if you want it that way. The truth is, the database we're using most certainly has the potential to bring the classroom scenario that I just mentioned, into reality. We recently met with Barry Brahier, PhD, Senior Product Mgr. at Infinite Campus about assessments. (By the way, THANK YOU to all of you who took time out of your summer to attend that meeting.) Barry appeared to be a careful listener and has taken our suggestions in hand back to Infinite Campus HQ, where he will present them to the development staff for consideration. I said 'it's only pie in the sky if you want it that way' because if we don't continue to come up with ideas to improve the product NOBODY ELSE WILL! That's right - nobody else has approached Infinite Campus with ideas about how to make assessments better. In turn, Infinite Campus has demonstrated a willingness to listen to ideas to make the product even better than it is now. They really like it when we bring ideas to the table in the form of screen designs and sample data. They freely admit that there is a lot of room for improvement in the assessments area. They want to be the industry leader; so if we bring them ideas to work on instead of complaining about deficiencies, we'll be moving in the right direction.

In the meantime, I'll work with you as I have in the past, and together we'll get that data out there for folks to work with.

NET NEWS - Jim Livesay



WEB FILTERING - Bob Buchanan

Districts that are using the shared regional web filter, initially had to fill out an Internet Filtering Form so that a filtering "profile" could be created for the district. During the filling out of that form, the district had a number of elections to make. For instance, which of sixty some internet "categories" were to be blocked (or monitored) for the district's staff and students when surfing the internet. Also, would selected staff need the capability to do an "immediate override" if blocked from a web site they need to access, and if so, what would the maximum length of time for that override be? And finally, would different profiles be needed for different times of the day? As an example, one profile for during the school day, and possibly a more lenient profile during the evening for community education classes.

As the beginning of the school year approaches, you may want to review your current filtering profile and let us know whether we need to make any changes to it. As an aid in determining which of the sixty some categories may be appropriate for your district, please refer the "filtering categories" link found within the technology section of ARCC's web site, or go directly to www.stbernard.com/products/iprism/products_iprism-cats.asp, both of which will provide a detailed description of each category. And if you aren't sure of what filtering elections were made for your district, please let me know and I'll be happy to send you the details of your district's current filtering profile.

K-12 Business Continuity Planning - *Jim Livesay*

Like private companies, school districts should have formal business continuity plans in place. I ran across the following list of common mistakes and thought I would share it with the region. The original information may be found at <http://www.knowledgeleader.com/KnowledgeLeader/Content.nsf/content/BusinessContinuityManagementBCPTenCommonMistakes!OpenDocument>.

Additionally, you might want to add number **11**, i.e. the failure to recognize a pandemic such as the avian flu virus as a real threat to the organization's stability.

Business Continuity Planning: Ten Common Mistakes

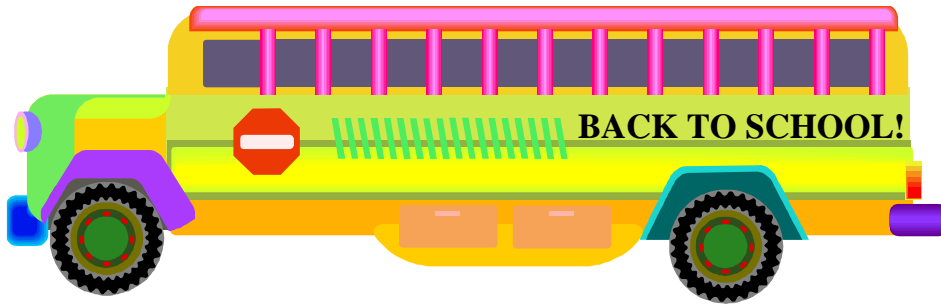
With increasing reliance on electronic markets, companies are becoming more and more concerned about business continuity planning (BCP). Yet, simply having a business continuity strategy is not enough. Common mistakes include:

- 1. Reliance:** Relying on a BCP can lead to a false sense of security and potential business failure if the plan is not updated regularly and fully tested. In addition, recovery personnel must be trained on plan execution and employees must be aware of the plan's provisions.
- 2. Scope:** Companies often limit the scope of their efforts to systems recovery. Business continuity planning requires consideration of both business process and systems recovery.
- 3. Prioritization:** A formal process prioritizing key business processes is a critical step that often does not get its due attention by senior management. Without prioritization, a plan may recover less-than-critical business processes rather than the ones crucial for survival.
- 4. Plan Update:** Formal mechanisms are not in place to force a plan update on a regular basis or when significant systems or business process change occurs.
- 5. Ownership:** Senior management often appoints the wrong person to manage the BCP process; someone with the power to lead, influence, support, prioritize and organize the project should be named.
- 6. Communications:** Communications issues are often overlooked. Formal plans to contact employees, vendors, business partners and clients often lack specific communications strategies. Strategies to address how these groups obtain recovery status updates is often inadequate.
- 7. Security:** Information systems security controls are often disregarded during plan development, resulting in a greater risk exposure during recovery operations.
- 8. Public Relations:** Practitioners often fail to plan for public relations and investor considerations, therefore missing the opportunity to limit perceived impact by the public and investors.
- 9. Insurance:** Many BCPs fail to adequately plan to support the filing of insurance claims resulting in delayed or reduced settlements.
- 10. Service Evaluation:** Many companies poorly evaluate recovery products (hot site, cold site and planning software), relying on vendor-supplied information. This often leads to a solution that may not adequately address a company's needs.

Companies that avoid these ten common BCP pitfalls significantly increase their odds of a successful and timely resumption of business and information technology operations. As an example, one single-site business located in the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City lost 18 of its 33 employees in the blast. With the implementation of their BCP, the business not only survived but their operations recovered quickly.

There are six F's in the sentence. A person of average intelligence finds three of them. If you spotted four, you're above average. If you got five, you can turn your nose at most anybody. If you caught six, you are a genius. There is no catch. Many people forget the "OF"'s. The human brain tends to see them as V's and not F's. Pretty weird, huh?

Please contact ARCC with any address or name updates



**ARCC WILL BE CLOSED
LABOR DAY - SEPTEMBER 4, 2006
HAVE A SAFE WEEKEND!**