



# Connected

The Newsletter of the Miami Valley Educational Computer Association



WINTER 2002

<http://www.mveca.org>

1-937-767-1468

## MVECA STAFF

Gary Bosserman - (3105)  
Director of Operations

Laura Gallogly - (3102)  
EMIS Software Specialist

Rebecca Nininger - (3108)  
SIS Software Specialist

Jim Pesch - (3103)  
INFOhio Software Specialist

Steven Phipps - (3107)  
Network Specialist

Michelle Powers - (3109)  
Fiscal Software Specialist

Thor Sage - (3101)  
Technology Coordinator

William Schroeder - (3111)  
Video/Distance Learning

Norma K. Stewart - (3104)  
Executive Director

Sue Ann Welsh - (3106)  
Secretary

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## Here's the Latest...



### Systems Update:

**MVECA0 Upgrade** – In September MVECA0, the system that runs the fiscal, student services and Multilis applications was upgraded. An additional processor was added and the main memory was doubled, bringing it to 3 533Mhz Alpha processors and 4 gb memory. The upgrade was needed to handle the additional load generated by an ever-increasing amount of email and the number of districts implementing the entry of requisitions at the building level. This is the first upgrade for this system, which was purchased in 1998.

**Disk Drive Upgrade** – MVECA is in the process of ordering a new disk drive subsystem for MVECA0. The new subsystem will have a storage capacity of around 486gb. The current subsystem has a capacity of around 200gb. The additional capacity will be used to store history files, FISCweb reports and the MonthlyCD reports. In addition to the disk space, a new RAID controller and a new tape drive will be installed. This is the first major upgrade to the disk subsystem, which was also purchased in 1998.

**DASL Update:** A major new release is expected in January 2003 with a new look, and great enhancements. We will be scheduling some DASL Update meetings after the new release is available. If you aren't using DASL, you are missing out on a great resource! Ask MVECA or a user in your district for a demonstration!

### The legislative Technology Task Force and Governor's Commission for Teaching Success

continue to meet. Both groups have as part of their mission to make recommendations about ways to streamline and realign Ohio's current regional service delivery system so it serves as a more effective and efficient infrastructure for delivery of professional development, technology and support services to Ohio's schools.

The Governor's Commission on Teaching Success will be hosting 40 regional focus group meetings to gather information and react to their draft ideas (attendance by invitation only). The full Commission meets again January 8, 2003 to consider comments from the focus groups. Their final report is expected in early 2003. The results of these two commissions could likely affect how districts receive services from MVECA and your other service providers (DA sites, ESCs, RPDCs, SERRCs, Area Media Centers, Ed Techs).

**ODE Survey** - Watch for another on-line survey from ODE in Jan. 2003. ODE will ask for your responses to many questions about your satisfaction with the services your DA site (MVECA) provides. Please do not wait until January to share your thoughts with us. We always welcome your comments and suggestions.



**Annual Report:** MVECA's Annual Report for FY 2002 is included with this newsletter. It is also available on our website.

From what we get, we can make a living;  
what we give, however, makes a life. - Arthur Ashe



## FISCAL UPDATE by Michelle Powers

### Implementation of Employee ID

The employee ID is being added to the software as a feature due to concerns with identity theft. A district can choose to implement the ID's as an optional feature. It is not required. If a district chooses not to implement the ID's, the employee SSN will become the ID.

Overall, USPS is being modified to no longer print or display the true SSN value when a system of ID's is being used. The true SSN of the employee will only be used when required by law or a reporting agency.

If your district decides to implement the IDs for all, the new IDs will print on all the reports. No SSN's will ever print again, except on the W2PROC, RETIRE, OBESRPT, USPEMS and OBES. The software does not allow a selection between printing the IDs and the SSNs.

Discussion on this new feature will be at our Calendar Year End Meeting on Dec. 11, 2002.

Full documentation on this topic can be found at: [http://dl.ssd.oecl.k12.oh.us/ww2/ssd/employeeid/implementation\\_of\\_employee\\_id.pdf](http://dl.ssd.oecl.k12.oh.us/ww2/ssd/employeeid/implementation_of_employee_id.pdf).

## INFOhio UPDATE by Jim Pesch



On November 8, Dave Ambrose came to MVECA to deliver Cataloging Training.

During the Users Group meeting between the training sessions we discussed the need for data cleanup in the library catalogs. This cleanup should occur before we migrate to the SIRSI Unicorn Ecole software. Details of the reports that need to be run to determine the amount of cleanup are available on the MVECA/INFOhio webpage. At this same meeting I also demonstrated a procedure for backup circulation that was developed at MEC in Columbus. This procedure would require the use of Microsoft Excel or a compatible spreadsheet and is only to be used in times when Multilis is not available. Support documents for this procedure are also available on my webpage under NOVEMBER 8th USER GROUP DOCUMENTS.

At the November INFOhio Provider's meeting a representative from OHIONET stated that for training purposes, all Ohio schools were considered members and could attend training sessions at the member rate.

See the training schedule at <http://www.ohionet.org/training/> to see if there is something that meets your needs. Member rates tend to be lower by 25% or more.

Washington Courthouse City and Northeastern Local schools continue to move forward in their automation projects. As of this date nearly all of the 12 schools have received their shelf lists back from Brodart Automation. I anticipate that all data will be loaded before the end of the year and these schools will be able to start circulating materials in January.



## EMIS UPDATE by Laura Gallogly

### Clarification on the SAID screen:

I have had numerous questions about the SAID screen. Below are some FAQ that I hope will help:

#### **Q1: Does every child need an SAID screen with a middle name?**

A1: No. If a child received an SSID with the initial assignment in late August. Then there's no reason to build an SAID screen for them.

#### **Q2: Who does need an SAID screen?**

A2: All students who enrolled after 8/29/02 will need to have an SAID screen. Make sure you complete the required fields on SAID.

#### **Q3: What if a child doesn't have an SAID screen?**

A3: If the child does not have an SAID screen but has an SSID already assigned, then it's OK. If the child does not have an SAID screen and does not have an SSID already assigned, then when the file is resubmitted to PWC for SSID assignment, his/her record will be rejected with missing information.

#### **Q4: When will the SSID screen be loaded?**

A4: As soon as I receive the program and the documentation to load the file from PWC into the SSID screen, the information will be loaded.

#### **Q5: How often will my data be submitted to PWC?**

A5: To start with, MVECA will be submitting data every other day to PWC. If PWC cannot process the submitted data before it's time to resubmit, then we'll have to change the submission process. This still will have to be a trial and error process.

**MORE EMIS NEWS:** As of 11/15/02, all districts have submitted their October FY03 data to ODE. The EMIS 03k database has been created so please remember to make corrections for October data in the EMIS 03K database. If the change affects your June data, please update either SIS and/or EMIS Live database. The EMIS live database will be used for resident school districts December reporting due to ODE by 12/20/02.

At the Nov. State Board Meeting, Mr. Robert Luikart, CIO, Information Technology Office, presented a report titled "Collection of Educational Data - EMIS meets ESEA." The report explained ODE's need to change from a data collection system to a data exchange system, driven by the NCLB Act, ESEA Reauthorization, and SB 1, as well as the need for an agile information/technology system. ODE response has two tracks; EMIS Tactical, a redesign of EMIS to collect student level data now and comply with federal and state requirements, and a strategic plan that would reexamine the education data system, eventually replace EMIS, and move from data collection to data exchanges. Data needs to be exchanged between the state and districts.

The EMIS redesign would take until 2005-06 to complete. ODE has stopped the RFP for the EMIS redesign. The Department will implement an abbreviated timeline for FY03 Year-end EMIS data submissions, moving up the FY03 November reporting date to August 2003.

MVECA will host **training** for the EBSCO product on Tuesday, January 14, 2003. The training is free, but advanced registration is required. INFOhio, through EBSCO, provides thousands of on-line, full text periodicals supporting all levels of K-12 education - students, teachers, administrators. You can access EBSCO through MVECA's website at [www.MVECA.org](http://www.MVECA.org). Click on INFOhio, then on EBSCOhost.

## SIS UPDATE

by Becky Nininger



A SIS Attendance Training has been scheduled for Thursday, December 12, from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. here at MVECA in the Training Room. This SIS Attendance Training will cover basic information and is geared more toward new users than those who have been using SIS for attendance gathering and reporting. If district personnel have additional SIS training needs, please forward those requests to me ([nininger@mveca.org](mailto:nininger@mveca.org)) and, as time and resources permit, I will work to schedule additional training throughout the remainder of the school year.

Many of MVECA's districts have incorporated SWAN into their attendance gathering and reporting procedures. SWAN is a web-based attendance and marks program that enables teachers to take attendance online. The attendance can then be moved into SIS by the office staff to produce attendance reports, letters, etc. SWAN can also be used by teachers to enter marks online for grade cards and/or progress reports. Currently, 14 schools are using SWAN for both attendance and marks entry. Seven additional schools are using SWAN for attendance and six more schools are using SWAN for marks entry.

The SWAN marks entry interface is very similar to the MOLE marks entry interface. The good news is class size is not limited with SWAN as it is with MOLE. Also, SWAN can accommodate the numerous reporting periods needed by schools much more easily than MOLE. Another advantage of using SWAN over MOLE is processing time. MOLE sessions slow down the processing times for all users; SWAN doesn't share this problem. With the many advantages of SWAN over MOLE, MVECA is looking at transitioning our MOLE users to SWAN and, eventually, phasing out MOLE. If you would like additional information regarding SWAN, please contact us here at MVECA.

Because time seems to fly by so quickly, the 'hustle and bustle' of the upcoming holidays will be followed shortly by the 'hustle and bustle' of the end of the first semester. Semester time is always a busy time for schools. If you are aware of any changes to your upcoming semester processing, you are more than welcome to give us a 'heads up' now.

I've enjoyed meeting and talking with many of you over the past few months and I look forward to working with even more of you as the school year progresses.

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20% of today's college students began using computers from the ages of 5 to 8, and an overwhelming 86% of them had gone online compared with 59% of the general population; 72% check e-mail messages at least once a day. Instant messaging, used daily by 12% of the general population, are used by 26% of college students. Nearly 75% say they use the Internet more than they use the library to look for information. *New York Times*, by way of EducationNews:[www.nytimes.com/2002/09/16/technology/16NET.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2002/09/16/technology/16NET.html)

## TECH UPDATE

by Thor Sage



\* Bandwidth is valuable. In an effort to better utilize expensive T1 lines, districts or buildings can opt to block game sites. Blocking game sites could have a significant and positive impact on network response times, as well as the overall technology implementation efforts in your building. Filters can also be customized to allow some educational sites to be accessed, while blocking all others.

\* MVECA is currently utilizing a minimum level of filtering that blocks sites containing content falling into the following categories: sex, gambling, pornography, and illegal activities. Blocking sites in these categories satisfies the requirements of CIPA ([www.ala.org/cipa/](http://www.ala.org/cipa/)). Filters can be customized to include other categories as well. If you're interested in customizing your district's content filtering policy to include game sites or any other category, give MVECA a call.

\* In December, MVECA anticipates the implementation of a change to the content filter that will allow "transparent filtering." A transparent filtering configuration will negate the need for technology personnel to edit the connection settings in web browsers. All Internet requests will automatically flow through the content filter.

\* The MVECA Winter Tech Update, originally scheduled for December 6<sup>th</sup>, is now to be held at the SOITA Conference on Monday, December 9<sup>th</sup> from 2:20 to 3:20. All district personnel interested in finding out how MVECA is answering the technology needs of our member districts are welcome to attend.

\* Passwords on MVECA's K12server are now set to expire every 365 days. K12server account holders will now be required to change their passwords only once a year.

\* Do you have pre-recorded, instructional video content that you would like to post on your MVECA hosted website? We may be able to help. Give us a call.

\* Are there opportunities for your district to acquire fiber connections between school buildings? You may want to check with your local municipal offices regarding any cable franchise agreement negotiations or fiber installation projects in your area.

### ONEnet exploring fiber project:

The ONEnet Committee and its participating agencies understand the need for increased bandwidth for the K-12 community. The ONEnet Committee approved the use of funds to study possible participation in a *statewide fiber backbone project* currently being developed by OARnet, the Ohio Board of Regents, and the Ohio SuperComputer Center. This study should conclude by Dec. 30.

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"Act as if what you do makes a difference.  
It does." — William James

## DISTANCE LEARNING UPDATE



by Bill Schroeder

### Video Over IP and You

The world of videoconferencing falls into three different standards: ISDN (H.320), ATM (H.321), and Video over IP (H.323). All schools receiving funding for their videoconferencing systems from Ohio SchoolNet use the H.321 standard. This is fine for calls within the State of Ohio video network. However, once you leave that network you are faced with the issue of compatibility. Currently the majority of videoconferencing sites outside of the State of Ohio network operate under the H.320 standard. To make this conversion you must schedule and use a bridge at DAS located in Columbus. The future of videoconferencing is the H.323 standard. Many sites that support H.320 are switching to the H.323 standard. This is to our advantage because we can configure our videoconferencing systems to operate under the H.323 standard. By using the H.323 standard you can directly connect to another H.323 site thus bypassing the middleman in Columbus. To configure your sys-

tem for H.323 your district or building technology coordinator will have to assign a static IP address to the videoconferencing system which will then be mapped to an outside IP address by MVECA. There are also a few configuration changes to be made on the system to allow it to do H.323 videoconferencing. Another advantage of H.323 videoconferencing is the cost of expansion. You can purchase H.323 videoconferencing systems for a fraction of the cost of an ATM system. On average you can purchase an H.323 system for less than \$3000. These systems are also extremely easy to move. They are portable; you can carry them in a small carrying case. On a switched network, these units can be plugged into any network drop. Combined with the use of an LCD projector, they can produce a quality image to meet the needs of any sized class. If you are interested in learning more on H.323 videoconferencing, contact me at [schroeder@mveca.org](mailto:schroeder@mveca.org).



### IMPORTANT DATES

Tues., Dec. 3	Tech Planning Tool training at MVECA	Wed., Jan. 1	MVECA OFFICES CLOSED
Tues., Dec. 3	IVDL Summer Institute Follow Up 8:30	Mon., Jan. 6	EMIS Technical assistance at MDECA
Wed., Dec. 4	Greene County EMIS working session	Tues., Jan. 14	EBSCOhost Training at MVECA
Mon., Dec. 9	Tech Coord Mtg at SOITA 2:50- 3:50	Thurs., Jan. 16	MVECA Board Meeting 8:30 a.m.
Dec. 9-10-11	SOITA Conference - Dayton	Mon., Jan. 20	MVECA OFFICES CLOSED
Wed., Dec. 11	Fiscal Meeting 9:30-noon	Feb. 3-5	SchoolNet Conference - Columbus
Wed., Dec. 11	Clark County EMIS working session	Mon., Feb. 17	MVECA OFFICES CLOSED
Thurs., Dec. 12	SIS Attendance Training 9:30 -11:30 a.m.	Thurs., Feb. 20	MVECA Board Meeting 8:30 a.m
Wed., Dec. 18	Clinton-Fayette-Highland EMIS work session	Sat., Mar. 15	Nat. Teacher Training Institute Wkshp 8:30
Wed., Dec. 25	MVECA OFFICES CLOSED	Thurs., Mar. 20	MVECA Board Meeting



**330 E. Enon Road**  
**Yellow Springs, OH 45387**