**DRAFT Email to IT Directors:**

**ELPA Practice Test and Extension of ELPA Test Window**

Note: On computers for which the ELPA practice test works (i.e. moves past the sound check page) using the secure browser, no action is needed.

Many students have successfully used the ELPA practice tests in districts throughout Oregon.  As of January 12, 2010, 2829 students have successfully begun the practice test, and 1716 of these have completed it. To date, the ELPA has successfully passed performance testing with 1000 concurrent users matching ODE’s blue print.

However, students in some districts have reported difficulty with the ELPA Practice Test. ODE’s test vendor, American Institutes for Research (AIR), has identified the cause of this problem and has developed several approaches to fixing the issue.

**Because of the impact this delay has had on some districts’ ability to use the practice test ODE is extending the close of the ELPA test window to May 17th** (originally the close was May 10th)**.**

The problem and solution:

**Macintosh**: Districts have experienced a conflict between the sound card and the secure browser with students reporting “scratching sound” from their headsets on Mac 10.4, 10.5, and 10.6. AIR has identified the issue, consulted with Oregon districts, and is testing a server-side fix. The implementation of the server-side fix for the Mac OS X browsers will be announced when performance testing is complete, we anticipate that this will be by Thursday 1/14/2010.

**Microsoft Windows**: Districts have experienced difficulty accessing the ELPA practice test when district security settings in Windows environments conflict with the Secure Browser’s attempt to write a key to a registry. This key is used by the OAKS Secure Browser to enable Java to function; Java is required for certain ELPA item types.  AIR is currently working with individual districts reporting this conflict to deploy successful fixes.  There are at least three solutions from which districts may choose to address this issue.

**ODE suggests that option 1 below may be the best solution for many districts. If you have questions, or if none of these three options are feasible, please contact the AIR Helpdesk (1-866-509-6257)** **who are ready to answer questions or escalate your call to the programming staff.**

**Fix Options:**

1. Install an Updated Windows Secure Browser
2. Log in as Administrator, Once Per Machine
3. Push Out a Registry Key Fix

**Option 1:** Install an Updated Windows Secure Browser

 Install an updated browser, Windows Secure Browser 3.1 (Note – Windows is the only operating system impacted by this conflict). This browser will be tested by some districts by Friday 1/15/10 and pending successful testing will be available by Wednesday 1/20 at 7:00 am (PST) <http://www.oaks.k12.or.us/browsers/default.html>

**Install a new version of the Secure Browser:**

1. AIR will release an updated secure browser  - OaksSecureBrowser3.1 for Windows - which will include the fixes for the registry entries above
2. Uninstall the old secure browser and install the new OaksSecureBrowser3.1
3. Use the shortcut provided in the new browser to launch the browser for all future browser launches (when logged in as regular user)

**Option 2:** Log in as Administrator, Once Per Machine

A user with administrator rights may log in on the affected Windows machine(s), open the Secure Browser, and follow the directions below to permanently write the needed key in the registry on the machine. This option will be available tomorrow, Wednesday 1/13 at 7:00 am (PST).

**Log in as Admin and allow the Secure Browser (SB) to set the necessary keys:**

1. As a user with administrator rights, launch the Secure Browser using the **kiosk.exe** shortcut and go to the diagnostics page (Ctrl+D)
2. Here, select the **ELPA check** option
3. Accept the security pop up and proceed through the sound check page to ensure that audio is working correctly on that machine
4. Then use the **kiosk.exe** shortcut to launch the browser for all future browser launches  (when logged in as regular user)

**Option 3:** Push Out a Registry Key Fix

Push out a registry key fix to all district computers. The registry key fix is below.

**Use ADM to update registries from central server (now):**

1. Through Group policy, set the following registry keys on each machine

**[HKEY\_LOCAL\_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\JavaSoft\Java Plug-in\1.4.2\_19]**

"JavaHome"="c:\\Program Files\\OaksSecureBrowser3.0\\java"    <update path to match your installation folder>\*

**[HKEY\_LOCAL\_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\mozilla.org\Mozilla]**

"CurrentVersion"="1.8.1.7"

1. Then, when logged in as a regular user, use the **kiosk.exe** shortcut to launch the browser for all future browser launches.

\* By default, when you run the secure browser installer, it installs the secure browser in C:\Program Files\OaksSecureBrowser3.0 folder. However, it is not mandatory that it be installed in that folder. Users have the option of choosing another folder (for example, their desktop) to install the browser. This instruction is to ensure that the registry key points to where the browser is actually installed, if it is not the default location.

Please note regarding the Microsoft Windows issue:  This issue impacts ELPA and will also impact OAKS Online after spring break.  After spring break, ODE will field test a new item type through OAKS Online which will use Java.  If your district is experiencing difficulties with the ELPA practice test now, please ensure you employ a fix on ALL Windows computers used for student testing – not just those computers used for ELPA.  If you do not address this issue, the new item types in OAKS Online this spring will not deploy.