

Instruction & Technology Weekly Bulletin

Volume III, No. 24

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“ It is not the employer who pays the wages. Employers only handle the money. It is the customer who pays the wages.”

- Henry Ford

Upcoming Events

- Thurs., Dec. 15 – Holiday Party – Back Nine Grill, 3500 East Ave., Rochester, NY – 4:00 PM
- Tues., Dec. 20 – Hanukkah begins at sundown
- Wed., Dec. 21 – First day of Hanukkah and first day of winter
- Sat., Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve
- Sun., Dec. 25 – Christmas Day (Recess-Dec. 26-27, 2011)
- Mon., Dec. 26 – First day of Kwanzaa
- Sat., Dec. 31 – New Year’s Eve
- Mon., Jan. 1 – New Year’s Day (Recess-Jan. 2, 2011)

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A Message from Mike

The directors and I have been meeting with the ASIs, business officials, and technology directors from our component districts to discuss our services. We have used this time to talk about the services to which the districts already subscribe and services that they might be considering. We have also used these opportunities to find out about each district’s priorities for the coming budget year. It has been refreshing to hear the many positive comments about our services and staff. Districts have expressed faith in our services and in many cases a desire to increase services with us. Sadly these positive comments have often been qualified with something like, “it all depends on the budget.”

In addition to helping us identify districts’ priorities, these conversations are also a critical part of our budget development process. As you know, BOCES can’t carry money over from one budget year to the next. State law requires us to break even by the end of the year because on July 1, we start over. In order to determine our budget for the next year, we have to identify an accurate charge for each service based on guidelines established by the Right Pricing Committee. This year, given the property tax cap, we have to keep our rate increases as low as possible – 2% or less.

As you can imagine, this is a complicated process. The rates for each service depend on how many districts participate in that service. It is during these early meetings with the districts that we try to get a sense of whether they plan to increase or decrease their participation in BOCES services. And remember that these commitments are very preliminary. Districts are not required to commit to what they are purchasing until May 1. I will continue to keep you posted as we move through this process.

You might find this [TED Talk from Bill Gates](#) about state budgets interesting. While Gates's focus is on California, the themes certainly apply to New York State with respect to the effects of state budgets on schools.

www.AskCarolyn.info (now a real website)

❖ Staff Kudos

- ❖ Diane Smith received this compliment for her great presentation last week at the OCM/Oswego Business Officials group meeting, from Michael Sheperd, Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services, Oswego County BOCES:

"I would like to extend a formal thank you from our group to everyone for helping to arrange this engagement and to Diane for her great presentation. It was (as Larry stated) exactly what we were looking for, and we probably could have gone all day on that topic alone! Really good stuff and Diane's approach was efficient, informative, and very well received. Sincerely, Mike"

- ❖ Dana Bowers has taken the lead on implementing a NEW open-source media distribution system called Kaltura. Kaltura allows districts to seamlessly embed video into their district webpages. Recently, serious server issues arose bringing down the whole system. Dana responded immediately to the problem late into Friday evening to offer uninterrupted service. His selflessness and leadership are appreciated.
- ❖ Judy Newbery's eagle eye on WinCap helped us avert a potential disaster. She noticed that a P.O. was hung up as pending. It was for materials needed for a series of workshops that Mike is conducting for over 120 people during three days. Judy worked with the Business Office to get the P.O. approved and to save the day. Great work Judy!

❖ Staff Reminders

❖ Time and Attendance –

- ✓ If you are requesting a change in your hours for any given day, please send an email to your supervisor, Brenda and me. I will approve, your supervisor will see the request, and Brenda will be aware of the request if any recording needs to be made. This includes two hour absences, flex time, a request to work extra hour(s) on one day to use on a different day, shift of hours for any one day.
- ✓ When you are recording your two hour absence into SEMS, please select the option for two hour absence. Do not select family illness or personal illness.

- ❖ **Holiday Event**—Thursday, Dec. 15—**Back Nine Grill, 3500 East Ave., Rochester, NY**—4:00 PM – We want as many staff to attend as possible. *\$15.00 and a fun wrapped ornament (ornament is optional) will cover wings, shrimp cocktail, meatballs, flat bread pizza and your first beverage.* Send me an email and your \$15.00. Don't miss the fun!

- Carolyn

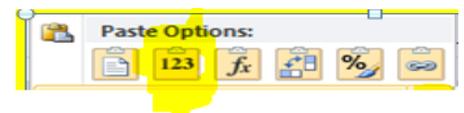
Technology Tip of the Week

Thanks to Diane Smith for sharing this Tip of the Week:

Changing Case-Excel

It's easy to convert data from one case to another using the "Proper" function in Excel, which capitalizes the first letter in each text string and converts all other letters to lowercase.

1. Insert two columns next to data to be changed.
2. In the second column insert the formula and copy it to all cells=Proper (A2)
3. Copy the second column (B) and put the cursor in the third column (C)
4. Right click in the **Paste Options** area and click on the **Values** icon. (123) (this converts the formula in B to data in column C)
5. You can now delete columns A and B as the good data is now in column C.



	A	B	C
1	Original Data (cell A2)	Function =Proper(A2)	Copy, Paste Special, Values
2	ALL UPPER CASE	All Upper Case	All Upper Case
3	I'M IN NEW YORK STATE	I'M In New York State	I'M In New York State
4	MORRIS KODE	Morris Kode	Morris Kode
5	Original Data (cell A5)	Function =Upper(A5)	
6	My report title	MY REPORT TITLE	
7	Original Data (cell A7)	Function =Lower(A7)	
8	ALL UPPER CASE	all upper case	

Jeremiah's Jottings

Update from 15 Linden

As Steve mentioned in a previous newsletter, the noise from 15 Linden has been intense at times. Those of you who aren't in the building may not know what is going on over there/here. 15 Linden Park has needed renovations for many years. However, there were many more urgent needs within our organization for O & M to address. With the reconstruction that happened over the past couple of summers, 15 Linden was now in the queue for some much needed TLC (tender loving care). What has also helped to move us up on the priority list is that after an inspection last summer, it was discovered that we had a number of items that were actually out of code. As we further explored we found that even some of the items that were technically in code (accessibility for one) were functionally not truly meeting the code. For example, although the front entrance was technically wheel chair accessible, due to the way the door opened and the tight entranceway, it was not actually possible for many types of wheelchairs to make it into the building from that main entrance. We are very excited about the changes and are extremely grateful to O & M that they are able to spend some time with us.

Help Desk

When looking at a help call, there are a couple of decisions that need to be made to ensure that we are supportive. One of those is the priority that we give the calls that come in. As part of the new help desk system we have looked at our levels of priority and responsiveness around each priority. It is important that we all work from the same understanding of what these levels mean. After researching other systems, reading Gartner articles and talking with other BOCES/RIC help desks, we have put the following list together. You will see that we have listed a SLA or Service Level Agreement for each level of priority.

Urgent

- Service or portions of service are non-functioning
- A large group of individuals cannot do their job
- *SLA: System due time is in 8 business hours (1 day)*

High

- Individual cannot do their job
- Service is still functioning, but is being interrupted or has a bug impacting the whole service or a large portion of the service
- *SLA: System due time is 25 business hours (3 days and 1 hour)*

Medium

- Individual's daily work is impacted
- Service is functioning, but not at ideal
- *SLA: System due time is in 40 business hours (5 days)*

Low

- Individual requesting enhancements, upgrades, or a fix which does not impact work
- Service: updates, enhancements, and requests
- Has a timeline of 1 week or more
- *SLA: System has no due time set*

Pending – Parts Ordered

- *SLA: System due time is in 40 business hours (5 days)*

Pending – Customer Approval

- Holds the ticket pending a response from the customer
- *SLA: System due time is in 40 business hours (5 days)*

Resolved

- Let's the customer know the problem is fixed, but gives them a chance to say it is still an issue before the ticket closes. If the customer says it is fixed or does not respond the ticket will automatically close in 12 business hours (3 days)

What happens if we miss our response time? The system will email the person assigned to the ticket when the ticket is nearing the end of the response time. If the ticket is not resolved when the time runs out, the system will automatically upgrade the status of that item and will contact the person assigned to the ticket, the administrator of that service and, in some cases, the person who submitted the ticket. This will allow everyone to realize that perhaps there is more that needs to be done with that ticket than we at first realized or sometimes that the person to whom it was assigned is out sick and needs someone else to handle it.

If you would like to provide final feedback or thoughts about the help desk system before it goes live on January 3, 2012, please join us in Conference Room 1 A/B on December 20, 2011, 1:00-2:00 PM.

-Jeremiah

Up to the TASC

On December 2nd, the New York State PBIS Technical Assistance Center and the Regional Special Education Technical Assistance Support Center Behavior Specialists hosted a one-day session with Lucille Eber. The regional event, took place at the Rochester City School District's Central office building on West Broad Street.

Participants were provided an opportunity to explore the continuum of supports across the tree tiered system with a focus on data tools and behavioral interventions for groups of students and individuals with higher levels of need. Connections were made between Response to Intervention, IDEA, the Social and Emotional Learning Standards and PBIS.

With nearly 90 people in attendance, from 11 districts in the surrounding region, this was a great opportunity for networking and building collaborative relationships. Thank you to Rochester City Schools for collaborating with the Mid-West RSE-TASC to find a space large enough to host this event!

-The TASC Team

Steve's Space



How Monroe #1 BOCES and District Equipment is Recycled...

Have you ever wondered about the recycling process for technology returned to us from districts? No? Good...You have a life. However, if you are still curious, here is a link to the company that BOCES contracts with to recycle all district equipment. [This link is obviously their advertising video.](#) We are not promoting this company over another; however, you might find the process interesting. There is even an award winning performance given in this video by one of our very own. See if you can identify him.

-Steve

Connecting with a Colleague

Each week, a staff member will be randomly selected to complete a brief questionnaire to help us get to know him or her.

This week we are connecting with **Ken Owens!**

- **Primary Responsibilities:** *“Right now, I support WBER our radio station, WHD (the helpdesk system), and whatever needs attention.”*
- **How long have you worked at BOCES?** *“Fifteen plus years. Before that, about fifteen years for US (and British) Navy as an Engineering Sub-Contract (Unisys Corporation.)”*
- **What is your favorite part of your job?** *“Mostly the people I interact with each day, and I rarely am presented with the same problem twice, so each day is something different. Having my cube located across from Cherie Nothnagle was...but she is moving now so we are sad about that.”*
- **What do you enjoy doing in your free time?** *“I am working on a 1988 Jeep, a 1983 Honda 750 Shadow motorcycle. I am an avid self-taught woodworker (some here have pieces of my work) and a baker. For the holidays, I'll bake 100 plus dozen cookies. There will be twenty plus in my house to decorate them.”*
- **What is the one thing you would like people to know about you?** *“I have the nickname “big bear” for a reason.”*
- **Is there anything else you would like to share?** *“Just found out that Marcy and I will be grandparents again in June for the second time.”*



Look for a different colleague to be profiled each week. If you are interested in participating before your name is “randomly” selected, please see Carolyn or Mike.
