ED**Compass** newsletter

News and resources for educators using SMART products

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IN THIS ISSUE

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the September issue of *EDCompass*™ newsletter!

Fundraising and grant writing are often on the minds of educators who look for new ways to outfit classrooms with technology products that are tried, tested and true. This issue of the newsletter offers tips, best practices and inspiring stories from teachers who are making strides in their schools by hitting the pavement to find the funding they need. In addition to reading these articles, you can visit www.smarttech.com/grantfunds to find a variety of other helpful grant-matching and writing resources. Check it out now for ideas you can implement this year.

We want to hear what you think of the newsletter. On page 3, you'll find a link to our reader survey. By completing it, not only can you help make the newsletter even more relevant and useful, but you'll also have a chance to win SMART products for your school. And as always, if you have any comments about the information featured in this issue, you can e-mail education@smarttech.com.

NANCY'S NOTES

Tell Two Friends

A number of years ago, a phone company undertook a successful marketing campaign wherein it urged its subscribers to tell two friends, and so on, about the company and its services. The campaign was both memorable and effective.

Today you have an opportunity to tell two friends (or more) a lot about SMART, such as the following:

- We've just launched an updated version of the SMART Exchange. On this website, SMART users can both access more than 25,000 free resources and connect with each other. You can read more about it in the product spotlight.

- We continue to offer our popular content creation seminars to assist educators in creating compelling lesson activities

- Our category share for interactive whiteboards keeps increasing in North America and around the world. Teachers everywhere prefer SMART – more so than all other providers combined globally.

- Our focus on innovation continues with new product offerings like SMART Notebook Math Tools, which offers everything a math teacher needs on an interactive whiteboard. We've also launched a dual-user board that will allow two students to work at the SMART Board™ interactive whiteboard at the same time – to find out more, check out last month's newsletter.

True to our promise, there are many new and exciting developments from SMART, all targeted at making your experience with our products productive and engaging. In this issue, you'll also read about ways in which you can find the funds to acquire the classroom technology you want and need. We know you have an exciting year ahead, and we hope you'll take advantage of everything you can.

And while you're at it – tell two friends.

Nancy Knowlton **is the CEO of SMART Technologies.**

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SMART Notebook Lesson Activities

Find a comprehensive database of professionally developed K–12 lesson activities on our education website. The lessons are correlated to local curriculum standards and created by classroom teachers or SMART's team of curriculum resource developers.

Try one of the following SMART Notebook lesson activities during your next math, English, geography or biology class.

Addition and Subtraction Practice
K–3 math students can learn how to add and subtract double and single-digit numbers and answer questions in a set amount of time.

Playing More Than One Part
Sixth-grade English students can review the parts of a speech. They'll learn that the same word can function as more than one part of a speech and that adding an ending to a word can change its part of speech.

The Great Unifier
Seventh-grade geography students can learn about the significant role Shi Huangdi played in Chinese history and evaluate his contributions according to his time.

Prokaryote and Eukaryote Cell Structure
Twelfth-grade biology students can label diagrams of animal, plant and bacterial cells.

SMARTer Kids Foundation Continues to Sponsor Teacher of the Year Program

The SMARTer Kids™ Foundation of Canada has extended its sponsorship commitment to the U.S. State and National Teacher of the Year programs through 2010. The Foundation has been a sponsor of these programs since 2000 through its Teaching Excellence Awards program, providing them with more than US$1 million each year. Every year up to 62 State Teachers of the Year receive technology training and an educational technology package worth more than US$16,000. The SMARTer Kids Foundation also offers an annual sponsorship of US$35,000 to the National Teacher of the Year program.

To find out how you can get involved in next year's program, visit the Council of Chief State School Officers website.

Race to the Top

President Barack Obama and U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan recently announced the National Competition to Advance School Reform. This competition includes the US$4.35 billion Race to the Top Fund, which will be used to reward eligible states for accomplishments made with stimulus funds and create incentives for future improvement in education. The U.S. Department of Education will begin receiving applications for the first phase of the program in October 2009 and will release grants in March next year. The second phase begins in June 2010 and ends September of that year, when the last grants will be awarded.

To receive a grant, applicants must demonstrate appropriate use of previous American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding and outline how they will use these funds to drive reform in four key areas:

- Adopting internationally benchmarked standards and assessments that prepare students for success in college and the workplace

- Recruiting, developing, rewarding and retaining effective teachers and principals

- Building data systems that measure student success and inform teachers and principals how they can improve their practices

- Turning around the lowest-performing schools

Learn more about how your school can participate in the Race to the Top Fund.

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Speak Up for a Chance to Win

We want to hear from you. Tell us what you think of *EDCompass* newsletter, and you could win a SMART Response interactive response system, complete with 32 handheld remotes, and a user license for SMART Notebook Math Tools. Your feedback will assist us in providing relevant and valuable information that helps you and your peers use SMART products in innovative ways.

You have until October 30, 2009, to qualify for our prize draw. Fill out the survey for your chance to win.

SupportLink Newsletter Now Available

In last month's issue, we told you about *SupportLink*, a new online newsletter that offers technical support and training resources to help you effectively use your SMART products. Read the current issue.

You can sign up to receive this newsletter six times a year and get dependable, results-oriented support sent right to your inbox. Subscribe now!
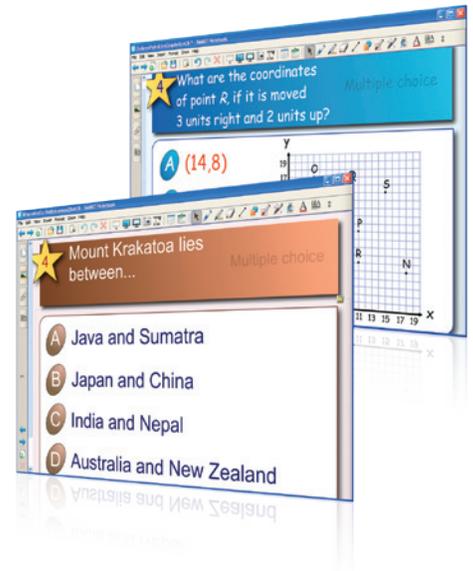
FEATURE ARTICLE

Buy Right

"After a tech implementation, the last thing I ever want to hear from a teacher is, 'Can you move this piece of technology please? It's in the way of my dry-erase board,'" says Dr. Mel Pace, director of media and instructional technology and technology services in Florida's Osceola County School District.

He's not alone in fearing that technology products, intended to enrich instruction and learning, won't be used to their fullest potential. Much work is done behind the scenes to secure grants and facilitate creative fundraising projects, all with the goal of purchasing state-of-the-art classroom technology – so it can be especially disheartening if these products sit idle. Avoiding such a scenario can be achieved by involving teachers in all aspects of the technology implementation process. Read the full article.

SMART Response Question Sets

Find a database of SMART Response question sets on our education website. Each set includes 10 questions that are correlated to state and provincial curriculum standards and are compatible with a matching SMART-created lesson activity on the same topic.

Try one of the following SMART Response question sets in your next science, math, social studies and language arts class.

Forms of Energy
K–3 science students can test their knowledge of the various forms of energy.

Ordered Pairs and Line Graphs
Sixth-grade math students can test their ability to plot points on a Cartesian plane.

Where Are Earth's Volcanoes
Ninth- and tenth-grade social studies students can test their knowledge of the names and locations of some famous volcanoes around the world.

Thesaurus 2
Tenth- and eleventh-grade language arts students can test their knowledge of synonyms and antonyms.

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Fundraising Tips to Help You Get Started

We asked Jocelyn Johnson, from W.L. Parks Middle School, what advice she would give other teachers looking to raise funds for their schools. Here's what she suggested:

- Find individuals who are movers and shakers in your community and who regularly offer support for community issues and concerns. Try searching the Internet, reading your local newspaper and attending social and community functions where prominent leaders may be present.

- Solicit help from your local Chamber of Commerce. Request the names of people and companies in your area that support education.

- Send letters to all individuals who could offer support, even if you feel they won't respond. I mailed generic letters inviting community leaders to visit Parks Middle School to discuss the kind of support that would make a difference to Parks students. Make sure your letter includes statistical data and explains how problems can be resolved with their help.

- Write your local and federal politicians. Remind them you are a constituent, and state your case in its entirety.

- Request a brief period of time to present your advocacy platform at a community meeting where prominent individuals are present

Getting Political Leaders On Board at Parks Middle School – One Teacher's Story

W. L. Parks Middle School is located in the heart of a disadvantaged community 15 minutes from downtown Atlanta. Sixty percent of the children in the community live in poverty, nearly thirteen percent of adults are unemployed, and about half the adults do not have high school diplomas. Despite these challenging circumstances, Parks Middle School has met federal education standards for the last five years. Part of this success is attributed to the work of Jocelyn Johnson, visual arts instructor and mentor at the school, who devised one of the school's plans to foster student success.

Last year, Parks Middle School received a SMARTer Kids Foundation grant worth US$20,000, which included a SMART Board 600i interactive whiteboard system, a SMART Document Camera, SMART Ideas™ concept-mapping software, an AirLiner™ wireless slate and a two-year school license for SMART Bridgit™ conferencing software. This was just the beginning for Johnson. She continued to strive to enhance her school by engaging with community members to serve as advocates for student learning. She connected with prominent leaders, including Judith Costello, political advocacy and academic relations consultant, and the Honorable Congressman John Lewis. Johnson expressed her concerns to both Costello and Lewis about the lack of funding for technology education and the impact of technological paucity on student learning.

Costello and Lewis are now keenly aware of the difference they can make in bringing more technology to Parks students. They have offered their full support of policies and actions that enhance student learning and achievement through the use of technology.

You can also turn community members into advocates for your school. If you haven't done so already, contact leaders in your area and let them know the difference they can make in the education of your students.

SMART SHOWCASE SCHOOL PROFILE

Salt Lake City School Leads Learning Exploration

When a school is named for an explorer who determinedly voyaged into the unknown over 230 years ago, there is an expectation that discovery and innovation will be found in large doses in its classrooms. Such is the case with Escalante Elementary, a science-focused school in the Salt Lake City School District. Read the full article.

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SMART Exchange – The Search Is On

Fast Facts

Just in time for the school year, we've completely revamped the SMART Exchange. On September 1, the SMART Exchange became your complete education destination – with a wealth of free, ready-to-use education content and a vibrant educator community.

On the new SMART Exchange, you can quickly find, evaluate, download and share a variety of digital content. And as always, you can also connect with colleagues to exchange lesson activities, ideas, insights and classroom success stories.

The key to the new SMART Exchange is the search function. From its home page, you can start searching for relevant, classroom-ready content right away. You can also narrow your results with a variety of filters, such as curriculum, grade, subject, media type and popularity. And when you find something that catches your eye, you can open a full visual preview of it before downloading.
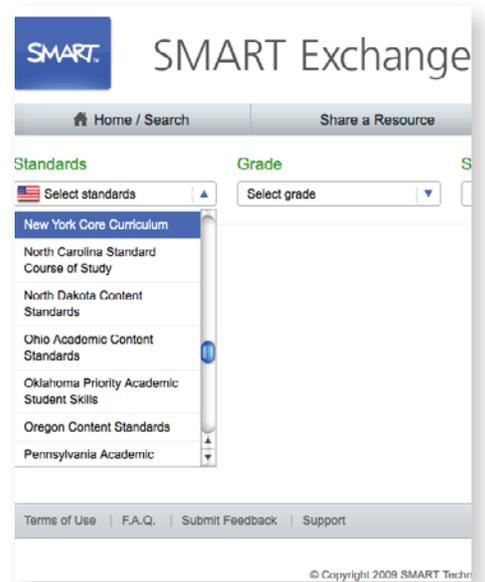
"I like the way the SMART Exchange is organized," says Jillian Sonmore, a teacher at A.B. Daley School in Nanton, Alberta, Canada. "It's very clean, and everything I expect to find is where I expect to find it."

So what kind of content can you find? The SMART Exchange has a wealth of standards-correlated SMART Notebook lesson activities created by both teachers and SMART education specialists. You can also find SMART Response question sets, links to useful websites and a variety of multimedia resources to use in your classroom.

With all these big changes to the SMART Exchange, one important thing has stayed the same. You can still use it to take part in the vibrant SMART community, collaborating with other teachers or connecting with SMART experts. And with the new SMART Exchange, it's even easier to upload your lesson activities, educational content and resources, so you can share them with other educators.

Visit the SMART Exchange.

- **Quick search** – Find classroom-ready content right away with a search designed to return relevant results

- **Refined results** – Narrow your results by subject, grade, media type, number of downloads and teacher recommendations

- **Preview** – Read more about the content you select, and get a full visual preview before downloading

- **Open access** – No sign-in or registration is needed to find, evaluate, download and share resources

- **SMART content** – Find lesson activities and assessments created by teachers and SMART education specialists

- **Download and share** – Download resources to your computer or upload your own content to the SMART Exchange to share with other teachers

- **Discussion forums** – Connect with educators in your district or around the world to gather insight or exchange ideas and best practices

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SMART Notebook Express

Even more exciting changes are coming soon to the SMART Exchange. One of the biggest is its integration with SMART Notebook Express, a web-based application that allows anyone to view SMART Notebook software files and take advantage of some of SMART Notebook's most popular features – without having to download any software. SMART Notebook Express gives educators a new way to share lessons and content anywhere, anytime – at school, home, the library or a local café.

Soon, when you visit the SMART Exchange you'll be able to use SMART Notebook Express to open lesson activities in a browser or download them to your computer or USB Flash® drive. Using the text editor or the pen and line tools, you'll be able to make changes to your lesson activities – such as adding pictures and annotations or making edits with copy, paste and delete. You'll then be able to save the SMART Notebook file and send it to other teachers, or upload it to the SMART Exchange and share it with the SMART community.

Up Next

Watch for the next issue of *EDCompass* newsletter. We're putting the focus on special needs, with compelling stories from teachers who use SMART products to make the extraordinary happen in their classrooms.

Ask Jason

Jason Orbaugh is a product manager for the SMART Exchange. We asked him about some of the big changes that arrived this month.

EDCompass What's new about the SMART Exchange?

Jason In addition to all the digital classroom resources developed by SMART education specialists and a growing community of educators, the SMART Exchange offers an enhanced search experience, full visual previews, quick access to standards-correlated lessons and community ratings. Plus, you don't need to register to find what you need or share content with others.

EDCompass How do educators find content?

Jason SMART Exchange visitors have a variety of search options. They can quickly browse or filter search results by curriculum, subject area, grade level and media type – just to mention a few.

EDCompass What kind of content can they find?

Jason Teachers who visit the SMART Exchange will find a variety of resources for their classrooms, including SMART Notebook lesson activities, SMART Response question sets, images and websites. And the number of resources is growing, so they can find new content every time they visit.

EDCompass Can educators contribute their own content to the SMART Exchange?

Jason With the new SMART Exchange, it will be easy to upload and share content with colleagues. Even better, educators will know the impact of their contributions thanks to auto-generated previews, and they'll also see how many times their content has been recommended by others.

EDCompass Can educators still use the SMART Exchange to connect with each other?

Jason The ability to make connections is essential for educators. They can simply select *Connect with teachers* from the main site navigation to catch up on the latest discussions.

EDCompass What can we look forward to in the future?

Jason The team is working to support a growing number of media types. We're also developing user profiles that enable more personally relevant results to be returned, based on the user's preferences and history.

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