

# magazine

Helping children to achieve their potential is your job—helping you to be more organized and have more time to do it, is ours.



## Software Project Failures

*Maximizing your chances for success with software projects* – Bill Gates recently said “Software is about implementing your vision.” Charter school authorizers, educational management organizations and State Departments of Education have oversight responsibilities for charter schools. Many have implemented technology based solutions using first generation applications of spreadsheets and Word documents organized in folders or binders. The next step is to define a software system that assists the organization in its oversight responsibilities by “connecting the dots.” This is a “strategic” project and warrants careful thought by leadership.

Five surveys have documented the high failure rate of software projects. Here are some of the statistics:

- 40% of projects failed to achieve their business case within one year
- 61% of projects analyzed were deemed to have failed by the respondents.
- 31% of projects get cancelled before they ever get completed.
- Only 16% of software projects are completed on-time and on-budget.
- 7 out of 10 IT projects “fail” in some respect.

You can maximize your chances for success with new software projects by making some early-on decisions. Using a software development firm who has a successful track in your industry is the first success driver. Look for firms that support your national and state associations as a second driver.

If you are considering a software development project, call Larry Brannan at (616) 988-3202—I’ve got eight more drivers to share with you.

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## MARCH 2008

Make this the year that you “get it under control!”

# 2008

- How many times have you heard State politicians call for “more charter school oversight”? It’s easy
- to continually call for more oversight—it’s much harder to prove your actions are consistent, measured and applied equally to all schools. If you want to start your next school year firmly in control of
- a proven oversight program that documents every compliance action, provides an easy-to-use user interface and has been audited by multiple State Auditor Generals and declared a “Gold Standard”
- call us now.

# Trust, Teamwork, Coaching, & Accountability

There is a new book by Gary Hamel titled *The Future of Management* that helped me to clarify my thinking about what it is that we offer our charter school authorizer and EMO clients. The old smokestack economy is rapidly going away (trust me—we live in Michigan!) and the web has the potential to allow new ways to allocate resources and build strategies. The old model was based on control and efficiency. New models, like AOIS are focused on adaptability and creativity.

Our clients have led us in adapting AOIS to create new ways of looking at accountability. The new paradigm involves trust, teamwork, coaching and accountability. The Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, under Director of Sponsorship Kathryn Mullen Upton's leadership, asked us to do a simple AOIS enhancement to make an internal notes field visible to their schools.

This change enabled them to easily document with

their schools specific actions and dates. None of us have perfect memory and this change made their oversight work better. It also highlights the trust between authorizer and school at Fordham.

We don't have account managers, sales managers, telemarketers or account executives in our company. We do have an AOIS Coach, Meghann Murphy who works with clients at all stages to help them understand the AOIS tool and creative ways to use it based on their needs. Our four document taggers also work directly with clients in a teamwork model and we emphasize trust between them and the schools, EMO's and authorizers we serve.

If you have any question regarding AOIS, please call Meghann Murphy at (616) 988-3215.

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## New AOIS Tip

*New tip* – Did you know that we can tag templates or forms for you in a folder under each school? By doing this, it becomes very easy for the school to download them directly from AOIS. The schools can then fill out the template or form and submit it to AOIS. This will help insure consistency between schools for the Authorizer.

Thanks to Erin Lanoue from the Chicago Charter School Foundation for suggesting this change and working with us to make it happen!

### Compliance

AOIS tracks the compliance status of each school authorized, and reports this instantly in a graphical interface that is easy to use.

### Electronic Filing

AOIS is also an electronic filing system, so every document associated with schools is immediately available and can be accessed from any location.

### Workflow

AOIS also incorporates a workflow system that informs employees when it is time to perform a specific task, and flows documents from employee to employee electronically, ensuring the work is done consistently among all schools.

### Performance

Aois also includes a performance module that tracks and reports student and school achievement.

## Why AOIS?

## National Charter School Conference

*2008 Charter School Conference* – We'll be in New Orleans June 22-25 showcasing AOIS to Authorizers, EMO's and State Departments of Education who charter schools directly. Since a high percentage of attendees at this conference are charter school staff and AOIS is focused more for the three groups listed above, we encourage reservations be made so we have scheduled time to do a complete AOIS demonstration for you.

Look for us at Booth #1111, next to the Model Classroom Exhibit Centerpiece. If you schedule your demonstration ahead of the conference, we'll send a Paul Prudhome New Orleans cookbook to you directly from Amazon.com after the conference.

### AOIS user quotes


*AOIS User Quotes* – Recently we called some of our customers to ask what they like best about using the tool:

*"We love the flexibility of the tool and the fact that it is customizable to our unique needs."*

*"It streamlines the process of oversight. Not only is the tool easy to use, but it puts all of the compliance requirements in one central location for all parties to access. We are all looking at the same thing now."*

*"The tool is a permanent archival system and a perpetual audit. We can report on the data stored in many different ways, quickly and easily!"*

*"No more 3-ring binders!"*



"Technology is temporary –  
relationships endure"

### WHO TO CALL

#### LOGIN ID QUESTIONS

W. David Schroeter  
(616) 988-3222

#### NEW REPORTS FROM AOIS

Akhilesh Sharda  
(616) 988-3217

#### BILLING QUESTIONS

Stephanie Misner  
(616) 988-3200

#### AOIS QUESTIONS

Meghann Murphy  
(616) 988-3215

#### TAGGING QUESTIONS

Stephanie Misner  
(616) 988-3200

#### NETWORK CONNECTION QUESTIONS

Paul Mulder  
(616) 988-3205

