Some Possible Solutions for

Your School System's Computer Issues

1 - Considering the uniqueness of technology's: **a)** substantial **academic significance**, and **b)** enormous **financial costs**, the School Board should establish an *independent* committee of informed citizens who will monitor the district's performance in this critical area.

2 - Assure that the head MIS person is a competent, open-minded individual who is **unequivocally** committed to support what is in the best interests of the students, teachers and taxpayers.

3 - Have the head MIS person subscribe to the **free** Mac-Managers email list. (Members are cross-platform managers who will answer essentially **any** technical question, for free.)

4 - Have a detailed written procedure for having the school's Macs use **only the latest of the four most dependable Mac OS versions** (8.6/ 9.1/ 10.3.9/ 10.4.x), and keeping these up-to-date with the most current free Apple system software.

5 - Have a detailed written procedure for seeing that the school district's Macs are loaded **only with the minimum items (like Fonts).**

6 - Verify that the school has a procedure to assure that it **only** purchases **well-reviewed** and **well-supported** third party software, and that they keep their Macs up-to-date with this software, in a timely manner.

7a- **Load each 10.x Mac** with the following basic and free (or inexpensive) programs:
  a) AppleWorks 6.2.9 or iWorks [powerful wordprocessor, SS and database]
  b) RealBasic [extraordinary, simple programming application]
  c) GraphicConverterX [$20 shareware program that almost equals $500 Photoshop]
  e) Stuffit Expander [latest version of this decompression program]
  f) Adobe Acrobat Reader [latest version for reading common Internet PDF documents]

7b- **Load each 8.6 or 9.x Mac** with the following basic and free (or inexpensive) programs:
  a) AppleWorks 5.0.3 or 5.0.4 or 6.2.5 [powerful wordprocessor, SS and database]
  b) HyperCard 2.4.1 [extraordinary, simple programming application]
  c) GraphicConverter [$20 shareware program that almost equals $500 Photoshop]
  d) Netscape Communicator 4.8 [very useful browser and email program]
     [when email, is not needed, substitute Internet Explorer 5.1.7]
  e) Stuffit Expander 7.0 [or latest version of this decompression program]
  f) Adobe Acrobat Reader 5.1 [for reading common Internet PDF documents]
  g) Calculator+ [superior, free Apple Menu item calculator]
  h) MacVerter Metric [quick conversions to/from any metric unit]
  i) the district's recommended Extension Manager and Sherlock sets
  j) TechTool [for monthly rebuilds of the desktop]
  k) Apple Disk First Aid 8.6/8.6.1 [for monthly hard drive testing]

8 - For problem situations: **a)** have copies of the recommended Mac OS versions you use, customized on your Apple Software Restore **Repair CDs**, and **b)** have a **detailed written procedure for troubleshooting** the school's Mac computers: in a logical, thorough manner.

9 - Have a detailed written procedure to allow each school's semi-technical person to do **basic maintenance and troubleshooting** of their school's Macs, on their own.

10-Have a detailed well-written procedure that **explains good computing practices** for teachers and students to follow. **This should include specifics as to how a person with a PC at home should transfer and convert files.** (Need to know more? The excellent MacWindows site provides tutorials for just about every cross-platform aspect imaginable.)

11-**Actively**, and **open-mindedly**, <u>encourage</u> inputs from teachers.

12-Provide teachers with a subscription for *MacHome Journal*. Have teachers become familiar with Teacher Mentor internet asklines, dealing with <u>educational software</u> and <u>Mac hardware</u>.

13-**Replace all Windows servers** that have Mac clients with the newest OS X Apple servers (<u>XServe</u>).

14-Collect all existing PCs into a small lab at each high school. Have one high school course for PC/Windows experience training. [Install latest version of Virtual PC on more powerful Macs if more PC stations are needed.] *Note: with Virtual PC 5+, Macs can run up to ELEVEN different operating systems! At the SAME TIME!!!*

15-When getting quotes for new computers, in addition to the up-front cost take into account a <u>specific</u> dollar amount for:
  a) annual maintenance cost,
  b) usable lifetime of the computer,
  c) software costs,
  d) networking costs,
  e) annual operating costs (e.g. electricity),
  f) teacher training costs,
  g) teacher preferences/satisfaction/ efficiency, and
  h) ability to provide students with the most productive and enjoyable learning environment.

— Section #7-f —