



LEADING THE WAY TO TOMORROW'S INTERNET



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PUBLICATIONS

DCP Today

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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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Senate and Assembly Budget Subcommittees Approve \$21 Million for High Speed K-12 Internet Services

On Wednesday, May 19th, both the Senate and Assembly Budget Subcommittees on Education approved the \$21 million proposed in the Governor's 2004-05 budget to continue high speed, high bandwidth network access for K-12 schools.

The Senate Budget Subcommittee on Education took action to include the \$21 million for "High Speed Internet2" after the committee staff had recommended deletion of the funds in keeping with the Legislative Analyst's recommendation to delete funding for the program. Senator John Vasconcellos (D-Santa Clara) advocated for continuing connectivity and said that it is essential for kids and teachers to have access to the high speed high bandwidth network because in today's world, access equals opportunity. He countered the argument that the network is underutilized due to the lack of content that requires high bandwidth by saying the only hope that it will be filled with content is if it is available for educators to fully become engaged in the possibilities it offers. Ultimately, the Senate subcommittee supported the \$21 million and approved budget language that sets forth the following priorities for the use of funds:

1. "ensure that all California public schools are connected at a speed of T-1 or greater into the nearest local access point for statewide high speed Internet connectivity"
2. "maintain statewide high speed Internet connectivity and network infrastructure for use by K-12 local educational agencies in each of the 58 counties, and
3. innovative projects that will support and benefit network users on a statewide basis.

On the Assembly side, the Budget Subcommittee on Education discussed the funding for the third time this year. Assembly Member Jackie Goldberg (D-Los Angeles), chair of the Assembly Education committee and a former school board member from Los Angeles Unified School District, forcefully led the fight for inclusion of the full \$21 million. Assembly Member Lynn Daucher, (R-Brea) a former school board member from Brea Olinda Unified School District and also a teacher, seconded the motion leading to a 6-0 vote. The subcommittee chair, Assemblyman Joe Simitian (D-Palo Alto), also spoke in support of continuing the program and expressed his intent to pursue legislation next year that would begin to define the state's overall vision for the use of technology in education.

The Assembly subcommittee expressed their commitment to continuing network connectivity, but also expressed a desire to ensure accountability surrounding the use of state funds for this purpose. Ultimately, the committee adopted budget bill language that authorized funding to flow through a lead county office of education for continued network services, and deferred the governance surrounding the use of funds in future years to future legislation that would contain specified provisions.

Sue Burr, Director of Governmental Relations for the California County Superintendents' Educational Services Association (CCSESA), led the K-12 community advocacy effort to support the Network funding in the budget subcommittees. David Walrath representing the Small School Districts' Association, Jeff Frost and Lisa Ramer representing Suburban School Districts, Michael Hulsizer of the Kern County Office of Education, Laura Wasco of the San Bernardino County Office of Education, Jamillah Moore of the Los Angeles County Office of Education, Sandy Silverstein of the Riverside County Advocacy Association, Russ Selken of Butte County Office of Education, Paul Tichinin, Mendocino County Superintendent of Schools and Teri Burns, Deputy Superintendent, Government Relations, California Department of Education, all offered support at various subcommittee hearings.

The numerous letters, faxes, emails, phone calls and personal visits by educators on this budget item were critical to the success of the effort. CCSESA leadership and the collaborative effort with the Digital California Project staff will ensure that the Network can continue to provide K-12 schools with high quality, fast and reliable Internet2 services that will continue to expand and integrate 21st century technologies into the daily lives of students, teachers and administrators.

Since the Assembly and the Senate have agreed upon the \$21 million appropriation, funding for K-12 networking should not be an issue before the Budget Conference Committee. However, the language which governs the allocation of the funds will be before the Conference Committee. It is hoped that compromise language agreeable to all parties can be developed and approved early in the Conference Committee process.

Future of the California Teleconnect Fund Remains Up In the Air

As of Thursday, May 20th the Assembly and Senate Budget subcommittee actions on the CPUC's California Teleconnect Fund (CTF) differed significantly, leaving the future of CTF telecommunications discounts for schools, libraries, hospitals and community based organizations up to the Budget Conference Committee deliberations. The Conference Committee is expected to convene sometime in early June to address differences between the Senate and Assembly versions of the 2004-05 state budget.

The Assembly Budget Subcommittee #4, chaired by Assembly Member Dutra (D-Fremont) heard the CTF item a month ago and failed to include any augmentation to the Governor's proposed appropriation of \$5 million for 2004-05. The annual discounts to eligible entities are estimated at \$35 million. The amount needed to reimburse telecommunications carriers for the discounts varies from year to year based upon when claims are submitted, but are expected to be at least \$18 million in 2004-05. The committee adopted language for the CTF budget item to link the receipt of CTF discounts to participation in the federal E-rate program (regardless of whether not a district actually applies for E-rate) and added language to make future CTF discounts "needs based" similar to the federal E-rate program.

The Senate Budget Subcommittee #2 approved a \$12.7 million augmentation to the Governor's proposed \$5 million, which provides the funding necessary to meet all of the anticipated 2004-05 program costs. The Senate Subcommittee did not adopt any of the language approved by the Assembly subcommittee. Members deferred consideration of changes in how funds are allocated to subsequent legislation so that the effect of the changes could be weighed by the appropriate policy committees. Efforts are currently underway to identify legislation that can be used for this purpose.

Keep up your letters and phone calls to Legislators so that they know your views on this matter. The specific budget item number to refer to in your conversations with legislators and staff is item # 8660-001-0493. At this time of year, it is helpful to talk with legislative staff or to meet with Legislators when they are in their home districts. The local impact and connection to an issue in the budget will make all the difference when a budget item comes up for consideration. In the beginning of June, every legislator has an opportunity to appear before the Conference Committee to identify key issues that are important to his or her district. Help make this issue for K-12 schools one that gets the attention of the conferees.

Education Technology Bills on the Move

The Senate Appropriations Committee approved Senate Bill 1254 (Soto) on Thursday, May 20th. SB 1254 extends the sunset date for the California Technology Assistance Project to 2009.

The Assembly Appropriations Committee approved Assembly Bill 2706 (Berg) on Wednesday, May 19th. AB 2706 makes numerous changes to the way in which the federal Enhancing Education Through Technology funds are distributed.

For more information and the text of the measures, you can access information and analyses at ftp://leginfo.public.ca.gov/.

Students Discuss Social Justice Issues on the Network with Author Luis Rodriguez

Thanks to the benefits of high-speed Internet connections made possible by CENIC's Digital California Project (DCP), students in Shawn Hamilton's English class at Calvine Continuation High School in Elk Grove are partnering with students in Matt Makowetski's class at Maple Continuation High School in Lompoc for an online, interactive literature project. Using Luis Rodriguez's award-winning novel, *Always Running: La Vida Loca: Gang Day in LA*, the students are examining issues of racism and social justice raised by the author and comparing them to challenges and issues in their own communities.

The students met for an initial "face-to-face" videoconference on March 17 to introduce themselves, their school sites and communities, and to begin their online dialogue. Through a web log provided by the National Writing Project (<http://blogs.writingproject.org/blogwrite118/>), they have maintained a running discussion on topics ranging from the author's invitation to speak at this year's Kent State Memorial to racial profiling and acts of violence and intolerance in their local communities.

On April 27, both classes met again by videoconference and were joined by the author, Luis Rodriguez, who connected with them through the Los Angeles County Office of Education. The students introduced themselves and quickly jumped into questioning the author on a number of complex issues at the core of this controversial novel. In one fast-paced hour, the students raised questions such as the author's motivation for writing the novel, how he was pulled into gang life, the personal price he paid for his gang affiliation, how he escaped "la vida loca" (the crazy life), his feelings on receiving the Unsung Heroes of Compassion Award presented to him by the Dalai Lama, and how he would compare the Kent State protests of 1970 to the events leading to the current war in Iraq.

Calvine student Jazmyn Martin, who had read *Always Running* several times prior to this project, found it especially interesting to hear Rodriguez in his own voice. "I always had my own ideas about how he would speak his mind out, but hearing it from him made it more meaningful," Jazmyn said. "Being there somehow gave me more insight. It got me thinking." Jose Montoya concurred. "It's very rare for me to meet an author of a book I actually finished," Jose, said, but to actually talk to the main character of a book was something else all on its own."

Due to a number of graphic passages in the novel pertaining to gang violence, students participating in the *Always Running* project were required to have written parent permission in order to read the book, to contribute to the web log, and to attend both videoconferences. Perhaps that fact that this technology-infused project was both voluntary and student-centered accounts for the high level of interest and enthusiasm from all participants. Calvine senior Jordon Sorenson explained why he enjoyed the project. "When you read a book that affects you in such a way that you start thinking differently and you completely change your views on something, it's an awesome feeling. Meeting the author of this book was like meeting my favorite athlete, actor, or musician."

It is the hope of both teachers that the possibility of using the DCP bandwidth to deliver a curriculum that engages their students in genuine inquiry while promoting a sense of community and tolerance will become as seamless as turning on a classroom computer.

The *Always Running* project was made possible under the leadership of Gail Desler, of the Technology Integration Office of the Elk Grove USD and Judith Green of UC Santa Barbara and the combined support of CENIC's DCP network, the National Writing Project, the California State Library's Civil Liberties Public Education Program, and the Center for Teaching for Social Justice at UC Santa Barbara.

New Study: How Do Teachers and Librarians find Math and Science Materials on the Internet?

The California Digital Library (CDL) was awarded a two-year grant from the National Science Digital Library (www.nsdlib.org, funded by the National Science Foundation) to look at ways to build a comprehensive, integrated Web portal for math and science content. The CDL's grant is concerned with how students and faculty find math and science content on the Web and how they integrate the content into other curriculum resources to support teaching and learning.

The California Digital Library is looking for volunteers to serve on a focus group to share how they and their end users locate math and science content on the Web, what tools and services are needed to integrate the content with local resources, and what the major issues are to locate credible, reliable core content and supplemental learning resources. During the focus group, CDL will look at several representative Web portals and compare features, services and content to get a better perspective of user needs. Lastly, the focus groups will explore the use of free vs. licensed content and ways to pay for science content, including library or individual subscriptions.

The focus group sessions will be in small groups of 8-12 people, with a Moderator. CDL hopes to learn current usage patterns and user needs, find out which features users find most valuable and identify any unmet user needs and/or opportunities for improvement in the current environment. You can explore the National Science Digital Library at <http://nsdl.org>.

Participation in the focus group is open to teachers in grades 9-12 and library staff who help locate science and math materials for classroom use. Participants will receive a \$75.00 honorarium. The focus group will meet on June 15th, 3:30-5:00 at the CDL Offices, 415 20th Street, Oakland (directly across the street from BART). For directions, visit <http://www.cdlib.org/contact/directions.html>

For more information, contact Rosalie Lack, Public Content Manager of the California Digital Library at Rosalie.Lack@ucop.edu.

June 28th Program Steering Committee Announcement

The next meeting of the PSC will be June 28th in Sacramento at the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office from 9:00 to 2:30. Please mark your calendars; we will send additional information closer to the date. You can RSVP to Michele Maes at sacto-aa@cenic.org.

CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENTS

UC College Prep (UCCP) Online Teaching & Learning Institute 2004

UC Santa Cruz
July 21 - 23, 2004

The Institute is designed to offer the most relevant and useful technology training possible to teachers and administrators. Attendees will obtain valuable and applicable information on everything from networks and technology troubleshooting to the fundamentals of mentoring online students and teaching online. For more information, contact Jennifer Bosco-Guillen, Conference Coordinator, at 866-482-7737 (Toll Free) or Email: uccp@uccp.org.

Youth Development Summit

October 1, 2004

The third annual Statewide Youth Development Summit will be held at locations across the state and will be linked by a web cast at various times during the day. In the March DCP Today, the 11 regional recipients of Youth Development grants were announced. Each of the regions will help coordinate conferences for youth and adults to discuss strategies for youth involvement in policy making efforts including youth councils, city councils, school boards, public commissions and committees, non-profit organizations etc. In the next several months, key county office of education locations will be identified to host the web casts based in part upon the acceptance of guest speakers who will broadcast presentations to the regional sites. The DCP CalREN Network will enable the connection of the multi-site conference.

October Keystone Conference on K-12 Videoconferencing

Indianapolis

October 25-26, 2004

K-12 Videoconferencing will be the subject of a two day conference to be held in Indianapolis on October 25 and 26 and simultaneously via two way interactive video conferencing nation-wide. Conference sponsors are currently soliciting presentation proposals from K-12 programs demonstrating their use of videoconference technology. K-12 practitioners interested in submitting proposals can go to www.keystoneconference.org for more information.

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.

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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Website questions: webmaster@cenic.org

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