



Technology News for Schools

The latest news and updates from the Information Technology Directorate

Bulletin 5 - December 2014

Welcome to the latest Technology News for Schools. At the end of a busy year, this edition takes a look at a range of technology projects that are delivering new teaching and learning tools. Early in the new year, we will provide another bulletin featuring an outline of the new model for schools ICT support, currently being finalised.

A New School Library System

The Department is introducing a new school library system to replace the existing DOS-based OASIS library service.

Following a tender process, a group of teacher librarians selected a system offered by Softlink Australia, a web-based service known as Oliver. The tender process was informed by broad consultation with stakeholders, including principals and library staff.

The new system offers anywhere, anytime access to online learning materials and supports interactive engagement with digital and physical resources. Access will be fast, easy and flexible, via staff and student portals.

Benefits

With the new system, schools will have the option to integrate a wide range of online resources, including eBooks and other interactive digital content.

Students will be able to check loans, make reservations and receive alerts, search, request and rate resources, publish reviews, access resource lists and develop bibliographies.

Teachers will be able to search for physical and digital resources across linked libraries and databases, catalogue course and project materials and share resources with colleagues.

Library staff will have a modern system with the functionality they currently use together with new tools to introduce and manage digital resources.

Training and support

A range of training opportunities will be offered to help users navigate the key features of the new system, including a full day web-based training course.

Anywhere,
anytime
access to
online learning
materials



Online tutorials, 'how to' guides and other resources will be available to allow users to extend their skills.

The vendor, Softlink, will provide ongoing support for DEC schools via a web interface.

Delivery

The new school library system will be delivered in stages. Schools were invited to submit an expression of interest to be a 'lighthouse school' for early migration.

A small group of schools will be moved across early in 2015, followed by the lighthouse schools in Term 2. The full rollout to all schools will then follow and continue through 2016.

A range of resources are available on the School Library System intranet site - <https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/publicschoolsnsw/learning-technology/library-system>

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What's new?

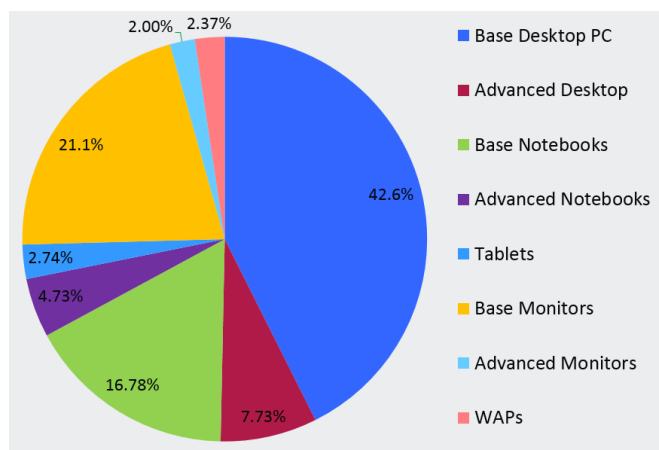
Technology for Learning

Technology for Learning (T4L) is ITD's annual refresh of school computer equipment, servers and other underpinning infrastructure.

All orders for 2014 have now been delivered. The chart below shows the range of devices and equipment supplied to DEC schools under T4L this year.

While schools continue to choose desktop computers, there is an increasing shift to portable devices. Schools are using tablets and notebooks, supported by wireless, to introduce more flexible teaching and learning practices.

The eT4L Server and Services project is supporting this change by giving schools more capacity to manage their devices and software locally.



eT4L Server and Services

eT4L Server and Services is providing schools with a high quality, easily managed and adaptable ICT foundation.

Secondary School Server Migration - in early 2014 the new eT4L servers were delivered to all secondary schools and installed over several months.

Pilot migrations have since been carried out to test the complex process for decommissioning legacy services and combining networks.

In Term 3 ITD commenced the full rollout of secondary server migrations. To date 58 secondary schools have been migrated to the new environment.



Network Remediation - all schools that opt-in for eT4L are also entitled to Local Area Network (LAN) assessment and remediation.

All DEC primary schools have had their LANs assessed and remediated as required to ensure a minimum 1Gb backbone infrastructure. All primary school learning areas are now connected and non-standard switches have been replaced by HP managed switches.

To date, 229 secondary schools have had their networks assessed, with a further 238 checks scheduled.

For more information visit detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/it/t4l/t4l_projects/et4l_server_services.htm

Whole-of-Government Data Centre

DEC is one of two anchor tenants for a new whole-of-government data centre, to be housed in custom-designed, state-of-the-art facilities at Silverwater and Unanderra.

The goal is stronger, more reliable data storage, lower energy costs, reduced environmental impacts and improved system performance.

The current focus of activity is migrating the many hundreds of applications used by schools, colleges and corporate offices across to the new environment.

This is progressing well, with many large and complex applications already migrated. Those applications that support the Premier's Reading and Sporting Challenges, for example, are all now housed at the new data centre.

There may be some unavoidable impacts as the final migration work is completed. If there are any system outages, local technology staff will keep schools informed throughout.

What's new?

Staff Email Upgrade

Several recent SchoolBiz items have provided advice on the Staff Email Upgrade to be carried out over coming months.

The upgrade will offer an extra functionality, including shared calendars and mailboxes and the ability to set rules.

Staff can assist by cleaning up mailboxes and emptying their deleted items folder before the summer break.

A flyer has been developed to outline what's planned - [https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/it/learnsyssupport/staff_email/communications/Staff Email Upgrade Fact Sheet Schools 2.pdf](https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/it/learnsyssupport/staff_email/communications/Staff%20Email%20Upgrade%20Fact%20Sheet%20Schools%202.pdf)

Third Party Integration

In response to feedback from principals, a project has been initiated to create a framework for integrating third party tools with ebs4 SALM.

One of the key considerations in developing a framework is ensuring data accuracy and security.

Vendors will need to comply with the Department's security and data standards.

ITD is working with Public Schools NSW to develop an integration roadmap, to identify and prioritise systems to be integrated.

The first tools targeted for integration are timetabling products and a pilot has now been completed for outbound timetable data.

Planning and design work is underway for inbound timetable data and daily attendance data exchange.



Adobe Creative Suite 6

As part of the Department's enterprise agreement with Adobe, students can download and install Adobe's Creative Suite 6 for free on one personally owned device.

Adobe Creative Suite 6 (CS6) is a set of software applications that empower students to work with digital media such as photos, movies and websites.

The software available to students includes Presenter, Captivate, Photoshop Elements, Premier Elements and InDesign.

For more information including download instructions visit: https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/it/learnsyssupport/sdbyod/adobe_for_student_byod.htm

Software Catalogue

The eT4L Software Catalogue is a user friendly interface developed to allow users to browse and request software for installation on any eT4L computer at their school.

Since its release the catalogue has attracted a lot of interest, averaging around 150 users per day.

All software in the catalogue has been classified by teachers. Reviews and ratings are listed to help you choose the right software to meet your needs. You can add your own reviews to assist others with their selections.

The catalogue is available to all schools who are running an eT4L server.

For more information visit https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/it/t4l/t4l_software_cat/et4l_software_catalogue.htm

Next issue...

We plan to provide another update early in the new year with more news on ITD projects and activities. On behalf of the team we'd like to wish you a happy and safe break.