



NORTHWEST REGIONAL WIDE AREA NETWORK CONSORTIUM

# LEARN

LEADING EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT  
THROUGH THE REGIONAL NETWORK

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2008

## LEARN HIGHLIGHTS—YEAR 1

### PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Northwest Pennsylvania Regional Wide Area Network (WAN) was established through funds secured from an Act 183 E-Fund grant provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit 5, Riverview Intermediate Unit 6 and ARIN Intermediate Unit 28 partnered to secure the \$5,205,682 three-year E-Fund grant. The consortium also purchased 400 Mbps of Internet to be distributed across the WAN and shared Internet2 connectivity.

The infrastructure phase has been completed, connecting the twelve counties the three Intermediate Units serve. The next stage of the project - LEARN (which stands for Leading Educational Achievement through the Regional Network) - was adopted to address the implementation phase.

### LEARN PORTAL

Coming in early Fall to the LEARN Portal at [www.learninpa.org](http://www.learninpa.org):

Voice-over PowerPoints -

1. Overview of LEARN Initiative.
2. What are Web 2.0 tools?
3. What is Internet2?

Check back often for additions to the website!

### Each Year 1 project participant received:

- A Polycom IP Videoconference Unit, valued at \$5500.
- \$2250 to conduct videoconferencing professional development within their LEA.
- Free participation to many professional development offerings at your local Intermediate Unit and on-site customized trainings.
- Free CAPE membership that includes additional professional development opportunities and access to online language courses.
- One free e-Mission (a NASA-inspired science simulation) from the Challenger Learning Center at Wheeling Jesuit University.
- Internet2 connectivity.

## LEARN COMMUNICATION

Communication has been a key part of our project success. To ensure the IUs, districts, career and technical centers, vendors and community partners are all well informed, the project team implemented a plan to provide timely and ongoing information. Features of this plan include:

- The LEARN portal (web site), [www.learninpa.org](http://www.learninpa.org), was created to serve as a communication tool and information hub for all LEARN activities for the regional consortium. Here you will find the Calendar of Events that includes information on upcoming professional development opportunities at each of the Intermediate Units.
- A quarterly newsletter was designed to provide ongoing information regarding upcoming professional development opportunities, project updates and project benefits. It is sent to all participating school entities and posted on the LEARN portal.
- Project team meetings are held on a regular basis and include representatives from each of the partnering IUs. Staff from technology, curriculum, and business departments are kept current on the project status, budget information and upcoming events. The project team also includes sub-committees to provide recommendations on technology and curriculum purchases.
- District contact meetings are held individually at each IU. The LEARN Initiative has been consistently included on various meeting agendas to keep all participating parties involved and current on the project status.

### Professional Development Wrap-Up

The LEARN Initiative has provided a variety of workshops offered at IUs 5, 6 and 28 for participants, professionals and/or administrators and IU employees including:

- Polycom
- Videoconferencing Best-Practices
- Beginner Web 2.0
- Advanced Web 2.0
- e-Missions
- MAGPI Technology
- eSchool Builder
- Internet2 Awareness
- Copyright in the Internet Classroom
- Visualization and Simulation Academy for Science and Math Teachers
- Moodle

In total, the LEARN Initiative has provided training to more than 500 LEA professionals and/or administrators and IU employees.

## 2008 - 2009 AT-A-GLANCE

- Year 2 LEAs will receive Polycom units and corresponding training.
- Year 1 and Year 2 LEAs will each receive web cams, speakers and microphones to conduct web conferencing in the classroom.
- Professional Development will be driven by content area; the first scheduled event will be the LEARN Middle School Academy for science and social studies teachers in August and October.
- Digital content will be made more readily available and appropriate trainings will be provided.
- Quarterly LEARN newsletters will continue beginning in September.
- The LEARN web portal will continue to expand and be a hub for communication and resources.

## NORTHWEST REGIONAL WIDE AREA NETWORK CONSORTIUM



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