Connections

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A Newsletter for Technology Using Educators

NHSTE
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INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION
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A Newsletter for Technology Using Educators

IN THIS ISSUE

You are invited to attend

NHSTE's Annual Meeting

Wednesday, October 1st • 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

St. Paul's School, Concord, NH

The NHSTE Annual Meeting is an event to soak in some professional development, get a glimpse into "our" NHSTE as an organization, eat well, and engage in a thought-provoking discussion that will get us all to reflect on what we are doing. Bring a friend to introduce them to NHSTE, learn about Web2.0, and hear about technology rich resources from our invited guests.

The member's cost is $25 for the program and dinner, $35 for non-members. See nhste.org for more information and to register to attend.

Technology Integration Across the Curriculum Series

By Marquita Maciolek,
kitam@metrocast.net
NHSTE Tech Teachers SIG Chair

The NHSTE Tech Teacher Special Interest Group (SIG) workshops continue to receive positive reviews by our participants. During the 2007-2008 school year, educators from across New Hampshire participated in sessions focusing on Technology Integration Across the Curriculum, covering Secondary Math, Robotics, Engineering and Digital Storytelling. Participants provided NHSTE with a variety of great suggestions for future planning. As a result, the Tech Teachers SIG planning committee has scheduled an exciting series of new sessions for the 2008-2009 school year. Please mark your calendars for these engaging professional development opportunities.

ADAPTIVE AND ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGIES

Wednesday, October 29, 2008 from 8:30 – 3:30
At SERESC in Bedford, NH

K-5 LANGUAGE ARTS (READING AND WRITING)

Wednesday, January 14, 2009 from 8:30 – 3:30
At SERESC in Bedford, NH

ESSENTIAL TEACHING TOOLS ~ EQUIPMENT/PERIPHERALS SHOWCASE

Wednesday, March 25, 2009 from 8:30 – 3:30
At SERESC in Bedford, NH

Although each workshop event is unique, most feature a combination of exhibitors and teacher presenters, with a chance to win some exciting raffle prizes donated by our sponsors. All workshops include a continental breakfast and a delicious lunch provided by SERESC's chef.

We are currently scheduling both exhibitors and teacher presenters for these workshops. If you would like to suggest an exhibitor or share an exciting integration strategy that is successful in your classroom, please contact Cyndi Dunlap, the NHSTE PD Chair, at cdunlap55@comcast.net.

This year we are adding a new element to our October and January workshops, an Open Playground. Our participants will have the opportunity for hands-on time with a variety of products as well as time to speak directly with our vendors.

We look forward to seeing you at our sessions this year!

For more information and updates on our sessions, please visit the NHSTE website regularly at http://www.nhste.org

Get in touch with NHSTE via email:
office@nhste.org

Letter from the President

Dear Colleagues,

Seven of your NHSTE board members attended this year's National Educational Computing Conference (NECC) and what we and other New Hampshire educators brought back will help transform education to meet the needs of today's learners.

I have to say that this year's NECC was the first I have been to and I do not intend to miss another. There I met and worked with members of other ISTE affiliates around the world, learned how others address common issues, met many vendor representatives that I have bought from, saw lots of neat new products and programs and got a lot of free tee shirts. I even heard ISTE President, Trina Davis, single out New Hampshire's own national award winner (and NHSTE board member) Maria Knee for recognition during her keynote address. Next year's NECC will be in Washington DC and NHSTE and the other New England affiliates are already planning to run buses down and back. I encourage you to plan to attend, bring your colleagues and share a room to keep the costs down in these tight budgetary times.

Second Life and NING. These are the two things I came away embracing from this year's NECC. Second Life is the on line virtual community that is been embraced by the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) and others as a means of facilitating collaboration and professional development. NING is a program that allows anybody to create an online social network.

To show how ISTE is embracing Second Life, just let me say that the closing keynote address was presented in Second Life. While we in the audience did finally see the speaker in real life, her address was viewed in other locations in Second Life. It was a huge expression and example of ISTE's commitment to Second Life's educational potential. Earlier during the ISTE Affiliates meeting at NECC, where several of your NHSTE board members spent an entire day working with peers from other state affiliates, the Arizona affiliate showed us how they use Second Life and left us with this advice…if you are just starting out in Second Life, do not join at Second Life's website but at http://sl.nmc.org/join/ and you can get your feet wet at New Media Consortium's own Orientation Island before heading out into the wilds of Second Life. This is how I finally joined. And after several driver updates to my video card I was finally able to enter Second Life. So if you every run across an avatar called Kepeli Landar, stop and say hello.

To see the impact of NING on this past NECC just look at http://www.necc2008.org/. Over 2000 NECC attendees contributed and benefited from this NING. During the ISTE Affiliates meeting, the Michigan affiliate showed several of us their state affiliate NING site, http://maculspace.ning.com/. Thanks to Sonja Gonzalez, the NHSTE board has had a little NING site running for the last few months so we were familiar with NING. Seeing Michigan's site showed us the possibilities NING will provide our NHSTE communities.

So I come away from NECC excited by these tools and also proud that NHSTE is already in the running, working to bring these tools to our members. The introduction of an NHSTE NING is coming. It is tied in with changes on our website and changes with our online event reservation system that will also bind our educational community together. And transformation of education will work only when we work together. The NHSTE board needs to know what you need from NHSTE and what you can help us to achieve. We are a community and we will meet the needs of all learners when we do it together.

Jeffrey Kessler, NHSTE President

ISTE Webinar - September 17th, 4:00 PM EST

"Revolutionizing Instruction with Autistic Learners Using Interactive Whiteboards"

Presented by Kathleen McClaskey and Randy Welch

As the field of education experiences an exponential increase in students diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder, a new and effective model for instructing students is called for. Interactive whiteboards have revolutionized how teachers engage and teach autistic students in group instruction at a residential special education school in New Hampshire. This technology has offered new opportunities for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders and other neurological impairments to demonstrate spontaneous social learning and increased on-task classroom behaviors. Video vignettes will illustrate how instructional practices have changed the paradigm of a classroom for students with autism and the resulting student outcomes that occurred, both expected and unanticipated. Go to www.iste.org and click on ISTE Webinars for registration information

M.Ed in Technology in Education through Lesley U. Offered at Exeter High School

By Andy Littlefield
Technology Administrator
The Cooperative Middle School
Stratham, NH 03903

Lesley University will offer a M.Ed in Technology in Education this fall in Exeter, New Hampshire at Exeter High School. I graduated from Lesley University with my M.Ed in Computers and think it was an excellent career decision. Looking around New England today, many of our leaders in technology in education are Lesley University graduates.

Lesley University currently offers their graduate programs in 24 states. With Lesley, students meet face to face, one weekend a month, studying together throughout the life of their program. Research indicates that the cohort model has proven to be very effective for professional development since it is long-term, experiential and inquiry based. The Lesley cohort model provides teachers with a team of motivated teachers who are committed to making a difference in their classrooms. They belong to the school of change.

Lesley University professors are superintendents, principals, technology coordinators, media specialist and other highly qualified teachers who provide you with a roadmap to integrating technology into the curriculum at a sophisticated level. This program helps you to develop your ability to affect your technological community. To find out more about the current offering visit: http://www.lesley.edu/courses/

Please contact one of us if interested in the M.Ed. Technology in Education program.
Carol Kiely - Regional Director 617.349.8182, ckiely@lesley.edu
Tracy Davis - Assistant Director 617.349.8633, tdavis@lesley.edu
Andy Littlefield - Site Coordinator 603.531.3232, alittlef@lesley.edu

Monthly Tech Coordinator Meetings

by Pam McLeod and Sonja Gonzalez
pmcleod@alton.k12.nh.us / sonjag@comcast.net

Are you interested in getting together more often with others responsible for technology services and infrastructure in schools to talk about those issues? Then this is for you! The meetings will be scheduled monthly, and be hosted at various schools around the state. The emphasis will be on... well, whatever the group decides!

We're thinking of the 2nd Friday of each month, with the meeting beginning at 9am. We would start with the morning a structured discussion and/or, when possible, a speaker. Then have lunch and a tour of the facility by the local tech person. Then open discussion/ small group discussions in the afternoon.

Since we don't have consensus at this point, we've chosen the focus of the first meetings but are willing to change our minds if we get some other input. We're not getting a speaker for every meeting, so some of them will just be group discussions led by a member of the group who has some experience with the topic. No right or wrong answers, but lots of discussions and ideas.

September: no meeting... send everyone oxygen to help recovery from start of school

October 10
- Location: Newport including tour of renovations and new addition

Topic: Firewalls - hardware, software, online tools like OpenDNS, security, filtering

November 14
- Location: Alton Central School

Topic: Backup & Recovery - offsite, onsite, tools, software

We do need people who are willing to lead the discussions, give a synopsis of their experiences and ideas for speakers. Let us know if you are willing or you know of someone! This is a grassroots effort! Also, we haven't worked out cost, which is mainly dependent on whether we provide lunch. Send us any thoughts on that also!

Future dates... second Fridays... put them in your calendar and look for announcements: December 12, January 9, February 13, March 13, April 10, and May 8.

Give us your thoughts!! If you're interested but these subjects aren't hitting the mark, we need to know so we can work on getting there. Email Sonja or Pam (email addresses listed at the top of the article.)

CMTC 2008 Coming Attractions . . .

By Cyndi Dunlap, NHSTE CMTC Chair
cdunlap55@comcast.net

The 2008 Christa McAuliffe Technology Conference (CMTC) has an exciting lineup of keynote and spotlight presentation topics this year. These sessions are described below. For those of you who can only attend for one day, the choice is going to be a difficult one this year!

Tuesday, December 2nd

Keynote presented by David Warlick
Our Students, Our World ~ Telling the New Story

Keynote Concurrent Sessions
~Harnessing the Digital Landscape for Teaching & Learning Video Games as Learning Engines

Spotlights
~Internet Safety, Cyberbullying, & Keeping Students Safe at School presented by Attorney Lucy H. Carrillo, Assistant Attorney General, Internet Crimes Prosecutor
~The Media Evolution presented by Scott Kinney, Discovery Education

Wednesday, December 3rd

Keynote presented by Dr. Yong Zhao
~How Technology Redefines Talents - What Should Schools Teach?

Keynote Concurrent Session
~Dictatorship to Democracy-How Technology Can Deliver 21st Century Learning

Spotlights
~Creating Multiple Pathways to Learning presented by Scott Kinney, Discovery Education
~Creative Learning Devices in the Secondary Math Classroom presented by Randy Wormald, 2005 NH Teacher of the Year & Disney Teacher Award Recipient, Math Teacher, Belmont High School, Belmont NH

Thursday, December 4th

Keynote presented by Peter Reynolds
~"Standardish" ~ Creativity, Innovation, & the Six Essentials

Keynote Concurrent Session
~Make Your Mark Move ~ Animation as a Tool in the Classroom

Spotlights
~PowerPlay ~ Can Online Games Reach Students We Are Leaving Behind? presented by Peter's twin brother Paul Reynolds & Gary Goldberger, FableVision
~Innovative & Engaging Technology Integration Strategies presented by Marina Capen, 2007 NH Milken National Educator Award Recipient, Math Teacher, Souhegan High School, Amherst, NH

NEW for 2008 ~ CMTC Website Offers a Daily Planner

by Cyndi Dunlap
cdunlap55@comcast.net

Our most recent enhancement planned for the Christa McAuliffe Technology Conference (CMTC) website (www.nhcmtc.org) is a Daily Planner that will allow attendees organize their day at CMTC. Making the most of your conference experience has always been a high priority for conference planners. We hope that this new feature helps you select sessions that align with your interests, level of expertise, and teaching needs.

The Daily Planner lets you select a day and then search the concurrent sessions database by strand, grade level, hot topic, and key words or phrases to build your personal calendar for the day. You are encouraged to select first and second choices for each concurrent session as some sessions fill quickly. The planner reminds you when the keynote begins, to schedule a time for your lunch break, and allows you to designate a time to visit to the exhibitor area.

This new feature will be available from the conference home page and the Attendees page in early October. Just click on Daily Planner and follow the instructions. A number of common search criteria are available for selection or you may type in your own keywords. Your search generates a list of the sessions that include your search criteria in the session title or description. From there you can decide which sessions will be of most value for you! Happy planning!

Please send us feedback on this new feature, as it is sure to be refined and improved next year. Send comments via email to Cyndi Dunlap, NHSTE's conference chairperson.

CMTC 2008 MITI Devices

by Cyndi Dunlap
cdunlap55@comcast.net

CMTC 2008 is once again offering three different choices for our early-bird Master It & Take It (MITI) workshops. The MITI hands-on workshops are designed to provide educators with both the exposure and training necessary to investigate the potential of a variety of learning devices. These Early-bird workshops are scheduled for Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday mornings from 7:30 to 8:30. The cost of the 2008 early-bird MITI sessions includes one of the following: an ultraportable laptop computer, a digital video camcorder, or a headset and digital voice recorder combination. You choose!

NHSTE will purchase the best model and brand recommended for instructional use by technology coordinators and highly rated by consumer groups. A volume purchase will take place in mid-November to garner the best value available for the advertised workshop fee. Please see the conference website in late October for specific details on models and specifications of the MITI devices to assist with your decision-making.

The 2008 MITI lineup includes the following:

MITI-01
Introduction to YOUR Ultraportable Laptop Computer
Deb Boisvert & Maria Knee
Deerfield School District

An ultraportable laptop Asus EEE PC, recommended for classroom use, is included in the cost of this workshop. During this 1-hour early-bird session, participants learn basic operations, functions, and features of this ultraportable and its Linux operating system. If you already own a laptop computer, you will be amazed at what this low cost device has to offer. A brief overview of both benefits and challenges of integrating ultraportable devices in schools is planned. **COST: $350**

MITI-02
Introduction to YOUR FLIP Digital Camcorder
Kathy Malsbenden, CACES &
Andrea O'Neill,
Auburn Village School

A FLIP digital camcorder, appropriate for classroom use, is included in the cost of this workshop. During this 1-hour early-bird session, participants learn the basic functions and features of their digital camcorder. Tips and techniques for taking quality digital video and a brief discussion of classroom integration strategies are included. Participants practice taking, reviewing, and deleting video clips. Participants are encouraged to bring their laptop if they have one. **COST: $190**

MITI-03
Introduction to YOUR Headset & Digital Voice Recorder
Kathleen McClaskey, EdTEch Associates,
Amherst, NH

A headset with microphone and digital voice recorder, appropriate for classroom use, is included in the cost of this workshop. During this 1-hour early-bird session, participants learn the basic functions and features of the headset and the digital voice recorder. Tips and techniques for making quality audio clips for inclusion in a variety of student projects and a brief discussion of classroom integration strategies are included. Participants are encouraged to bring their laptop if they have one.
COST: $170

Register for CMTC 2008 MITI workshops using the conference registration form located in the print program or available on the conference website (www.nhcmtc.org).

MITI workshop registration deadline is: November 7th, 2008.

CMTC MITI - Headset with Mic and Digital Recorder

By Kathleen McClaskey, NHSTE Advocacy Chair

A headset with a microphone is one of the least expensive computer accessories that has powerful implications in the classroom. With the onset of electronic books and no-cost text-to-speech (TTS) tools, universal access to the curriculum and reading materials can become a reality for all students. Students who struggle with reading would find this barrier removed with the use of a headset and electronic books. The microphone that is attached to the headset offers students who may have challenges in expressing their ideas or responding to quizzes and tests in writing, independent means to respond with audio notes. Audio notes can be used by teachers and students and are located in most standard software like MS Office 2003, Inspiration and Kidspiration. The other device included in the Thursday CMTC MITI is the digital recorder. Digital recorders include a comprehensive set of tools that can empower students in the classroom. Outside of being a recorder, it also has a built in MP4 player with a 2.5" TFT display. Use this device to download the audio of books, photos, videos and of course, music. ***Learn how to use both of these devices with tips on classroom applications at the CMTC MITI event on Thursday, December 4th at 7:30 AM. See you then.***

TechEdge ~ Summer 2008

By Cyndi Dunlap, NHSTE PD & CMTC Chair

Mini-laptop/Ultra Portable Computers

How small can you go? How small do you want to go? How small is appropriate for classroom use? Many of us have watched the convergence of bulky desktop computers with handheld calculators over the past 20 years. We have seen the fully functional desktop computer get smaller yet more powerful each year. We have observed the evolution of the personal digital assistant (PDA) from little more than an electronic calendar and address book to a handheld computer combined with a phone, mp3 player, and web access. Somewhere in the middle of this convergence appeared the laptop computer and most recently very small versions of the laptop computer designed primarily for students and educators.

This TechEdge edition provides an overview of the mini-laptop (also referred to as *ultra portable*) computers currently available and discusses the major features of each. As schools and educators across the NHSTE readers explore and experiment with these new tools, I welcome your comments and observations on your experiences.

Early versions of the Mini-laptop?

Some of us remember the eMate and the Newton, long since relegated to the archives. Next came the AlphaSmart and then the dana, at price points where schools could afford classroom sets, enabling them to provide an entry level to one-to-one computing. Development of one of the first mini-laptop computers was initiated by Nicholas Negroponte's One Laptop Per Child (OLPC) project in an effort to bring computing power and global collaboration to developing nations. Since the roll out of the XO computer by the non-profit One Laptop Per Child project, for-profit ventures have entered the mini-laptop market place, including Intel's Classmate PC, ASUS's Eee PC, the Think CloudBook, and most recently the HP 2133 Mini-Note PC. The XO was not initially intended for the North American marketplace but the city of Birmingham, Alabama recently approved the first US pilot of the XO, beginning with an initial purchase of 1,000 (total estimated at 15,000 units). This pilot is planned to run from April through September 2008. Educators will watch the results of this pilot closely across the nation. (eSchool News, May 2008) Closer to home, teachers at the Deerfield Community School and in Manchester School District classrooms (through the GMPDC) are experimenting with classroom sets of ASUS' Eee PC.

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TELL THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES THAT YOU SUPPORT EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY--SIGN THE PETITION TODAY!

By Kathleen McClaskey,
NHSTE Advocacy Chair

In less than 75 days, America will elect a new President. Education technology has surfaced as an issue in the Presidential campaign, with Senator McCain recently sketching out his vision for technology's role in education and Senator Obama continuing to call for innovation in education.

Now is the time to tell the Presidential candidates our priorities for educational technology. CoSN and ISTE have teamed with the National Education Association and the State Educational Technology Directors Association to initiate a PETITION, found at www.onegiantleapforkids.org, that offers our collective vision of what a 21st Century Education should include:

- Every student learning in an environment that reflects the technology replete world in which we live, including ready access to sophisticated computing devices, instructionally sound digital content that facilitates self-paced learning, and broadband-level bandwidth necessary to support cutting-edge digital applications and services.
- Every teacher possessing the technology tools and skills necessary to use technology in the classroom and to integrate technology and digital resources seamlessly into classroom learning.
- Every parent utilizing technology to monitor student academic progress, communicate with educators regarding academic matters, and access online and digital resources to assist their children's studies.

Our PETITION calls on the next President to:

- Support access for all students to technology and the Internet.
- Increase federal funding for education technology through the Department of Education's budget.
- Preserve the E-Rate and providing robust bandwidth in all classrooms to allow students and educators to use the cutting-edge digital applications and services.
- Incorporate technology literacy and facility into state teacher standards, teacher training, and professional development.
- Encourage student technology literacy by the eighth grade.

Don't delay, sign the PETITION today! Go to www.onegiantleapforkids.org and add your voice to the growing chorus supporting education technology.

At the same time, join ETAN (EdTech Action Network) to stay informed on educational technology issues and legislation!

How to build an IT Office Suite in just 7 short years.

By Glen H. Page, Thetford Academy

When I was hired seven years ago as the Technology Systems Administrator for Thetford Academy, in Thetford, Vermont, I remember being shown to my new office. It was at the end of a dead-end, basement hallway and the door was labeled "Hazardous Waste". The room was 6 by 12 feet. It had no ventilation (let alone AC) and no windows. One of the long walls was filled with shelves leaving just enough room along the opposite wall for my desk and a two post rack for all of the servers. If I backed my chair away from the desk too quickly, I got a back full of books. I knew immediately that I would love this job but that I would also need to do something about office space. I began dreaming and scheming to get school to take its technology needs seriously and to do something to a) keep the servers secure, cooled and alive; and b) to keep the new Technology Systems Administrator from going bonkers working in such a space.

My initial thoughts involved moving a few walls to expand the room into the dead end hallway. This idea was met with a polite no. There was no money and the idea expanded the space but did not address the ventilation issues. I decided that I needed to go to plan B. Plan B, in my play book is almost always a long term, slow plan that usually involves documenting current conditions and looking for ways to improve things incrementally.

Towards this end, I installed an indoor-outdoor thermometer. I put the outdoor probe in the tiny, adjacent wiring closet and the indoor part in my office/server room. I began recording in a spreadsheet the temperature in both rooms first thing every morning. This gave me evidence that something needed to be done before conditions cooked the servers or me. I also began mapping the school's network (this wasn't done when it was installed) and looking for other places on campus that could both physically and logically house the server room and the IT department. I looked for unused or under-used rooms and offices. I discovered that there was an office on the main floor of the gym building that was only being used by the food service department for cashing out at the end of the day and calling in orders for food. They had no high speed network connection and only a Mac Classic for basic computing.

The office seemed large enough to at least temporarily meet the needs of the food service department and house the servers and me as well. This idea took care of space issues and ventilation (corner office with not one but two windows) and, since network cabling would need to be run to the office, would provide the food service department with access to the school's ethernet network. With this many steps forward, I was give permission to make the move. I ran all the necessary networking and then announced a network outage for a holiday weekend. I came in on that weekend and moved in.

Moving in to the office was just the start. I moved the thermometer and used it to document that just having ventilation was not enough to cool things to an acceptable level. I added a full-sized rack donated by a local hospital. I upgraded the computer for the food service department so that they could do their ordering on-line. I convinced the school to install an air conditioner to keep the servers running at a cooler temperature.

This location was not my end goal though. All the while I was advancing to this point, I kept in the back of my mind the fact that what I really wanted was a "suite" consisting of a server room and an adjacent office space. This would do away with the one problem I haven't mentioned yet. With ten or more servers sitting a foot or so from my desk, it is nearly impossible to carry on a conversation in the office. Phone conversations and in office conversations are punctuated by the words, "huh?", and "what did you say?" So, how do you go the next step? You watch for opportunities. My opportunity came when I found out that the school was planning to address over crowding issues. Like most schools, we do not have enough classroom space. We also have an undersized gym and no actual cafeteria. The school 's leadership began plans to improve the situation. I volunteered various ideas and kept a close eye on the proposed plans as they were produced. I was shocked to find that the first set of plans demolished my current office and had no space for IT anywhere. I enlisted the help of a board member that works in the technology field and is on the building committee. Instead of complaining about the situation, I had examined the plans and found two possible locations to fit in my dream office and server room. These ideas went to the architect (along with orders to insert proper wiring closets in certain locations in each building) and were incorporated in the plans.

My next step involved convincing the school leadership that the timing of my move was critical and needed to take place over summer break regardless of the status of the rest of the project. My reasoning behind this was that since the old office gets demolished the IT office and servers needed to be in their new home before the other construction begins. The best time to do this, with minimal impact on the "customers" was over summer break.

The administration agreed and so, right after school ended for the summer, the custodial staff emptied the small classroom that would become the IT Department's new home. I went in and marked out the location of the walls for the server room and sat down with the maintenance department head to discuss the details of how the walls should be built and the electrical needs of the new space.

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What are the Features of Mini-laptop Computers?

The unifying characteristics of these mini-laptop computer are 1) the small size and light weight, 2) smaller screen (7" to 9" diagonal), 3) robust design to withstand the rigors of student use, 4) flash memory for storage, and 5) wireless network capacity. A productivity software suite is included with most, albeit scaled down in some instances, but generally compatible with major productivity suites, both commercial and open source. Some of these mini-laptops have unique characteristics, for example the XO screen is designed with two contrast levels, one for indoor use and one for outdoor use in bright light conditions.Detailed specifications and features can be found on each product's respective web site, please see the list of web links at the end of this article.

What is the educational potential for Mini-laptop Computers?

Some of the *benefits* of one-to-one computing strategies include:

- ~ resources can be moved on-demand to minimize down time of technology resources and maximize return on investment
- ~ mobile devices can used, put away, and reused as class time and activities require, becoming more of a learning
- ~ tool and less the focus of instruction wireless and infrared capacity supports the sharing and "beaming" of information from student to student
- ~ resources can be taken from within the classroom into the world to collect data outside, on field trips, in the halls, and other environments not equipped with computing resources

Scientifically-based research data regarding the educational impact of one-to-one computing initiatives is finally becoming available from projects in place across the nation. Quantifiable data following year 1 implementation (launched in 2002) from the state of Maine middle school laptop initiative showed a significant increase in student attendance and decrease in discipline problems in the grades where the laptops are deployed. In the fall of 2007, the Maine one-to-one laptop program announced improved scores on writing skills assessment. "The first in a series of studies aimed at evaluating Maine's pioneering laptop program, *Maine's Middle School Laptop Program: Creating Better Writers* concludes that the use of laptops improves scores on writing skills assessments, that more frequent use is linked to higher scores, and that writing skills of laptop users transfer to writing without a laptop." The full text of this article titled, *A research study from the University of Southern Maine shows that the state's one-to-one laptop program improves scores on writing skills assessments*, by Mary Axelson can be found at: http://www.k12blueprint.com/k12/blueprint/story_good_news_from_maine_about_the_impact_of_laptops_on_writing_skills.php . The full research report by the Maine Education Policy Research Institute (MEPRI) at the University of Southern Maine is located at: http://www.usm.maine.edu/cepare.

The impact of mini-laptop devices on the educational landscape is significant when considering computing power versus price. With the price of standard sized laptops continuing to decrease, and these mini-laptops are currently positioned in the $200 to $500 price range. Thus the feasibility of providing 1-to-1 computing resources for all students approaches a financial reality for many schools. When selecting computing devices, districts will need to match purpose and intent of the device with the most appropriate resource as each has capacity and production limitations.

What are the challenges facing schools with the implementation of Mini-laptop Computers?

In addition to benefits, a number of *challenges* for schools have also been identified for these new computing devices:

- ~ smaller and more portable devices are subject to increased vulnerability to theft, damage, and loss
- ~ longevity of rechargeable and conventional batteries and the need to recharge (and keep recharged) batteries in a logical fashion can cause usability issues with shared resources
- ~ movement of carts or cabinets in multiple level facilities can raise safety concerns as well as access issues in modular and portable classrooms
- ~ availability of these devices as been an issue recently with significant back-orders and non-traditional K-12 purchase programs
- ~ the long term future of the companies/organizations marketing these devices is unproven, a risk some schools are not willing to accept at this time
- ~ the unique operating systems of some devices require a learning curve that is not required for standard laptops running Linux, Windows, or Macintosh OS

Try one yourself . . .

This year at the Christa McAuliffe Technology Conference (CMTC 2008) will be featuring an ultraportable as one of the Master It and Take It (MITI) early-bird workshops. An **Asus EEE PC** is included in the cost of the workshop. During the 1-hour early-bird session, participants learn basic operations, functions, and features of the ultraportable and its Linux operating system. A brief overview of both benefits and challenges of integrating ultraportable devices in schools is planned.

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Where can I find more information about Mini-laptop Computers?

The following web sites provide detailed information, including technical specifications, for each of the mini-laptop computers mentioned above:

One Laptop Per Child Initiative ~ http://laptop.org/laptop
Intel's Classmate PC ~ www.classmatepc.com
Asus's Eee PC ~ eeepc.asus.com/us/product.htm
Think CloudBook ~ www.everex.com
HP 2133 Mini-Note PC ~ http://h10038.www1.hp.com/taw_detail.asp?fid=291&agencyid=135&jumpid=iin_r33_psg_mini_note_k12_wn1

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50 Ways to Use Your Wordle

By Nancy J. Keane,
Rundlett Middle School

Last month I heard about Wordle. http://www.Wordle.net. It was advertised "as a toy for generating word clouds from text that you provide. The clouds give greater prominence to words that appear more frequently in the source text. You can tweak your clouds with different fonts, layouts, and color schemes." I knew I needed to try this out. I immediately saw some uses for this in the classroom. Students could use this for reading logs, for booktalks, for review. There seemed to be so many uses so I filed it away with my list of cool sites to check out later.

Then I heard Bob Sprankle talk about using Wordle. He mentioned some great ideas for using it in the classroom. From his start, the ideas kept coming. Last week when I opened the Boston Globe, I saw a cool Wordle in a political article. So, here are some ways to use Wordle in your classroom. Thanks to Bob for starting the list. There are 50 ways in this article but I challenge you to come up with more! The possibilities are endless.

1. Use the comment tag cloud in LibraryThing to introduce a class novel.
2. Create a poster of LibraryThing Wordle and refer to it during the novel unit.
3. After reading a class novel, have students do a reflective writing and create a Wordle from the words they use in their writing.

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Telecommunication Tidbits

by Brewster Bartlett

FIND MORE INFORMATION ON THE WEB WWW.NHSTE.ORG

Have a favorite web site or project that can be used for research or for classroom? Contact me at this address so we can spread the word to other NHSTE members: drsplatt@comcast.net

Awesome Stories

http://www.awesomestories.com/site_map/site_map.htm
Learn about the stories of movies, history, disaster, and biographies of some interesting people. A must for those that want to explore the many questions of the past.

Zerofootprint

http://www.zerofootprintkids.com/kids_home.aspx
Green is now in and this web site will measure the impact of a child's lifestyle onthe planet. A great environmental awareness website.

Hippocampus

http://www.hippocampus.org
A great web site that has online textbooks on many subjects. There are many multimedia presentations that will assist a student for an additional resource for help in that particular subject.

Bitesize Games

http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/ks1bitesize/
Sponsored by the BBC, this educational website has simple games for Literacy and Numeracy. Great review for younger students or ESL students.

Science and Nature: Interactive Human Body

http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/humanbody/body/
Great animations on the human body including muscles, nervous system, skeleton, body organs and more. Users must select female or male

GoogleEarth: Small World, Your World, Our World

http://edcommunity.apple.com/ali/story.php?itemID=11916
This site offers teachers to involve students in active and engaged in 21st Century learning. Teachers will learn to use tools and resources within GoogleEarth to help teach everything from geography to math.

"And this is Maria Knee, coming to you live...."

By Maria Knee
patella4@comcast.net

"We are broadcasting on the EdTechTalk channel of the Worldbridges network. Thanks to Jeff Lebow and Dave Cormier for their support. Please join us again next time."

I am a webcaster for edtechtalk.com and each time I'm broadcasting, the show ends with those words. I've been involved with webcasting for almost a year and still have a hard time believing I really do this. I am part of two teams of webcasting educators and we produce 2 different shows. Together with Jose, in Los Angles, Alice in Sacramento and Lisa in Maryland, I produce It's Elementary. On this bimonthly show, we go beyond the barriers at our schools and provide a forum for elementary school teachers to learn about technology integration. This summer, Lisa Parisi, a teacher on Long Island, and I have created a new show called Conversations. This weekly show invites people to join a conversation on various topics relating to education in the 21st century.

During each show, my co-hosts and I take different roles in order to produce the show. We start a Skype conference call to connect the hosts and guests. The show is broadcast courtesy of Worldbridges Webcasting Network and the audio is archived to post as podcasts. I use NiceCast to record and archive the audio. During the show, listeners can stream the audio from edtechtalk.com and participate in a back channel text chat as well. One of us takes care of the chat room to insure that questions or comments get mentioned on air. Someone else takes care of the stream. The intro, outtro and managing the conversation is shared by all.

The live, informal and interactive nature of the webcast is what I find exciting. From the comfort of our living rooms, classrooms or home offices, we have discussions with people from all over the world. While there is some preplanning to every show, when broadcasting live, anything can happen. Someone's dog or cat may enter the room and make their presence known, the landline phone could ring or thunderstorms might disrupt the broadcast. Sometimes connections through Skype might be problematic or both sides of the conversations won't broadcast. And of course, when working with people, anything can be expected. In spite of the various little bumps that make life as a webcaster interesting, it is the rich conversations, learning about various edtech tools and meeting new friends that motivates me to do this.

It's Elementary is broadcast on the second and fourth Monday of the month at 7:00 eastern time. You can listen and participate in Conversations, each Sunday morning at 11:30 eastern time. More information about these shows and past episodes can be found at edtechtalk.com. Other shows can also be found at the EdTechTalk webpage. You will find a variety of shows to listen to, download and have your professional development at your fingertips.

How to build an IT Office Suite in just 7 short years.
Cont'd. from pg. 7

The maintenance department built the walls. The electrician came in and discussed our needs and how he could meet them. The head of maintenance okayed the electrical work and it was installed as specified. The sheetrock was hung, the walls were finished and painted. After the floors were refinished, I was given the go ahead to move in.

I gave a one week notice for a network outage and began my part of preparing the space. I installed an over head ladder rack for cabling and ran a backbone cable and phone lines back to the main closet for the building. I installed a spare rack in the server room. I ordered and installed flat panel displays on outside wall of the server room on either side of the door. These will display what is happening in the two server racks so that the status is visible without entering the server room.

On the morning of the planned outage, the equipment from one rack in the old office was shut down and moved to the new space. When that rack was emptied, it too was moved to the new server room and then the second rack from the old office was emptied into it. Once all the servers were moved and all of the cables were reconnected and powered back up. All servers were tested and the move was over. (Okay, so it really wasn't quite that simple. Murphy worked overtime and we had to call the electrician in to redo an outlet for a UPS; oops, installed 240 instead of 120!; and we had a few network cables get plugged into the wrong VLANs but all that worked out).

The only thing left now is for the maintenance crew to install the server room door and the air conditioner. Then the IT department can set up the rack mounted kitchen (coffee maker, mini fridge and microwave!) and host a ribbon cutting ceremony.

Imagine that, from "Hazardous Materials" to "Dream Suite" in just 7 years! The key? Set goals and chip away at them a little at a time. Can't afford that classroom set of handhelds? Get a few, prove their worth. Then add a few more at a time until your goal is reached.

[Editor's Note: Glen really does have the rack mounted kitchen appliances in his office space]

50 Ways to Use Your

Wordle

from page 9

4. Use digitized copies of books from googlebooks to create a Wordle. Have students analyze the Wordle and predict what they will find in the book. Bob Sprankle used Romeo and Juliet and found very interesting results.
5. Use Project Gutenberg with Wordle to preteach/preview text.
6. Use the Wordle as a prompt for reflective writing.
7. Any RSS feed can be put into a Wordle.
8. Compare political websites. The Boston Globe compared the two presidential candidate's websites and found very interesting results.
9. Use Wordle on your blog. Analyze what you are writing about.
10. Have students analyze what they are writing about. Wordle will highlight their top words.
11. Use Wordle in test review.
12. Use Wordle to analyze what has been covered most during the school year.
13. Wordle your delicious tag cloud.
14. Use Wordle as an idea generator.
15. Use Wordle to prep for college admissions essays.
16. Print Wordle for student use.
17. Current events. Call up a news page such as google news and create a Wordle. Have students discuss what it means.
18. Use the RSS feed from a news source to create a daily news Wordle.
19. Use your daily news Wordle to prompt research on the news.
20. On your news Wordle, have students highlight terms and try to find a relationship between words.
21. Have students create sentences from the terms in Wordle and research to see if they are correct.
22. Use Wordle as a final project. Have students create the Wordle and explain it to the class.
23. Have students plug their writing into Wordle and analyze their word choice.
24. Students can make sure they are on topic by putting papers in Wordle and viewing the results.
25. Create a student interest cloud.
26. Use Wordle in vocabulary lessons.
27. Have students create a Wordle on a subject by each contributing 3-4 words.
28. Plug in key thoughts into Wordle as a reflection activity.
29. Wordle your blog - reflection on class blog year.
30. Use Wordle to introduce new subjects.
31. Use Wordle for brainstorming. Have whole class contribute and then use the Wordle during the lesson.
32. Have students use Wordle during writing revision.
33. Analyze student's overuse of words in essays.
34. Analyze your overuse of words in writings.
35. Use Wordle to create book posters.
36. Create concrete poetry.
37. Use as a visual booktalk.
38. Use Wordle in storytelling.
39. Use in chapter review.
40. Use Wordle in creative writing review.
41. Compare writings using Wordle.
42. Analyze song lyrics.
43. Wordle your dissertation.
44. Use Wordle to compare introductions to summaries.
45. Use Wordle to track student word choice.
46. Create art.
47. Wordle your school mission.
48. Use with ELL students to analyze word choice.
49. Create a class Wordle to represent your class.
50. Use Wordle just for fun.

Statewide Data and Voice Network Being Explored

By Sonja Gonzalez
sonjag@comcast.net

An ad hoc committee, consisting of representatives from interested districts, has met a few times over the past months to discuss the possibility of forming a consortium to provide group buying power for a high speed data and voice network throughout the state of NH. The New Hampshire Department of Education initiated this effort after Cathy Higgins, State Educational Technology Director, became interested in the idea and talked to other states that have already created such consortiums. Other states began by looking at ways to help their schools simplify and benefit from a common E-Rate application process and expanding services from there.

"Having a consortium is a way to create a foundation for future network managed services to schools that could include high speed internet access, telecommunications, content filtering, and other possible services. The consortium would have better purchasing power to hopefully reduce costs to schools that currently purchase internet access, while providing a higher level of service to schools that are looking to expand their current level," says Higgins.

At this point, the group has created a draft RFP and is focused on answering questions and smoothing the way for this project to come to fruition for as many New Hampshire schools (public and private) as are interested. There are many opportunities for increasing collaboration between school districts; this is one step in that direction.

If you would like more information about this project, please take a look at the group's blog that will continue to be updated as new info arises: http://www.nheon.org/oetb/?page_id=72

BE SURE TO CHECK THIS OUT ON LINE:

Linda George's article on Scratch programming for young learners!

See nhste.org/newsletter.cfm

FIND MORE INFORMATION ON THE WEB

FIND UPCOMING *PD OPPORTUNITIES* ON NHSTE.ORG

FALL CALENDAR

September 2 . . . . . NHSTE Board Meeting, 4-7 pm; Concord (Repeats first Tuesday of the month.)
September 17 . . . . . ISTE Webinar, 4 pm; www.iste.org

October 1 . . . . . NHSTE Annual Meeting for all members, 4 – 8 pm; St. Paul's School, Concord
October 7 . . . . . NHSTE Board Meeting, 4-7 pm; Concord
October 10 . . . . . Tech Coordinators' Meeting – 9 am, Newport
October 13 . . . . . Week, K12 Online Pre-conference keynote; http://k12onlineconference.org/
October 20-24, 27-31 K12 Online Conference; http://k12onlineconference.org/
October 29 . . . . . Adaptive and Assistive Technologies Workshop, 8:30 – 3:30; SERESC, Bedford

November 4 . . . . . NHSTE Board Meeting, 4-7 pm; Concord
November 14 . . . . . Tech Coordinators' Meeting, 9 am; Alton Central School

December 1 . . . . . Pre-Conference workshops, Christa McAuliffe Technology Conference
December 2-4 . . . . . Christa McAuliffe Technology Conference, Radisson Hotel, Nashua
December 12 . . . . . Tech Coordinators' Meeting, 9 am; Location TBD.

Repeating Events at www.edtechtalk.com/live include:
Sundays, 11:30 am – 12:30 pm; Conversations
Tuesdays, 9-10 pm; Women of Web 2.0
Wednesdays, 9-10 pm; Teachers Teaching Teachers

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