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VITALNews

Virginia Initiative for Technology and Administrative Leadership



The View from the Conference

This issue of the *VITALNews* is late because we wanted to report to you from the annual Department of Education's Educational Technology Leadership Conference which took place at the Hotel Roanoke and Conference Center last week. The theme of this year's conference was ***Technology Planning: Putting The Pieces Together***.

Despite a snowstorm that made Roanoke a winter wonderland, the conference was an inspiring reminder of the power of technology to influence all areas of education.

Dr. Larry S. Anderson, founder of the National Center for Technology Planning, provided the keynote speech. His practical approach to technology planning focuses less on hardware and software and more on the people who will be interacting with the technology. Anderson asks the question, "We planned for technology but are we better off?" And, in fact, Anderson reminds us that often the important part of planning is not coming up with answers, but rather the questions we ask. He suggests a plan should have three elements: descriptive (what are we doing now), prescriptive (what do we want to be doing), and subscriptive (encouraging buy in from the stakeholders). If you're interested in further information about technology planning, visit the NCTP website (<http://www.nctp.com/>).

Dr. Timothy R. Jenney, Superintendent of Virginia Beach City Public Schools, was the featured speaker. His presentation ***Virginia Beach Schools: Technological Innovation on the Fast***

Track discussed the strategies employed by VBCPS over the span of six years to put technology on the fast track. His presentation included a virtual tour of the Advanced Technology Center, which opened in November. To learn more about the center, visit its website at <http://www.vbatc.com/>.

Lan Neugent, Assistant Superintendent for Technology, discussed the new six-year technology plan which is in the final development stages and will be in place by next spring. The plan focuses on six areas: appropriate and effective integration, connectivity, educational applications including the web-based SOL initiative, professional development and accountability. The report will identify targets in each six areas that answer the question: "What do we want to see happen?" Overall, the plan looks at the benefit of information technology to teaching and learning.

The conference breakout sessions focused on using technology to teach the SOL, data warehousing, using data to make decisions and guide planning, and assistive technology. Several sessions discussed the role of the technology integration specialist in the school.

If you didn't get to Roanoke this year, plan now to attend the next Educational Technology Leadership Conference. It will be held at the Hotel Roanoke, December 10-12, 2003.

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New Products Offer Solutions

A wide range of exhibitors at the Technology Leadership conference showed their latest products to meet the needs of educators.

Plagiarism Prevention

Turnitin.com is one of the leaders in plagiarism prevention software. This web-based resource works by comparing a student paper to billions of pages of content. Teachers are provided with an originality report that shows the level of similarity to documents within the turnitin database or on the Internet. A color coding system identifies specific passages that have been copied. An added feature of turnitin is Peer Review that allows students to evaluate papers. Want to know more? Visit the website at <http://turnitin.com>.

Streamlining IEPs

IEP.Online is a web-based solution to writing individualized education plans. The secure interface helps divisions manage the entire IEP process and is easily customizable. With Medicaid billing and state reporting capabilities, this program can help move the focus away from paperwork and onto the students.

Users can access IEP.Online either through the Internet or through the school network. It can be integrated with a variety of student information services including SASI, PowerSchool, Open District, MacSchool/WinSchool and Star Student.

You can learn more about IEP.Online at its website: <http://www.ieponline.net>.

Students Helping Teachers

When the computer in the classroom freezes, the teacher often turns to a student to make it work again. But the Generation Yes program goes beyond

simple troubleshooting and maintenance, to create partnerships between students and teachers to integrate technology in the classroom. During a semester long class, students learn technology skills to help teachers use technology to deliver more effective lessons. Each partnership creates a technology-infused lesson plan or project. You can learn about this course and the others offered by Generation Yes by visiting their website: <http://www.genyes.org>

Leaders are Readers

In the past two months, I've heard three different presenters mention the importance of reading to a professional development community. Each of them made required reading part of leadership meetings. Groups grappled with new ideas and learned together.

Does this idea intrigue you? Here's a resource to start with: The Education Development Center took a national study tour of 11 school divisions that have employed different models to integrate technologies. The study describes the factors that influence the successful integration of technology. The article is available online: <http://www2.edc.org/LNT/news/Issue4/cct14sum.htm>.

Coming Soon...The VSTE Conference

2003 Annual State Technology
Conference

March 9th, 10th, and 11th

Hyatt Crystal City

<http://www.vste.org>