Characteristics of Competent Users

*** An important characteristic cutting across all of these competency areas is the ability to choose the appropriate tool for any given task both in the realm of hardware and software. (not specifically tested at this point)

*** In all areas users should be aware of copyright and fair use guidelines as they apply to students and teachers.

Computer and Network Competencies

• Is able to distinguish the various components that make up the computer and the network. This is exhibited by being able to discuss capabilities and problems clearly with students, colleagues and technical staff. (exhibited through troubleshooting tasks)

• Is able to use the operating system interface to manipulate windows, menus and files. (embedded in all other tasks and shown by observation)

• Is able to perform routine troubleshooting and setup tasks. This includes dealing with printer problems, connecting projection devices, network and Internet connections, and audio connections; and installing software. (assessed through a different task being presented at each assessment session.)

• Is able to utilize various kinds of storage devices to store and retrieve files. This includes storing and retrieving documents from floppy disks, hard drives and network drives; searching for files on multiple devices; using hierarchical storage systems appropriately; and observing good backup procedures. It also includes the ability to find and launch applications. Adept users will be able to create shortcuts for these applications. (included in each skill assessment)

• Is able to identify and utilize appropriate technology for a given task. This includes digital cameras (still and video), scanning devices, modems, microphones, digital data collection devices and adaptive devices. (not specifically tested at this point)

Word Processing

• Is able to enter, manipulate and format text. This includes basic text entry skills such as limiting carriage returns to ends of paragraphs; copying, cutting and pasting text within and across documents and applications; and changing text attributes such as bold or font.

• Is able to format pages. This includes using margins and tabs, setting up columns, inserting headers and footers, and setting up page numbering.
• Is able to use embedded tools such as spell checking and grammar checking.

• Is able to insert objects from other programs, including graphics, tables and charts.

**Spreadsheets**

• Using an existing spreadsheet, can utilize the information. This includes distinguishing between numerical, text, and calculated data; adding and updating information; printing; and creating summary data.

• Is able to create a new spreadsheet setting up rows and columns, setting up formulas, making use of absolute and relative addressing, and formatting appropriately. Simple formulas may be limited to standard arithmetic functions. More adept users will be able to use advanced functions such as data fill, if, count and named variables.

• Is able to create graphs from spreadsheet data.

**Communication and Internet Use**

• Is able to send and receive e-mail. More adept users will be able to file messages, maintain address books, and work with attachments.

• Can use the web to find information. Techniques will range from entering URLs to sophisticated search strategies making use of multiple tools.

• Understands the variable nature of information on found on the Internet and has strategies to assess information quality.

**Graphics and Presentation Technologies**

• Can use graphics programs to produce hard copy materials such as signs.

• Can use a presentation program to produce and present a multi-slide presentation. The end product may be on paper, on overheads, for delivery from a computer or published on the web.

• Can acquire graphics from the web to be used elsewhere

• Knows how to attribute graphics by observing copyright and fair use or by getting permission from involved subjects.