



MCIU CONNECTION

The bi-weekly newsletter of the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit

July 25, 2008

Online: www.mciu.org

Cabinet Changes



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

"I am very excited about joining the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit

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.

Dr. Gales and her husband Richard live in Quarryville, Lancaster County and have three grown sons, Jonathan, Richard II and David.

Other Changes: Dr. Pete Grande, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development, announced his retirement effective November 6th.



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 IUs to start analyzing transportation options that could potentially save tens of thousands of dollars.

The MCIU Management Services Division hosted the first meeting of the Bucks/Montgomery County Transportation Study Advisory committee on Wednesday July 16, 2008. There were 23 people in attendance representing the 35 districts and the Intermediate Units (IU) in Bucks and Montgomery Counties. The advisory committee is comprised of transportation directors, business managers, superintendents, and the transportation supervisors, business managers, and CEOs of the two IUs. Tim Ammon, with a student transportation consulting firm, Management Partnership Services, Inc., will be assisting the committee in determining the type of study to be commissioned. At the first meeting, the committee discussed the role of the advisory committee, potential funding sources and school district support. At the next meeting, scheduled for September 17th, Mr. Ammon will present a more detailed proposal outlining the costs, timeline and details of a study that would look at special education and non-public school transportation. The committee determined that the study should be focused on these two areas first to achieve some efficiency/cost saving results before moving into other areas of transportation. In addition, the committee will be presented with information relative to transportation operations, transportation subsidy and the current role of the IUs.

"The committee discussed the value of learning more details about transportation operations and the difficulties with the current system," said Stan Wisler, Director of Management Services/CFO. "The first meeting was very productive and there seems to be support in moving forward – the timing of the current cost of energy/fuel will actually reinforce the support."



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MCIU Snapshots



CIPD Director Dr. Pete Grande's article "The Four Pillars of Differentiated Instruction:

"Naïve Shack or Foundational Structure" will be published in the Pennsylvania Administrator magazine.

Jackie Krail, TIS Assistant, has been given the prestigious title of "Power Seller" on e-Bay.

Dr. Jeanmarie Mason, Director of Special Education, presented at the Special Education Summer Leadership Academy in Bedford, PA this June on "Effective Special Education Programs."

To Move or Not to Move? Facilities Update

The architecture and engineering firms commissioned to do the MCIU and PaTTAN building study presented their findings to the Board of Directors at the June 25th meeting. Their report recommended that the MCIU and PaTTAN relocate to a new site based on the significant space and operational inadequacies of the current locations.

Based on interviews with the nine IU divisions, the report projects space program needs for the IU to be about 120,000 square feet and parking for 950 cars (Current space is about 81,000 with parking for 251 cars). Space program needs for PaTTAN were projected at about 55,000 square feet. (Current space is about 43,000).

The cost projection for the MCIU to construct a new building on a new site or renovate an existing site is \$47 million and an additional \$21.5 million for PaTTAN. Renovating the existing buildings was not considered a viable option due to the lack of parking required by program needs and the code issues which would require the entire structure to be rebuilt. PaTTAN is a leased facility and also does not have adequate parking or building space to renovate. The cost of renovating also was projected to be the more expensive option with a price tag of \$51 million for the IU.

The next step will be to investigate a financing plan, including assumptions on how the IU would fund the loan. Management Services is working with each of the divisions to determine what their contributions will be in future years. It is expected that with a larger facility and more conference rooms, there will be an increased revenue stream from new programs. The Legislative Services Division is also researching grant options for a new building.

We Make a Difference

"Thank you for everything MCIU staff members do to support research at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. I hope you will extend our deepest gratitude to those who contributed to the most recent gift supporting cancer research in honor of Maggie Geschke. The gifts from your staff will support our mission to provide the finest, most compassionate care available to children suffering from childhood cancer."

Mark Turbiville, Director of Donor Relations & Stewardship Children's Hospital (The IU donated \$600 to Children's Hospital raised from the Nonpublic School Services Fundraiser)

MCIU Staff Rocks!



Joan Evans, Supervisor of the Hearing, Vision and Speech Program, performed with singing partner Bob Rhodes at the Celtic Festival at Graeme Park on Saturday, July 19th. Joan and Bob have been singing in a duo called "Now & Then" for the past ten years. They sing songs in harmony from both "now" and "then" and accompany themselves on 6-string and bass guitars. Their repertoire consists of popular music from the 1930s, 40s, 50s and 60s; country and folk songs; selections from movies and Broadway shows; and patriotic and inspirational music. "Now & Then" performs for retirement centers, community functions and private groups.