

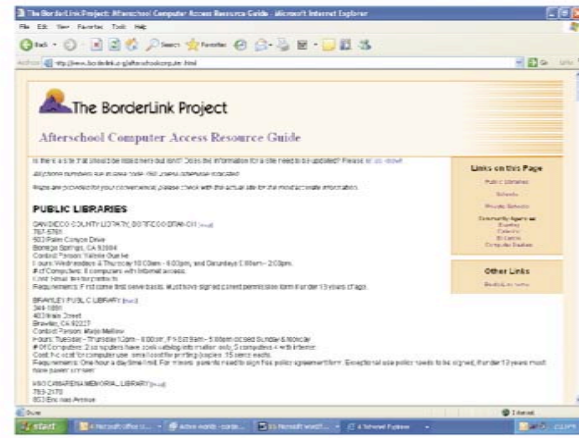
7) Support Services

The BorderLink Project gave considerable attention to supporting various groups in our communities. We have already talked about how the project provided sustainable technical support to schools through GenTECH and the Tech Leaders program. We described professional development through GenYES—a support program that will keep going after the BorderLink Project ends. We have also discussed the ways that the BorderLink Project established student support that will continue: websites and mini-courses on college readiness, test preparation, and career awareness. In this section, we will focus on three categories of activities that we have covered in no other section: community support services, educational technology support organizations, and funding support services.

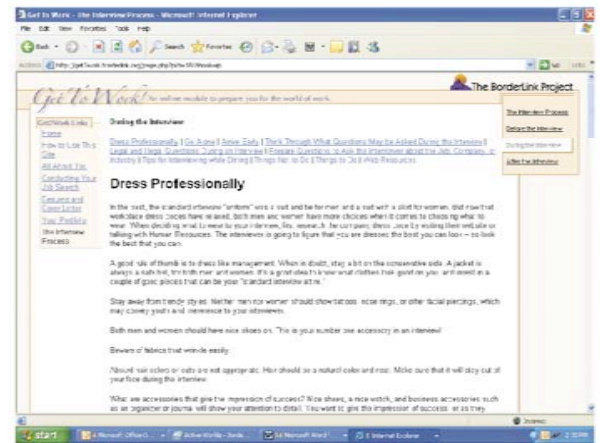
Community Support Services

Right from the start, we were aware of the special needs in our communities. Our decision was to impact not only schools, but their communities as well, through such activities and products as:

• **Community Access Points.** During the first year of the project, we developed a map of locations in each BorderLink community where families could find and use computers. We developed the “Community Access Points” because we were aware that a high percentage of our families did not have access to technology at home. Therefore, we researched where students and their families could go to use the Internet, write papers using word processing, and use software for projects. We were pleased to discover so many libraries, community centers, and after-school opportunities for our families. We kept the Community Access Points updated, and it remains on our website for community members to use.



• **Get to Work Website and Mini-Course.** Several BorderLink communities suffer from high unemployment, especially during agricultural off-seasons. We created the Get to Work website to be a one-stop shop with step-by-step advice about how to research, find, and win jobs. The target audience for this website is both secondary students seeking their first jobs and adult community members who may be thinking about a mid-career change. We followed up the website with an online mini-course, available at www.borderlink.org, to present the Get to Work ideas in video format.



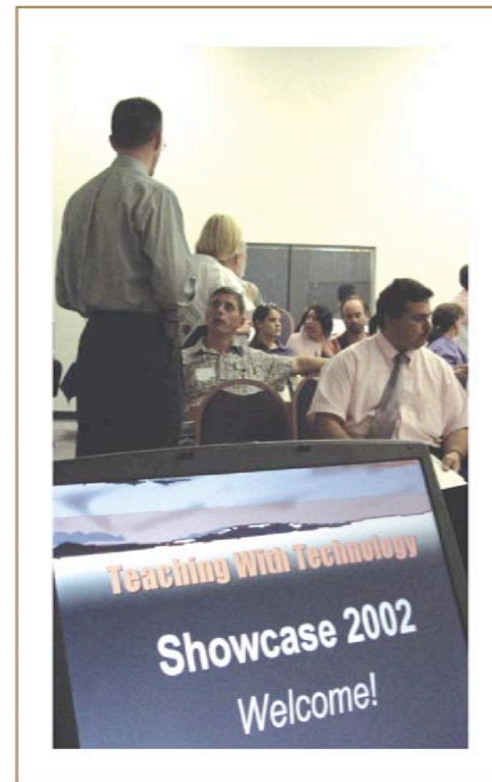
7) Support Services

- ☞ **Community Technology Courses.** We took our responsibilities to the community seriously. The BorderLink Project offered a full menu of technology training opportunities that parents and community members were welcome to attend.
- ☞ **Technology Fairs, Student Technology Showcases, and Career Fairs.** BorderLink played a role in an assortment of showcases and fairs for students and the community. Our goal was to demonstrate how technology supports academics and employment.

Educational Technology Support Organizations

We were aware that effective educational technology is based on several kinds of support, including support from administrators and support in keeping the equipment working. In addition, one of the lessons that we learned is that effective distance learning often depends on cross-district support. We launched two organizations to sustain the gains made during the five years of the project and to provide a vehicle for district-to-district collaboration:

- ☞ **The Desert Alliance for Technology in Education (DATE).** The BorderLink Project assisted in the organization of the Desert Alliance for Technology in Education. The focus of this group is on the appropriate use and support of technology to undergird student academic achievement and classroom instruction. This organization provides continued communication among the BorderLink schools and collaboration beyond the life of the BorderLink Project. Through DATE, we have provided a forum for technical support personnel to provide input on important issues, acquire new knowledge, and network with each other.



7) Support Services

☞ **Distance Education Task Force.** Superintendents from BorderLink schools came together to establish the Distance Education Task Force. The purpose of this group was to address distance education implementation concerns, discuss policy issues, and plan for future collaborations. One outcome was the planning and implementation of videoconferencing pilot programs. In one pilot program, students from four schools participated in an algebra course through videoconferencing.



Funding Support Services

The BorderLink Project management team has provided ongoing customized assistance to the eleven BorderLink Project districts in meeting annual state and federal mandates for data collection and technology funding. BorderLink Project management support has also been provided in areas such as technology skills training for teachers and administrators, as well as the coordination of the state-sponsored Student Technology Showcase. Services have been provided in the following areas: California Technology Assistance Project Technology Assessment Profile (CTAP²), Online School Technology Surveys, district technology plans, Enhancing Education Through Technology Competitive Grants, California Technology Assistance Project online courses for educators (CTAP Online), Principal Training Program (AB 75), and state-sponsored Student Technology Showcase.



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