

Home Base Biweekly Update



February 27, 2014

NEW THIS WEEK

- **2,000+ Join in Learning, Sharing at Home Base Symposium**
- **What Went on in that Hub? Answer: Plenty**
- **Schoolnet: If You Haven't Tried It Lately, You May Be Surprised**
- **From the Field: 'We Love the Student Portal' For Class Registration**
- **From the Field: Hertford County Has Begun Parent Portal Rollout**
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NEW THIS WEEK

2,000+ Join in Learning, Sharing at Home Base Symposium

More than 2,000 North Carolina educational staffers came together in Greensboro Feb. 17-19 for the first-ever Home Base Symposium. This transition year from the former NC WISE conference to this new project-wide symposium was packed full of learning, collaboration and problem solving.

Ninety NCDPI, Pearson and district level staff presented a whopping 170 sessions. Presenters and organizers commented on attendees' dedication, the amount of hard work that's gone on statewide up until this point and the commitment to continued learning. Yes, we continue to tackle what comes our way as we smooth out the rollout, but there is a true appreciation of the group effort it's taken.

That appreciation goes two ways: Attendees took time to express their gratitude regarding the individual care and attention they received from symposium contributors and commented on the obvious dedication of staff throughout the state.

What Went on in that Hub? Answer: Plenty

Also premiering at the Home Base Symposium was the Pearson Hub, humming with activity as district and charter teams sat with Pearson project managers, Home Base Support Center (HBSC) staff and others to solve problems and collaborate on local interests and needs.

The joint was hopping: nearly 300 people shared 60 issues to be investigated and resolved. Top issues included, honor rolls, report cards, transcripts and Principal's Monthly Reports (PMRs).

In addition, Pearson hosted a Meet and Greet Reception for all participants giving school district staff an opportunity to network with other Home Base coordinators and managers as well as Pearson regional, state and national PowerSchool, Schoolnet and OpenClass development and services experts.

Finally, on the last day of the Symposium, Pearson and NCDPI hosted roundtable discussions for district superintendents and technology directors.

Schoolnet: If You Haven't Tried It Lately, You May Be Surprised

Schoolnet performance has improved considerably in the past three weeks. Pearson added another five servers to the web tier, raising the total number of servers from five to 15, a 200% increase. Additional coding changes also were implemented that improved application efficiency.

So if you've heard about sluggish performance or just haven't gotten around to trying Schoolnet, now's the time to give it a thorough test drive.

From the Field: 'We Love the Student Portal' For Class Registration

"We loved it," proclaims a data manager at Caldwell County Schools. Tamara Dillard, data manager/registrar for South Caldwell High, is talking about their students' class registration process, which occurred much quicker thanks to Home Base.

"We registered over 1,100 students in five days," she touts. "Our old process took us three and a-half weeks." Her team also registered their middle school feeder students, 497 in all. "We registered all in two days. We had wonderful cooperation from our middle schools to make sure the students were successfully logged into the student portal.

"We are using the online request. Our faculty and students are very excited about using this tool. This is actually something we have been waiting on for a long time!

"Looking back, I would 'trust' the system more now. We already have our plan for next year to open up class registration to students Feb. 1 to 28. They will have the ability to sign up within that month. We do an advisory period during our week to give students access to the internet.

"I met with one of our high schools within our LEA today and they are also registering online. We have been waiting on the capability to register students with this process, and we are super excited to have the components to make this possible."

From the Field: Hertford County Has Begun Parent Portal Rollout

Hertford County, one of the Partnership LEA sites, has successfully implemented the Parent Portal at four of their schools with plans to roll out to the rest of the county next month. Parents of students at the first wave of schools received Alertnow calls and were

invited to information sessions for an overview of what the Parent Portal has to offer. Brochures were sent home with progress reports prior to sessions. Additional school-level community outreach is planned, and the district announced the news to their local media.

District leaders said the brochure, news release and an easily identified information link on the district website are keys to the successful exposure of the Parent Portal and its benefits to the community. They plan to continue school-level outreach through a focused effort to communicate directly with parents at open houses, quarterly celebrations and other special programs.

Weekly Project Status Webinar and Online Reporting Continue

After a break because of Symposium, the Weekly Project Status Webinar for Superintendents resumed Feb. 25. CFO/CIO Philip Price opened the hour by first thanking everyone for participating in Symposium, and then acknowledging the Herculean feat districts pulled off on the tight deadline to supply the much-needed Month 1 and 2 PMRs. (The PMRs are important because the information they provide is key to developing the state budget for public schools.)

This standing, one-hour Tuesday webinar features Home Base project leaders highlighting Successes and Recent Accomplishments, Major Attention Areas, Future Updates/Releases Calendar plus Weekly Performance Indicators. The webinar covers all aspects of Home Base: PowerSchool, Schoolnet, OpenClass, Educator Effectiveness, Professional Development and updates from the Home Base Support Center that include the Top 5 issues of the week.

MORE INFO: All these report areas are now found online, as well, including links to the Professional Development Schedule and Training Calendars. Start here:

<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/homebase/status/>

Next Maintenance Weekend Is March 14-17

The next scheduled Home Base maintenance weekend is March 14-17. Remember that during maintenance, you cannot access Home Base.

View the list of all scheduled maintenance weekends here:

http://www.nc-sis.org/Documents/maintenance/Home_Base_Maintenance_Sched.pdf

Upcoming Webinars Cover Custom Reports, Data Analysis

We want to bring these three webinars to your attention with the target audiences noted. Each webinar lasts from 3:30-4:30 p.m.:

- “Custom Reports and Publishing” for District Administrators on Thursday, March 6, covers creating student sets, custom reports, spreadsheet analysis, publishing reports and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Register here:

<https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/778367752>

- “Data Analysis” for Teachers on Thursday, March 13, explains what data are available to

teachers, as well as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Register here:
<https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/163326432>

- “Custom Reports” for School Administrators on Thursday, March 20, covers creating student sets and creating custom reports as well as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Register here: <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/247705289>.

Webinars New on the Web: Test Item Review, Building Your Item Bank

These two webinars are newly posted online at the top of our webinar page, <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/homebase/resources/videos/webinars/>, but you also can access them through their vimeo links, which are listed:

- Home Base IIS Webinar for School Administrators - Test Item Review Process that aired Feb. 20 can be accessed directly at <https://vimeo.com/87222666>. NCDPI Policy and Planning Analyst Kayla Siler covers the test item review process school administrators can follow to review, approve and share assessment items created by teachers and staff within their school. Also discussed was test item submission process school administrators can follow to submit items to be shared within their district and ultimately the state item bank.
- Home Base IIS Webinar for Teachers - Building Your Item Bank that aired Feb. 13 can be accessed directly at <https://vimeo.com/86653012>. In it, Ms. Siler reviews how teachers can create test items for use when building assessments in Schoolnet. Also discussed was the test item submission process teachers can follow to submit items to be shared within their school, district and ultimately the state item bank.

MORE INFO: If you access the videos on the Home Base page, you’ll find the accompanying slide presentations that you can download as well.

HOME BASE WEEKLY UPDATE INFO

We encourage you to share this Update, and for past issues of Home Base Weekly and Biweekly Updates, please visit

<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/homebase/updates/biweekly/?year=2013>

*****LINKS: PC users might need to press the CTRL button when clicking on a hyperlink in this document.**