

Wave 3 Year 2: The Big One is HERE!!!



The final wave of the NC WISE Tsunami has finally washed up on shore and its projected path will wipe out the land formerly known as SIMS.

At the completion of the Wave 3 Year 2 conversion, 772 new schools with 421,745 students will be transferred to NC WISE, thus completing a project seven years in the making. After the final deployment, 115 LEAs, 100 Charters, 2,551 LEA Schools and 1,543,671 students will have been converted to NC WISE.

“We are at the end of the beginning and the beginning of the end,” says Skip Neal, NC WISE Deployment Manager.

Although a big wave to get through, the NC WISE Team has trained very hard for

this endeavor. According to Neal, the Year 1 transition was met with a couple of challenges, but Year 2 will have some new tools in its arsenal, which will make the transition less hectic. Validator, which has been redesigned to perform more checks including 26 error reports and 19 file format reports. The SIMS Data Correction Tool automates a mass clean up of data.

“What used to take two to three months will now take about 10 minutes,” Neal said.

Expected to be more “LEA-focused,” the Wave 3 Year 2 Conversion is already a success due to a seasoned team of workers including Corwin Armstrong, Ann Tyn-dall and Rosalyn Galloway, who will each serve as account managers during the conversion.

“If there is NEGATIVITY at the top.. the whole system will “dread” this conversion. They’ll suffer and so will the teachers. Even in our long nights... we truly never complained. It was an adventure—our own Mt. Everest if you will.”

Dr. Kelly Propst, Asst. Superintendent
Cabarrus County Schools

YET 2008: A Success!

Many thanks to the data managers and data coordinators for their diligent work in preparing the school data, as the NC WISE team has declared the 2008 Year End Transition (YET) a success.

A tenuous project, running YET requires that all schools are closed and final reports are approved. The YET process must be successfully executed before any schools can open. Due to the various school calendars in the State, this limits the NC WISE team to one week of time. When the time comes to run YET in production the NC WISE staff takes an aggressive approach. The team works on a 24x7 schedule executing the steps necessary for YET.

According to YET Project Manager Joan Nelson, the only challenges that were noticed during this year’s YET were a new code level of eSIS, and the increased number of LEAs and Charters using NC WISE from last year to this year. “In 2007, there were 96 LEAs and Charters and in 2008, there were 157,” Nelson said. “We went from having 759,488 students records to process to 1,078,106 student records.”



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2008 NC WISE Summer Conference—Sea Trail



NC WISE Director John Wetsch addresses the crowd during the General Session.



The NC WISE Coordinators' Summer Conference was held from July 20-22 at the beautiful Sea Trail Resort & Conference Center in Sunset Beach.

Over 200 participants from across the state took part in a variety of information packed sessions.

The highlight of this year's conference included the launch of the Wave 3 Year 2 conversion.

If you were unable to attend this year's conference, don't worry, many of the presentations have been posted to the NC WISE website at http://www.ncwise.org/summer_conference_08.html.



Conference attendees had the opportunity to meet other coordinators during a luncheon.



Over 200 attendees were at this year's annual summer conference, including these three who took a moment to pose for a group photo.



Sandra Johnson with the NC WISE Service Desk addresses a group on Security Issues.



Welcome Wave 3 Year 2 LEAs & Charters



Alexander County Schools
 Alleghany County Schools
 Anson County Schools
 Ashe County Schools
 Bertie County Schools
 Cherokee County Schools
 Clay County Schools
 Columbus County Schools
 Edgecombe County Schools
 Guilford County Schools
 Halifax County Schools
 Hertford County Schools
 Jackson County Schools
 Johnston County Schools
 Kannapolis City Schools
 Lexington City Schools
 Lincoln County Schools
 Macon County Schools
 Mitchell County Schools
 Montgomery County Schools
 Mount Airy City Schools
 Nash-Rocky Mount Schools
 Northampton County Schools
 Onslow County Schools
 Orange County Schools
 Person County Schools

Pitt County Schools
 Randolph County Schools
 Robeson County Schools
 Rockingham County Schools
 Rowan-Salisbury Schools
 Scotland County Schools
 Stokes County Schools
 Surry County Schools
 Swain County Schools
 Union County Schools
 Warren County Schools
 Wilson County Schools
 Academy of Moore County
 Arts Based Elementary School
 Bethany Community Middle School
 Bridges Charter School
 Children's Village
 CIS Academy
 Exploris
 Forsyth Academy
 Gaston College Preparatory
 Greensboro Academy
 Laurinburg Homework
 Orange Charter
 Preeminent
 Queens Grant

Research Triangle Charter Academy
 Rocky Mount Preparatory
 Woods Charter School
 Woodson School of Chal

Upcoming NC WISE Training Sessions

The start of school is here and so are NC WISE training sessions! The NC WISE Training Team has a number of upcoming opportunities for you to enhance your knowledge of NC WISE:

- Aug. 11-15 New User—Data Manager
- Aug. 18-22 Refresher-RPG
- Aug. 29 New User—LEA Coordinator
- Sept. 22-26 New User—Data Manager
- Sept. 29-30 Refresher-PMR

For more information on training courses, dates and registration please visit http://www.ncwise.org/TRAINING/ncwise_training_pg_home.html.



NC WISE Maintenance Weekends



2008

2009

Aug. 15-18
 Sept. 19-22
 Oct. 17-20
 Nov. 14-17
 Dec. 12-15

Jan. 9-12
 Feb. 20-23
 Mar. 20-23
 Apr. 24-27
 May 15-18
 June 19-22

Please remember that the systems will go down beginning at 5 p.m. on Fridays and will be restored no later than 6 a.m. on Mondays.

Application Express (APEX) Makes Report Viewing Easier

WHAT IS APPLICATION EXPRESS?

Oracle Application Express (Oracle APEX) is a rapid web application development tool for the Oracle database. Using only a web browser and limited programming experience, you can develop and deploy professional applications that are both fast and secure.

WHAT IS THE COST OF APPLICATION EXPRESS TO THE LEAS?

Currently, because of DPI's Oracle licensing model, DPI is able to provide APEX hosting free to the LEAs. Every LEA that is interested in learning how to develop using APEX can be given a secure workspace located on a server at DPI. Once an application is ready to "move to production" an LEA will contact DPI and DPI will move the application to a more secure, production ready environment at ITS.

WHAT CAN DPI OFFER AS AN APEX HOSTING PROVIDER?

- * A free APEX workspace
- * APEX technical phone support with DPI staff
- * APEX technical forum support with DPI staff and NC LEAs as members
- * Sample APEX applications available for download



HOW CAN THE LEAs BENEFIT FROM USING APEX?

Data collection in areas such as:

- * AYP and ABC Reports—Build reports with data already gathered through ABCTools.
- * Capture the goals and targets from student to teacher to administrators.
- * Capture data needed to identify students who need tutoring.
- * Integrate with NC WISE's Database to create LEA specific reports not currently provided by NC WISE.
- * Use APEX as a vehicle to get information out to the families of students via the web.
- * Use APEX as a reporting option with applications hosted on platforms such as the AS400, MySQL databases, MS SQL databases, Excel Spreadsheets and Access Databases.

ADVANTAGES OF ORACLE APEX APPLICATIONS

- * Browser based application development.
- * No client software to develop, deploy or run applications.
- * With Application Express, code is declarative. This means that no code is compiled and no code is generated.
- * Little programming skills are needed to develop APEX applications. However, SQL, PL/SQL, HTML, and Java experience is helpful for more advanced applications.
- * Applications development is point-and-click, reducing the possibility of errors, thus reducing troubleshooting code time.
- * Reports can be printed in PDF, RTF, CSV or XLS format.
- * APEX applications can connect to DB2, MySQL, Microsoft Access and Microsoft SQL databases as well as Oracle databases.
- * Consolidation of desktop databases and spreadsheets. This makes it easier to manage and share data.
- * Lower cost of application development.
- * Tight integration with Oracle DBMS.
- * Real-time interactive application development.
- * Comes bundled with every version of Oracle DBMS.

Join A Winning Team

Convert your

- Access Databases
- Excel Spreadsheets
- Legacy Client Server Applications

Into Secure Web Applications!!!

For more information contact:

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 Database & Workstation Support
 301 North Wilmington Street
 Raleigh, NC 27601
 Phone: (919) 807-3239
 Email: jmerritt@dpi.state.nc.us

Joining the Team

A number of new faces have joined the NC WISE Team at DPI and we'd like to introduce them below. If we've missed you please let us know at ncwise@dpi.state.nc.us

Eric Bumgartner is a PinPoint



contractor working on Betsy Baugess's team in Data Management on SIMS conversions to NC WISE. He comes

to NCDPI from Accenture, LLC, where he performed business consulting to utility companies. A Pennsylvania native, Eric has two children and enjoys golfing and hiking.



Wendy Hinson is the newest team member on the NC WISE Training Team. Wendy brings 13 years of LEA NC WISE experience to the



team, having previously worked in the Caldwell County School System. In her spare time, she enjoys reading and scrap-booking.



As NC WISE's new Communication Specialist, Michele Burton works with



the NC WISE team and assists in preparing and distributing project information to program participants at NCDPI and statewide. A former

newspaper reporter, she has also worked in Communications for Saint Augustine's College and the NC Restaurant and Lodging Association. Another Pennsylvania native, Michele is a die-hard Steelers fan and enjoys participating in her bowling and softball leagues.



Words From The Wise



I just wanted to thank all of you for all of your help this past year with our conversion to NC WISE. We had a great conversion, and I have been very appreciative of everyone on the NC WISE team and their assistance. I think I would not be able to do my job without the support of all of you. The Summer Conference was very informative, and I feel like I walked away with even more knowledge to apply to my job as the NC WISE Coordinator here in Currituck.

I know sometimes you guys don't get thanked as much as you need to be thanked, but just know that there is an LEA here in the Northeastern part of the state that is very appreciative of everything.

We love NC WISE!!!!!!

Thanks so much for everything you do.

Joe Baisley, NC WISE Coordinator
Currituck County Schools

As always, we welcome your feedback, suggestions and story ideas.

Please contact us through the NC WISE mailbox at ncwise@dpi.state.nc.us.