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Call for Co-Operation in the Development of a Stack Exchange Site on Science Teacher Professional Development in Astronomy

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Abstract

We have proposed a Q&A/FAQ *type* of website at Stack Exchange that is focused on the pedagogical and pragmatic questions that teachers, teacher educators, and outreach educators encounter in astronomy education. The site will address the lack of centralized “professional development” opportunities. We seek keen astronomy educators and researchers to join our site and help create such an online community.

SHORT OUTLINE

We have proposed a “Stack Exchange” professional development site for astronomy education in schools. The Stack Exchange concept is somewhat like a knowledge database but is based on natural language questions about a particular topic. Our proposal was put to Stack Exchange on the 24th of June, 2010, and received very positive support from the Community Coordinator of Stack Overflow, Inc. We conceptualize the site/resource as a place where teachers can come to ask questions about *how* to teach particular topics in Astronomy K-12 education and where they can find answers about such pedagogical questions. Thus, we seek any elementary or high school science teachers, teacher educators, astronomy education researchers, and outreach professionals to help in the development of this site.

Although we have initially proposed the site, the site is community based and has no particular leader. Rather, the development of the “community of astronomy educators” itself is the key focus in building the site. If you are interested in helping out with this site or want to learn more, a larger outline of the site is available here: <http://black-hole-net.mit.csu.edu.au/telescope/news/PD%20Proposal.pdf>; the actual development version of this site is available here: <http://area51.stackexchange.com/proposals/9728/astronomy-education-in-schools>. If you would like more information on this site, please contact Professor David McKinnon at dmckinnon@csu.edu.au or Michael Fitzgerald at michael.fitzgerald@mq.edu.au.

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