



## LEADING THE WAY TO TOMORROW'S INTERNET


 
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## PUBLICATIONS

### DCP Today

Volume 4, Issue 8  
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Welcome to DCP Today, CENIC's monthly electronic newsletter detailing the latest news about the Digital California Project.

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#### [Digital California Project News](#)

##### **SB 720 (Bowen) on the Governor's Desk**

The DCP project has enabled approximately 71% of the schools and 82% of the school district offices in California to access the high speed, high bandwidth CalREN Network used by higher education. The cost of connecting the remaining 1500 sites is estimated at \$4 million. Senate Bill 720, authored by Senator Debra Bowen (Democrat - Redondo Beach), provides the means to address the "last mile" challenge faced by the unconnected schools and school districts throughout the state. The bill will provide for up to 90% of the cost of one time network connectivity, helping make high speed service a reality for these sites, thereby giving all students and teachers equal access to network content.

Specifically, SB 720 authorizes the California Public Utilities Commission to allocate up to \$3 million from any surplus in the California Teleconnect Fund to provide educational entities with 90% of the one-time costs associated with obtaining advanced telecommunications services (i.e. DSL or T-1 connectivity). Thanks in part to the letters and phone calls to legislators from DCP Today readers, SB 720 is now on the Governor's desk! Please send a letter to Governor Davis expressing your support for SB 720.

Information about which schools and school districts are on the list of schools NOT yet connected, go to <http://www.cenic.org/downloads/SB720/SB720Info.htm>. Any errors in the information can be reported to [Sacto-aa@cenic.org](mailto:Sacto-aa@cenic.org).

##### **State Policy Makers Sustain Technology in Tough Times**

For several years California benefited from unusual windfalls in state revenues that allowed several new programs to be created and various tax relief measures to be enacted. In the 2002-03 and 2003-04 fiscal years, anticipated state revenues dipped sharply. The Governor's revised 2003-04 budget presented in May estimated the growing gap between revenues and expenditures at \$38.2 billion. Lawmakers were forced to wrestle with how to bridge the gap. While painful, difficult budget times require elected officials to prioritize the state's investments and to identify the programs that are critical to the state's future. Given the magnitude of the cuts that have been made the last two years and the many programs that were reduced or eliminated, the mere survival of California's education technology programs is a sign that policy makers are beginning to recognize the important role technology plays in education.

The 2003-04 state budget appropriated \$87.8 million in federal Enhancing Education Through Technology funds. \$43 million of this amount will be allocated to eligible schools on a per pupil basis (students in grades 4-8). The remaining funding will be allocated on a competitive basis within each of the eleven regions in the state. In recognition of the fact that technology alone is not enough and that technology users need support and assistance, the state continued to provide \$14.8 million for the California Technology Assistance Program (CTAP). Funding for the Technology Information Center for Information Leadership (TICAL) and the California Learning Resources Network (CLRN) was maintained as part of those appropriations. An Assembly proposal (contained in Senate Bill 1046) to redirect the \$14.8 million from CTAP to school district revenue limit equalization remains in the Senate Rules Committee and did not reach the Governor's desk.

The 2003-04 state budget also included \$14.3 million to support the high speed, high bandwidth K-20 network established by the Digital California Project (DCP). This amount reflects a \$6.6 million reduction from the prior fiscal year, which will force drastic changes in the program in 2004, including possibly disconnecting circuits, if additional funding is not obtained. While the shortfall presents a tremendous challenge for the project, the state's willingness to sustain the project in these tough times bodes well for the project's future.

In addition to the State General Funds, DCP and numerous school districts and county offices of education help fund their networks through discounts made available by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) from the California Teleconnect Fund (CTF). Education, library, and hospital advocates and community based organizations were able to defeat a budget proposal by the Assembly to eliminate the CTF. On a more positive note, as indicated in the previous article, Senator Debra Bowen (Democrat - Redondo Beach) authored legislation that has reached the Governor's desk which authorizes the CPUC to make up to \$3 million available from the California Teleconnect Fund to provide the funds for connecting the remaining school and district sites to the DCP network.

Project supporters were pleased to learn that the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) had realized the potential of the DCP to assist with the state's professional development needs. The request for proposals for \$10 million in Improving Teacher Quality grants, issued by the agency in June, included a technology category that specifically welcomed projects that utilize the DCP. CPEC is the first agency to officially incorporate DCP into their program operations.

Supporters were also pleased to learn that the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Jack O'Connell, plans to provide a monthly update to superintendents via the DCP. The first address will be filmed and made available online on September 24th. Future addresses will be live web casts that will also be archived online.

The growing recognition and appreciation for the role of technology in education is evident, particularly given the tough budget decisions that have been made during the last two years and the state's continued investment in education technology. Since fiscal analysts predict that the 2004-05 fiscal year will be equally difficult with an estimated \$8 billion shortfall, continued progress will hinge upon the various technology programs' ability to work together to maximize the benefits that the existing programs provide to support teaching and learning.

#### **DCP: A Major Component of Three New Enhancing Education through Technology Grants**

Recently the California Department Of Education (CDE) awarded the first round of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) competitive grants. Three of the winning EETT proposals incorporate the Digital California Project (DCP) high-speed network as a major resource. Planned student use includes research related to science projects, use of mathematical tools, and on-line writing projects and assessments. Planned teacher use includes use of video conferencing over the Internet to share ideas and projects. EETT projects are intended to contribute to increased student learning through the use of research-based technology applications infused into curriculum and instruction. The projects are restricted to the middle school grades 6-8 and must support the California Content Standards. The three district EETT recipients featured in this article are Pomona USD/Los Angeles COE, Elk Grove-Folsom Cordova/Sacramento COE consortia, and the Cajon Valley USD/San Diego COE consortia.

Pomona Unified School District plans to use technology as a component of the new Holt Middle School Language Arts adoption, as well as instituting data-driven instructional and scheduling decisions at the classroom level. The Pomona district office is already connected to the DCP Network and will use the DCP Network as a vehicle for professional development through CTAP 11-Online as well as for storage and access to data needed for the data-driven instructional planning component of the project, and to access and evaluate an online writing assessment program. The Network will also be used to access and download instructional media that requires the high bandwidth offered by the DCP Network.

Elk Grove and Folsom-Cordova school districts are planning to use the DCP Network to deliver the professional development needed for teachers to implement the Holt Language Arts adoption, as well as online data-driven planning for instruction. Another feature of this project will be to identify and classroom test the use of additional electronic learning resources that are included in the CLRN database of standards aligned resources. Partners in this project are the Sacramento Educational Consortium (SECC) and the Sacramento COE. SECC facilitated the establishment of high-speed connections to the schools participating in this project. SECC will provide for a cable and Internet accessible homework hotline to support the project. An action research approach will be used whereby teachers develop classroom level EETT plans that define, test and evaluate the specific technology applications used to support the curriculum.

Because of the similarity of their EETT project goals, Pomona and Elk Grove/Folsom-Cordova projects will use the DCP Network to enable teachers and administrators to share resources. The Network will be used for virtual meetings between the two projects on common topics, share staff development related to the Holt adoption, and use video over IP conferencing. These two projects are planning to share in the development of a 'portal' designed to serve the unique needs of the educators involved in these projects.

Cajon Valley USD is planning to focus its activities on the improvement of middle school science and math skills and knowledge with the addition of research-based technology applications to support the district core science and math curriculum. They plan to use the DCP Network for students to interact with scientists online, to access real-time scientific data online for school projects, to access and use educational resources offered by digital libraries and museums, and for teachers to share and interact with other middle school science teachers who are using technology in their classrooms. The San Diego County Office of Education will work closely with Cajon Valley USD to facilitate the DCP access and utilization for delivery of CTAP-sponsored professional development. The California Learning Resource Network (CLRN) will assist teachers and the project leadership in the identification of electronic learning resources to support science and mathematics.

All three of these projects, as well as the EETT projects in general, are required to undergo a comprehensive, formative and summative evaluation. Part of the evaluation will be to determine the specific cost-benefits and educational advantages of using the DCP Network as an educational resource. Results of the evaluations will be used to inform project improvements, and to provide progress reports to the California Department of Education as well as to the Governor and the Legislature.

For additional information about the implementation progress, evaluation findings, and use of the DCP network to support these projects, contact [cradler@earthlink.net](mailto:cradler@earthlink.net).

#### **DCP Program Steering Committee Notice**

The next meeting of the Digital California Project's Program Steering Committee will take place on November 12, 2003 from 9:30 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. at the Community College Chancellor's Office in Sacramento (1102 Q Street). Attendees will discuss the Planning Committee's recommendations for DCP activities in the 2003-04 year and approaches for securing necessary funding to maintain service at the current levels. The meeting is open to the public.

#### **CENIC/Digital California Project Staff Changes**

There have been several staff changes within the Digital California Project this past month. John Vaillie, Director of DCP Applications, has taken a new position within CENIC as the Development Director for CENIC's Gigabit or Bust Initiative. Vaillie's former responsibilities will be absorbed by the remaining staff. Patrick Kennedy, the Assistant Director for Statewide Initiatives, has left CENIC to practice law. Rebecca Baumann, a former legislative advocate for the California School Boards Association, will be filling Patrick's position on a temporary basis. Monica Jackson, the Office Assistant for DCP's Sacramento office, left CENIC to take another position with UC Davis Extension. Heather Gibson has been hired as the new Office Assistant. Contact information for the new staff is available on the CENIC/DCP web site at [http://www.cenic.org/DCP/DCP\\_manage.htm](http://www.cenic.org/DCP/DCP_manage.htm).

#### **California Department of Education includes CENIC at National E-Rate Training in Washington, D.C.**

The California Department of Education, a member of the State E-rate Coordinators' Alliance (SECA), has assembled a team of trainers to attend the annual national E-rate training in Washington, D.C., September 24-26. The national training is presented by the Schools and Libraries Division of the Universal Service Administrative Company, which oversees the E-rate discount program. CENIC consultant, Van Wilkinson, from Techmasters, Inc., will be among those attending the event. The training focuses on new policies and procedures specific to applications for E-rate discounts, such as those sought annually by the CENIC-DCP consortium.

#### **Science Made Exciting**

On September 29th from 9:00 a.m. until noon, Shasta County Office of Education's Project ARISE (Advanced Rural Integrated Science Education) will be webcasting a live educational event with California students and teachers and Dr. Paul Dougherty of the Exploratorium.

The event will include live questions and answers from local students as Dr. Dougherty introduces his new science program, "Try This!", with a presentation by NASA astronaut Yvonne Cagel. Dr. Nathalie Cabrol, a planetary geologist for NASA and a scientist on the MER mission (Mars Exploration Rover), will discuss her work, including an expedition involving California classrooms working with scientists exploring the highest lake on earth.

NASA educators will also be presenting space science materials for California classrooms utilizing the Digital California Projects high bandwidth educational network. The webcast will be available at [www.shastaco.org](http://www.shastaco.org). For more information contact Rick Fitzpatrick, Director, ARISE (530) 225-0190 or [rick@projectarise.org](mailto:rick@projectarise.org)

#### **About CENIC**

CENIC is a not-for-profit corporation serving California Institute of Technology, California State University, Stanford University, University of California, University of Southern California, California Community Colleges and the statewide K-12 school system.

CENIC's mission is to facilitate and coordinate the development, deployment and operation of a set of robust multi-tiered advanced network services for this research and education community.

More information about CENIC can be found at [www.cenic.org](http://www.cenic.org).

#### **About DCP**

The Digital California Project is a project of CENIC. 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.

#### **Subscription Information**

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