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DCP Today

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Welcome to DCP Today, CENIC's twice-monthly electronic newsletter detailing the latest news about the Digital California Project.

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Governor's Office and Educators Focus on the Benefits of DCP

More than 120 people gathered in Sacramento on May 2-3 at the invitation of Secretary of Education, Kerry Mazzoni, and the Director of the Office of Planning and Research, Tal Finney, to advise the Governor's office on how to maximize the benefits educators and students receive as a result of the Digital California Project. The discussions focused primarily on the types of functionality or benefits that could be built into a website or a portal that would provide a "one-stop shop" for educators and students seeking to use online resources in the classroom or as part of a professional development program.

Many classroom teachers, principals and superintendents offered insights into the types of resources that would be of help to teachers and students if they were widely available in classrooms throughout the state. The suggestions included digital libraries for students' and teachers' use, the ability to obtain individual student assessment data "on the back end" of classroom resources (i.e. diagnostic elements), resources that help students find data and repurpose it to make it relevant to their needs (such as web quest) and staff development resources that could be customized to meet individual teachers' needs. Catherine Banker, representing the California Curriculum Commission, urged the Governor's office and DCP to ensure that classroom resources featured on a website or a portal be reviewed for legal and social compliance, are standards-based, are designed in a manner that makes them accessible to all students, and are based on valid research.

Representatives from the private sector demonstrated exemplary instructional and professional development programs that meet the standards described above. They also presented information on emerging trends in the e-learning industry and on technology efforts underway at the federal level. Technology experts from K-12, the community colleges, CSU, UC and the private sector discussed procedures and processes that could be put in place and tools that could be incorporated into a website or portal to enhance the delivery and usefulness of online learning resources.

Carlos Ramos, Director of the Teale Data Center reminded those in attendance at the end of the two day session that the "journey of 1,000 miles begins with a single step." The two-day meeting was the first of several meetings that the Governor's office plans to hold to gather more input as a website or portal is developed over the next six months.

Source: [Stephanie Couch](#), University of California Office of the President

Henrietta Maire Virtual Tour

May 15 proved to be a memorable day for a group of 4th, 5th, and 6th graders from Barbara Comstock Morse Elementary School in Sacramento's Elk Grove School District. These students went to California State University Sacramento to participate in a virtual tour of artifacts from the Henrietta Marie, a slave ship that sank off the Florida coast nearly 300 years ago.

This remarkable touring exhibit is currently on loan to the Karpeles Library in Santa Barbara. Thanks to the benefits of high-speed Internet connections made possible by the Digital California Project, the Elk Grove students were able to interact face-to-face with elementary students from Santa Barbara who, along with students from UCSB, served as docents for the tour. Students at both ends were able to observe how historians actually "do history" as they watched local historians examine the objects and artifacts of slavery, a part of our history that has affected the lives of every American.

In addition to touring the Henrietta Marie, the students also met with Professor Maria Mejorado of the Bilingual and Multicultural Education Department. Dr. Mejorado built a unit of study these students have recently completed on the life and contributions of Cesar Chavez. Students had the opportunity to listen to Dr. Mejorado's "voices from the fields," her personal recollections of what it was like to grow up as the child of migrant laborers. She was joined by some of her students who also shared firsthand accounts of everyday challenges faced by those who harvest our nation's crops.

This learning adventure was the result of collaborative efforts with the Center for Teaching for Social Justice at the University of California at Santa Barbara. Through the vision and efforts of UCSB professor Judith Green, Elk Grove students had the opportunity to connect with experts in the field as they explored important chapters in our nation's history. It is hoped this virtual fieldtrip will be the first of many joint adventures to link UC and CSU resources with K-12 students.

District Contact Person: [Gail Desler](#), Technology Services, EGUSD
CSU Sacramento Contact: [Dr. Larry Hannah](#)
UCSB Contact: [Dr. Judith Green](#)

DCP Node Site Meeting

The 3rd DCP Node Site meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 21 at the Oakland Airport Hilton Hotel from 8:45 AM to 4:00 PM. All Round 1 DCP node site technical or administrative contacts are invited, as are representatives from pending Round 2 Node Sites. The hotel is located at 1 Hegenberger Road in Oakland.

Source: [Edwin Smith](#), Network Implementation Project Manager

[National Education Technology News](#)

Imagining a California Virtual High School

Currently, 14 states operate a virtual high school program (www.dln.org/virtual.html). Research indicates that students can be successful in online high school courses. It is just a matter of time until California will move in this direction.

What do you think about a California State virtual school? Rob Darrow, Online Learning Specialist of the Clovis Unified School District, is currently collecting this information as part of a grant from the University of California College Prep Initiative (www.uccp.org). Mr. Darrow is the coordinator for online high school courses in the Clovis Unified School District (www.cusd.com).

If you would like to give your input, please fill out the online survey by May 24 at <http://www.cusd.com/calvhs>.

Source: [Rob Darrow](#)

Study: Broken web links impede online learning

Few people would question the Internet's importance as an educational tool, but a new study suggests the ephemeral nature of web pages can pose significant challenges for educators. According to research done by two university professors who tracked the existence of web pages used in their online science courses, almost one in five science education web links becomes extinct within two years.

"We were surprised by this steady decline," said John Markwell, a professor of biochemistry at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln. Educators can spend hours searching for appropriate online content online to build into their lessons, he said, only to find at the worst possible time a broken link, or worse. "I was very optimistic about using Internet links two years ago. I'm less optimistic now," Markwell said.

Markwell and his colleague David Brooks, a chemistry education professor, developed three online biochemistry science courses for high school teachers in the summer of 2000. Instead of creating a lot of original content, they decided to link to existing Internet web pages where possible.

However, when students began using the courses the following September, they noticed many web links were no longer active or the content had changed. Flustered by so many broken web links, the researchers decided to formally track the 515 web links used in their online courses.

The study, entitled "Broken links: The ephemeral nature of educational WWW hyperlinks," will be published in the June issue of the Journal of Science Education and Technology. Over time, the researchers assert, most web links gradually disappear.

"About 12 percent [of dot-edu web links] were gone in the first year," Markwell said. "After 20 months, almost 19 percent of the links were gone."

As a solution to this problem and as a free service for educators, Markwell said he'd eventually like to create a web page where teachers could submit important links, and the site would monitor the links and report any changes to the teachers. Markwell said he has applied for a grant from the National Science Foundation to develop this technology, but he won't know whether his proposal for funding is approved until this summer.

Source: Cara Branigan, Associate Editor, eSchool News

Share the Technology

Whether you're looking for used computers or trying to donate ones of your own, Share the Technology can help. Share the Technology is a nonprofit organization that repairs, upgrades, and donates used computers to nonprofit organizations, schools, and people with disabilities. They provide listings of computers available for donation and a database for public and private schools, and other nonprofit organizations to list their computer needs.

More information can be found at: <http://sharetechnology.org/>

Source: eSN School Technology Alert

About CENIC

CENIC is a not-for-profit corporation formed by the California Institute of Technology, the California State University, Stanford University, the University of California, and the University of Southern California to facilitate and coordinate the deployment, development, and operation of a set of seamless and robust advanced network services. The CENIC Associates program offers qualified companies the opportunity to collaborate with CENIC in pursuit of the goal of providing the most advanced network services for research and education. Cisco Systems, Nortel Networks, Pacific Bell, and the University and Community College System of Nevada are CENIC's Partner Associates.

More information about CENIC is available at: <http://www.cenic.org>.

About DCP

The Digital California Project is a project of CENIC. A multi-million dollar effort funded by the State of California, the DCP was designed to build the necessary network infrastructure needed to prepare California's schools to take advantage of tomorrow's advances in network technology. In essence, CENIC is developing an advanced-services network to serve the entire California K-20 education and research community.

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