

San Diego City Schools

Staff Bulletin – September 17, 2003

SUCCESSFUL LAUNCH OF NEW STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS PROGRAM

Phase I of the District Wide Application (DWA) pilot for the new Student Information Systems (SIS) program, Zangle, has been completed and phase II, which launches the Special Education component, 4GL's eNCORE, is on target for a November training and deployment.

"We were very excited about the initial success with the first day, especially considering the chaos that goes into the very first day of school anyhow," asserts Denis Dolbey, Student Information Project Manager for the DWA. "There were expected glitches, but all the pilot schools successfully entered master schedules, courses, class schedules and enrolled students."

The pilot schools, which include University City High School, Standley Middle, Curie, Doyle and Spreckels elementary schools, along with Garfield and Twain high schools, are running parallel attendance processing on both AERIES and Zangle for the time being, to ensure any issues with the processes are addressed and resolved.

What's the reaction at the pilot schools?

"I love the system, I absolutely love it," enthuses Brett Weiss, an Advanced Placement (AP) Seminar teacher at University City High School. "The training has been really thorough, and implemented in such a way that everyone, absolutely everyone, overcomes their intimidation factor with it. It is just so promising."

Classroom teachers are first launching the online attendance feature of Zangle, which allows teachers to record attendance in both an alphabetical roster and seating chart-style. Additional features will be included gradually, as the pilots become proficient. Read more about Zangle features.

Literacy block teacher Michael Jason, a 14-year veteran with San Diego City Schools, agrees the transition to the new system at UCHS was a smooth one. "I really appreciate that it deals with the students you actually have in class, and with such immediacy."

Initial glitches, reports Dolbey, have included power issues that stalled some attempts to log onto the system, along with scattered cases of connectivity issues among teachers or classrooms. "We are tackling them on a case-by-case issue and learning as much as we can from them to improve the launch for the first 'Go Live Deployment' group." That next group, the Serra cluster, begins preparing next month for training in January and a February launch.

University City High's Vice Principal Yvonne Dyson, who also participated in the pilot of the AERIES program years ago, says working out the kinks for subsequent schools is both challenging, in that they're finding the roadblocks before anyone else, but also rewarding. "A lot of what we've done is a template, and other schools won't have to work as hard. We like that."

At the pilot elementary schools, both Spreckels and Doyle had 100% success rates with their first day of the new attendance program. Curie principal Chris Juarez reports his stumbling block had been primarily one of connectivity, and has since been completely resolved. "We had a number of teachers here who'd never had Internet access in their classroom, and that was the first hurdle. We had to be extremely diligent in making sure these teachers were first brought up to speed and

made comfortable with first-time access to an Internet connection, before having them do online attendance.”

Juarez credits a high level of support from the DWA team for minimizing anxiety. “One of the perks about being in the pilot is the huge level of customer service to help work out the kinks,” he says. Over at UC High, Dyson agrees, adding, “it seems like before I even hang up the phone, someone’s here to help or show us what to do. And the training was just terrific.”

Feedback summaries of the training conducted for the pilot schools have been quite favorable. “At our very first training, the scores came back 3.6 out of a possible 4,” says Mike Guay, DWA Project Architect. “The hands-on practices are, without a doubt, a key to the success.”

With the SIS component of the DWA up and running, attention now turns to applications scheduled to go live in November for Human Resources and Finance. To learn the latest about the DWA programs, visit www.sandi.net/dwa. DWA-related fact sheets will continue to be developed to address specific DWA components. Recent additions include:

DWA – Finance Essentials for Administrators
DWA – HR Essentials for Administrators
DWA – Payroll Essentials for Administrators
DWA – SIS Essentials for Principals

For additional information, please contact the DWA team at (619) 725-5584.

DISTRICT WIDE APPLICATIONS (DWA) TRAINING UPDATE

Training sessions on the DWA continues, with terrific feedback so far from participants on the value of information provided, the hands-on exercises and the course materials. Here’s what people are saying about the various classes on the evaluation form:

- **HR Overview**
“My staff thought the HR overview session they attended on Monday morning was good. They are anxious to learn more!”
“Very well organized – we even got out earlier than expected.”
- **Financial Overview**
“Instructors were knowledgeable and receptive to questions.”
- **Time & Labor**
“This training made a difficult task easy”
- **eProcurement**
“The handouts are great”
“Hands-on training was more useful and reinforced what was discussed in the overview.”

How is your feedback used? Participants are asked to rate the training sessions on a scale of 1 to 4, evaluating effectiveness of information, materials, etc. Trainers use the information to ensure they are on target in terms of employee information, and practice opportunities. At the first two-day Time & Labor session, participants rated the training experience an average 3.8 out of 4.

Still have to sign up for training? First, talk with your site administrator and review the “who should attend” section of the DWA website, www.sandi.net/dwa. Please remember to sign up only for the classes you are *required* to take, as it’s important to accommodate first those

employees whose job functions require the training. Next, visit the [PeopleSoft Training](#) webpage to register.

For additional information, or to review the latest DWA news, please visit the DWA website at www.sandi.net/dwa.

Bringing campuses into the technology age

Under Proposition MM, schools are getting campuswide technology upgrades to equip classrooms and learning spaces for Internet access. Some of the technology upgrades include:

- Campuswide access to the Internet and districtwide area network
- Six computer network jacks in each classroom, plus media and administrative data jacks throughout the campus
- Campuswide electrical power upgrade to accommodate the new technology, including additional electrical outlets in each classroom (Many classrooms don't have enough outlets because of the age of our schools.)
- Campuswide fiber optic data distribution system and networking equipment, such as stackable hubs and routers
- Additional conduits and pathways to accommodate future adaptations to newer technology
- Electronic security system to protect the new technology

The district is not allowed to use Proposition MM funds to purchase furniture or equipment, such as computers. Instead, these items are funded by matching state facilities bond money, which allows for the purchase of computers for new classroom buildings, library media centers, and science labs.

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Mary Ann Polityka

Physics Teacher, University City High School

You're part of the pilot program for the District Wide Application (DWA) program. For teachers such as you, that means implementing the new Zangle component, which deals with enrollment, attendance, scheduling and other student information. What has the pilot experience been like so far for you?

I really like it. The training was very thorough and I picked it up quite quickly. I'm looking forward to getting my hands on some of the other features!

What about the training did you find especially useful?

It was so hands-on and included a lot of demonstrations. We were given sample classroom account, so we could practice taking attendance for ourselves. We also practiced getting samples of student information. It made it all much more real and we left realizing with a clear understanding of what it would be like actually doing it in our own classrooms.

Is it too early to see what some of the advantages of the system might be for teachers?

It seems much more reliable and the immediacy of it is a real plus already. I can immediately correct attendance if a student comes in late with a pass, or adjust an absent to a tardy. It's instantaneous. And I can see how this will help prevent calls being made to parents unnecessarily.

What do you mean?

In the “old” way, attendance forms may have gone to the office before a student came in tardy or with a pass, so it would be recorded as an absence initially, and then corrected later in the day. We’ve had occasions where parents were notified of a student’s unexcused absence when it turned out the student was only tardy. This new way is so immediate, I think we’ll be seeing a lot less of that.

What were you expecting with the new program?

Truthfully, I pictured a bubble sheet in a digital format. And it’s not like that at all.

What surprised you most?

How easy it is, and the flexibility. I can take attendance with the alphabetical roster if I want, or I can do it with the seating-chart option. The seating chart option, by itself, is really useful because you can add features like aisles between rows and you can auto-select seating.

What’s been the most challenging part?

Getting used to the log-in window. It’s timed, I know for security reasons, but it kicks you out after a certain time. I know there’s talk about extending the log-in window a little longer, but I’m not sure where that’s going.

Editor’s note: The log-in window currently lasts for ten minutes, but discussions continue about whether to extend it.

What would you tell other teachers about using Zangle?

It’s a lot less tedious, and it’s faster and gives more information. It’s right at your fingertips so you don’t have to spend as much time shuttling paperwork back and forth to the office. The sorting features are helpful.

What are you looking forward to as the pilot advances further?

Getting access to the rest of it!

Editor’s note: For additional information on the new Student Information Systems (Zangle and 4GL), please read the DWA – SIS Essentials fact sheet, and check out the list of Zangle FAQs, available on the DWA website, www.sandi.net/dwa.

HALL OF FAME

The **DWA Human Resources Systems training team** delivered its first two-day Time and Labor session during the last week of August. The training session was attended by 11 participants, who rated their training an average 3.8 out of 4! Comments include:

- "Very well done!"
- "You were terrific! You made a difficult task seem easy."
- "Great to have so many support staff on hand."
- "Excellent program."

Special kudos go to **Alexis Brennan**, who helped develop the course and deliver it, to **Tim Blake** for assisting and to **Bruce Roberts** for providing his subject matter expertise in the classroom.

The **DWA Financials training team** also received rave reviews for its training sessions.

Aetna Hispanic Network recently commended the district's **Communications Department** for its help in publicizing the 1st Annual Community Awareness Fair, held at the Penn Elementary/Paradise Hills Recreation Center on August 23. The fair, which was open to the entire family, featured activities, entertainment and informational booths set up by a diverse group of community organizations.

STUDENT SALUTES

- On August 15, **Chuong Dang (Hoover), Hana Kim (Mira Mesa), Christine Villahermosa and Maya Web (Lincoln)** presented the results of their summer research projects through **The Scripps Research Institute (TSRI)** and spoke about their summer experiences at TSRI. The luncheon was a special event that allowed the interns to reflect upon and share the impact the program, which pairs the students with a laboratory/faculty mentor with support of community groups and foundations, has on their career plans and goals. District students were sponsored by San Diego Workforce Partnership/Neighborhood House Association and The San Diego Foundation.
- In June 2003, four students from **Mark Twain High School, Bethany Weddington, Heather Chester-Francel, Laura Pruett and Martha Damaso**, received a scholarship that includes a brand new Dell computer and printer and all expenses (tuition, books, parking and health fees) paid at a San Diego community college of their choice. After successful completion of two years at a community college, they are eligible to transfer to San Diego State University. Another Twain Student, **Vincent San Nicholas**, will receive similar funding if he successfully completes the current year at a community college.

NEWS YOU CAN USE

- Due to the district's current budget crisis, the **Community Relations Department** will not be holding the **annual Partnerships in Education Kick-Off Event** normally held in the fall. Schools are strongly encouraged to contact their partners and schedule their own kick-off and/or planning session for their partnership activities and to write their partnership renewal agreements for the 2003-04 school year. Contact the Community Relations Department at (619) 725-5592 if you have any questions or need assistance.
- The **Discover Program's Fall Session** is offering a wide variety of professional development classes and training opportunities for San Diego City Schools employees. Included are district-sponsored courses offering district credit for salary advancement to SDCS certificated staff.

To view a listing of courses offered, go to "Classes at a Glance" on the Discover website. You may also view course descriptions by the month and register online through the Discover website by going to the district website, www.sandi.net, click on "For District Staff," then "Professional Development," to the "Discover Program" link, or key in the word "Discover" in the Google search window.

For questions or more information, call the Discover office at (619) 725-7255. Register early to guarantee enrollment and to avoid a class cancellation.

- Any permanent certificated staff member who is interested in becoming a certified **Literacy Peer Coach/Staff Developer** in San Diego City Schools is encouraged to sign up for the certification process. SDCS and SDSU will be holding an **orientation meeting** on Thursday, September 23, at 4:00 p.m. at the San Diego State University City Heights Community Center. The center is located at 4283 El Cajon Blvd., Suite 100, San Diego.

Call Lisa Sheldon in the Literacy Department at (619) 725-7265 if you are interested in the certification process and plan to attend the orientation meeting.

- Have you ever considered sharing your knowledge with other professionals in the district by offering a course through the **Discover Program**?

The Discover Program is **seeking instructors** to teach classes for the Discover Program being offered to district employees for the Fall Session (September-December, 2003) in many areas: Math, Science, Literacy, Fine Arts, Social Studies, Second Language, Guidance, and Staff Development.

Discover courses provide opportunities for teachers to learn from other practicing professionals while earning district salary enhancement credit. Instructors are paid at a rate of \$39.04 per hour for teaching time and \$26.34 for preparation time spent outside of assigned workday.

To submit a course proposal, or if you have any questions, please call Debi Giolzetti at (619) 725-7255, or email dgiolzet@mail.sandi.net.

- **Assemblymember Christine Kehoe**, 76th District, will be **sponsoring an Essay Contest** for all 5th Grade Students who attend school in her Assembly District. Contest information will be in the schools on October 1, 2003. Deadline for submitting entries will be November 26, 2003. The writing prompt will meet the 2.4 writing standard for 5th grade. Assemblymember Kehoe looks forward to the participation of your students in this annual contest. Prizes will be awarded. For information, please contact Joanne Climie, field representative, at 619-294-7600 or email: joanne.climie@asm.ca.gov.

IN MEMORIAM

- **Phillip George**, whose service with the district began in December 1982, passed away May 15, 2003. Mr. George was a community and public affairs coordinator in the Public Relations Office at the time of his retirement.
- **James Halluer, Sr.**, whose service with the district began in September 1958, passed away on May 27, 2003. Mr. Halluer was a painter in the Maintenance Department at the time of his retirement.
- **Michael McPherson**, whose service with the district began in October 2000, passed away June 20, 2003. Mr. McPherson was a substitute teacher at various locations at the time of his death.
- **Barbara Murfey**, whose service with the district began in August 1987, passed away August 26, 2003. Ms. Murfey was a substitute teacher at various locations at the time of her death.
- **Charolette J. Shearer**, whose service with the district began in September 1966, passed away May 25, 2003. Ms. Shearer was a teacher at Bayview Terrace Elementary at the time of her retirement.
- **Joyce L. Tank**, whose service with the district began in January 1963, passed away June 21, 2003. Ms. Tank was a teacher at Hardy Elementary at the time of her retirement.
- **Maxine Wilson**, whose service with the district began in September 1972, passed away in May 2003. Ms. Wilson was a classroom assistant at MacDowell Elementary at the time of her retirement.
- **Eleanor G. Yeakle**, whose service with the district began in November 1971, passed away in June 2003. Ms. Yeakle was an evaluation administrative in the Assessment/Evaluation Department at the time of her retirement.

CLASSIFIED ADS

The next Staff Bulletin will be posted on October 1, 2003. Please submit all items by Thursday, September 25, 2003, to the Communications Office, Room 2145, Eugene Brucker Education Center.