

# Technology Newsletter

Fall 2007

## PowerSchool Update

This past summer, the old, tired, PowerSchool server that was implemented in 2002-03 was replaced with a new, more robust server. In addition, a newer version of PowerSchool, called PowerSchool Premier was installed and our database was migrated over to the new server. PowerSchool Premier utilizes a SQL database, which is a more industry standard database architecture that will make future data integration with other student applications more feasible. The other major change was the introduction of PowerTeacher, which included a new web-based Gradebook program.

The previous PowerSchool teacher portal referred to as "PowerSchool Teacher" was replaced with a new portal called simply "PowerTeacher". The new web-based Gradebook is accessed via a link from the PowerTeacher main page. The new Gradebook replaced PowerGrade, which was a client/server application. The new web-based Gradebook provides some new functionality that was not present in PowerGrade. There are still some functions, such as the seating chart that are not yet available, but will be included in a future program release. The main benefit of the new Gradebook is the ability for teachers to access their classes from any computer that has Internet access. Teachers are no longer limited to doing this from computers that had to be logged on to their school network.



## Café Services/NUTRIKIDS

The introduction of Café Services as the food service provider for TRSD also included the implementation of NUTRIKIDS, a Food Service

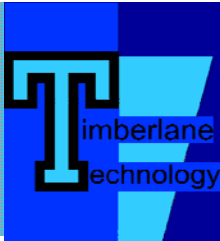
Management computer application. Included in NUTRIKIDS is a Point of Sale (POS) component, and MyNutrikids.com, an online prepayment system.

NUTRIKIDS POS utilizes touch screen terminals in the cafeteria serving lines to record student and staff breakfast and lunch purchases. Student photos provided by our school photographers have recently been imported into NUTRIKIDS for display at the serving line terminals. With MyNutrids.com, parents can enter prepayments into their child's account, and staff can do the same for their own account.

This project was a major undertaking that involved the work of many, many folks, in a relatively short time period. Implementation of NUTRIKIDS included the creation of the initial student and staff databases, creating a centralized database folder accessible district-wide, installation of the POS program on various computers, and setting up and configuring the POS terminals in all of the schools. It was not too long ago last August when all of this stuff was still in packed in boxes in the boardroom at the district office! I truly believe the overall planning, continuing project communication and coordination of all of the players, and plain hard work made this project a huge success.

## New Wide Area Network

The recent integration of our voice, data, and video communications into a single service provider network has provided the district with new wide area network (WAN) capabilities that did not exist with our previous disparate service providers. Our new district-wide network utilizes multi-protocol label switching (MPLS) to provide private, secure data transmission across the network as well as support for Quality of Service (QOS) voice and



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video, using high speed T1 lines. Danville Elementary is awaiting the completion of some prerequisite infrastructure upgrades being conducted by Verizon and is expected to be on the new network this January.

Data and video traffic was moved to the new network at the end of last August and the voice traffic is expected to be completely moved over by the end of this month. The timing of establishing the data links at the end of August was most timely in that it was required in order to support the NUTRIKIDS POS transaction database updates that were to start happening the first day of school. Full utilization of the new WAN will require reconfiguration of existing servers, and this is scheduled to be done this coming summer. Future network plans include the creation of a district-wide email domain, single district-wide user account, and the use of other WAN Management tools. This system also provides a phone system upgrade path that can support VOIP.



### **Upgrade to Waterford Labs**

All Waterford labs in the district were upgraded to the new server version of the software. This required setting up an additional server and adding new cabling to each building. We will now be able to run the program from the classrooms as well as the labs. The labs are up and running and we have started installing in K-2 classrooms.

### **MyLearningPlan.com**

If you have any questions or problems with MyLearningPlan.com, please see your building representative to the Professional Development Committee. They are:

Atkinson – Debbie Bell  
Central – Cathy Riley  
Danville – Charlene Antonakos, Chris Dube  
HS – Terri Demaine, Carolyn Finn  
MS – Ann Day, Lois Paul  
North – Faith Emerson  
Pollard – Pat Collins, Delores Coyle Quirk



### **Moodle and E-Portfolios**

The district has decided to use a product called Moodle to create student ePortfolios as required by the state ICT Literacy Standards. Moodle has a Portfolio Module that will help students and teachers collect artifacts very easily. Moodle was developed as a course management system so there are added benefits to using this product for the ePortfolios. Teachers will be able to create online “courses” on which they can post homework, post messages, share materials, create calendars and give quizzes. The portfolios and courses can be accessed from any computer with an Internet connection. Students and parents will be able to access the information from home. Our Moodle site is [web.timberlane.net](http://web.timberlane.net). Anyone who has a district login account, staff or students can login. We will be offering more Demos and Training in the near future.



### **Middle School Mobile Laptop Lab**

The Middle School now has a mobile lab with 20 laptops. We hope to add more laptops next year to make it 30. This lab can be rolled to any classroom for student use.