

American Samoa Teacher Information System

By Todd Benson, PMP

Recently Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL) completed a Web-based staff information system for the Teacher Quality Division of the Department of Education (DOE) in American Samoa. It was an interesting and fulfilling project to work on. It was interesting because every system presents its own unique problems to solve. This staff information system needed to have varying levels of access. For example, when a principal logged into the system, he or she was to be able to see only staff members assigned to him or her; and when the principal ran reports, they would only contain information about his or her staff members. There were to be six levels of access, with each level able to see different links and data. This was an interesting programming challenge, which we were able to successfully complete.

In September 2005, the DOE contracted with PREL to build a Web-based staff information system. At that time, the DOE did not have a centralized staff information system to track teachers' education, certifications, professional development, job experience, attendance, and other relevant information. This information had been housed in

paper files and various other scattered information systems.

The requirements of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) and a need to retrieve relevant information about staff for reporting purposes made it necessary and critical to create a centralized staff information system to store staff data and generate reports for internal and external use.

The DOE already was using a Web-based student information system running on Microsoft's SQL Server database and using ASP.Net. After gathering and analyzing information on requirements, it was determined that the staff information system should use the same architecture. This would allow for better communication between the two SQL Server databases and better exchange of data. The staff information system was completed in February 2006.

Currently, the Teacher Quality Division is entering all the staff data. Once the data is entered, relevant reports can be generated. Once, it took several days or weeks to gather information for reports. Now, it will take seconds or minutes to generate relevant reports. This well-developed Web information system is a huge time saver and benefit to the DOE.

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