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## **Online data helps track needs of students**

### **R.B. School District will use new access to data to predict test scores**

**BY LAYLI WHYTE, Staff Writer**

RED BANK - Advances in technology now allow teachers and administrators at the Red Bank Public School District to better track the progress of their students.

At a Board of Education meeting last month, Director of Curriculum Toni Mullins and Director of Technology Jayne Frankenfield discussed the new Internet technology now available for Target Teach, an educational program that has been in use in the district for more than three years.

Target Teach is distributed by Evans Newton Inc., which works with schools across the country to create individualized programs to meet each school's needs. Target Teach has programs for both mathematics and language arts and literacy.

According to district Business Administrator Anne Darrow, the district paid \$700,000 over the first three years of the program use, and is now paying a \$4,000 annual licensing fee, which includes the new technology.

"Target Teach is our ongoing assessment that we start at the first grade," said Mullins. "It is aligned with the New Jersey Core Curriculum standards."

Until recently, according to Mullins, there have been only two people in the district who had direct access to students' test results, which with the help of Target Teach, are compiled to track the progress of each student, each classroom and each grade level.

"We used to have volumes and volumes of paper," said Mullins.

"Now we can provide classroom teachers with student achievement data," said Superintendent Laura Morana. "Teachers and administrators can all have direct access to the data online without waiting for information from one person at the primary school and one person at the middle school."

Before the new technology, Mullins said, the system administrators were the only people who had access to the data, and teachers and administrators who wanted the information would have to ask them to retrieve hard copies.

"Now they can access it from home or from any computer in the school that is online," Morana said.

"And the results come in much more quickly," added Mullins. "We no longer have to be concerned with all of that paper work."

Now all the information has been moved from paper to hard drive and has been placed on a Web site,

constructed by Target Teach but managed by the district system administrators.

Frankenfield explained that teachers each have a log-in name and password for the system, and that teachers are more limited in their access than the district administration, able to view only

the data relating to their own students in their classroom.

She said teachers can track students' progress, not only throughout the school year, but they can look back to track their progress since the first grade.

"One reason we got the Web version," said Frankenfield, "is because we did not have to print every report. Some reports are 39 pages long. Now we're putting the data in the hands of the people who need it, the administrators and the teachers."

Frankenfield said teachers and administrators can now get together and discuss the learning trends of each student, as well as the class as a whole, and that data can be used to pinpoint areas where an individual student may need more help, or curriculum areas where a teacher might need to spend more time with the class.

Frankenfield displayed a chart showing results for one class throughout 2005.

The students take four incremental exams throughout the year, and one comprehensive exam at the end of the school year.

The bar graph showed the increase in test scores throughout the year, but also showed that students overall scored higher on the end of the year comprehensive exam than on any of the incremental exams.

"You can really see the improvement throughout the year," said Frankenfield. "From first grade through eighth grade, in language arts literacy and in mathematics, it really shows which students are proficient in which objectives."

Board member Mary-Ellen Mess asked if the data could be used as an indicator of how well students will do on the standardized tests used for state and national assessment.

"The whole purpose of us getting Target Teach was to boost the performance on statewide standardized tests," she said.

Morana said the ongoing assessment is intended to be used as a predictor for test outcomes.

"Now we can make sure the analysis is used more skillfully," she said. "One of the key things about this system is that it is used for diagnostic purposes."

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