

Connecting Points Newsletter

Keeping you informed where technology and school district functions connect

September 2009

www.calhounisd.org

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Student Service Connecting Points

Student PreP

In partnership with the department of General Services and Legislation, we have created a system called Student PreP (Student Pre-enrollment Process). This system, provided at no cost to our districts in Calhoun and Branch, allows a user with secure username to access Student PreP and receive pre-enrollment information on students who have left a district in our two county region and are enrolling in a their district.

Provided the student has been exited from their former district, the receiving district will have access to information including demographic, discipline, transcript and program information. The key for the receiving district is to verify the data with the parent. This allows the receiving district to be proactive in planning for the student's needs without having to wait for their cumulative file (CA60) to show up weeks later. Union City, Harper Creek, Pennfield and Albion are piloting this project, which will be available to all districts this fall. Tim Howard, CISD Programmer, has done an amazing job in creating this system based on the needs described by our two departments.

Did You Know?

- Functionality has been written by CDOT to connect Zangle Gradebook to Moodle or Blackboard?
- We continue to consult on major projects with districts such as Bond projects and migration from Novell to Windows

Business Office Connecting Points

Cyborg Release 5.2.1

Over the summer, Cyborg release 5.2 was rolled out to all Calhoun/Branch consortium districts with the last two completing their conversion the week of August 24th. Our consortium has displayed its leadership role by being the first in Michigan to complete the conversion. With this upgrade, users have an easier process for handling garnishments. Also, to most everyone's relief the CAPS Lock key will not be necessary once you sign on to the system.

Did You Know?

- 15 out of our 16 districts now use direct deposit.
- By using the eVoucher system you can eliminate the printing and distribution of vouchers.

For more information on these topics, please contact Carole McNamara or Sherry Williams, CDOT Consultants.

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WISE Finance is History

Because all Calhoun, Branch and Wayne districts are using SMART for their finance package, the WISE finance system was shut down August 1st. With the shutdown of WISE, many of the reports in TSO will no longer pull accurate financial information. In order to get current and accurate financial information, data needs to be accessed in SMART Finance. Joy is also working with districts to create custom finance reports to meet their needs for reporting to their Boards, etc. If your district needs a particular report and your finance staff can't figure out how to get it, have them contact Joy to see if it can be created in Logi.

SMART Report Writer:

Get Ready! Now bundled with SMART is a Report Writer capability procured and made available by Wayne RESA called Logi. This capability permits districts to produce their own customized reports. Because this is a very powerful report tool it requires training in order to properly use it to design new finance reports. Joy Sommers will be offering training soon.

Meanwhile, there are some common reports already available in the 'Shared Reports' folder that can be run without training. If a person wants to use the Logi reports, they must have a SMART ID with clearance to Finance Reports. They would sign in to SMART and go to Finance, Reports. From there, go to View, Logi and it will open a web browser with the Logi program. The default is 'My Personal Reports' so you would need to go to 'Shared Reports' to see what is currently available. Anything in the Shared Reports can be copied into a user's personal folder so they can modify it to fit their needs.

District Operations Connecting Points

Phone System

CACC has a new phone system that was installed by our staff this summer at a significant savings using an open source solution (programming that is at no cost – only the cost of the computer housing the system and the cost of the phones). This is the same phone system installed at the Gifford Schultz Service Center, Workforce Development in Coldwater, and in the near future DKDC. Under the leadership of Sam Lutgring and his staff, we have also helped Bellevue install the same system.

Teaching and Learning Connecting Points

Blackboard now hosted at Calhoun ISD

Calhoun ISD is now hosting Blackboard on our fiber network, rather than hosting at Genesee ISD. This helps to utilize our fiber network and increase reliability and speed of access to the system for our local districts. Andy Mann continues to be the lead in training our districts in how to utilize the system, which has been upgraded to the latest version. Doug Smith and his team did a great job in moving the system to Calhoun ISD this summer.

REMC Video Sale! Calhoun ISD, September 14th and 15th from 2:00 to 4:30 p.m.

Final sale of videos (VHS and some DVD) and materials that have been taken out of circulation – first come first serve for educational use - must come in person. All videos \$1 each.



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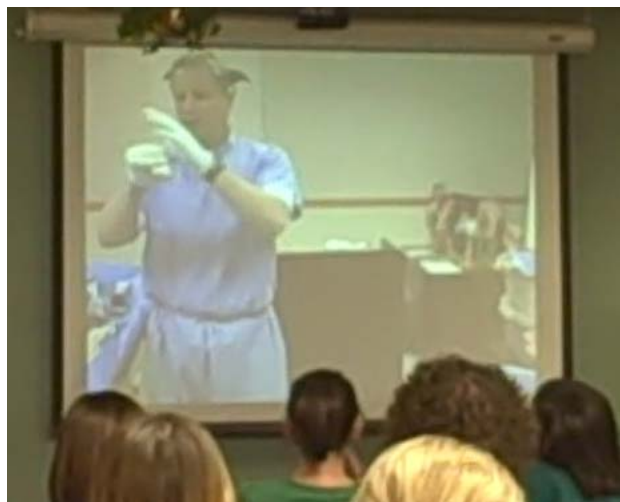
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Collaboration and Learning at a Distance

Students are leaving school to find themselves working in a global environment where their team members are located around the world. To facilitate communications and collaboration, they connect using a special camera, microphone, and connection hardware which we refer to as video conferencing or distance learning. This same equipment is being used to schools to support learning and collaboration. There are five different uses for video conferencing/distance learning:

- A. **Shared classes** - teacher instructs students who are not physically in the same location. It is useful for classes which would normally not be available in every school such as Chinese or AP Physics.
- B. **Video conference program/video field trips** – connect to a location or specialist to enhance or expand learning. Thousands of different programs are available including zoo and museum visits, participating in an autopsy, or learning about the Holocaust from a concentration camp survivor.
- C. **Connect to an expert** – hospitals, court houses, and universities have distance learning equipment as well as experts who would be happy to answer student questions about their career.
- D. **Connect to another classroom** - students collaborate, work on a project, or teach each other a lesson. Websites help teachers find or propose projects. Area schools have participated in Michigan Week and Read Around the Planet collaborative projects.
- E. **Meetings** – video conferencing allows for multiple connections at one time; it is useful for MDE presentations as well as monthly state organization meetings, allowing local participation without driving to a meeting.



Calhoun Area Career students participate in an interactive Forensic Autopsy program guided by an instructor from Saint Louis University.

The CISD is a member of Michigan's Two Way Interactive Connections in Education organization (TWICE.) Their website www.twice.cc provides a wealth of information as well as a link to a searchable database of video conference programs. Any educator can register to participate in collaborative projects at <http://projects.twice.cc> if you have access to video conferencing equipment (you can also arrange to coordinate with Calhoun ISD to host your connection).

Considering the variety ways video conferencing/distance learning can support learning, more area districts are installing equipment. For more information about how video conferencing/ distance learning contact Andy Mann, CISD Educational Technology Consultant. manna@calhounisd.org (269) 789-2421.

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Seat Time Waiver – Available Statewide through Genesee ISD's GenNET

In an effort to expand opportunities for Michigan high school students, Superintendent Flanagan has invited schools and school districts to seek waivers from the Administrative Rules and Pupil Accounting Rules that cause barriers to innovation and student academic success. The GISD Seat Time Waiver (STW) expands learning options for high school students while still allowing the pupil to be counted for membership. In order to accomplish this, sections of the MDE Pupil Accounting Manual (PAM) and Administrative Rules (AR) were waived with certain provisions. All districts in Barry, Branch and Calhoun have signed a memorandum of understanding with Genesee ISD, allowing them to participate. For more information, see <http://gennetbb.geneseeisd.org> username: user.stw password: user.stw as well as contact Mike Oswalt, Becky Rocho or Mary Gehrig.

MI StreamNet – your resource for viewing video resources!

The REMC Association continues to sponsor the REMC MI StreamNet project – a collection of videos and access to live events. For example, state school board meetings, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation presentations, MEAP and MME presentations, Title I presentations, Algebra for All training, and all video resources through Data for Student Success are available at www.mistreamnet.org.

Data for Student Success

Sustaining Data for Student Success

A critical component of any initiative is sustainability. This summer we coordinated the first of three sustainability events for ISDs and their districts that have been part of Data for Student Success in 2008/9. We had approximately 150 attend from 24 ISDs and several local school districts. We plan to have two more similar events this school year– one in Lansing and one in southeastern Michigan. The main focus of this event was unveiling new data inquiry tools (Mi Access, MME, CNA/PA25) as well as new professional development modules (Leadership, Building a Culture of Quality Data, Assessment, and Data Conferencing). This was a significant amount of planning, designing, developing and implementing from all those involved. To date, we have 40 ISDs/RESAs involved. Later this month, we have an event where we have invited the remaining 17 ISDs to attend and get involved with Data for Student Success. It is being held in Cadillac.



Regional Data Initiative Grant

Calhoun ISD is applying for the latest competitive educational technology grant – Regional Data Initiative. This grant is meant to provide consortiums of ISDs funding to help teachers use data from local data warehouses to drive their instruction. The intent is for each consortium to be formed around a product. Calhoun ISD is the lead ISD on the Data Director consortium. There is a second Data Director consortium of upper Michigan and rural ISDs using Data Director. The Calhoun ISD consortium at this time includes: Barry, Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Eaton, Gratiot-Isabella, Jackson, Lenawee, Livingston, Macomb, St. Clair.

This grant complements the work of Data for Student Success. In fact, consortiums that apply need to indicate in their application how they will use the professional development and the data available in

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Data4SS. This will mean for our local districts continued professional development around using data to inform instruction and continued delaying of the cost of Data Director for local districts. Currently this is the last school year that CISD will use technology consortium funds to pay for Data Director (\$4.90 per student) for Branch and Calhoun. With this grant, we hope to delay it at least one more year. Statewide, there is \$11.6 million available in this grant.

Calhoun ISD Connecting Points

The Calhoun ISD provides this "Connecting Points" newsletter to provide the districts we serve relevant and timely information about technology-related topics within school district functions. We call the cross section of technology-related topics and school district functions 'connecting points.'

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us:

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Doug Smith, Director	Organizational Technology Services (Cyborg, SMART, CISD Technologies)	smithde@calhounisd.org 269.789.2424
Help Desk		helpdesk@calhounisd.org

2009/10 Meeting Dates

September 14 at CISD

2 – 4 [Blackboard](#) Key Contacts

September 16 at CISD

8:30 – 2:00 [Annual Ed Tech Symposium](#) (TLC, RITC, Media Council)

2 – 3:30 REMC 12E [Media Council](#) Meeting

November 11, January 13, March 18, May 20 at CISD

For each of the above dates, the schedule is:

8:30 – 9:30 [Blackboard](#) Key Contacts

8:30 – 9:30 REMC 12E [Media Council](#)

9:30 – 12:00 Regional Instructional Technology Committee (RITC)

12 – 12:45 Lunch and Learn ([RITC](#), [Media Council](#), [TLC](#) welcome)

12:45 – 1:30 Technology Leadership Council ([TLC](#))

September 10, November 12, January 14, March 11, June 10 at CISD

[Zangle](#) Planning 8:30 – 11:30

September 10, November 12, January 14, March 11, May 13 at CISD

[Data Director](#) Key Contacts, 12 – 3 (with lunch)

September, October, November, February, March, April, May at CACC

[Cyborg](#) user meetings are third Wednesdays at 2:00 for the months above

September 17, December 10, January 28, and June 10 at CACC

[Finance](#) meetings at 1:30 for the dates above