



New Haven News

News from the New Haven Unified School District

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FREE ONLINE SOFTWARE TRAINING AVAILABLE FOR STUDENTS, STAFF, PARENTS

UNION CITY (Friday, January 26, 2007) – A student wants to learn Adobe Photoshop Elements, so she can include pictures in a report. A teacher wants to insert charts in the PowerPoint presentation he is preparing for his classroom. A mother wants to know more about the blogs that her son has been reading every night.

Or, just for fun, someone wants to create a playlist in iTunes or compose a new song in GarageBand.

Students, teachers and parents in the New Haven Unified School District can learn all of the above and much more – for free – just by going online.

Using state and federal funds earmarked for technology, New Haven has purchased a District-wide subscription to Atomic Learning, a national provider of web-based software training. Starting today, every New Haven student and teacher, all other staff members and every District parent will have free access to Atomic Learning tutorials for more than 250 software applications.

“For many years, New Haven enjoyed a reputation for being on the cutting edge of technology, and for integrating technology into our classrooms,” Superintendent Dr. Pat Jaurequi said. “By providing this training – not only for our students and teachers in our schools but also for parents at home – we’re hoping to not only enhance the classroom technology experience but share technology training with the community.”

Dr. Jaurequi noted that integrating technology into the curriculum is one of the components in the New Haven Strategic Plan, the District’s guide to budgeting and decision-making crafted last year by more than 150 students, parents, teachers, other employees and community members.

“Our goal is to train every student and every educator in as many applications as they can use, and to train as many parents as want to take advantage of the program,” Dr. Jaurequi said.

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Using Atomic Learning is easy, said Chris Hobbs, Executive Director of Technology. Users simply go to www.atomiclearning.com, enter a user name and password provided by the District (parent user names and passwords will be sent home from individual schools, in a flier describing the program). Users type in a question or click on the Tutorials tab to find a program, and a one- to three-minute tutorial movie walks the user through the topic.

Tutorials, available for both Windows and Macintosh platforms, include closed captioning, and many are available in Spanish.

Financially, the program is a bargain, Mr. Hobbs said. The District's subscription, good through June 2008, costs \$24,000 and is being paid for with state EETT (Enhancing Education Through Technology) funds and Microsoft Settlement Voucher funds for federal Title I schools.

"This is exactly the kind of thing that funds like that should be used for," Mr. Hobbs said.

Dr. Jaurequi and Mr. Hobbs credited Rhonda Neagle, Director of Technology and Media, and Stephen Politzer, Program Specialist for Technology Integration, for their work in setting up the system.

"New Haven is dedicated to providing the highest quality technology resources," Mr. Hobbs said. "We want to give students the resources they need to learn, and teachers and parents the resources to be able to help them, and to learn themselves."