

10-1-99

* Alex demonstrated the shift key to us - wonderful feature! (Enclosed: printed instructions.) Yes, we are able to print in Word without a problem (white to black) - however we have not been able to print from WOL with dark enough letters. (Don't worry - tomorrow I am having a small in-service & I can ask about how to solve that problem.) I have been having Alex use WORD lately because of the better printing & as I discussed with Liz he hasn't seemed dependent on WOL & co-writer. Remember our assessment?

We did a shortened version of it and Alex didn't use the co-writer 'pick a word' option while he typed. However, if you insist that is what you want we can have him do his work with those 2 programs. Let me know. Not a problem. 😊

* Question: when doing $<$, $>$, $=$ work today the "sticky-key" (shift) worked the first few times & then stopped working when we tried to type the $>$, $<$, keys. Is that because they aren't letters? Shouldn't the "stick-key" work for any key? We'll try again this pm. and see if it works. Any ideas?

1-13-00

Mrs Brubaker.

All of the WOF & Cowriter settings I created for Alex's access have been reset. Additionally, I can not find the file in Word I created which had all the settings and how to implement them.

If the tech support people have written over them, let us find out why and create a procedure so it does not happen again. Can you get things put back the way they were with colors and fonts by Mon. or if you would like my help, please send the PC home this weekend and let me know where I can help. We need these settings in place when we do our work at DIC,

Use of Cowriter was recommended to reduce fatigue when writing. Are you using it in class? Pat Nizio at DIC uses it in our work and will be looking for ways to enhance use.

Thanks

Alan Duncan

1-14-00


As you know, adjustments were made in the computer because we were having difficulty with the programs & ~~the~~ certain functions.

Please list the specific settings that you are referring to & when our technician is in on Tuesday he will look at them and see if adjustments can be made that won't interfere with the overall performance of the PC for Alex's use.

Just a reminder - you had mentioned the Drag + Drop capability/feature - any recommended changes must be made by the Dist. tech.

On Tues. he will be looking at the disk-space error.

I'm am sending an assignment home this weekend. He understands the assign. & is excited to do it. Please see Homework folder (purple) for explanation. Alex has done this before.

Have a nice 3-day
weekend!!! 

Mrs. Brubaker

Mrs. Brubaker,

Sorry I was not very clear in my last message. What I meant was, I was wondering what happened to the file I created in WORD which had all of the Wiggle Works Operation info in it including the settings. Usually, tech support people do not need to delete user files such as that one. It had a log of all the problems we had encountered and the fixes as well as how to do the screen settings. I can not find it anywhere on the machine, perhaps you could ask the support guy if he can find it but I am pretty sure it is gone. The file name was wiggle_w_ops.doc.

There is some good news. The WOL error that required entry into the SPEECH utility menu and to run a test before using WOL is no longer required. WOL works OK from the start. Also, it works fine with Co-Writer. I reset the font size, color, and background for each before I confirmed everything was working OK. Also, the WOL feature that learns to pronounce new words phonetically, is functioning and the new pronunciation is saved after you quit the program.

I also organized the ICONS into folders with names for their respective functions. For example, you 2-click on the Folder "ALEX READ & WRITE" to get to WOL, WORD, WW etc.

I did not reactivate sticky keys to get the shift key to help Alex with capitalization, perhaps the technician can do this. It is under the accessibility utilities. Perhaps he could set up your printer to get Black and White when printed from WOL with the present settings of black bkgd and yellow letters. Try the file checkout.wol as a test.

Did the CD get replaced when Alex was gone?

Good Luck,
Alan Duncan

PS. We did run out of time to do a lot with Wiggle Works. I was not quite sure of assignment. You directed me to the purple folder and I went there. Did you intend that we were to do the assignment from Thursday? If so please send it home again until we get it right. Thanks. Alan

FAX TRANSMISSION SHEET

BIRMINGHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS
550 WEST MERRILL
BIRMINGHAM MI 48009
(248) 203-3000

**Note: Main Issue starts here
with PC not allowed to go
home for no apparent reason!!!**

TO: NAME Mr. A. Duncan
COMPANY _____
FAX NO. (248) 642-1525

FROM: NAME Chuck Koneval
FAX NO: (248) 203-3074
NO. OF PAGES INCLUDING COVER: 1

COMMENTS: Mr. Duncan -- It has come to my attention that the district technicians had to be called again to repair Alex's computer. They indicated that someone has tampered with the settings and other adjustments making it inoperable for Alex's use. Since we don't believe that Alex can institute these changes, we are concerned about how this is happening. To insure that we have no further problems, I have decided that the laptop cannot go home until after the hearing. Homework will be sent home on a disk until further notice. Also, I spoke to the Oakland Mediation Center today, and told them we were going directly to hearing and would not need their services.

TO: Ms. Jaci Rokicki (Fax 248-203-3074)
FROM: Alan E. Duncan (Ph./Fax 248-642-1525)
DATE: 01-18-00
SUBJECT: Status of Alex Duncan's PC

Dear Jaci,

According to Alex, you and the PC technician visited Mrs. Brubaker's room this morning. I assume it was to study how to fix the "insufficient disk space to save student file" error that was coming from Wiggleworks. I observed this error before it went out for repair in Dec. and just after we used it in Jan. It was reported to Mrs. Brubaker and at our Jan. 13 IEPC meeting. I had not made any changes to anything before the occurrence of this error. While this error did not prevent use of the PC, it would be good to get it fixed. Were you successful at solving the error? Alex said he used Wiggleworks later in the afternoon. I received a fax from Mr. Koneval stating that some changes in settings had rendered the machine inoperable. The only changes I made were to font sizes and colors in WOL and could not have any effect on other software. These changes are required so Alex can see the letters so the software will have to be made to work regardless, however, I checked everything out and it was working fine (except for the already reported error in Wiggleworks on 1-13) when the PC went back on Tuesday.

What exactly is not working? I am sure I can work this out with your technician and we can get to the fact that nothing I changed would make the system inoperable (to repeat, I confirmed that everything was working before the PC went back). Alex did not use the machine in the AM so he could not have made the changes.

Please call me with his number so we can discuss this while he has the machine. If you are not available on Weds., I request that someone on the copy list please take action on this.

Thanks for your help in this matter.

Alan E. Duncan
Please call on this No. or just pass it to your technician.
Work/Day 313-653-5213

CC. C. Koneval
C. Schraeger
R. Brubaker

FAX TRANSMISSION SHEET

BIRMINGHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS
550 WEST MERRILL
BIRMINGHAM MI 48009
(248) 203-3000

Note: This Fax was responded to at bottom by Father.

TO: NAME MR ALAN DUNCAN
COMPANY _____
FAX NO. 248-642-1525

FROM: NAME CLUCK KONEVAL
FAX NO: (248) 203-3074
NO. OF PAGES INCLUDING COVER: 1

COMMENTS: MR DUNCAN, IF YOU HAVE
 QUESTIONS ABOUT OUR CORRESPONDENCE
 PLEASE ADDRESS THEM TO ME NOT TO
 MRS. BRUBAKER. I RELATED TO YOU
 IN AS HONEST A MANNER POSSIBLE
 WHAT THE PROBLEMS WERE AS THEY
 WERE EXPLAINED TO ME.
 I HAVE ASKED MRS BRUBAKER NOT TO
 RESPOND TO YOUR QUESTIONS REGARDING
 THE PC. ANY COMMUNICATIONS REGARDING
 THAT ISSUE IS TO COME DIRECTLY TO ME
 THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION
 ON THIS ISSUE.

CLUCK KONEVAL

Mr. Koneval, I have sent you a set of questions identical to those that Mrs. Brubaker was sent. When will I get the answers? I think we should talk about why parent teacher communication for Alex's main learning tool should be restricted and you can help my understanding.

Alan E. Duncan

TO: Mr. C. Koneval
FROM: Alan E. Duncan (Ph./Fax 248-642-1525)
DATE: 01-21-00
SUBJECT: Operation of Alex's Laptop PC

Mr. Koneval,

I have written several notes to Mrs. Brubaker and placed several calls to J. Rockiki, who have asked me to request info about the PC incident from you. These questions can only be answered by someone who was present but I will send them to you so you can get the answers and we both can get at the facts of what happened with Alex's PC. Thus we both can assure that it will be functional for his use both at school and at home when he does his homework.

The fax that you sent me about the PC being inoperable does not fit with the fact that I had confirmed that everything, except a previously identified issue, was working fine when it was sent to school on Tues. 1-18. I had wrote a note to that effect in the journal and asked that some settings be changed by the technician. I knew he was coming since Mrs. Brubaker had told me he was coming to fix the WiggleWorks (WW) problem already identified. It is possible that something happened in transit that day but I do not think that is the case here. The answers to following questions will help us both understand what happened.

I will leave room for your answers so you can jot them down and fax them back.

On Tues. 1-18, Alex said he used the PC using WW in the afternoon. Is this correct?

He said it worked OK. Did it work differently than when he last used it on Friday 1-14?

Did it have any functional problems except for the file save feature in WW which I discussed at the IEP meeting on the 13th and which I mentioned on the 10th? (p.87 of journal)

I asked Mrs. Brubaker on the 13th (p.90) last paragraph, if she was using Co-Writer (CoW) and Write-Out-Loud to reduce writing fatigue?

Please elaborate on when and if COW and WOL are being used?

On p.93 of journal, I indicated that WOL and COW were working together fine. I checked them several times. Were they still working on Tues. 1-18.

If CoW and WOL have not been used, could you please check to confirm that they are working as I indicated. Are they OK?

Mr. Koneval, you sent a fax 1-18-00 with two statements. The first sentence indicated that the technician was called in. Was he called in for the purpose of fixing the WW disk error identified as early as the 10th?

Has he fixed the problem?

Were there other problems he uncovered?

Mr. Koneval, your second sentence indicates that the PC was inoperable. Was the PC more inoperable on Tues. 1-18 than it was on Fri. 1-14 when it was last used at the school?

If the PC was more inoperable, which programs were having difficulty?

If the PC has not yet been repaired, please check out CoW, WOL, and WW and determine if they are working as I indicated.

When will the technician complete his repairs?

Alex said he used WW on 1-19. Has it been fixed?

I would like to have in writing, our agreement as to which settings can be changed and which will be changed by the technician. A word processing program

such as WOL is expected to be changeable for font type, size, etc. to fit personal taste and needs as they change. There should be no need to restrict a common function setting change like this since it is a standard built in function as common as changing a top or bottom margin. If these changes were to affect other programs, this would indicate a malfunction that would have to be fixed. I do not think any settings in this area is related to the problem you are experiencing but let me know if you find otherwise.

Changing operating system parameters and background jobs are more likely to disrupt other programs and I see a need to have your technician involved.

Lastly, I request that you send the PC home when it is not needed so Alex can practice his writing and reading skills consistent with this being his main learning tool as per the IEPC.

These are the changes that are needed immediately.

Please confirm that the CD was fixed.

A handicap accessibility feature called "sticky keys" is part of Windows 98 and allows Alex to get a shift key for capitalization by pressing and releasing the shift key. This was working before Dec. Please set it up and check it's function in WOL, WORD, and WW.

Please create a folder on the desktop so Alex's programs can be in one area and other programs, such as scanning, can be put elsewhere out of his sight. You may have just his programs on the desktop if you feel this is better.

We need a feature so Alex can do a "drag and drop" operation like those in KID PIX deluxe, using only one hand and mouse picks. Does your technician have a solution? Pat Nizio, of DIC, has suggested a couple of options. Can your technician go to the DIC meeting on 1-27-00 to supervise the evaluation. We would not work on anything that requires this kind of change without your technicians involvement.

Your Assistive Technology specialist is invited to this meeting and as I recall, you had Ok'ed her attendance. Additionally, we will be evaluating keyboard positioning, so your OT and PT may want to be there as well as Ms. Rockiki.

Name: Alan E. Duncan
Company: Automotive Analytics, Inc.
Voice Number: 248-642-1525
Fax Number: 248-642-1525
840 Ardmoor

Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48301

Fax

Date: Sunday, January 23, 2000

Total Pages: 3

Subject: PC Enhancements per your request

Name: Chuck Koneval

Company: BPS

Voice Number:

Fax Number: (248) 2033074

Note: See Attachments

Mr. Duncan,

The computer will be available for you to take to DIC for the positioning.

I will not respond to your 2 pages of questions regarding the PC because I don't see the merit in engaging in this sort of dialogue (He said, you said, etc.) I will forward your request to the district technician for the adjustments on the PC.

Chuck Koneval

CC: C. Schraeger
J. Rockiki
R. Brubaker

TO: Mr. C. Koneval
FROM: Alan E. Duncan (Ph./Fax 248-642-1525)
DATE: 01-24-00
SUBJECT: Request for Answers to my inquiries.

Mr. Koneval,

Thank you for arranging for the availability of Alex's PC to go to DIC for positioning. I would like to know if you expect anyone from BPS to attend so I can let them know at DIC. We can be flexible to focus on positioning or software depending on who you have attend.

The 'merit' to answering my questions will give me an understanding of what went 'wrong' so that we can all be prepared in the future. Your definition of what "inoperable" means could also be better understood, since information derived from Alex and my wife clearly indicated that the PC still functions to the same level as identified on Jan.10. An atmosphere of disrespect for answering my questions is not justified.

At this time, it seems that inoperable merely meant that Wiggeworks could not save the student file which was not a significant change in function. A legitimate malfunction does not have to be anybody's fault and it can not be immediately assumed that usage at home is causing the problem. Instead, the focus must be on getting things fixed. If software settings are causing the problem, then change them and move on. An honest assessment of the long term history of our PC experience will reveal that I have helped with the PC function. It would be reasonable to come to some terms on working with the technician directly and he is welcome to come to our biweekly DIC meeting. I am not clear on the motivation for creating an extra step by going through your office, perhaps you could help me understand.

Finally, we must comment on your order that Alex's teacher is not to communicate with us regarding his PC. How can you expect us to find this acceptable? We have communicated nearly everyday on some issue regarding PC use, homework, existing software, and new software function. Our involvement with Alex's learning and direct interaction with his instructor is vital to Alex's success. Dealing with your office on all issues is just not practical. When we are told that answering our questions does not have merit, we can have little optimism that this will be an effective way to be involved with our son's education.

In order to move forward we need resolution of two outstanding issues:

>Access to PC for Homework. Alex can not use a pencil and we have achieved good positioning. It is important to be in compliance with the IEPC and provide home use of the PC for Homework.

>Direct Communication with Mrs. Brubaker for software issues and PC assignments.

We are particularly interested in the new Don Johnson reading program that Mrs. Brubaker is evaluating.

Please respond at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,
Liz Lawrence-Duncan and Alan Duncan