

# The Battalion

Wednesday, August 29, 1984

## Investors lose as coin-op computers crash

United Press International

TULSA, Okla. — It had all the elements of a booming business — high tech, low cost, functional purpose. But the big plans of Collegiate Products Inc. to place coin-operated computers in college dormitories failed like a wet firecracker.

"I'm embarrassed," said John Johnson, CPI's vice president of sales. "You expect something like that to really fly. It didn't."

A year ago, CPI tried out the coin-op computer idea in residence halls at Oklahoma State University. Disappointed in the turnout, they moved them to the University of Tulsa and equipped them with video games. That captured students' attention only momentarily.

The idea came from New Hampshire, where coin-operated computers were becoming popular in libraries. The program was launched at Oklahoma State with strong support from university officials and Apple Computer, Johnson said. It seems the only group not excited about the program was the students.

"The students would come and they would look at that computer but we couldn't get them to sit down and do anything with it," Johnson said.

The idea was to give students easy access to computers that could be used with word processing packages for writing term papers or with software packages for specific subjects.

"I think, quite frankly, they were the most use was by foreign students," he said. "The rest of them, the attitude was 'If I'm not assigned that in class I'm not going to worry

about it.'"

Tulsa-based CPI leased the computer, memory, screen and printer to the universities for three years at a cost of \$723 each six months. CPI provided the word processing software, a security device so the machines could not be stolen, and all

The machines needed 65 percent usage to make a profit, he said. CPI lost \$15,000 to \$20,000 on the venture, Johnson said.

"That's minimal compared to what the potential (for profit) was," he said.

The vending devices have been removed from the computers that were purchased for the program and the equipment has been leased to university departments.

CPI won't suffer too much because of the failure, Johnson said.

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The company's base business is successfully renting compact refrigerators to college students. CPI also provides activity buses and is developing a long-distance telephone service for college students.

Experimentation is nothing new at CPI. President T.O. Allan and Johnson have come up with ideas that sold, and others that didn't.

"There was the strong box (for personal belongings)," Johnson said. "That one never went either."

"We used to be big in Fussball tables," he said. "That's not big anymore, either."

"I think we could make a lot of money doing other things," he said. "We just have a lot of fun with this."

Allan, who purchased the company four years ago after a dozen years with CPI, is willing to take the

risks to try new ideas, Johnson said. "If companies don't take risks like this then you don't really get any new products," he said. "I know T.O. looks at it like if we try this and it crashes it won't destroy the company."

"We don't do anything that puts us in terminal risk," he said.

Johnson said CPI has not given up on the coin-op computer idea, but the program will stay on the back burner for awhile, perhaps until today's high-tech oriented high school students become tomorrow's college students.

"It might be three or four years," Johnson said, "before we bring it back out again and it will go."

"It was a good product," he said. "But we were a little ahead of our time."

## Texas students face changes in new school year

United Press International

An estimated 2.7 million students returned to classes in Texas public schools Monday to face tougher academic standards and curriculum reforms imposed by the Legislature and state school board.

"I don't think we have ever had a year, in my experience, where so many drastic changes had to be made," said Linus Wright, superintendent of the Dallas Independent School District.

Some of the state's 1,100 school districts, such as Houston, began classes last week, but most schools opened Monday.

Houston and Dallas boasted the state's largest enrollments. Houston's 234 schools enrolled about 179,000 a week ago, but that figure was expected to reach about 190,000 after Labor Day.

In Dallas, an estimated 127,000 students reported for classes Monday. Austin reported an enrollment of roughly 58,000.

The Texas Education Agency in Austin reported no problems on the opening day for schools.

But some black leaders in Houston called for black students to boycott school Monday to protest what they call rampant racism in the

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schools. However, HISD spokeswoman Jeri Konisberg said schools reported "very few" absences.

About 30 people, including a few students, marched outside the federal courthouse to call attention to the boycott, which was planned to

### 2.7 million students back in Texas public schools

coincide with a hearing on a motion to dismiss a 28-year-old desegregation lawsuit.

HISD has asked U.S. District Judge Robert O'Connor to dismiss the lawsuit, claiming it is fully integrated.

However, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund, claim the district still discriminates against minorities.

Texas teachers also returned to school Monday with a raise of at least \$1,700 a year, with first-year teachers earning no less than \$15,200 a year.

A new four-level career ladder also will provide additional yearly

bonuses of \$2,000, \$4,000 and \$6,000 to teachers who complete certain educational and performance requirements.

But all teachers and administrators must pass a competency examination before June 30, 1986, to retain their jobs.

The changes in curriculum, academic standards and teacher pay scales were approved by the Texas Legislature during a 30-day special session that ended July 4, and by earlier actions by the state Board of Education.

In anticipation of the confusion at the start of the school year, the Dallas ISD spent the summer mailing thousands of information packets to parents, answering a hot line to ex-

plain the legislative changes and opening their offices three weeks early to students looking for guidance before school started.

One of the major changes this fall was the requirement that ninth graders select one of two "tracks" to follow toward graduation from high school. The choice was either a general-vocational program requiring 21 credits or an advanced academic plan that requires 22.

Other changes mandated for the new school year included:

- School districts are required to provide tutors to students failing in one or more subjects.

- High school students must pass a basic skills test to receive a diploma. Students will be given opportunities to pass the test in the eleventh and twelfth grades and also will be offered remedial help.

- Students must maintain a grade average of at least 70 to be promoted from one grade to the next.
- Elementary students may ad-

vance a grade level by earning a grade of 90 or above on an exam developed by the state board. Secondary students can earn credit for courses by earning at least 90 on subject exams.

- Students cannot receive credit for a course if they have more than five unexcused absences per semester. No student is exempt from final examinations.

- Students cannot voluntarily leave school before the end of the school year in which they reach their 16th birthdays.

- Students who fail to maintain grades of 70 or above in all subjects, except advanced or honors classes, are prohibited from participating in extracurricular activities.

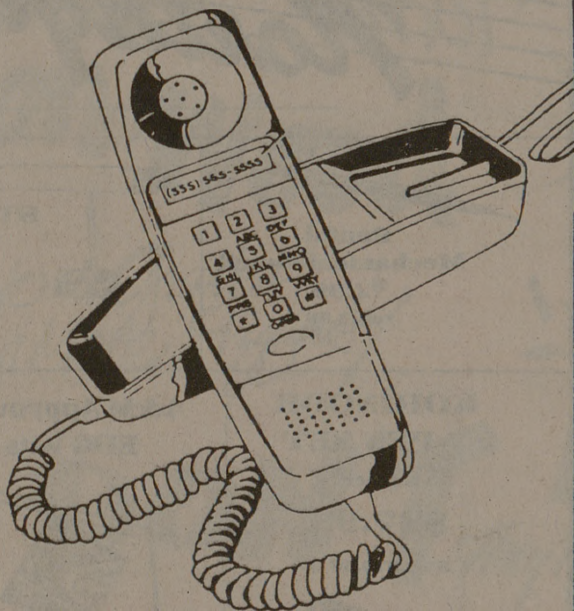
- No extracurricular activities or practices can be offered in the weeks before or during final exams.

- Pupil-teacher ratios cannot exceed 22:1 in kindergarten, first and second grades.

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SEPT. 13, 14, 17, 19, & 20	10:00, 1:30, & 3:00	RM. 301 RUDDER

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