

ETS: The District Plumber

by Willie Pritchard,
Vice Chancellor and
Chief Technology Officer



As we all know, the state is having serious financial problems – with deficit projections up to \$25 billion. This means very difficult times for community colleges for the foreseeable future. While it's hard to project our budget in the next fiscal year, we know that we need to watch our expenditures and work more efficiently with current resources.

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This is what technology – and ETS – are all about. ETS works on numerous projects, tools, services, and support and training programs to help us become more efficient and effective in our work.

Jan Kuersten, an Educational Technology Advisory Committee (ETAC) member, had a great analogy to describe the perceived value of ETS. "It's like when you're doing plumbing or electrical work at home," she said. "It costs a lot, you have to do it, but you can't see anything on the outside that makes you feel good about the money you've spent."

She's absolutely right. It can be difficult to see what ETS is doing for the District unless we tell you. For this reason, we've dedicated this issue of *News Bytes* to covering specific examples of how we're working to meet your needs – while saving time and money for the District.

We hope this issue helps to outline current projects and future plans aimed at improving technical services for the District. If you have further suggestions regarding efficiencies or cost savings, please contact me at PritchardWillie@fhda.edu. I welcome your feedback and suggestions.

ETS Provides Service, Savings to District

Following are a few examples of the many ways ETS is working to help administration, faculty and staff be more efficient and effective as they go about their daily work. In the long term, this translates into a better educational environment and enhanced teaching – as well as reduced staff time and expense.

- **Hardware Standards:** Hardware standards make it easier for users to purchase equipment without spending large amounts of time investigating systems. This enables the District to keep up with current technology, enhances technical support, and saves users and the Purchasing Department time and energy.
- **Software Standards:** Standard software and upgrades are available to all District technology users at no charge to divisions. Site licenses substantially reduce District costs. Recently negotiated agreements have the potential to save the District \$100,000 per year. Examples include Microsoft Office (for about \$120 less than the best retail price per installed computer), Norton Antivirus (savings of approximately \$6 per user), Meeting

"In the long term, ETS will offer the District better service as well as savings. We're getting better deals on software through bulk purchasing. We're also getting better deals on hardware by having standards to focus buying on fewer vendors who provide us with good pricing and better service."

– Chuck Lindauer, ETAC Member

"The Manila project has helped De Anza faculty quickly and easily get web sites up and running. After just a few hours of training, you can have an attractive web site that serves as an online presence for classes and other information."

– Wayne Chenoweth, ETAC Member

Maker (at a savings of about \$20 per license), and Eudora (\$20 savings per new computer purchased).

- **Call Center:** This ETS department resolves 40 percent of user problems on the phone and provides documentation via the web so users can quickly and easily troubleshoot their own technical problems. This substantially reduces down time for users and raises work productivity. It also frees technicians to help others.
- **Leveraging District-Wide Technology Savings:** As a District entity, ETS is able to work closely with vendors and various District departments to build coalitions to achieve cost savings. Example: As the single point of contact, ETS brought together managers from both colleges to combine several Macromedia software orders to save about \$40,000 for the licensing costs throughout the District.
- **TouchNet Voice and Web Registration System:** This state-of-the-art system will enable rapid payment of registration funds, ensuring the District promptly receives revenues from student registra-

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ETS Provides (continued)

tion fees. The system can also tie into other payment areas in the future, such as parking, cashiering, etc.

- **Pay-for-Print:** This project, which provides an automated printing solution for open student labs, will be implemented in the summer and should quickly pay for itself. After the breakeven point, the self-maintaining system should generate revenue. Savings

"The intent in forming ETS was to centralize and standardize technology services for the District's students, faculty, and employees and to provide services to enhance and extend the use of technology for those groups as well. While I think it's too soon to fully evaluate the value of ETS, I can say I've enjoyed better, faster connectivity to our management information systems."

– Jan Kuersten, ETAC Member

will also be achieved through saving paper, toner, and reducing printer wear and tear.

- **Digitized Forms:** ETS is exploring a system that will enable the District to quickly and easily create new and existing forms in an electronic format to save paper, labor and storage costs. This system, which will automate the approval process, could be used for time sheets, job application forms, request for services forms, job requests, online surveys and purchase requests.
- **Web-Based Purchasing System:** ETS is working with Purchasing to explore a new web-based procurement system. This would greatly streamline the purchasing process, while improving vendor management and saving labor and paper.
- **Curriculum System:** ETS is investigating a free, web-based curriculum management system at the colleges' request. The system is self-perpetuating between faculty

Check out the
ETS Website
a rich source of information
about ETS and technology.

<http://ets.fhda.edu>

and the curriculum committees. Savings will be achieved through greater efficiency and reduced labor time for moving from the course approval process to publishing the course schedule on paper and online.

- **Manila:** At least 150 faculty members are currently using Manila to offer online discussion and web-based information about their classes. The cost per student today is approximately \$1.77. As more faculty members begin to use Manila, the savings will grow (at 300 faculty members, it will only cost 80 cents per student) since there will be no additional purchase cost.

Open Discussions on Technology

Following are the remaining "Open Discussions on Technology." The focus is on specific technology areas/projects, but all topics are welcome and everyone is invited.

Foothill

June 6: 1-2 p.m.; Room 3525; Willie Pritchard, Cindy Vinson; Learning Technologies

June 12: 11 a.m.-noon, 3525; Pritchard, Bob Barr; Institutional Research and Planning

De Anza

May 29: 11 a.m.-noon; Santa Cruz Room; Pritchard, Vinson; Learning Technologies

June 19: noon-1 p.m.; El Clemente Room; Pritchard, Barr; Institutional Research and Planning

Manila Magic

If you're interested in how Manila can help you easily post material online, attend the Manila Magic Workshop on Friday, June 7 in Hinson Center Conference Room A from 1:30 to 3 p.m. Instructor Dan Mitchell will demonstrate advanced Manila features such as customizing your site appearance, adding resources, putting grades online and more. More information: <http://faculty.deanza.fhda.edu/support/> and click on the Manila Magic link.

FAQ's

Q: *I'd like to start working more from home, but to do this effectively I need remote access to SIS. Is this possible?*

A: While this option isn't currently available, ETS is working on a solution to this increasingly common request for at-home access to secured resources such as SIS, FR or HR. We aim to have a solution in place in the fall.

While it's simple to set up your home computer to work with Meeting Maker or to check and send FHDA e-mail from home, accessing secured

resources is another matter. These resources need to remain secure from unwanted, illegal intrusion from the outside. For this reason, we've established a "firewall" on our network, which protects against unwanted attacks by hackers. We can't allow cracks or holes to develop in this wall because that would create a vulnerability that could be used to gain access to our network and servers.

Our Network and Systems staff is creating a security plan for the District, and will be conducting a complete and thorough security audit soon. This is the first step towards a secure remote access solution.

Just Call TECH!

The Call Center: Your one-stop source for technology information and support.

Phone: Ext. TECH 8324

7 a.m. - 8 p.m. Mon. - Thurs.

7 a.m. - 5 p.m. Fri.

E-mail: Techhelp@fhda.edu

Web site: <http://ets.fhda.edu>

(click on the Call Center link)

Walk in: De Anza College Forum 5A

7 a.m. - 8 p.m. Mon. - Thurs.

7 a.m. - 5 p.m. Fri.