

What If?

We may have a long established IT design with documented practices or be new to most of the current technology. Our schools may be small or large, with old or new systems. In any case it is important to take an assessment of the equipment and procedures that are in place and ask

- “What if” the electricity is out for a day? And
- “What if (person you need) is no longer available?

Here are some suggestions to help you prepare for these potential disasters.

What if the electricity is out for a day? UPS (Uninterruptable Power Supply) systems can keep a few computers running for an hour or so, but here in the Northwest power outages almost always run longer than that. Here is a checklist to help you prepare:

	Install a good quality file backup system. Ensure backup data is stored on a device that will continue to work even if you have to move to new hardware.
	Back up the most critical files, such as accounting database, off site.
	Test backup system monthly including a test file restore.
	Know the limits of your UPS system, such as how long it will keep your systems running. Install auto-shutdown on your servers if it is available with your UPS
	Document the order in which your systems must power on after the outage is over, and display this list next to the equipment.
	Post a prayer to St Jude next to the above document.

What if the person that has managed your IT systems is missing? Keep in mind that this is usually more than one person. Firstly, you will need to replace the actual IT support with a new staff member, new duties for another staff member, or outside consultant. But perhaps more urgently, you would need to capture and document all the accounts, passwords and secret questions that have been created over the years. Here is a short list of accounts used at a typical school.

	Windows or Apple administrator account – Please maintain at least 2 system admin accounts.
	Firewall, wireless network and router systems
	Alarm and phone systems
	School’s website – there may be at least 2 accounts, one for just the domain name and one for the actual website data.
	Backup system, which often runs under a second Windows administrator account.
	All the student and teacher computers. Recommend that you maintain at least 2 local system accounts plus a central managing account.
	Web based email system – Google apps for education , Office 365, etc.
	Internet connection – account number and password provided by ISP
	Apple Store, Microsoft licensing, Adobe store
	Store this list in a secure location.
	Post a prayer to St Christopher next to the above document.