

~ *The CONNECTIONS WEEKLY* ~  
**November 2 - 9, 2007**



***Daylight Savings May Affect NYSeMAIL Calendaring...***

*The following information is contained in an OFT Customer Notification that was issued on October 25<sup>th</sup>.*

Beginning in 2007, Federal legislation expanded Daylight Savings Time by four weeks. As you may recall, Daylight Savings Time began three weeks earlier than in previous years, and will end one week later than usual (on 11/4/07).

The CIO/OFT NYSeMail Operations team successfully patched all our servers prior to the onset of Daylight Savings Time in the spring of 2007, however, though NYSeMail servers are current with patches and updates, errors may be present during the week of 10/28/2007 through 11/3/2007. Users are urged to check calendar items scheduled to occur during that time period. Potential errors include incorrect start times for meetings and full day appointments that falsely span 2 days.

If these issues are observed, the meeting organizer should adjust meeting start times and send an update to all invitees. CIO/OFT also suggests including the meeting time and date in the subject line of any new meetings scheduled during that week.

We appreciate your patience and consideration as we make our best effort to accommodate this significant change.

***UPDATE on the Remote Access Services (or RAS)...***

On Thursday, November 1<sup>st</sup>, a communication about the decommissioning of the RAS, or Remote Access Services was sent to individual users at the local districts (241 users) and voluntary agencies (73 users), who have used the dial up service to access the HSEN. The communication was also sent to the agency and district Implementation Coordinator and Directors of Service, and included a letter, explaining some alternate methods of dial in, as well as a survey questionnaire to be completed by the RAS user and returned by Wednesday, November 7<sup>th</sup>, to [ocfs.dl.it.ras@ocfs.state.ny.us](mailto:ocfs.dl.it.ras@ocfs.state.ny.us). The point of the survey questionnaire is to help

OCFS IT identify alternative methods for current RAS users to access email or other OCFS HSEN application(s).

*It should be noted that the phase out of the RAS service will be begin on December 1, 2007.*

The information below was included in the recent communication.

*The following are a listing of alternate access methods that require that you have your own internet service provider (ISP). In some cases public Internet access may be used.*

1. For general **Email** access, including Outlook Calendar and Global Address Book - anyone with a HSEN account and Internet access can use Outlook Web Access (OWA). Instructions can be found at <http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/remote%20access.asp>
2. If you require **access to a specific application, such as Connections or Webstar, you may be able to use SSLVPN from a non state imaged device.** Details may be found here: <http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/vpn/sslvpn/>, including the link to form OCFS-4827 to request SSLVPN access. This request must be submitted by your agency security administrator to [comctrup@dfa.state.ny.us](mailto:comctrup@dfa.state.ny.us)
3. If you require access to **an application NOT available through SSLVPN,** you may be able to use CISCO VPN. To use CISCO VPN you will need a state-imaged laptop or desktop with the VPN software installed, and you will need special access granted. More information may be found here: <http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/vpn/>. This request must be submitted by your agency security administrator to [comctrup@dfa.state.ny.us](mailto:comctrup@dfa.state.ny.us)
4. If none of these solutions support your need for this access, please fill out the attached questionnaire and mail it to [ocfs.dl.it.ras@ocfs.state.ny.us](mailto:ocfs.dl.it.ras@ocfs.state.ny.us) by close of business, Wednesday, November 7<sup>th</sup>.
5. If one of these solutions **does** meet your needs, please send an email to [ocfs.dl.it.ras@ocfs.state.ny.us](mailto:ocfs.dl.it.ras@ocfs.state.ny.us) by close of business Wednesday, November 7<sup>th</sup>, specifying which one(s) it is. Please include the Serial Number of the PC or laptop that you use. (It should be on the underside of the laptop, and will be after either "S/N" or "Service Tag." On a desktop, it will be on a tag on top of the tower that houses the hard drive.)
6. If your district or agency no longer needs the PC or laptop that you have been using to RAS in, please send an email to [comctrup@dfa.state.ny.us](mailto:comctrup@dfa.state.ny.us) to request pickup of the device.

7. If you need more information, please contact the RAS issues mailbox <mailto:ocfs.dl.it.ras@ocfs.state.ny.us> . Please include: your contact information **and what you use the RAS server for**, as well as your questions or concerns.

**\*\*Please note: If you use RAS, but have not received your survey, or if you have any questions regarding the decommission of RAS, please send e-mail to [ocfs.dl.it.ras@ocfs.state.ny.us](mailto:ocfs.dl.it.ras@ocfs.state.ny.us) . Please include: your contact information, your use of the RAS server (if any), as well as your questions or concerns.**

### ***Letter to Commissioners and Executive Directors About the Implementation of the CONNECTIONS Health and Education Modules...***

A letter was forwarded on Wednesday, October 31<sup>st</sup>, addressed to local district Commissioners and agency Executive Directors, dually signed by Jane Lynch, Deputy Commissioner of the Division of Development and Prevention Services and William E. Travis, Deputy Commissioner of the Division of Information Technology, encouraging those local districts that made the decision to defer implementation of the CONNECTIONS Health and Education modules, to begin preparations to implement these modules. For your reference, a copy of the letter is posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet site on the Home page.

### ***A 'Gentle' Reminder About Changing Passwords...***

This is just a reminder, that all users need to change their passwords every 90 days. There are system prompts gently 'remind' all users to change their passwords when the time is getting near, we just wanted to reinforce and 'gently' remind you as well!

### ***Computer Based Training Information & Feedback Request...***

The following is a copy of the text of a letter signed by Gerry Magnes, OCFS CONNECTIONS Training Team Lead, that was forwarded earlier today to Staff Development, Training Coordinators and CONNECTIONS Implementation Coordinators.

"We are seeking feedback from you and your colleagues regarding the CBT courses listed below. Over the past year, SUNY Training Strategies Group (TSG), in conjunction with OCFS, has developed several Computer-Based Training (CBT) courses aimed at supporting specific users as they learn about various aspects of the CONNECTIONS and OCFS Data Warehouse systems. These CBT course topics include:

- *Data Warehouse*
- *CONNECTIONS Fundamentals* and

- *Recording Health Services in CONNECTIONS*

We are seeking input directly from staff who have completed any part of one or more of the CBTs listed above. We are requesting that you circulate this message to any staff who may have used one or more of the CBTs, even if they didn't complete the entire CBT. All that is required is for these staff to complete a short evaluation questionnaire that should only take about 5 to 10 minutes of the responders' time. Completing these questionnaires will greatly assist us in making future CBT's more effective learning tools for you.

Click this link, or copy it to your browser, [http://www.tsg.suny.edu/CONN\\_eval/](http://www.tsg.suny.edu/CONN_eval/) to access the electronic evaluation form. Please complete one form for each course used. Please forward this link to all staff from your agency who have used any of these courses. The more responses we receive, the more data we have to use for improvements. This link will be used for all future CBT course evaluations as well.

Thank you, in advance, for your continued cooperation in providing helpful feedback for the improvement of our courses to the field of child welfare. If you have any questions regarding the evaluation, you can contact Torie Seeger of SUNY TSG at 518-443-5940."

### ***OCFS Data Warehouse News ...***

#### ***OCFS Data Warehouse Training for Cognos 8...***

The "OCFS Data Warehouse Basic Training for Cognos 8" is an online computer-based training (CBT) accessible via the Intranet. It provides an interactive simulation of the Cognos 8 environment. Users learn how to access Cognos 8, navigate Cognos, run predefined reports, and manage report output. The CBT also demonstrates how to copy reports from the My Folders area to the Technical Assistance folder. Finally, users are shown the User Tools folder, which contains valuable Data Warehouse resources. The training takes approximately 15 minutes to complete. A link to the online training is located at <http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/datawarehouse/dwtrain.asp>. The link also brings you to a downloadable PowerPoint slideshow for those who cannot run the online version. This training is a simulation of the Cognos 8 environment. Anything that takes place during the simulation does not carry over into the "real" Cognos 8 environment.

#### ***More Info About Cognos 8...***

The **Cognos 8** environment is now open to all OCFS Data Warehouse users! Cognos 8 is the new OCFS Data Warehouse environment that brings reports and data from the Cognos PowerPlay/Impromptu and Cognos ReportNet environment into one location. The end result is one point of access for all your Data Warehouse needs.

If you have access to PowerPlay/Impromptu and/or ReportNet – you are already set-up for Cognos 8. For information on accessing Cognos 8 and setting-up the

OCFS Data Warehouse tab, view the **Quick Reference Guide** for Cognos 8 on the DW Access page of the CONNECTIONS intranet site: <http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/datawarehouse/dwaccess.asp>.

For more information on Cognos 8, view the October newsletter at: <http://ocfs.state.nyenet/connect/datawarehouse/dwnews.asp>.

### ***New Postings to the CONNECTIONS Intranet...***

The following document(s) were recently posted to the CONNECTIONS intranet website:

- Letter to Commissioners and Executive Directors About the Implementation of the CONNECTIONS Health and Education Modules
- RAS communication (letter and survey questionnaire)
- The CONNECTIONS Weekly

### ***Weekly System Maintenance...***

#### ***CONNECTIONS Application Downtime...***

- **Wednesday, 11/7/07** from 5:00 AM – 7:00 AM
- **Friday, 11/9/07** from 5:00 AM – 7:00 AM
- **Wednesday, 11/14/07** from 5:00 AM – 7:00 AM