OME-RESA INSIGHT

Issue 9

Fall 2011

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

BYOT - BRING YOUR OWN TECHNOLOGY

By Angela Underwood, Executive Director

Winter is fast approaching and many are preparing for the holiday seasons and the inevitable winter storms that will come. There is one storm that we are currently fighting, and that is the demand for mobile technology. In many districts it is still the belief that student-owned technology should be left at home. In today's economy where resources are scarce, we need to embrace innovation! There are now technologies in place that will allow districts to safely and securely allow **BYOT** "Bring Your Own Technology" into their buildings, no matter what they are using. OME-RESA has assisted districts in the past to meet their goals - let us assist you now in the present and help move your district to a cutting-edge future in technology!

During the month of November we will be sending an email to our contact lists asking them to complete our customer satisfaction survey. Please make sure you complete this survey and provide as much information as you can. The opinions that you give provide OME-RESA with invaluable feedback on how our services are delivered, if there are things that need changed, and what things that cannot change. It also helps us determine if there are needs that have not yet been met.

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STUDENT SERVICES UPDATE

Just a reminder that the SSAC (Student Services Advisory Committee) meets again on November 17th. You should be hearing from your region's representative soon requesting any topics that you may want to submit for discussion.

ADOBE WEBINARS

We now offer all trainings on-site and also via ADOBE CONNECT. We have had a great response to this new way of attending meetings. We thank all of you for your cooperation as we worked to make this available for you. If you were to need any additional help with issues on your end please contact Student Services.

DASL

DASL 12.0 Release

The DASL 12.0 software release was the first DASL Suite-wide release (DASL, PB, SpS, VendorLink (formerly Cornucopia).

This release was installed during the second week in October.

Highlights of the 12.0 release include:

Student Import - Import students from other DASL ITC's or non DASL districts

Import of Marks - Quarter marks can now be imported from a JVS to a home school at anytime

Defect Corrections

FY12 EMIS Changes

The 12.0 Release notes can be found in the DASL Help option under the Release Notes section.

STUDENT SERVICES UPDATE- CONTINUED

PROGRESS BOOK

Anyone running the Missing Assignment or Low Mark Alerts in Parent Access might want to consider staggering the time so both alerts are not processing at the same time. It is also advisable to run these after school has let out for the day. This will alleviate some intense processing while students and teachers are using the system, and also allow more system resources for the alerts to process. Staggering the alerts by one hour and starting them at 4 -5 PM could affect performance positively.

SpS Trainings

SpS training just took place. If anyone is interested in training for SpS to EMIS, please contact cindy.alban@omeresa.net.

EMIS UPDATE

This reporting period begins a new era in EMIS reporting methodology. For the first time EMIS reporting will be done through the Data Collector. This is a complete rewrite of the EMIS reporting system and something that has been in the works for quite a few years. One of the primary purposes for this rewrite is for ODE to be able to collect the data directly from the student software system, DASL. There is no longer a separate student database and EMIS database. The information that is entered into DASL is the information that will be reported to ODE. It is important that every user entering data into the student information system be aware of how the accuracy of their input could affect the overall finances of the district.

To get ready for the October reporting season, EMIS Coordinators had been busy preparing data collection worksheets and verifying enrollment reports. They will continue the process of collecting the data, previewing the reports and error messages and overseeing the correction of errors so that by the end of the reporting period their district is submitting as clean and accurate data as possible to ODE.
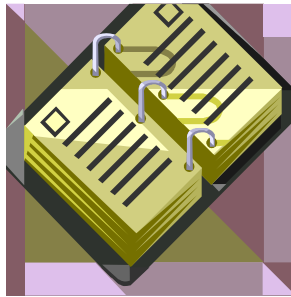
Some Future Key Dates for FY12K Reporting:

- Nov. 4th – Level II Validation reports will be sent back to districts through the Report Collector. These reports verify data that crosses different districts or different fiscal years.

- Nov. 21st – Warning Letters will be sent that week to districts that have not met the submission requirements based on data processed the weekend of Nov. 18th.

- Dec. 12th – First Out of Compliance Letters sent to districts, based on data submitted by Dec. 9th , that have missed a submission requirement two weeks in a row.

- Jan. 25th – FY12K reporting period closes

Assistance is only an email away and you can also find much useful information posted in the Knowledge Books located on the OME-RESA web site. Should you need special assistance with a problem or report you can always contact Student Services to request a one-on-one EMIS Lab.

FISCAL SERVICES UPDATE

Affordable Health Care Act Impacting 2012 W2 Reporting

Over the past month I have been working with districts who had not updated their health care records to include the mandatory board shares for 2012 payrolls. Almost half our districts had made no changes to their board share or hadn't begun the process to break out their deduction records to reflect board share to not include their stand alone plan costs. This, in part, was due to the fact that many treasurers didn't understand the information provided by the IRS as to what constitutes a stand-alone plan. This took quite some time for fiscal staff to assist in completing to ensure that we had done everything we could to assist districts in taking on this task. It is important to remember that this is an IRS regulation, not one imposed by a simple software change or an ODE or Ohio legislative act. Not having these records in place before the first pay of January was started would have put great hardship on the district to calculate and update all the board shares for their staff.

As of this newsletter, all districts have completed the spreadsheets sent to them for re-import into their USPS files. Hopefully, after all the work we have all put into this project, districts have checked their board shares as they appear on their payroll reports each pay to ensure that the totals are matching what they are paying for their district's health care each month. Any errors found at this point in time are to be corrected by the district payroll staff, either by means of a modification to the USPSCN – DEDSCN record for those who are incorrect, or by means of the CHGDED program if rates are wrong, or rates change, from this point forward.

Once again, and for the final time, I am providing the IRS link and text from the link that describes this portion of the IRS requirement due to the Health Care reform.

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

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*. ****Reprieve to begin with 2012 payrolls/W2's was granted to employers, but this was the original wording from the law****

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.

FISCAL SERVICES UPDATE - CONTINUED

Calendar Year End Meetings

The calendar year end fiscal inservice meetings are scheduled for Wednesday, December 7th at the Buckeye JVS in New Philadelphia and Thursday, December 15th at Eastern Gateway Community College in Steubenville. All normal year end topics will be reviewed as well as any new topics. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend this important meeting.   If you haven't done so already, please register via the Event Scheduler on our home page.

FY 12 Five Year Forecast and Assumptions

Beginning in FY12, treasurers began submitting their own five year forecast data and assumptions to ODE via the new Data Collector method. The process of creating the forecast was the same as in years past, and those files continued to be uploaded to the Alpha for validation and combination into a single file, but the treasurer was notified that the file was error free and that they now needed to download the file to the data collector and upload/prepare/certify and submit themselves. Instructions for the entire process, including the data collector submission, were placed in the Knowledge Book area of our Helpdesk. I was very pleased to see that the submissions in the data collector went so smoothly. There were still the problems with the notes file we encounter every year, but the data collector went off without a hitch. Good job everyone!

EMISr for Staff Reporting

While our EMIS staff held trainings for EMIS coordinators during late summer/early fall 2011 and explained how to collect the staff data from the Alpha files, there are some required record types that cannot be pulled from those files. The most current file type, for the October (12K) reporting period, is the CL Summer Employment Separation Record.

District staff must make a choice as to how to handle the reporting of such records. In several emails, I attempted to clearly explain how to handle the automatic creation of this new record type, in a manner that was somewhat familiar to staff who have worked with EMIS. That process was to go to the Alpha, run the USPEMS program, select the USPEMX option to extract and take the options for 2012 and K reporting periods. **If the program produced one file, the district needed to do nothing further**. If the extract created a **second file, called USPEMX_EMISR.SEQ, then the EMIS coordinator needed to be notified** that they had to download THAT file only and upload it to the data collector.   The second file created would be the summer separation record(s) for staff that were correctly coded as leaving the district AND had no attendance for any job in the current school year, even if as a substitute of any sort.

(continued)

FISCAL SERVICES UPDATE - CONTINUED

The instructions for these new changes were provided in fall 2010 when the record was first created by the UPSEMS program and they were provided again to treasurers during our June 2011 meeting, at which time they were told if they were not responsible for these types of changes to PLEASE pass the information on to those who were responsible. This did not happen in all districts, so I am providing them again for all to see.

When an employee leaves your employment on or after the last scheduled day of instruction, that is considered a summer employment separation. It doesn't matter if they are classified or certified. If they were reportable to EMIS, and their documented separation date was on or after the last scheduled day of instruction reported to ODE, the ODE classifies that as a summer employment separation.

If you choose to let the USPEMS program extract the summer separation records for you, all the following must be true:

1) Termination date must be present on all EMIS reportable jobs

2) Termination reason code must be present on all EMIS reportable jobs

3) Contract stop date must be present on all EMIS reportable jobs

4) Status of U must be present on all EMIS reportable jobs, on the POSSCN.

5) NO ATTENDANCE RECORDS tied to the staff member at all, no matter what the job, and no matter if it is EMIS reportable or not. EMIS software looks for attendance records, regardless of what job they are tied to, so as soon as an attendance record is detected, the automatic creation of a summer separation record cannot continue for that staff member.

If all of the above are true, the USPEMS program, USPEMX option, will automatically create the summer separation record for you and it will be called USPEMX_EMISR.SEQ. This is the ONLY file that needs transferred off of the Alpha to the desktop of the EMIS coordinator, then uploaded to the 12K manifest, data sources area, for inclusion during a data collection.

Any staff that left your district after June 30th must also have the above fields completed in order to get the automatic summer employment separation record created. However, in the event that anyone previously reported to EMIS in the June reporting period that has now left your district and needs to have the summer employment separation record reported for them and it isn't getting created, must have an alternative record created via the EMIS flat file editor option and MUST be set to NO to report to EMIS on all staff demographic and staff employment records.

More detailed explanations and instructions can be found in the Helpdesk and Knowledge Book, under the Fiscal area, specifically, USPS – EMIS chapter.

INFOHIO UPDATE

New Additions to the Core Collection of Electronic Resources for 2011/2012

INFOhio's Core Collection of Electronic Resources for 2011-2012 will be expanded by the addition of three new resources:

Mango Languages is an online foreign language learning system teaching practical conversation and cultural awareness for the world's most popular languages. The languages covered by the package are Arabic (Levantine), Chinese (Cantonese), Chinese (Mandarin), Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dari, Dutch, Farsi, Finish, French, German, Greek, Haitian Creole, Hebrew, Hindi, Indonesian, Irish, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Norwegian, Pashto, Portugese (Brazil), Russian, Slovak, Spanish (Latin America), Tagalog, Tami, Thai, Turkish, Ukranian, Urdu and Vietnamese. In addition, there are 15 English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) packages to help various foreign language speakers learn English. *Mango Languages has been funded as a one-year pilot project.*

ProQuest Ancestry Library Edition, also funded as a one-year pilot project, delivers billions of records in census data, vital records, directories, photos and more, contained in over 7,000 databases.

Unlike the other INFOhio Core Collection databases, *Ancestry Library Edition* will be restricted to in-school computers with IP addresses registered with INFOhio, home access is **NOT** available.

Features include:
*   U.S. collections - hundreds of millions of names from sources such as federal and U.S. censuses; birth, death and marriage records including the Social Security Death Index; and U.S. border crossing and trans-ocean ship records.
*   U.K. collections - Census data for England, Wales, Isle of Man, Channel Islands and Scotland, with nearly 200 million records; Births and Baptisms (1834-1906), Marriage Licenses (1521-1869), Deaths and Burials (1834-1934) and Poor Law Records (1840-1938) in London; and more.
*   Military collections - Over 150 million records containing information often not found elsewhere; includes records from the colonial to the Vietnam era.
*   Multimedia collections - millions of files ranging from family and gravestone photos to postcards and newsreels.

INFOHIO UPDATE - CONTINUED

New Additions to the Core Collection of Electronic Resources for 2011/2012

World Books' Early World of Learning offers a wealth of resources to help preschoolers and children in the early grades grasp critical early childhood themes while developing reading and oral language skills. ***The Early World of Learning*** uses narrated stories with word-by-word highlighting, interactive games, interactive reference material for beginners and more to help young learners build vocabulary, comprehension, phonics and reading fluency.

NOTE: All 3 new resources have HELP Resources located from the INFOhio webpage (www.infohio.org) located under the CORE Collection button. Just click on the blue button to access Getting Started guides, posters, multimedia tutorials, and other resources.

Discovery Portal Continues at NO CHARGE for 2011/2012

INFOhio has successfully negotiated with SirsiDynix Corporation to provide FREE access to all INFOhio automated libraries for the 2011/2012 school year.

The *Portal* provides one-stop resource shopping for your students, staff, administrators and parents. It contains curriculum relevant, age-appropriate websites, access to our statewide digital video collection, and select electronic resources. All resources are searchable with one button. Home use is allowed and encouraged; users will be prompted for the INFOhio username and password.

Features:

*   A search conducted within CAT or CAT Jr. will automatically be transferred to the *Discovery Portal*. When the visitor arrives at a *Portal* landing page, search results from all available resources will be waiting.

*   Within each *Discovery Portal* room, featured content such as *How Do I* questions, *Cool Links*, and *Fun & Games* engage visitors in the *Research Discover Learn* process.

*   In addition to the student-centered content, the *Discovery Portal* contains a *Children's & Young Adult Literature* room, as well as three guides for *Parents, Educators and Librarians*

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

INFOhio eBook Collection

Looking for e-books?

INFOhio's new *eBook Collection* is your source for many classic literature e-books available for download. That's in addition to all the e-books already available through **LearningExpress Library, Literature Online** and **World Book Advanced**.

600+ titles available by September 1

- Public domain e-books cataloged by INFOhio

- Works of high quality that meet the selection criteria of Ohio schools

- Works in print compatible formats ePUB (Nook)

- MOBI (Kindle)

Available Formats:

ePUB   VIEW | DOWNLOAD

MOBI   VIEW | DOWNLOAD

HTML   Click to view HTML version online

Zipped Archives:

ZIP ARCHIVE   HTML (zipped) - Click to download zip archive.

Fall

INFOHIO UPDATE - CONTINUED

Learn With INFOhio!
INFOhio webinars
2011-2012

INFOhio's 2011-2012 *Learn With INFOhio!* series of free one hour webinars was for classroom teachers, librarians, curriculum coordinators, guidance counselors and technology coordinators. No registration is required, but a computer with Internet access, working speakers or audio headphones is necessary for participation. Sessions are conducted by building/district practitioners, Core Collection publishers, and INFOhio and ITC staff.

- FREE webinars conducted twice a month (except December and May)
- Requires computer with Internet access, working speakers or audio headphones
- Learn and earn CEU credit
- Currently no pre-registration required
- For more information visit the INFOhio website: **http://www.infohio.org/Educator/Webinars2011-2012.html**

Nov. 17   Do You Know How to Prepare Students to Thrive in College?

- Presenters: Suzanne Johnson Varney and Ken Burhanna

Dec. 8   Incorporating Inquiry into Elementary Lessons

- Presenter: Liz Deskins

Jan. 12   Beyond Bird Reports

- Presenter: David Loertcher

Jan 26   Book Reports 2.0: Enhanced for Critical Thinking

- Presenters: Amy Gibson and Laura Smith

NETWORK/SYSTEM UPDATE

Citrix Services

- OME-RESA has rolled out its virtual application service utilizing the Citrix XenApp software.

- We currently host virtual application pools for Steubenville City Schools and the Ridgewood Local School District.

- This system allows for centralized application management, high availability and flexible deployment options to any client device including tablet technology.

- Please notify **lanstaff@omeresa.net** if you are interested in evaluating this cutting edge technology or have any questions concerning this service.

Internet Access Speed

- OME-RESA increased the capacity of the main Oarnet internet connection effective August 1st, 2011 from 280Mbit to 300Mbit.

- Additionally, a new 300Mbit Comcast internet connection was turned up September 30th, 2011. Both the Oarnet and Comcast connections are functioning together in a live redundant configuration.

- The addition of the Comcast circuit will not only provide increased capacity, but will provide a fully capable failover connection in the event we lose connectivity to our main Oarnet circuit.

Expansion of Broadband Network Capabilities for Member Schools.

- A total of 44 schools are connected directly to OME-RESA using Fiber Optic Circuits. Fifteen of these 44 sites are utilizing 100Mbit connections. The remaining 29 sites are each at a 10Mbit rate. Seventeen 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.

- 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.

NETWORK/SYSTEM UPDATE - CONTINUED

Group Policy Resources

- Group policies for Windows Servers is like the "force", very powerful as long as you use them for good.
- Most "day to day" user, client and printer administration can be centrally managed from your Windows 2003/2008 active directory server, saving your most precious resource time.
- Good reference sites:

    http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/windowsserver/bb310732

    http://www.petri.co.il/working_with_group_policy.htm

    http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/library/cc754699.aspx

    http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/library/cc753298.aspx

Exchange e-mail Configuration for Smart Phones

- The exchange system is compatible with most smart devices utilizing the Microsoft ActiveSync software.
- Most smart phones have Active sync installed on them - for phones that do not, you are still able to access your e-mail using the IMAP protocol.
- One caveat exists with IMAP connections (BlackBerry excluded) and that would be the outgoing SMTP server. Some wireless providers do not offer SMTP services while connected to their 3 or 4 G network, additionally OME-RESA only provides SMTP services within our network. This could limit your phone's ability to send "omeresa.net" e-mail while connected to wireless providers network.
- In many cases, 3rd party applications exist which would provide you access if your provider does not provide SMTP service.
- Please refer the link below to configure ActiveSync on the Droid or iPhone.
- **https://helpdesk.omeresa.net/helpspot/index.php?pg=kb.book&id=5**

M86 Update:

- There is progress with denying access to Facebook and YouTube. You should notice that they are mostly (if not completely) blocked now.   If an end user can get through, please notify **internet@omeresa.net** for assistance.
- About 6 districts are using the VuSafe successfully and it seems to be a big hit. If you have trouble configuring the program please notify **internet@omeresa.net** and we can assist you.
- As always, please remain vigilant in removing outdated and/or unwanted URL listings from your exclusion lists. Also, if you created a custom category and no longer use it, please remove it.
- You can find more filter information and "how to" files in the Networking-Internet area of the helpdesk knowledge base.

NETWORK/SYSTEM UPDATE - CONTINUED

Local Technology Meetings Dates and Agenda:

Nov. 14th	**Feb. 13th**
Dec. 12th	**March 12th**
Jan. 9th	**April 9th**
May 14th	

9:00AM – Local Discussion on Various Topics
10:00AM – Regional Discussion
10:20AM – Technology Related Presentation
11:00AM – OMERESA 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)	**Jefferson Group - OME-RESA**
Musky Group – MVESC	**Tusky Group - ECOESC (New Philly)**

Visit us at
www.omeresa.net

OHIO MID-EASTERN
REGIONAL EDUCATION SERVICE AGENCY

OME-RESA

2023 Sunset Blvd.
Steubenville, OH 43952

Phone: (740)-283-2050 x116
Fax: (740)-283-1500
E-mail: angie.underwood@omeresa.net