

Connecting Points Newsletter

Keeping you informed where technology and school district functions connect

November 2006

www.calhounisd.org

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.'

Teaching and Learning Connecting Points

Online Learning Experience

As the President of the REMC Association of Michigan this year, Mike Oswalt has initiated a project that is designed to help MDE support schools in implementing the new online learning experience. The intent of this project is to provide a rubric for an online course and experience and also to provide 'companion documents' designed to give narrative examples of online learning experiences. Several Instructional Technologists from various ISDs have volunteered to help on this project. These experiences will be tied directly to the subjects of the Merit Curriculum (such as, what does incorporating an online learning experience in Biology look like). Mike will be facilitating a meeting of various statewide stakeholders at the end of the month to provide input into these documents that should be finalized in December.

United Streaming

Marilyn Anderson is available to provide in-district training for teachers on using United Streaming. United Streaming is the product that is substantially discounted thanks to the work of the REMC Association of Michigan (\$385 per building per year). Since the beginning of school, over 8,700 video clips have been viewed (viewed on line or downloaded) by the sixty subscribing school buildings in Calhoun and Branch counties. This is up 1,600 compared to the same time last school year.

8th Grade Technology Literacy

The Regional Instructional Technology Committee meet recently and discussed next steps for a collaboratively created assessment. The similar statewide committee, a subcommittee of REMC, is meeting later in November to discuss this same topic. Rhonda Rasmussen from Lakeview will be attending that meeting on Mike's behalf and will share the information at our next regional meeting on December 18. The intent of the committee is to once again use a common assessment and utilize Data Director to administer and analyze the results.

Online Learning Experience Toolkit

The RITC committee discussed the potential of collaboratively creating an online learning experience that could be incorporated into middle school curriculum, focused on writing. This concept will be discussed further by a subcommittee later this month, including looking at how a county learning management system such as Moodle or Blackboard might be utilized.

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Business Office Connecting Points

Cyborg Payroll

The new release of Cyborg has been implemented in all consortium districts. As a whole the implementation has gone well and the few outstanding issues are being addressed by Wayne RESA, Carole and Sherry. The December 1 report for Special Education is fast approaching. The CISD Cyborg team is working closely with Special Education to pull together the report for the state.

Also fast approaching on December 1 is the REP report. New requirements by the state have resulted in major changes to the process of reporting REP. And in turn has generated significant work for our districts and the CISD. Carole and Sherry have been working closely with the districts creating reports to assist them in meeting the new requirements in the most efficient manner. The most significant of which have been the linking of REP to the Title I Comparability report and the need to report base salary for each teacher schedule. Basically all teachers must be tied to a job, salary schedule and step. Battle Creek has been ahead of the game and already utilizes this process. Working with Battle Creek, Carole and Sherry created an EEO5 report for them in October.

The next Cyborg user meeting will be Wednesday, November 15th. Kathy Hayes from BISD is our guest speaker. Updates on REP and the year end process will be addressed at the meeting.

Finance

The deadline for FID submission to CEPI is Wednesday, November 15. Joy is working with the districts to insure they meet the deadline. As of November 6, only 6 districts are outstanding with one more slated to be completed by November 9.

Did you know:

- Battle Creek now fully employs the SMART Electronic Requisition/PO module through out their operations.
- Quincy has volunteered to test the remaining modules of SMART not currently deployed. Quincy will also be the first district of the consortium to only employ SMART and not Wise in any function.
- Branch ISD will be expanding the use of SMART past the business office.
- A new listing of current and future SMART modules is under development for distribution to the consortium members.

The next Finance user's group meeting is Wednesday, November 8 at 1:30 PM in the CATC garden room. Main topic is the AP1099 module, an easier way to create Federal 1099s.

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Data Driven Connecting Points

Leading Data Driven Continuous School Improvement using Data Director

Four Workshops – ALL IDENTICAL – please note locations and only register for one section.

At the Calhoun Area Technology Center (CATC)

- DATA 600, Section 1 November 28: 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.
- DATA 600, Section 2 November 28: 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.

At the Calhoun ISD

- DATA 600, Section 3 November 29: 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.
- DATA 600, Section 4 November 29: 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.

Outcome for the workshop: “After understanding how to access and interpret the information from Data Director, the participant will be able to interpret the reports and resulting data views well enough to write a narrative describing what they are seeing.”

Who should come? District Data Director Key Contacts and those instructional staff and leadership from their districts who are users of Data Director and will help advance the use of Data Director in their district and regionally as a continuous school improvement tool.

Registration is first come first serve and limited to 35 at each session. Please register at <http://pdreg.calhounisd.org> – click on DATA 600 and be sure to choose the right section and location.

Student Services Connection Points

Zangle

Do you know the untapped potential of Zangle? Here are four areas that are in Zangle that have been implemented by just a handful of districts:

- Student Connect which allows students to log in to Zangle and see their schedules, assignments, grades, school news. Students are also able to generate course requests, a great time saver for counselors.
- Web pre-enrollment for students new to the district.
- Graduation requirements which allows the district to track a student’s progress towards meeting the new high school graduation requirements.
- Standards Based Report cards, allowing teachers to eliminate the large hand completed report cards and keep track of student progress directly in Zangle.

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Technology Efficiencies Connecting Points

Spam Filtering

The CISD continues to provide e-mail spam filtering. There has been a continued increase in the spam volume on the Internet over the last few months. Those districts using the spam filtering received 2,138,271 messages in October of which only 339,278, or about 16%, was not spam.

Calhoun ISD Connecting Points

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