We, as a Technology team, faced many challenges, enjoyed many successes, and learned many lessons. These experiences helped bring our technology stakeholders together to become a stronger and more unified team.

We completed a variety of key projects in 2011, primarily Windows 7 deployment, Google email and calendar implementation throughout the District, LANDesk Anti-virus solution, End-of-Course Exams infrastructure testing and implementation, use of alternative mobile devices (iPad), and teamed up with Academic departments on many key initiatives.

In 2012, many of our key initiatives will revolve around enhancing our infrastructure to support state-mandated initiatives such as online testing and digital conversion initiatives. This would require capital investment into the improvement of our wireless and LAN (local area network) infrastructure at all schools in order to support such a mandate. IT is working with Purchasing to develop RFPs (Request for Proposal) to implement this technology at all of our schools.

We will be applying for eRate grants from FCC to fund some of the investment. In today's difficult budget climate (similar to the past few years), all of our other key initiatives and projects throughout will focus on reducing our total cost of ownership.

I will provide more details in the upcoming Spring and Summer TIM editions.

Thanks to all of our schools and business partners for their help and collaboration.

You can also read this newsletter online at http://www.palmbeachschools.org/it/ in the Newsletters section.
Recently, staff from Orange County Public Schools visited IT Solutions to review our Forms and Records Management functions. They also attended a District Forms Review Committee meeting where they spoke with the principal, teachers and CTA representative on that committee. They were very impressed with everything we have in place! They plan to incorporate many of our procedures and processes in their District. We received the email below from their District Forms Officer.

Good Morning! We just wanted to take time out and thank you for allowing us to come and visit your school district. We gained so much valuable information and feel confident that it will be instrumental in forming our own Forms Management processes. If there is anything in the future that you need assistance with or would like to visit, please do not hesitate to contact (us). Thanks again!

Sara Loewer, FCRM
District Forms Officer
ICTS Infrastructure

The School District of Palm Beach County will NEVER ask you for information such as your user name, password, social security number, or any other confidential information through an email. NEVER reply to these messages. If you feel you have received one of these fraudulent messages, please forward it to: MailAbuse@palmbeachschools.org.

We will review them and take action to stop them.
Hmmm . . .

Ever wonder who’s in that particular Group you’re about to send an email to? Here are the steps that will answer that question . . .

Check it out!!!
**FY12 Computer Refresh Project Update**

*by: Natasha Bell-Hayden, IT Solutions*

The FY12 Instructional Computer Refresh is well underway!

The purpose of the computer refresh is to address the immediate and increasing computer needs at schools by providing new and up-to-date ‘modern’ computers. The objective is to maintain the ratio of 4.8 teachers/students to one modern computer. The computers will replace teacher and student stations, as well as computer labs.

As part of this year’s Refresh and Title I projects, 110 schools were eligible to receive computers, resulting in over 10,000 computers to be delivered. This includes providing a laptop cart with 30 laptops to each High School.

All eligible schools received notification of their computer allocation and orders were successfully processed online using LiquidOffice. The 4.8:1 ratio for FY12 has also been met and the project is currently ongoing. The completion of all computer deliveries is aimed for the end of April 2012.

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**PeopleSoft HCM, Financials, and Portal Application Upgrade**

*by: Imtiaz Paniwala, IT Solutions*

The School District of Palm Beach County currently uses PeopleSoft Human Capital Management, PeopleSoft Enterprise Financials, and PeopleSoft Portal Applications. The ERP team is currently working on upgrading the current 8.9 PeopleSoft platform to the latest technology available from Oracle, PeopleSoft 9.1. Given the constant demand for system change based on regulation changes (like Tax Updates) and demand for new services, as well as increased speed of technological changes, our ERP software is constantly updated. This means that continuous updates to our production systems must be made, and major upgrades (which provide new functionality, performance, and technology updates) will generally need to occur every few years. The upgrade will also put us in a position to be able to leverage new and improved functionality within the PeopleSoft software. The benefits of the upgrade include continued vendor support without incurring additional maintenance costs and enhanced software functionality focused on improved end-user experience. The look and feel will not be significantly changed for our customers.

The upgrade began with the install of 9.1 Demo environments in November 2010. DEV, TST, and parallel PQA environments have since been successfully upgraded and most Unit and System Integration Testing has been completed. The Production upgrades are planned to “Go-Live” during the Spring Break week in March 2012.
YOU SAY GOODBYE AND I SAY HELLO—HELLO, HELLO.
I DON’T KNOW WHY YOU SAY GOODBYE, I SAY HELLO . . .

The Division of Information Technology has recently had to say GOODBYE to . . .

Chad Wintzer joined the School District’s work force in October of 2004. In his previous position with the Department of Safe Schools, he developed TrainU and the District’s Vodcast system—two of the most widely used applications throughout the District. He is expanding his career in the private sector.

Mike Requeny also joined the private sector recently. He had been with the District since August of 2007 in the capacity of Server, VMware and Network administrator. He was instrumental in implementing our Virtual environment to its current state and played a major role in the virtualization of school servers.

We are happy to say HELLO to these employees as they made in-house moves . . .

Jerry Kinney, IT Technical Analyst from Technical Operations / Service Desk, has moved to the IT Applications Department working on the Web Team. Jerry will lead the technical support of the LANDesk ITSM implementation. The Web Team members very much look forward to working with Jerry. A big “Thank You” goes to Leigh Carr and Joyce Parker for allowing Jerry to make this move, ensuring that the LANDesk ITSM solution has adequate technical staffing assigned to it.

Debra Kaczor, recently became the Technical Solutions Specialist I in IT Applications/Web Team. Debbie joined the District in 2009 as an IT Technical Analyst with 20 years of system administration and development experience with companies such as Siemens and Levenger. She has been heavily involved in several critical District projects and systems including the Web Redesign Project, the document imaging system and migration, eForms / LiquidOffice, HEAT, IPCM, ChangeGear, ParentLink, and SharePoint. In addition, she has recorded over 50 training and informational videos for various applications. She is an important member of the Web Team.

And then there’s a BRAND NEW Member of the IT Family . . .

On February 7th at 3:26 PM, Sanjay Gothana and his wife became the proud parents of their new baby boy, Viraj!!!

Congratulations to the Gothana family!!!
Here are some blurbs from recent complementary communication about helpful IT employees. We love hearing your success stories—keep ‘em coming!!!

“. . . just wanted to thank everyone at the IT Service Desk for all of their assistance with trouble-shooting my Network connectivity issue after my new hard drive was re-imaged . . . And to Nixon Marc for (solving) the problem . . .!!” (Lisa D., IT Applications)

“. . . just wanted to say Thank You to (the) group (who) set up our computers for FTE and Reporting. Demard set up my computer and I just wanted to let you know what a great job he did for me. He stayed right here and made sure everything was working just the way I needed it (to). He was just a pleasure; never complained. Great group you have! . . .“ (Debbie R., Department of FTE and Reporting)

“. . . (Ida Perez and Laura Roberts) are doing a great job (on the District Website Banners). I love the content and the ease of getting to the additional information about any specific banner. As of late, they have become more informative and very artistic. They are eye-catching without being overly busy.” (Gerry P., Wynnebrook Elementary Librarian)

“. . . Just a ‘shout-out’ to Michael (Fitz) and the Service Desk personnel. They completed the restore very quickly & were great to work with! . . . they did a great job correcting things. Thanks again!” (Michele S., Legal Services)

“. . . Laura (Roberts), Your work is outstanding. My team and I were very impressed with the selection of banners that were sent to us. The quality of the banners made our selection challenging . . . Again thank you for your expertise with our literacy project.” (Robin W., K-12 Curriculum)

These thank-you notes were received from outside customers requesting records.

“Yvonne White, . . . Thank you so very much for your help today. I am so very grateful and proud to know that my home state (FL) has such kind and professional people as yourself . . . Continue to be as kind, considerate, helpful and professional as you were today.” (Melvenia L., Out-of-State Records Request)

“Renea, Life throws so much at you that sometimes you just need somebody, anybody to be kind to you . . . Thank you for being my angel today . . .” (Belinda F.)

“Ms. White . . . Thank you for what you did for me and my husband, we greatly appreciate it.” (Byron and Jolie)
The APC Solution

by: James Gallon, IT Solutions

GO GREEN INITIATIVE!

The APC Solution is a project that began in 2009 and its objective was to Optimize Data Center spacing, power, cooling and work toward a greener technology footprint. Below, are the steps and pictures taken during the project.

The unit below contains its own Power Distribution Unit (PDU), Uninterrupted Power Source (UPS), and four in-row A/C units. This is important because, if the building lost power, this is a backup system that will keep all computer-related systems up and running until the generator is activated.

At the end of the project, the state-of-the-art hot isle containment unit was installed. All the heat from the servers are now contained within an enclosure and the air circulates and is reused from the in-row A/C units.

By containing the heat from the servers within an enclosure, we are saving the District power usage from the larger Leibert A/C units. One unit has been removed and the plan is to remove and/or downsize two other A/C units for more efficient units.
Random Acts of Kindness

http://www.randomactsofkindness.org/Kindness-Ideas/Browse/

Personal Social Responsibility (PSR) is all about doing for others what you would like done for you. It is about recognizing how your behavior affects others, and holding yourself accountable for your actions. Each one of us has to do our part to make the world a better place.

Kindness is contagious – and as part of PSR, you might want to consider carrying out random acts of kindness on a daily basis without expecting anything back. It is truly a win/win situation. The person you are being kind to benefits through your help and you feel good for having helped someone.

So where do you begin? Here are a few ideas. Put them into practice and also create your own.

1. Make and send a card to a friend for no reason.
2. Hand-write notes of appreciation to people who have helped you lately.
3. Cut your neighbor’s grass or hedges.
4. Walk your friend’s dog.
5. Offer a couple of hours of free babysitting to a friend or neighbor.
6. Give a compliment about your waiter/waitress to the manager.
7. Give a large tip to someone when they least expect it.
8. Let someone in front of you in line at the store.
9. Pay the person’s toll behind you at the toll plaza.
10. Hold a door open for someone who is carrying many items or seems in a rush.
11. Give up your seat for someone, not just an elderly person.
12. Move down in a movie theater so those “one-seat leftovers” don’t prevent others from sitting together and enjoying the show.
13. Pick up litter that has been left that would otherwise be lying around.
14. Compliment a work colleague for their excellence.
15. Give another driver your parking spot.
16. Let a driver ahead of you at a stop sign or in a merge situation.
17. Give a piece of fruit, cold soda or water to a delivery person.
18. Help an elderly neighbor carry out their trash/bring in the cans of a neighbor.
20. Tell all your family members how much you appreciate them.

What goes around is sure to come around – happy helping!!!
Random Acts of Kindness

...continued

Back in October, 2011, Tiger (a lost dog) and Wanda (Tiger’s owner, a Tallahassee resident), were recently the recipient of Random Acts of Kindness by staff members of IT.

Ida Perez found Tiger in the FHESC parking lot after a heavy rain, took him home, cleaned him up, and fed him.

Chandra Ramcharitar took care of him for a few days, too, and took him to PetSmart where they were able to read the micro-chip and found Wanda’s contact information! Apparently, Tiger had been lost for two years and Wanda never stopped looking for him.

Joyce and Tom Parker were planning a trip to Georgia and offered to drive Tiger to reunite with Wanda.

The reunion with Wanda and her children was heart-warming.

Thanks to everyone involved for helping to reunite Tiger with Wanda and her three children!!!