

# MCIU Update

Fall 2008

The Newsletter of Montgomery County Intermediate Unit 23



## Welcome Back

Congratulations on successfully beginning the 2008-2009 school year. Your school is served by the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit 23 (MCIU), a non profit public educational service agency providing educational services to the 22 public school districts and more than 170 nonpublic schools in Montgomery County.

Our staff is ready to assist you with

a myriad of educational and administrative support services. We support our districts in all areas of special education; put you in touch with the latest instructional materials and offer you an opportunity to attend a multitude of workshops taught by nationally known educators. Our technology division can assist you in elevating your lessons with the latest technology. We also offer assistance in staff and curricular development, fiscal management, grant development, personnel and communications. In addition, we support your district in the implementation of the directives and programs from the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Our Nonpublic School Services Division provides expert support in a wide range of areas.

Please avail yourself of our web site, [www.mciu.org](http://www.mciu.org), which provides additional insight about our organization, our mission and how we may be of assistance to you. You may also receive more detailed information about services by calling our Communications Division at 610-755-9484 to request a brochure. All of us at MCIU wish you a successful and fulfilling year. If we can assist you to improve instruction or to operate more efficiently or effectively, please call our general number (610-539-8550) or our division numbers listed on the website.

Dr. Jerry W. Shiveley  
Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer

## Bucks/Montgomery Counties to Study Transportation

Did you know the cost of student transportation in Montgomery County alone is more than \$100 million annually? That high price tag has motivated school districts and the local intermediate units (IU) to start analyzing transportation options that could potentially save tens of thousands of dollars.

To date, the MCIU Management Services Division has hosted two meetings with the newly formed Bucks/Montgomery County Transportation Study Advisory Committee. All 34 Bucks/Montgomery school districts and the two IUs are involved, including transportation directors, business managers, superintendents, and CEOs of the IUs.

"Every district and the IUs have something to gain from this study. Our combined energies will create much-needed efficiencies in transportation," said Stan Wisler, Director of Management Services/CFO at the MCIU.

At the September meeting, the committee reviewed a proposal outlining the costs, timeline and details of a study focused on special education and nonpublic school transportation. The committee determined that the study should analyze these two areas first to achieve some efficiency and cost saving results before moving into other areas of transportation. Following the meeting, the committee made the following recommendations to the school districts:

- Hire Management Partnership Services, Inc. (MPS) to conduct a study of the special education and nonpublic school transportation operations
- Spread the cost of the study among the 34 districts using 06/07 transportation costs of each district. The study is currently estimated between \$2,000-\$3,000 per district. The committee secured a \$20,000 grant and will continue to pursue other funding avenues to decrease the impact of the study on each district.

Districts are asked to indicate their support /approval of joining this study no later than October 31, 2008.



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## New Service: Elluminate Webinars

The MCIU Technology Information Services Division (TIS) now has the ability to connect over 200 sites simultaneously for an Elluminate event through its new webinar facilitation service. Elluminate offers real-time voice, video, instant messaging, polling, whiteboard, desktop sharing, and the ability to create custom breakout rooms. For more information, contact John McBride at 610-755-9355.

## Cabinet Changes

The MCIU is pleased to welcome Dr. Mary Jane Gales, former superintendent of the Oxford Area School District in Chester County, as the new Director of Legislative Services and Grants Development, effective September 2nd. Gales replaced Dr. Sharon Richardson who retired August 15th.

"I am very excited about joining the MCIU as legislative director. I believe passionately that our legislators need to understand the impact of their votes involving our local school districts.

"This is an important position with many unique challenges. Our lawmakers must have as much information as possible before making decisions that will have wide ranging effects on the quality of education our students



receive. I strongly feel that my work at the MCIU will enable me to make a difference in the future of public education in Pennsylvania," Gales said.

Since 2003, Dr. Gales served as Superintendent of the Oxford Area School District. She has also served as assistant superintendent, principal, mathematics teacher and language arts teacher. Dr. Gales has had extensive involvement in the Oxford community as a member of the Rotary Club, the boards of the Southern Chester County YMCA and United Way of Southern Chester County, the Oxford Area Chamber of Commerce and the Oxford Economic Redevelopment Commission.

The MCIU also welcomes Kendall Glouner as Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development (CIPD), effective October 10. Glouner will replace Dr. Peter Grande following his retirement.

Ms. Glouner joined the MCIU in 2007 as the Assistant Director of CIPD where she facilitated the approval of Continuing Professional Education courses, coordinated county-wide staff development, and assisted districts with the implementation of the Pennsylvania Department of Education's mandates and initiatives.

Glouner began her career as an elementary teacher in Central York School District and then joined the School District of Lancaster as an elementary assistant principal in 2002. She held the position of elementary principal in



Central Dauphin School District and in Dallastown Area School District before accepting the position as director of curriculum in Hatboro-Horsham School District in 2006. Glouner is currently completing the requirements for a doctorate in educational leadership from Temple University.

"I am looking forward to working with the school districts to develop results oriented, value added services that support their curriculum, instruction and professional development needs," Glouner said.

## Trainings + Coaching = Better Teaching Results

Research indicates that professional training for educators is more effective when combined with in-classroom coaching. This research, plus interest from the school districts, prompted the Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development Division (CIPD) to offer this type of professional development opportunity. So far, six Montgomery county school districts are taking advantage of the option at their schools to receive training on topics such as Differentiated Instruction and Reading Apprenticeship, followed by coaching activities in the classroom. "With the on-site follow-up coaching activities built in to the program, it ensures that districts get the greatest value for their investment. This structure creates greater teacher buy-in, application and increases the likelihood of promoting lasting change." said Dr. Peter Grande, Director of CIPD. For more information, contact CIPD at 610-755-9312.

## 2007-08 MCIU BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Joseph Chmielewski, Upper Dublin School District • Vice President: John S. Grispon, Spring-Ford Area School District

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Mitch Zimmer, Colonial

## Understanding Special Education

**C**onfused about the special education rules and regulations? PaTTAN may be able to help. Over the last several years, the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN) distributed over 450,000 educator and parent guides, which explain the rules and regulations governing special education for school age children and for charter schools. PaTTAN is responsible for writing, editing, designing, printing, and disseminating materials for the Bureau of Special Education (BSE). This year, PaTTAN produced publications supporting inclusive practices, paraeducator training, secondary transition, behavior support, autism, and early intervention. More than 100 PaTTAN publications are available upon request by calling 610-265-7321. Publications are also available in PDF on the PaTTAN website ([www.pattan.net](http://www.pattan.net)).

## Cooperative Counseling Meets Needs of Nonpublic Schools



**I**ndividualized counseling services designed to meet the needs of a specific school and student population has been a huge success. So much so that the demand for this service offered by the MCIU Nonpublic School Services Division has grown from one day of counseling per week to the equivalent of three full time counselors a year. Dozens of eligible nonpublic schools in Montgomery County now take advantage of the Cooperative Counseling Program which allows them to create a short-term counseling program that meets their needs. For some schools, this means conflict resolution trainings

for a specific grade or an entire school that has encountered behavioral problems. It might mean a “Healthy Relationships” course for a school that experienced a loss or injury due to violence. It could be a “Successful Transition” program to prepare students for high school.

“The beauty of this program is we are able to offer more services to schools and impact a larger number of students. We serve a highly diverse group of schools and this is a way to tailor counseling services that make sense for them,” said Dr. Melissa George, Supervisor of NPSS Counseling and Psychology. Preventative programs such as “Conflict Resolution” are the most popular and receive tremendous feedback from the schools and parents. “Parents call us to say how well their children are using negotiation, leadership and other conflict resolution skills they learned in our trainings,” George said. “If we give the students these life skills up front, they often don’t end up needing individualized counseling.”

Requests for specialized counseling services can be made by all eligible nonpublic schools throughout the school year, but George said priority is given to schools that don’t receive regularly scheduled counseling services from NPSS.

For more information on Cooperative Counseling services, contact NPSS at 610-755-9321.

## MCIU Update

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**Jane W. Mansuy**  
Asst. Executive Director/  
Director of Human Resources

**Stan H. Wisler**  
Chief Financial Officer/  
Director of Management Services

Edited by  
**Kristen Rawlings**  
Director of Communications



## Communications Services for School Districts

**N**eed help with a brochure or press release? The MCIU Communications Division is available to support school districts with communications projects including:

- ▶ Writing & Design of Publications
- ▶ Media Relations
- ▶ Website Support (developing content/navigation)
- ▶ Special Event Management
- ▶ Communications Audits & Strategic Planning
- ▶ Trainings (Graphic Design, Publications 101, etc)

For more information, contact Kristen Rawlings at 610-755-9313.

## Cochlear Implant Consultation Improves Learning Opportunities



School districts are beginning to see an increasing number of students with cochlear implants enter their schools. This new technology is enabling more and more profoundly deaf children to gain access to auditory information, thus giving them the opportunity to develop oral speech and language. However, technology alone is not enough to ensure that students with cochlear implants will achieve success in the educational setting.

“Montgomery County Intermediate Unit’s new service, Cochlear Im-

plant (CI) Consultation, provides a much-needed resource to school districts and educational teams working with students who have cochlear implants,” said Terri Cohen-Johnson, CI Consultant and Hearing Support Teacher.

Terri provides the team with information about the surgical procedure, the mechanics of the device, audiologic management, habilitation techniques, acoustic modification of the environment, the impact on the student’s educational program, and numerous related topics.

Terri received training through an intensive program in conjunction with Smith College and Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia. She is involved in on-going professional development to maintain “state-of-the-art” knowledge regarding the ever-growing field of cochlear implants.

For more information about this service, contact the Special Education Division at 610-755-9443.



## Video Wall Impressive Addition to Perk Valley Science Building



“When people walk into the building, we wanted it to shout science and technology,” says John Romanoski, Perkiomen Valley High School Principal, explaining the idea behind the installation of a video wall in its Science and Technology Building.

Sure enough, the seven 47-inch flat screen, high definition TVs broadcasting a multitude of information fed via the Internet, videos, cable TV and PCs appears to have accomplished that goal. The wall is a gift from the Class of 2006, the Class of 2007 and the Perkiomen Valley High School Home and School Association.

“The video wall is the focal point of the 3-story cathedral lobby, providing an impressive display of modern technology,” said John Steyer, the MCIU Technology and Information Services staff member who designed and installed the video wall. The TV monitors are connected for Internet/PC capability and wired to an audio-visual system with DVD player. The TVs can display the same information or a potpourri of seven different feeds.

Romanoski envisions using the wall to advertise and inform. “It’s a wonderful way to showcase our school. For instance, we can advertise our Japan Club by showing a video of their trip to Japan. We can show our athletic teams in a competition or our students at graduation. We also plan to display videos related to science,” One or two monitors scroll school events and information.

Students and faculty are being challenged to think of “creative ways” to use the wall to inform and or educate. PV’s television communication’s class plans to approach area businesses to see if they would like to advertise on the wall using commercials that the communications students would write and produce.

In the near future, Romanoski also hopes to use the video wall for instruction. “Our faculty meetings can be held in this area. It would add a whole new dimension to use the video wall for presentations.” The lobby area may also be used as a community meeting center.

To learn more about the installation of a video wall, contact the MCIU Technology and Information Services Division at 610-755-9352.