

Home Base Biweekly Update



June 6, 2014

NEW THIS WEEK

- **New on the Web: Opt-In Progress Now Part of Weekly Project Status Reporting**
- **Emergency Maintenance Weekend Set for June 6-9**
- **From the Field: Vance County Experiences PowerScheduler Up Close and Personal**
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IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

- **Evaluation System Closes June 30**

NEW THIS WEEK

New on the Web: Opt-In Progress Now Part of Weekly Project Status Reporting

Even though the Home Base opt-in deadline is July 15, as of this writing, there are already 47 LEAs and 11 charter schools that have officially opted in, meaning all their teachers, staff and students will be benefitting from the full suite of technology tools in Home Base for 2014-15 — that's 330,496 students so far.

The list of opt-in districts and charter schools, along with their ADM count and the running total and percentage, is now part of our Weekly Project Status report that's updated online each Tuesday. It also features a color-coded state map. Access it here:

<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/homebase/status/opt-in/>.

MORE INFO: Both the opt-in form and a short description of what you get for the \$4 per ADM price are found on the Home Base landing page online just above the Home Base Toolkit:

<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/homebase/>. Or, access them directly at:

<http://forms.ncpublicschools.gov/home-base/home-base-opt-in>

and <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/homebase/home/opt-in.pdf>.

Emergency Maintenance Weekend Set for June 6-9

The previously announced June 20-23 maintenance weekend has been canceled due to preparations for the End-of-Year Process. However, an emergency maintenance weekend has been scheduled for June 6-9 to allow Pearson to perform needed updates which are necessary for graduation, state reporting and end of year.

The Home Base system will shut down on Friday, June 6, at 5 p.m. Once maintenance is completed a message will be sent to notify users that the system is up and available for use. Home Base will be returned to service no later than 12 p.m., Sunday, June 8.

Remember: A maintenance shutdown means there's no access to Home Base, so please plan accordingly. We thank you for your patience as we move through EOY.

Last issue, we announced the 2014-15 maintenance weekend schedule which is also posted online. The dates are:

- 2014 — July 18-21, none planned for August, Sept. 19-22, Oct. 17-20, Nov. 14-17 and Dec. 12-15;
- 2015 — none planned for January, Feb. 6-8, March 13-16, April 24-27, May 15-18, none planned for June.

MORE INFO: For detailed information on the maintenance weekend updates, please read the May 30 and June 6 NC Reporting Release Notes located at http://www.nc-sis.org/Documents/requirements/2014_North_Carolina_Release_Notes_May30_June6.pdf. For reference, the maintenance weekend schedule is at http://www.nc-sis.org/Documents/maintenance/Home_Base_Maintenance_Sched.pdf, and you can email questions or comments to ncsis@dpi.nc.gov.

From the Field: Vance County Experiences PowerScheduler Up Close and Personal

Vance County's high school counselors and students describe the PowerSchool feature that allows students to go online and request their courses for the new school year to be a great benefit.

Using the PowerSchool application, high school teams made up of counselors, data managers and administrators, designed their student course request screens by grade level. They determined which courses should be available for each student at their grade level and posted on-screen instructions for the students. Once the screens were completed, counselors met with students —including rising ninth-graders still in middle school — in computer labs so that they could log into their PowerSchool accounts and select their 2014-15 courses online.

Advantages school counselors and administrators cited with PowerScheduler included:

- built-in parameters to prevent too many or too few course selections per student;
- built-in parameters to force students to select the correct number of courses from each category, such as English, math, science, social studies and electives;
- a requirement for students to enter alternate electives in case of scheduling conflicts; and
- the ability to enter course requests into the system early enough to review course request tallies and identify the courses with the greatest student interest.

"I loved being able to do registration online this year," said Carolyn Powell, the senior class counselor at Northern Vance High School. "It saved a great deal of tedious keying in of course numbers for the counselors. I also thought it was helpful that a counselor was with the students when they registered. We could guide them with course selections compatible with their future plans and/or graduation needs."

Shirley Lewis, the senior class counselor at Southern Vance High School, also thought the PowerSchool online course selection application was extremely helpful.

"Overall, I like the scheduling feature of PowerSchool, because it was very user friendly for the student and me," Lewis said. "It helped me assist at least 10 students in a registration session as opposed to seeing only one student at a time. It allowed the student to be more responsible for scheduling, because they actually had to read their transcript and had to click and select their classes for the next year. Thus, making them more knowledgeable of the classes they have already taken. Since they could not submit the registration form until I had proofed their selected classes, we both had another chance to check and balance their selection."

Powell said the feature she liked the most was the setup of the pages students saw to select the courses. "Students could only view the courses they could take for their grade level, so a rising ninth-grader could not register for a course that was only available for 11th- or 12th-graders," she added.

Lewis said she liked that students could not submit their course registration until they had chosen eight courses for the school year (four are required for each semester). "This option left no chance for a student to not choose the required eight courses," she explained.

Students also like the convenience and ease of selecting their courses online.

"It was a lot better, because you knew what you would be taking right away and did not have to keep coming back to the counselor," said sophomore Faith Young of Northern Vance High School. "I hope they do it online again next year."

"Yes, it was helpful, because sometimes the counselors don't talk to you," added Toscano Villines, a sophomore at Southern Vance High School. "In the past, we would just fill out the registration form and the counselor would put it in. This time they had to talk to us, because we had to put the classes in. It was much faster and we chose what we wanted."

MORE INFO: To share your Home Base experiences with other readers here, contact Kathy Newbern, Kathy.Newbern@dpi.nc.gov.

New on the Web: Reporting System Performance Issues for Schoolnet

A new document has been posted on the Home Base website Resources page that outlines the steps for submitting a Home Base Support Center ticket specifically related to the system performance of Schoolnet. This document will help your ticket contain the details required to determine and resolve performance-based issues. Access it here: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/homebase/resources/support-center/> by clicking on "Reporting System Performance Issues for Schoolnet."

While on the Resources page, you'll notice a new look for the list of "leads" for school districts and charter schools for each component within Home Base. If you need to change your listing or notice an error, please email Kathy Newbern at kathy.newbern@dpi.nc.gov. We know change happens, and we'd like to keep this list as current as possible as these contacts reach out on your behalf to the HBSC and are recognized users for logging Remedy tickets.

NC Educator Evaluation System: Summer Update

Enhancements to the Educator Evaluation system, based on LEA feedback, will launch shortly after the system closes June 30. The system reopens on July 14, and we appreciate the time district leaders have taken to work with us on changes to make the system more intuitive.

It is very important for all required evaluation processes to be captured in the online tool. During the initial implementation of the tool this year, some districts and charters experienced early data issues which impacted their ability to complete all activities within the system in a timely manner.

Some of these users still have paper-based records of evaluation activities that must be recorded in the online tool. To support the ability of these districts and schools to complete all required evaluation processes online, work flow will be disabled now through June 30. For each teacher, we do suggest that districts work backward from summative to observations, as the state must have summary data ratings to report in aggregate to the State Board of Education.

MORE INFO: Contact Educator Effectiveness Director Lynne Johnson at lynne.johnson@dpi.nc.gov.

Home Base Content Can Benefit from Governor's Teacher Network (GTN) Initiative

Governor Pat McCrory, in partnership with the NC Department of Public Instruction, established the Governor's Teacher Network to recognize and reward teachers who can help advance Race to the Top (RttT) funded educational remodeling efforts across the state.

Approximately 450 outstanding teachers from across North Carolina have been selected through an application process to serve for one year as content experts and professional development creators and facilitators. Network teachers will develop projects designed to spread understanding and use of new resources and practices in their schools and districts. Part of this work will be included in Home Base as content to benefit educators statewide.

Network teachers will participate in specialized training related to their projects June 30 and July 1, and will receive coaching and support from NCDPI staff plus \$10,000 for the Home Base instructional resources and online learning module components produced during the 2014-15 year.

MORE INFO: GTN Executive Director Theresa Perry at Theresa.Perry@dpi.nc.gov.

Professional Development System District Pilot Is Under Way

The Home Base Professional Development System (HBPDS) pilot launched May 22 and continues through July 18. This process will inform future system improvements for districts choosing to opt-in for local functionality.

The twelve districts participating in the pilot (Beaufort, Carteret, Wilson, Northampton, Columbus, Moore, Montgomery, Asheville City, Elizabeth City-Pasquotank, Stokes, Union, and Newton-Conover) will provide feedback regarding the following processes:

- Creating and managing district-level, instructor-led and self-paced courses in their local catalog,
- Leveraging Moodle integration,
- Targeting courses to specific participants,
- Creating aggregate and individual reports,
- Producing course completion certificates and surveys,
- Managing enrollment and participant processes including wait lists, courses and sections, rosters, attendance, completion, etc.

Each week the Educator Effectiveness team, 12 pilot members, and the system vendor meet to discuss successes, questions and challenges using the system. This weekly collaboration with all stakeholders is productive and already informs resources produced to assist LEAs and future enhancements of the system.

MORE INFO: Professional Development Coordinator Robert Sox at Robert.Sox@dpi.nc.gov.

Home Base Part of 2014 Summer Institutes' Line-Up

Home Base resources for classroom instruction will be among the topics at 2014 Summer Institutes, which are planned in all eight regions across the state next month. Regions 1, 2, 5 and 7 will experience the myriad of professional development simultaneously on July 7-8, while Regions 3, 4, 6 and 8 will participate simultaneously during July 9-10.

This year's theme is "Sustaining Success: Building on Achievement." Each institute will feature sessions created and presented by LEAs and charters. These "Implementation Innovation" sessions include authentic practices from the field that have proven to be successful in moving the district or charter forward in building local leadership capacity.

The overarching goal of SI 2014 is to connect educators across the state with meaningful professional development around best practices. Implementation topics, in addition to Home Base, include curriculum content, instructional practices for student differentiation, and local professional development planning time for the year.

MORE INFO: SI launches the yearly professional development calendar in partnership with our eight Regional Service Alliances (RESAs). Contact Cynthia Martin, Educator Effectiveness PD lead, at Cynthia.Martin@dpi.nc.gov should you have questions. And read more at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/profdev/summerinstitutes/2014/>.

Final Two Technical Webinars for 2013-14 School Year on Tap

There are two remaining PowerSchool Tuesday Technical Webinars, June 10 and June 17, from noon to 1 p.m. both dates. Details on technical issue resolutions, data imports, new page and functionality implementations, state reporting and timelines and more are shared during these sessions.

Register at: <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/340351513>. You only have to register once for both June 10 and 17. Previously held webinars were recorded and posted to the NC SIS website's Recordings page. To view, please click on this link, <http://www.nc-sis.org/recordings.html> and scroll down to the section Technical Webinars.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

Evaluation System Closes June 30

The evaluation system will close for the 2013-14 school year on Monday, June 30, at 5 p.m. The ability to access the EE system through PowerSchool will end on Friday, June 27, at 5 p.m.

Users may access the EE system between June 27 and June 30 using the direct access login link: <https://ncees.homebase.ncpublicschools.gov/alternateLogin.html>

If users plan to use the EE System after June 27 when PowerSchool is shut down, we recommend that users test their direct access login link before June 27 to ensure that they are able to access the system through this link. If users do not remember their passwords, they should contact their district NCEES coordinator (usually the human resources director) to get the password reset.

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=2014>.

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