OME-RESA INSIGHT

Issue 7

Fall 2010

Ohio Mid-Eastern Regional Education Service Agency

An Information Technology Center (ITC) of the Ohio Education Computer Network (OECN)

Serving an 11 county area and 45 school districts in Mid-Eastern Ohio

Connecting Appalachia Funded!

By Angela Underwood, Executive Director

Exciting news for our region was delivered in mid-August. The Connecting Appalachia project was funded in the second round of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)!

Bouyed by the benefit of strong public-private partnerships, the project looks to provide metropolitan-class broadband coverage to all of Appalachian Ohio, encompassing a 34-county area centered in Southeast Ohio. The proposal focuses on a 15,610 square mile region in which an astounding 46% of the area remains unserved and 100% is underserved.

The $220 million project seeks to improve critical community areas such as health care, education, public safety and small business development.

The holistic plan addresses availability, affordability and adoption, demonstrates a clear path to sustainability and brings strong and experienced project leadership from within the service region, building upon a high level of trust, an essential dimension in achieving success in these communities.

Since the project was funded, the roll-out of the project is being developed. Superintendents will hear updates concerning the project from Project Manager Tom Reid at the October 13th Superintendent Inservice meeting. OME-RESA staff will continue to work with Mr. Reid's office to bring enhanced broadband services to the K-12 community in our region.

Questions concerning the Connecting Appalachia project should be directed to Angie Underwood (angie.underwood@omeresa.net) or Sandy Petrozzi (sandy.petrozzi@omeresa.net).

OME-RESA PHONE EXTENSIONS

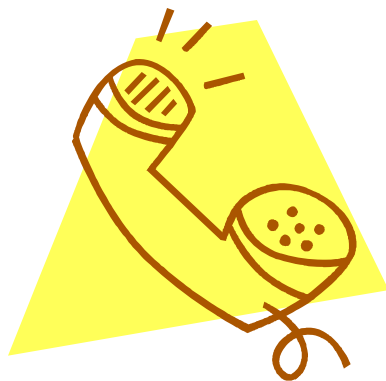|	
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ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE

PreK-12 Notification System

Did you know that OME-RESA supports a parent/staff notification system? The PreK-12 notification system is updated from the DASL database. This makes keeping staff and student contact records up-to-date much easier.

OME-RESA will be offering training on the PreK-12 notification system this October. At the training sessions, the notification system will be reviewed including how data is imported from DASL, how to import non-DASL data, how to manage accounts, how to manage call lists, how to make calls, and how to ask for support. We will also have a segment on "Tips and Tricks" that we have learned over the past two years.

OME-RESA encourages all districts that use the call system – or those that are interested in using the call system – to attend. You may register using the Event Scheduler on the OME-RESA website. Each session will run from 9:30 AM until Noon. Training dates and locations include:

- Thursday, October 21st at Ohio Valley ESC in Cambridge
- Tuesday, October 26th at East Central Ohio ESC in New Philadelphia
- Friday, October 29th at OME-RESA Offices in Steubenville

Disaster Recovery

Disasters can happen at any time, often without notice. School districts need to be prepared to recover applications that exist at the school district level. Does your school district have a disaster recovery plan? If you do, have you tested the plan or updated the plan? If you do not have a plan, do you know how to develop one?

OME-RESA will be conducting Disaster Recovery workshops later this Fall to assist school districts in developing or enhancing their DR plans. The workshop will include information on what should be in the plan, how to update the plan, how to test the plan and resources you can use to support your plan.

School districts are encouraged to send a "team" of both technical and administrative personnel to the training since both groups will need to have input into a successful plan. You may register using the Event Scheduler on the OME-RESA website. Each session will run from 9:30 until Noon. Training dates and locations include:

- Tuesday, November 30th at Steubenville High School in Steubenville
- Wednesday, December 1st at East Central Ohio ESC in New Philadelphia
- Thursday, December 2nd at Ohio Valley ESC in Cambridge

STUDENT SERVICES UPDATE

F.Y.I.

Data Integration will now run nightly, 7 days a week at OME-RESA.

Reminder: The DASL FEEDBACK and the PROGRESS BOOK FEEDBACK links are not to be used to submit issues to OME-RESA. Those links go directly to the developers and are for archival purposes only. You will not receive support by submitting issues through these links. To submit issues needing assistance, please go through your District Point of Contact. OME-RESA will then work with them to resolve the issue.

Progress Book

Academic Standards Update – The new Academic Standards have been added to the software and also included are the Common Core Standards. As ODE makes changes these will automatically be updated in the software.

Special Services

Sps to EMIS – if anyone is interested in utilizing the SpS to EMIS functionality please contact Cindy Alban at spstaff@omeresa.net to start this process.

Documentation – The latest SpS documentation is available in the Knowledge Books section of the OME-RESA Helpdesk. The 9.6 SpS User Guide has been posted as a full manual and also by individual chapters if you would like to create your own unique manuals.

Upcoming Trainings

- DASL Marks and Report Card Training
- DASL Security – DASL ACCOUNT ADMINISTRATORS ONLY
- DASL/EMIS October Reporting
- PROGRESS BOOK POC Admin Training – DISTRICT POINTS OF CONTACT ONLY
- PROGRESS BOOK POC Train-the-Trainer - DISTRICT POINTS OF CONTACT ONLY
- SpS and SpS Admin Training - DISTRICT SpS/PB POINTS OF CONTACT ONLY

You may register for the trainings through the Event Scheduler.

EMIS UPDATE

G Reporting Period

Be sure to review your Grad Info report each week to verify your number of graduating students for school year 2010 is correct. Once districts begin reporting for 11K, any student you reported as a graduate that is reported as enrolled in Oct. will no longer count as a graduate for your district. Please continue to monitor the FY10G data until the close of the reporting period November 19th, 2010.

EMIS-R

Based on the information gathered during this performance period phase, the decision was made by ODE to utilize the existing EMIS system for the FY11 October and the Five-Year Forecast EMIS reporting periods rather than migrate to EMIS-R at this time. ODE continues to work with Edustructures in hopes of bringing the new system on line for the Yearend reporting period. More information will be provided in the spring.

October Reporting

The FY11 October reporting checklist has been posted to DASL Help and should be followed for the reporting of your October data. This checklist, used along with the FY11 EMIS manual, will provide you with valuable information to aid in an accurate reporting of your data.

The December reporting period will be combined within your October reporting this year providing feedback for the December Child Count earlier in the reporting cycle. October (and therefore December) reporting end on January 21st, 2011.

Data Submission Requirements

Please check the Data submission requirements for FY11 to make sure you meet all of the required timelines for submitting your data to ODE throughout the reporting cycle. Missing two submission goals in a row could result in a withholding of funds for your district.

Reporting Students with Disabilities

Special Education Coordinators should work closely with their EMIS Coordinators to make sure all students with disabilities are reported correctly for FY11K and the December Child Count.

FISCAL SERVICES UPDATE

Affordable Health Care Act Impacting 2011 W2 Reporting

Over the past month and a half I have been working on gathering information pertaining to the new reporting requirement for the 2011 W2 forms. Initially, the State Software Development Team was requesting information from ITCs to see how many districts may already have deduction records (DEDSCN) set up for employees to include the board share and who did not. I polled the eleven fiscal advisory committee members and the majority responded that either they did have a deduction record set up with, at minimum, the employee share only, the board share only, or both. There are surely a few districts that don't withhold any employee share of health care, thus may not have any records in place, and we will work with each district individually based on email requests sent to FSTAFF for assistance on this topic.

The IRS has a section on their webpage for the Affordable Health Care Act that is provided below. Please read the information on this page as it applies to employer health care and the 2011 W2. You should go to this site and watch for updates as they state that they will update the page as more information becomes available.

http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=220809,00.html

The following is additional information regarding this reporting. Each district is responsible for contacting their health care provider to see if their dental and/or vision is considered a stand-alone plan.

Health care reform requires employers to calculate and report the aggregate cost of applicable employer-sponsored health insurance coverage on employees' Form W-2s. The new rule applies for employees' tax years *beginning after December 31, 2010*.
Plans for which coverage costs must be reported under the new requirement include:

- Medical coverage (including health reimbursement arrangements)
- Executive physical benefits
- Prescription drug coverage
- On-site clinics
- Medicare supplemental policies
- EAPs (except for referral only programs)
- Health Care FSA – employer contributions only (e.g., "seed" or match)
- Dental and vision, unless stand-alone plans (i.e., employee may elect only dental or only vision and is not required to also enroll in medical coverage)

The cost of coverage under health flexible spending accounts, health savings accounts, and specific disease or hospital/fixed indemnity plans is excluded from the reporting requirement.

I will be sending out an email in October with instructions to help districts get deduction records set up, updated or whatever it takes to make sure you are ready for this reporting requirement PRIOR to starting your first payroll in 2011.

Since I started this research, there has been one area of the wording of the bill that has caused the SSDT to stop and get a legal opinion on the actual dollar amounts you are to report. Previously, it was thought that the premium the board pays on the employee's behalf for the calendar year is what was to be reported on the W2. But as you can see from the above information, the words 'aggregate cost' are used instead of 'premiums paid'. The SSDT wants something in writing from their tax attorney that clearly spells out what figure you are to report before they send anything further out to ITCs to pass along to their districts. Watch your email and READ completely any information provided to you.

FISCAL SERVICES UPDATE - CONTINUED

Calendar Year End Meetings

The calendar year end fiscal inservice meetings are tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, December 8th at the Eastern Gateway Community College and Thursday, December 9th at the Buckeye JVS. All normal year end topics will be reviewed as well as any new topics, such as the health care reporting for 2011 W2 forms. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend this important meeting. An email will be sent out when you will be able to register via the Event Scheduler on our home page.

New Payroll, Budgetary, and Equipment Inventory Trainings Scheduled

Trainings for new payroll users, new budgetary users and new inventory users have been scheduled for the October and November timeframe. The trainings will all be held at the Steubenville training facility, where new fiscal staff member, Dave Roe, will be performing the training. Users many register for the training by going to the OME-RESA home page and clicking on the Event Scheduler. Simply click on the Fiscal department from the first drop down box to appear and any/all trainings available will be displayed. Please use the PUBLIC registration option to register for the event(s) you wish to attend.

- The new payroll training date is Friday, October 15th at 9:00 a.m.
- The new budgetary training date is Friday, October 22nd at 9:00 a.m.
- The new equipment inventory training date is Friday, November 12th at 9:00 a.m.

FY11 Five Year Forecast and Assumptions

Due to issues with the EMIS data collector, the five year forecast will once again be handled through uploads and verifications on the Alpha system. This will be the same exact process as last fiscal year. Users should run the USASFF program from the Alpha menu system to extract the three previous years of expenditure and revenue history, transfer the CSV file that it creates to your desktop, then load it into your spreadsheet and begin your forecasting.

Once the forecast spreadsheet is complete, the forecast should be saved as a CSV file and uploaded to the Alpha. The forecast notes can either be processed in Word, making certain that no line is greater than 80 characters and spaces combined, then saved as a plain text format and uploaded to the Alpha OR you can convert the notes to a PDF file. If you choose the latter, ODE has a set of instructions you must follow to submit that file to them. This does NOT eliminate your need to provide OME-RESA with a file for your notes. However, the file you provide us only needs to contain the generic text provided by ODE staff. This generic text can be found as a topic in the Helpdesk and Knowledge book area of the OME-RESA webpage. Specifically, it can be found under Fiscal, then USAS – EMIS chapter, topic 5.2.

INFOHIO UPDATE

Switzerland of Ohio Receives LSTA Grant

The "Strengthening 21st Century Skills" LSTA Grant Proposal was submitted by the Switzerland of Ohio Local School District in Monroe County and was awarded at the State Library Board meeting on September 30th, 2010.
The project proposes to fund technology hardware to facilitate automating eight libraries that collectively house 30,767 titles. The project will furnish access and provide library and information services to 2,583 students and their families, 350 faculty members, and to community members at-large. The project will link the district libraries to other libraries through the INFOhio network.

Completion of this first step will allow the Switzerland School District to go forward with plans to implement the District Technology Plan. The Plan calls for students and staff to "acquire and utilize 21st Century skills," "to access appropriate technology," and for teachers to "integrate technology-based [information and media] to enhance the curriculum." At the present time, students and teachers are not on track to meet these goals. The high school libraries are open and staffed by a licensed librarian only one day per week. During the 2008-09 school year, the library budgets averaged $643.
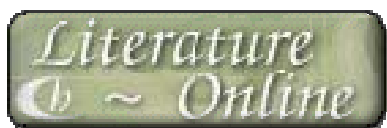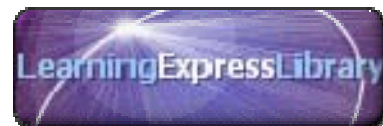
Although Ohio districts are facing fiscal belt-tightening measures, this is the perfect time for Switzerland Schools to embark on an expansive library education initiative. A partnership with the Ohio Facilities Commission will bring eight new library facilities to the district. The district has a one-time opportunity to bring new infrastructure and new technology access to library programs, services, and global information. Project goals align well with LSTA five-year goals and purposes.

INFOHIO UPDATE - CONTINUED

Core Collection for 2010/2011

INFOhio's Core Collection provides resources free to all Ohio K-12 students and educators for the 2010-2011 school year. A username and password are required for home access; see your school library media specialist.

The ART Collection

Biography Reference Bank

EBSCO HOST

LearningExpressLibrary

Literature Online

OXFORD ONLINE Reference

SCIENCE ONLINE

WORLD BOOK WEB

Enciclopedia Estudiantil Hallazgos

L'Encyclopédie Découverte

NewsBank inc. A world of information

WORLD BOOK Hispánica Saber GRAN ENCICLOPEDIA HISPÁNICA

INFOHIO UPDATE - CONTINUED

Core Collection for 2010/2011

The Art Collection
- Online image collection of paintings, sculptures, drawings, photographs, textiles, costume jewelry and more, from earliest times to the present.

Biography Reference Bank
-Articles about more than a half-million people, most in full text, from around the world, both living and dead.

EBSCO Host
-Articles from more than 6,000 magazines and newspapers are indexed, most in full text, from children's magazines to professional research.

Learning Express Library
-More than 100 programs to learn, practice and prepare for tests on a variety of subjects in elementary, middle and high school.

Literature Online
-Full-text, searchable works available online to supplement your library's print collections. Poetry, drama and fiction are included.

Oxford Reference
-More than 175 complete reference titles, fully indexed and cross-searchable, from a wide range of disciplines.

Science Online
-Thousands of essays on major topics and issues in science, math and technology, along with illustrations, experiments, activities and biographies.

World Book Web
-Encyclopedias with three interfaces: World Book Kids (K-5), World Book Student (6-8) and World Book Advanced (HS and college).

Enciclopedia Estudiantil Hallazgos
-Online Spanish language encyclopedia that is appropriate for younger Spanish-speaking students and students just learning the Spanish language.

L'Encyclopedie Decouverte
-Online French language encyclopedia that is appropriate for younger French-speaking students and students just learning the French language.

NewsBank
-A collection of five full-text Ohio daily newspapers available online.

Gran Enciclopedia Hispanica
-Comprehensive Spanish-language encyclopedia from World Book Inc. and Hispanica Saber. It is written from a Latin American perspective and content updated monthly.

INFOHIO UPDATE - CONTINUED

BookMyne - SirsiDynix Mobile OPAC app

Now only available for iPhone, iTouch, iPad

Allows patrons to locate libraries worldwide and:
Search the library catalog.
Renew checked out items.
Place and cancel hold requests.
Check their account details.
Navigate to the library's home page.

Additional Information is located at:

http://www.infohio.org/ER/TechSupport.html

1. Scroll down to the BookMyne icon and click which will redirect you
to the SirsiDynix page for more information.

If interested in utilizing this application, please contact me at the office.

INFOHIO UPDATE - CONTINUED

Introducing CAT Jr. 2.0!

INFOhio would like to invite you to review our newest addition to the OPAC family - CAT Jr. 2.0.

This is a completely revised interface that has replaced the current CAT Jr. It still spotlights the familiar CAT Jr. character that we hope will help young learners more easily transition to the new interface upon their return from summer break.

The features are purposely intended to be much the same but with many improvements:

More graphics and colors used throughout

Larger non-serif type and text colors

Easy search screen that automatically filters to YOUR library

Added Sort and Item Group filter that can be used (or ignored)

New material type images on the results list

Range search in Reading Program Search

Check for Reading Program tests in YOUR library if currently set that way in CAT

New lexile range search

Visual search remains for topical searching

Ability to add Chilifresh Review Engine (3rd party vendor)

*

We hope you like the new interface and we look forward to hearing from you!

INFOHIO UPDATE - CONTINUED

*How do I connect?**

There are two ways to connect to CAT Jr.

The preferred method for first time connection:

Go to URL: http://unicorn.omeresa.net/opac/

Then select your district and building.
The familiar welcome page now has a working CAT and CAT Jr. button.

Bookmark this welcome page or make it your browser's home page.

Alternatively, you can also visit CAT and see it has a "Go To CAT Jr" button
at the right end of the navigational bar.

For your webmaster, if you want the URL located on your library pages, the URL will be:
http://unicorn.omeresa.net/opac/districtcode/buildingcode/

where district code is the code for your district e.g. EL for Edison Local
where building code is the code for your building e.g. EDHS for Edison High School

Example: http://unicorn.omeresa.net/opac/EL/EDHS/

Comments and Suggestions Welcome

Please share your comments and suggestions for improvements using the feedback link located at the bottom left of all
CAT Jr. web pages.

INFOHIO UPDATE - CONTINUED

INFOhio's 21st Century Learning Commons

INFOhio's 21st Century Learning Commons is a dynamic, content-driven and collaborative site where classroom teachers, administrators and librarians can learn more about 21st century learning skills, Web 2.0 tools, and how to prepare learners for 21st century success. All while having the opportunity to collaborate with other professionals about their study of 21st century skills and learning!

Professional development opportunities

By participating in the self-paced online course entitled 21 Essential Things for 21st Century Success, you will learn how to integrate 21st century skills into your classroom instruction. You may use these modules without cost for your own learning. If you are interested in credit, there are several options including individual module CEUs, graduate college credit or a 21st Century Skills Certificate with specialization in Media and Information Research. The course is made up of 21 separate modules. Each module includes a learning path document detailing the purpose, scope, skills and tools covered in the module.

Information on 21st Century learning skills

Focus on 21st century student outcomes with new technologies to help students master the skills they will need to be successful in the 21st century.

INFOhio Videos

These will help you learn more about some of INFOhio's most popular online resources.

Glossary

This continues to grow and expand. There are three separate glossaries of terms relevant to Web 2.0 technologies, 21st century skills, and Information Literacy and Research. Each glossary is searchable independently or as a single collection of terms.

Discussion Forums

Using INFOhio's discussion forums, you can collaborate with your peers while you complete your coursework. Additionally, you may use the FAQ and Support forums.

INFOHIO UPDATE - CONTINUED

Announcements and Updates

September 23, 2010 – Columbus, Ohio – INFOhio's Certified Coach Program has trained the first cadre of 16 **ICoaches**, Ohio educators who can train classroom teachers and other educators to use INFOhio resources effectively while helping them to integrate INFOhio into their classrooms using 21st century instructional strategies. Each of Ohio's 16 professional development regions has at least one ICoach.

Each ICoach has been selected for his/her:

- Experience with effective technology teaching strategies

- Understanding of key learning theories and methods of instruction and their relation to technology integration

- Strong oral and written communication skills

- Knowledge of a 21st century skills environment that encourages creative and independent use of instructional technology

- Ability to encourage the use of INFOhio resources by staff and students through student-centered, constructivist ways

- Ability to assist teachers in knowing which INFOhio electronic resource or interactive tool supports specific educational goals, as well as which provide support in using technology effectively on a daily basis

Each ICoach will conduct training sessions for educators that deepen understanding of *INFOhio's Core Collection of Electronic Resources* and *INFOhio's 21st Century Learning Commons*, as well as other Web 2.0 tools and procedures. Hands-on experiences will be encouraged. The ICoach will endeavor to work with building/district professional development committees to tailor training sessions to meet the needs of those being trained.

The ICoach for this region is:

Dave Savastone, INFOhio Manager
dave@omeresa.net
OME-RESA
2023 Sunset Blvd. Steubenville, OH 43952
Phone: 740.283.2050 ext. 102
Cell: 740.381.2543
Fax: 740.283.1500

David has undergone a two-day training session conducted by INFOhio staff to earn the status of INFOhio Certified Coach.   ICoaches maintain their knowledge of INFOhio resources and 21st century skills by participating in regular in-service programs and peer support activities.

INFOhio, a statewide cooperative school library and information network, supports and enriches teaching and learning by providing equitable access to quality resources for Ohio's PreK-12 community of students, educators and parents.

NETWORK/SYSTEM UPDATE

Internet Access Speed

OME-RESA increased the speed of the main Internet connection effective Sunday, August 1st, 2010 by 30Mbit; from 230Mbit to 260Mbit to insure proper Internet speed and response. OME-RESA continues to maintain the 20Mbit Comcast Internet connection.

PacketShaper

OME-RESA utilizes a Blue Coat PacketShaper ISP class device to identify applications on the network and monitor response times and utilization at the application level. Network staff optimize application performance by controls to regulate traffic and increase WAN capacity through application-specific classifications. The PacketShaper is a scalable, flexible platform providing control and compression capabilities in a single appliance. Traffic shaping policies are reviewed by the OME-RESA Technology Advisory Committee.

Generator:

OME-RESA purchased a new 150kW Natural Gas Generator and 400AMP Automatic Transfer Switch to provide backup power to servers, network equipment, air conditioning units, lighting, staff computers, etc. in the event of a prolonged power outage. The new generator will help OME-RESA ensure continuous service to our schools and administration offices during times of extended power loss at the OME-RESA facility. The generator is on-site at OME-RESA and is expected to be fully functional later this fall.

Virus Activity:

Please ensure that your district's clients and/or servers are updated daily with the latest operating system and virus/malware software updates.

E-Mail Migration to Exchange 2010

- Migrations will begin this month and will continue throughout the year.

- Initially we will move one district at a time. These moves will be completed over the weekend to help minimize the impact on district personnel and allow our staff to better assist you in any issues that may arise.

- OME-RESA staff will contact you well in advance to schedule your move and discuss the specifics of the migration.

Expansion of Broadband Network Capabilities for Member Schools

- A total of 43 schools are connected directly to OME-RESA using Fiber Optic Circuits. Six of these forty-three sites are utilizing 100Mbit connections. The remaining thirty-seven sites are each at a 10Mbit rate. Thirteen 10Mbit Fiber tail circuits connect local school buildings to district network hub sites.

- OME-RESA is working with vendors as well as federal and state governmental agencies to secure broadband connections for schools outside the territory covered by AT&T and Time Warner.

NETWORK/SYSTEM UPDATE - CONTINUED

- The Fiber connections offer cost-efficient, locally managed, fiber-based broadband Ethernet services and continue to support the high volume of voice, video, data and Internet services.

- The converged network enables application consolidation, allowing for quick and reliable voice, video and data transfer as well as improving capabilities for disaster-recovery services, security and redundancy.

- Additionally, Connecting Appalachia has been fully funded in round 2, which will result in expanded fiber network availability and more competitive broadband pricing.

Virtual Desktop and Applications Project

- OME-RESA is working with MCPc on a proof of concept project to explore the feasibility of OME-RESA being able to provide virtual desktops and applications to its districts.

- OME-RESA has identified "2" pilot districts for this project.

- We will provide the results of this project to the Board of Directors for their review.

IT Academy E Learning

- The Microsoft IT academy site for OME-RESA has been configured and is ready for access.

- For more information on how to access the courseware please visit:

 https://helpdesk.omeresa.net/index.php?pg=kb.page &id=438

Local Technology Meetings Dates and Agenda

- Sept. 13th - First Meeting of the Year

    October 11th

    December 13th

    January 10th

    March 14 (Tentative)

    April 11

- 9:00AM - Local Discussion on Various Topics

    10:00AM - Regional Discussion on E-Rate & eTech
              Items

    10:20AM - Technology Related Presentation
              (Technical topics will include Live@EDU,
              Gmail, Windows Servers, Imaging, Etc.
              with a different presentation each
              meeting)

    11:00AM - OME-RESA Portion

    11:30AM - Meeting Adjourn

Local Technology Meeting Locations

- All local meetings will be held on these days at these locations:

- Belmont Group - ECOESC (St. C)

- Musky Group - MVESC

- Jefferson Group - OME-RESA

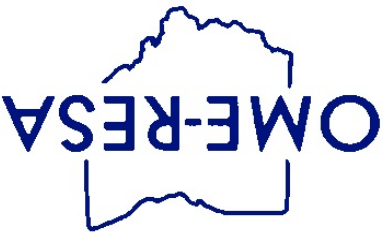- Tusky Group - ECOESC (New Philly)

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