

Open source software supports student learning



Students at Woodward Middle School are working with open source programs in Sean Eaton's Applied Computer Technology class.



THANKS TO THE LEADERSHIP of the Technology Department staff, Bainbridge Island School District now uses open source software to provide services for students and staff. It started out of necessity: there were no funds to provide the kind of software needed to support modern classrooms.

District teachers now have access to an open source course management system called Moodle, which allows them a range of possibilities on the web: from posting assignments and information to creating a multi-level interactive site for students. Equal services on a comparable commercial program would cost the district around \$40,000 per year. Open Office, an open source program similar to Microsoft Office, saves the district about \$50,000 per year, freeing up funds for professional development.

“The best thing about open source software,” says Randy Orwin, BISD Director of Technology, “is the ability to change things. If the programming code doesn't do what you need and you have the expertise, you can change that code to address your need.” He adds that there is a community aspect to open source software; people share the “plug-ins” they write that add or change features of the program, so the services multiply, and it's all at no cost.



www.bainbridge.wednet.edu

For more about the district's use of resources

IN THE KNOW

Budget Corner—

DISTRICT EARNS CLEAN AUDIT 8TH STRAIGHT YEAR

The district received a positive report from the State Auditor's Office (SAO) this past spring. Auditors review the district's financial statements and compliance with federal laws and regulations annually, and check accountability and compliance with state laws and regulations every two years. Once again, for the 8th straight year, the district received no findings.

“It takes a team effort,” said Business Director Peggy Paige. “Human

Resources, Transportation, Food Service, Special Education, Student Services, and the Business Office all have specific areas that must be correctly reported, documented and verified. A deficiency in any area could lead to an audit finding.”

SAO's Communications Director Mindy Chambers commented, “Eight years without a finding is exemplary. It shows that the district is committed to having good systems and procedures in place to protect public resources.”

CHANGES IN SCHOOL FUNDING IMPACT DISTRICT BUDGET

State funding will fall short of mandated expenses, and schools statewide are challenged. Local economic impacts caused Bainbridge Island Schools to cut \$1.5 M from projected costs to achieve a balanced budget and maintain a responsible fund balance.



www.bainbridge.wednet.edu
For more about the 2008-09 budget

did you know

Bainbridge Island School District's Multi-cultural Advisory Council demonstrates the district's commitment to understanding and appreciating diversity. Operating since the 1980s, it serves as an ongoing School Board advisory group regarding multicultural education. Read more by going to www.bainbridge.wednet.edu.

Community Celebrates BHS Stadium

On October 24, community and high school athletes celebrated the refurbishment of Memorial Stadium at Bainbridge High School. When completed the stadium will feature a new 400 meter track, state-of-the-art scoreboard, new all-weather turf, and new fencing. Thank you, Bainbridge Community, for making this possible!

Stars in Our Schools

Randy Orwin Recognized as a Tech Leader



Our own Randy Orwin has become a leader in educational technology circles for his work with open source software (see related story). He was profiled in the International Society for Technology in Education's *Learning and Leading with Technology* magazine (Sept. 2008). A "Got Moodle?" article in *T.H.E. Journal* (April 2008) featured Orwin and teachers Paul Sullivan and Adam Rabinowitz. See the full article: <http://www.thejournal.com/articles/22391>. Nominated by OSPI, Orwin was selected as one of T.H.E Journal's Innovators for 2008.

This fall Orwin spoke at the International K-23 Open Mind Conference, and he led a Moodle session at the National School Boards Association Technology & Leadership conference.

Orwin is always on the lookout for new ways to enhance learning. He is currently reviewing a new World Languages curriculum and working with teachers to implement Moodle at the middle school level. He notes that his success is shared. "We only use good software. We have great techies, and they test it, try it out, find the bugs. They make me look good."

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Open and Read About Your Schools

- Technology Saves Money and Wins Recognition
- Clean Audit and Shrinking Funds Impact Budget
- BHS Stadium Celebration

OpenBook is a publication by the Bainbridge Island School District to connect with and bring timely information to our community.



School Events— Too good to miss!

OCTOBER

28-30 Bainbridge Schools Foundation Phonathon

NOVEMBER

5 Half-Day, Early Dismissal
6 WMS Fill the Tuba Concert
8 Odyssey PTO Auction
11 No School, Veteran's Day
14-15 BHS Fall Play, *Servant of Two Masters*
21-22 BHS Fall Play, *Servant of Two Masters*
27-28 No School, Thanksgiving

DECEMBER

16 WMS Holiday Concert
17 BHS Winter Choir Concert
22-Jan 2 Winter Break

Call the district Community Relations Office for more information, 780-1398.



www.bainbridge.wednet.edu
For a complete list of district events



Remember to use your 60+ Gold Pass!