



Newsletter – September 2009

Welcome back to school!

As you begin the new school year, it's a good time to think about how you can help students develop the skills they will need in the 21st century. MassONE exists to help you and your students develop those skills. With the rapid growth of online learning and collaboration in the realms of higher education and business, you can give your students a head start by exposing them to MassONE. Its discussion forums, Virtual Hard Drive, and online survey tool can be easily integrated into classroom activities. You can start small--or big--and the MassONE staff are always available to help you. For information on setting up accounts for students, go the [MassONE web site](#) or contact MassONE Help at 781-338-3020 or MassONEHelp@doe.mass.edu.

MassONE's Acceptable Use Policy

Like the real world, the virtual world offers wonderful opportunities for learning, as well as opportunities for getting into trouble. With the start of a new school year, it's a good idea to talk to your students about how to be safe and ethically sound when using online resources. Take time to review MassONE's [Acceptable Use Policy](#), as well as your district's policy before beginning an online project.

Resources for teaching online safety

MassONE has some terrific resource collections for teaching about online safety. The Cyber Security Toolkit offers a variety of reproducible materials and videos designed for administrators, educators, students, and parents. The NetSmartz Internet Safety Resources include videos, computer activities, real-life stories, and activity cards--all geared to specific age groups. NetSmartz also has a teacher training program. To access these resources, click the icon for Teaching Learning Resources (TLR) on the left side of the MassONE screen. Then scroll down to Cyber Security Toolkit and NetSmartz Internet Safety Resources.

Tools for learning about MassONE

If you'd like to know more about how to use MassONE's tools, there are several resources that can help. Once you have logged into MassONE, look for these resources:

- On the main announcements page, there are links to the MassONE Quickguide and the Student Quickguide. These quick tutorials will help you get up and running.
- For more in-depth information on using MassONE in teaching, you can take the MassONE Orientation. To access it, click the TLR in the menu bar on the left. Then click "Online Courses" and then "MassONE Orientation."
- For help with specific tools, you can use the MassONE Help tutorials. To access them, click the Help icon in the toolbar at the top of the screen. Then select the topic.

Setting up student accounts

Classroom teachers can create student accounts by simply rostering students into their classroom workgroup. The roster tool allows teachers to search for the names of students in their school, select the names, and then add them to the workgroup. The tool will also produce a list of students' usernames and passwords.

Note, that in order to maintain efficiency in MassONE's operations, MassONE requires that students be in grade 5 or higher in order to be eligible for an account.

MassONE's use of Moodle

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is piloting the use of the Moodle open source course management system within MassONE. During this pilot phase, the use of Moodle is limited to professional development and trainings sponsored or funded by the Department. As a result, Moodle access is available only to people who are participating in those activities. For more information about the courses that have been offered through MassONE Moodle, see the [Moodle page](#) on MassONE's web site.

Did you forget your MassONE username or password?

If you misplaced your username or password, you can quickly and easily retrieve them anytime. To do so, just go to [MassONE's home page](#) and click "Forgot Username or Password?" To provide security, MassONE uses a two-step process. First you need to provide some basic information, along with a new password. Then MassONE will instantly email you a secure link, along with your user name and password. When you click the link in the email, your password is reset. You should do this as soon as possible, because the link expires after 24 hours. For security reasons the password reset tool cannot be made available to students. To reset a student's password, choose your classroom workgroup, click on the "Admin" icon at the top of the screen, and then click "Reset Password."

Help using MassONE

If you need help with a problem, start by contacting your district's MassONE Admin. A list of Admins is posted on the MassONE web site at: <http://massone.mass.edu/Admins/list.html>. If your district doesn't have a MassONE Admin, or if the Admin is unable to resolve your problem, you can contact the MassONE Help Desk at MassONEHelp@doe.mass.edu or 781-338-3020.

Older MassONE accounts

As part of its routine maintenance, MassONE deactivates accounts that have not been used in 18 months. If you have not used your account recently and are unable to log in, you should contact your district's [MassONE Admin](#), who can resubmit the information to MassONE. If your district does not have an Admin, you can send an email to massonehelp@doe.mass.edu with your full name, school, and district, explaining the situation. MassONE will research your account and promptly resolve the problem. Because users with deactivated accounts will not receive the MassONE newsletter, please help spread the word to your colleagues about this process.

Springfield uses MassONE for virtual learning

Springfield has devised a unique way to provide a virtual learning experience for its students. Nadine Payne, instructional technology specialist at Central High School, has developed an online module on Excel, which has been incorporated into “Applications of Technology I.” Because this course is required for graduation, more than 500 students took it last year.

Although the content of the module resides on the district’s web site, students access it through MassONE, using a link posted in the virtual hard drive for their course workgroup. Students also use a MassONE discussion forum to discuss their work, and they submit their assignments to a drop box within the virtual hard drive. Since there are three teachers teaching the course, each teacher has a workgroup with its own virtual hard drive, discussion forum, and drop box.

The module, which takes about three weeks to complete, is delivered using both online tutorials and hands-on guidance from the teachers. The module includes pre- and post-tests, which are posted in the virtual hard drive and then submitted by students via the drop box. The post-test includes a performance task using Excel.

Students enjoy the online module, since it allows them to learn at their own pace and to communicate online with their classmates. Moreover, the module is helping them gain skills that they will need once they graduate. Nadine explains, “As the ability to acquire knowledge and skills through online experiences becomes critical, this online learning experience provides our students with a realistic opportunity to learn how to properly and successfully participate in this environment while under the guidance of a classroom teacher.” The district is in the process of developing additional online modules that will eventually become part the technology course.

Back issues of newsletters

If you missed any previous issues of the MassONE newsletter, you can now find them on the MassONE web site. To access them, click MassONE News Archives on the [MassONE home page](#).