



The ESD SOURCE

The Newsletter of Southern Oregon Education Service District

November 2004

New SOESD web site content and design

Southern Oregon ESD has implemented a new information management product from Project A called *Site-in-a-Box*. This new software allows staff from each of the ESD departments to input and manage their department's web site content.

Last school year, the SOESD Webmaster and the Technology Services programmer worked with Project A to develop a site that met SOESD's design and navigation requirements. This summer, Technology Services migrated existing content to the new site, and Project A provided *Site-in-a-Box* training to SOESD departments, who have since been busy updating their content on the new web site. Technology Services also worked with the SOESD Administrative cabinet on the presentation of a new graphical design and the organization of the web site's content.

The interface and content designs are now finalized, and the new web site resides at the same address of SOESD's former site: <http://www.soesd.k12.or.us>.

Site-in-a-Box provides easy access to information for visitors and puts content management in departments' hands.

To assist visitors in locating pertinent content, the new site is cross-indexed in a variety of ways. You may browse content

- by department,
- by the online services we offer,
- by the specialized products we offer, or
- by selecting your audience type.

Additionally, a search feature is available in the top right corner of every page. Whether you are an administrator, teacher, student, or parent, information should be up-to-date and easy to find.

Many districts in our service area are also using Project A's *Site-*

in-a-Box product to manage their web site. Project A is offering special pricing for *Site-in-a-Box* as part of a group purchase coordinated with Southern Oregon ESD and the districts they serve. While Ashland School District has been using the product for many years, other local districts have taken advan-



tage of the benefits of the *Site-in-a-Box* product. School districts in SOESD's region who have adopted the software include: Ashland, Eagle Point, Medford, Prospect, Rogue River, and Three Rivers.

Included in the *Site-in-a-Box* package, Project A offers quarterly training for the support staff identified by each of the school districts currently using the product. Check PD Networks <http://www.soesd.k12.or.us/Page.asp?NavID=199> for the next training offered at SOESD's Medford computer lab.

If you would like to discuss how *Site-in-a-Box* might benefit your district or if you're interested in taking advantage of the consortium pricing, please contact the SOESD Webmaster or Project A directly.

SOESD Webmaster

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Project A

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INSIDE

Source: Director of Technology and Media Services
October '04 Board Notes
Help Desk toll-free number and procedures benefits customers
Regional Autism Services
SOESD Electronic Services



Source: Ron Enger Director, Technology & Media Services

Schools in the 21st century are not the same as they were in the 1960's and 1970's. Just like most other elements of our society, education has changed significantly. Gone are the chalkboards and methodologies of instruction that seemed to work well in the later decades of the 20th century. The students of today have moved from a society based in industry and manufacturing to one that is "high tech" and information based.

Educators have had to rethink the way we deliver instruction and how we reach students. The technologies of television, the computer, and the Internet have had a tremendous impact on education. Our students will graduate into a world that requires skills in all of these technologies.

As an ESD, we have also had to change how we deliver instructional services to schools. Films have given way to videotape, which are now being converted to digital video discs (DVD) or digitized media resources delivered from a computer server. This latest development will make it possible for teachers and students to receive full motion educational video programs on their computer stations at school or even at home.

The ESD is now helping schools deliver entire classes electronically over the Internet or via video conferencing systems. There are hundreds of students in Southern Oregon taking advantage of distance education technologies that did not even exist a few years ago. Just as in the business world, schools are beginning to take advantage of distance education to provide more options and equity for their students. In addition to entire electronic courses, teachers and students may interface with science researchers, museum staff, artists, and government officials from around the nation.

Another ESD service that has changed as a result of school needs is "computer and networking" support. When the Internet first became a part of our schools, it was used to supplement instruction and learning. Now it has become an essential part of most classes. It has become so important that the technologies over which it travels must be operational 99% of the time. This requires a significant level of support and expertise. The ESD employs staff with this expertise, and the necessary equipment to enable a complex wide area network (WAN) to work successfully. The ESD serves as an Internet provider to our schools as well, with a direct connection to the Internet II broadband network.

The ESD also repairs most types of electronic equipment and systems in schools. Whether it is a computer, a VCR, or an intercom in a school, this service is important to keep these systems operating. Currently the ESD maintains thousands of equipment items for schools, either onsite or at the ESD. In addition, staff members help with installation of many different electronic systems in schools, including computer networks and labs, video conference classrooms, public address systems, and even video security systems.

Technology support has changed a great deal at the ESD in order to address the many needs schools have today. New technological applications will be introduced in educational settings. Southern Oregon ESD will continue to support schools as they incorporate technology into school operations and classroom instruction.

The technologies of television, the computer, and the Internet have had a tremendous impact on education as we know it today.

The ESD
Source

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Board Notes

The Southern Oregon ESD Board of Directors held a meeting on October 20, 2004. At the meeting the Board:

- Presented plaques to Nick Viani, technology/staff development specialist, in recognition of his innovative practices, and to Janell Walton, school psychologist, for her community outreach activities. Announced that the recipient of the performance award, Mark Tapley, school psychologist, was unable to attend the meeting.
- Offered contracts to Virginia Pettitt, online school specialist, and Jay Matheson, supervisor in Technology and Media Services.
- Received information about the resignation of Richard Fulton, teacher in the Program for Severely Handicapped.
- Learned about the retirement of Paul Rickerson, director of Special Education Services, and of Nick Viani, technology/staff development specialist.
- Received the financial report for the period ending September 30, 2004.
- Reviewed the superintendent's schedule for October, November, and December.
- Heard a presentation by Ron Enger, director of Technology and Media Services.
- Studied student enrollment data for the public schools in Jackson, Josephine, and Klamath counties.

New Help Desk toll-free number and procedures benefit customers

Southern Oregon ESD's network and computer support Help Desk has a new toll free number: 866-858-6730. The Help Desk has also implemented new procedures that are proving to be very beneficial for their clients. During business hours, calls by SOESD employees and district support staff are routed immediately to a support technician. If the Help Desk is unable to resolve the issue during the call, an appointment is immediately scheduled with the caller to resolve the issue at a time that fits the caller's schedule. The caller will know exactly who will be coming and when. We hope these changes result in a higher and faster rate of resolved issues and greater customer satisfaction. We encourage your feedback regarding your experience with the Help Desk.



Southern Oregon ESD
Network and Computer Support Help Desk
Phone: 541-858-6730
Toll Free: 866-858-6730
Email: support@soesd.k12.or.us

Regional Autism Services

By Blanche McKenna

The good news about the Regional Autism Program is that we exist again this year, complete with some new staff with great skills and lots of enthusiasm!

Blanche McKenna is the Program Leader for the Regional Autism Program and serves in Eagle Point SD, Grants Pass SD, Central Point SD, Phoenix-Talent SD, and Jackson County STEP's classrooms. She has worked as a SOESD Autism Consultant for the past 10 years. Prior to that she was a case manager for Jackson County Developmental Disability Services. She has worked in the field of Developmental Disabilities for over 30 years including work as a Recreational Therapist and Vocational Evaluator.

While Blanche holds an M.S. degree, she believes that her most intensive "degree" is being a 'Mama' to two young adults with special needs including one with autism. She likes working in the field of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) because it is so dynamic. There is something new everyday whether it is a book, a curriculum, a methodology, a medication, a paper, or a speaker. You never arrive at expertise in this field, just new knowledge and experience that constantly needs to be weeded.

Susan McNamara has worked with the SOESD for over 20 years and currently serves autistic students in Jackson County STEP's and Ashland SD. Although recently retired, she wanted to return to work part time as an Autism Consultant this year.

After years of being in classrooms, Susan is enjoying bringing some of those experiences to consulting with an awareness of what teachers can and are willing to do, as well as new ideas for folks to try. Susan is enjoying the uniqueness of each student's individual needs and personalities. Although ASD students share some qualities, learning styles and areas of difficulty, each student brings to school his/her own needs, desires, and motivations - trying to identify and assist with this is what rocks!

Kirby Erickson has worked for Josephine County Early Intervention Services for the past 13 years and serves in Medford SD, Three Rivers SD, and Josephine County Early Intervention. For the first 5 years she was an Early Intervention Specialist working with infants and toddlers, and the last 8 years as Autism Specialist for EI and ECSE eligible children. Kirby is a Registered Nurse, Certified in Developmental Disabilities Nurse (CDDN). She has a Bachelor's degree in Physiology from UC Berkeley and an MS from University of Oregon in ECSE. In addition to two sons, Kirby has a daughter 19, who experiences autism and Down syndrome.

Ever since Kirby attended an EI conference about autism taught by Gary Mezibov many years ago, she has been intrigued with learning more and more about autism. She remembers asking Gary if one could have both Down syn-

See Autism (continued on the next page)

Autism (continued from previous page)

drome and Autism and he said YES. That changed her world. There are specific teaching strategies that students with ASD learn best. Her goal has been to learn all possible strategies, keep abreast of new learning and teaching for these students, and share that information with teachers and parents. These students are so individually unique yet have similar underlying characteristics.

Kirby is excited to learn about older children with higher functioning skills and help create ways that they can participate in life more socially. She is concerned about how these children will function in the adult world, as they are so socially isolated and given that than 80 % of persons with developmental disabilities have no employment after special education. Kirby will be supporting teachers, families, and schools in providing more appropriate social skills learning during their school years to prepare them for adult life.

Geni Moots-Plotnick is a familiar person at SOESD where she has been a Speech Therapist for many years. Geni currently serves as an ASD specialist in Ashland SD, Grants Pass SD, and Rogue River SD. She began her professional life teaching a self-contained communicatively handicapped classroom in the early 1970's. Since then she has performed many roles including speech/language pathologist, elementary teacher, early childhood specialist, grant writer, SOU adjunct instructor, workshop presenter, and parent and paraprofessional trainer. She has worked closely with dozens of ASD families through the schools, as well as in private practice.

Geni considers herself a life-long learner and continually builds her professional library. She has focused on championing development of social communication in fragile children for the past 17 years. She is among a small group of professionals who are certified in Relationship Development Intervention. Geni is realistic about the mushrooming growth of ASD but remains optimistic that powerful strategies are available and continually being developed for promoting greater happiness, motivation, success and cross-domain development. She looks forward to developing supports for ASD children, their staffs and families and working with a diversified team of colleagues.

In addition to the ASD Consultants that serve school age children in Jackson and Josephine counties, a number of Regionally funded consultants serve ASD students in other areas. In Jackson county, Misten Daniels serves ASD students at Jackson County Early Childhood Education Services. April Depuy and Ellen Argall serve students in Klamath County SD while Sharon Crabbe serves ASD students in the Klamath County Early Intervention Program and Klamath City SD. In Douglas county, four ASD Consultants are deployed to serve the local school districts and Early Childhood Education Services: Patricia Work, Sonja Freitas, Sheri Mican, and Diana Pierce. Finally, Robert Key provides ASD consultation in Lake County.



SOESD Electronic Services: economical repairs, maintenance, and design

SOESD Electronic Services is responsible for the annual repair and maintenance of approximately 80,000 pieces of electronic equipment in the schools. This includes computers, videocassette recorders, scoreboards, TV monitors, public address systems, and just about every other type of electronic equipment with the exception of fire alarms, typewriters, and photocopier machines. Repairs are occasionally performed on-site but more often at the Electronic shops in SOESD's Medford and Klamath Falls offices. Districts are not charged for labor costs or parts costing less than \$15.00

When districts consider new building construction or remodeling projects, Electronic Services staff members consult, design, and participate in the construction of cable television signal distributions, closed circuit television, intercom, local area networks (LAN), public address, and videoconferencing systems. Detailed estimates, product information, system recommendations and material purchasing services are provided. As with repairs, labor costs are seldom levied, and equipment is sold at cost. After installation, the department provides continuing repair and maintenance. Recently, the department has been installing video surveillance systems in several schools in our service area.