

## Explorations Partial Hospitalization Program Accepting Referrals

Referrals are now being accepted for the MCIU's new partial hospitalization program, Explorations PHP. Explorations is a sub-acute program for children and adolescents, ages 11 through 18, with chronic or acute mental disorders who require active treatment. Explorations will be one of only two providers in the county providing this level of educational support.

"The program focuses on stabilizing the student's emotions and teaching the students acceptable behavior in order to transition back to the least restrictive environment with appropriate services in place," said Dr. Lois Robinson, MCIU Special Education Director and board member of Explorations.

ExplorationsPHP has a minimum of three hours per day of behavioral health treatment and up to three hours per day of education based on the individual needs of the student. The community-based program operates with a maximum of 15 students for a 6 to 12 week anticipated length of stay. The program is housed in The Anderson School in Eagleville, which provides an opportunity for students to receive behavioral health treatment in a school setting.

Explorations was developed through a supportive

collaboration with the Montgomery County Office of Behavioral Health and in direct response to Montgomery County school district staff who identified a need for a sub-acute program.

Referrals are accepted from parents/self-placement, school personnel, inpatient hospitals, medical professionals, courts and Magellan Behavioral Health Services.

To refer a student or to schedule an intake evaluation, contact Dr. Brittany Lourea-Waddell at (610)755-9433 or [bwaddell@mciu.org](mailto:bwaddell@mciu.org).



Left to right: Dr. Jerry W. Shiveley, MCIU Executive Director/ CEO, Robin L. Grafton, M.A. and Clinical Program Manager, Montgomery County Behavioral Health, Chris Stultz, Anderson School Principal, Dr. Lois Robinson, MCIU Special Education Director, and State Rep. Todd Stephens shared information about ExplorationsPHP and the Anderson School at an Open House held August 31st.

## MCIU Training a BrainSTEPS Team

### A School Re-Entry Program for Children with Brain Injuries

Each year, approximately 4,000 of Pennsylvania's children survive severe traumatic brain injuries significant enough to require hospitalization. Many are left with life-altering difficulties in physical, cognitive, or behavioral functioning.

In order to provide educational support to children with brain injury, the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit Special Education staff is being trained to develop a Brain STEPS Team. BrainSTEPS Consulting Teams are comprised of professionals from varying disciplines who have received extensive training on educating children with brain injuries. When a child who attends a Pennsylvania public school has experienced educational effects following a brain injury, a BrainSTEPS team from the child's county of residence will act as consultants to coordinate services and provide basic training and resources to colleagues and families. Over the past 3 years, the MCIU has received more than 30 requests from school districts for this service.

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## Electricity/Prescription Consortiums Generate Significant Savings for Districts

The Pennsylvania Utility Commission's (PUC) decision to lift the rate cap on electricity is significantly impacting local school districts. Electricity was deregulated in the PECO area in January 2011 resulting in additional cost to one of the largest operating expenses for schools.

In response, the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit (MCIU) Management Services Division began exploring options in 2009 to secure reduced rates for electricity through the creation of an Electricity Procurement Consortium.

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## Teaching American History Curriculum Writing Project

In order to assist districts with their curriculum alignment efforts in response to Common Core and Keystone adoption, the Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development Division (CIPD) will assemble county-wide teams to create model, K-12, U.S. History and Civics curricula. These products will utilize the curriculum mapping tools housed on the Standards Aligned System (SAS) portal and will be made available to all districts in the county.

Teachers and administrators will be asked to apply to participate on the curriculum writing teams and twelve members will be chosen for each project (twenty-four in total) with special priority being given to teachers who have been active participants in the MCIU Teaching American History (TAH) grant. Dr. Jodi Bornstein, Social Studies Education Program Director at Arcadia University and Sally Flaherty, Social Studies advisor from the Pennsylvania Department of Education have been asked to give leadership in this work.

There will be three days of writing and then a smaller team of six editors will refine the work. The dates for the writing are November 21, December 1, and December 19; team members are asked to commit to all three days. After editing, the documents will be distributed in the county for comment in January 2012. The final products will be ready for public dissemination in early March 2012.

This curriculum project will be funded through the TAH grant. The cost for substitutes and mileage will be reimbursed to districts that have personnel who work on the project.

For more information, contact Arthur Mitchell at [amitchell@mciu.org](mailto:amitchell@mciu.org) 610-755-9336.

## MCIU Update

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## PaTTAN Assistive Technology EXPO 2011

Thursday, November 10  
Radisson Hotel Valley Forge  
King of Prussia, PA

Anyone interested in assistive technology and educational software for individuals with disabilities of any age is welcome to attend. Two concurrent PaTTAN presentations begin at 9 a.m. Vendor presentations begin at 10:30 a.m. There is no charge to attend. For more information, visit [www.pattan.net](http://www.pattan.net) (choose Online Registration/Begin Registration) or contact PaTTAN at 1-800-441-3215, ext. 7217.

## Improving Student Engagement in Science Using the Smart Board

(12 Act 48 credits earned)  
November 30 and December 7  
8:30-3:30 pm at the MCIU

This two day workshop will focus on advanced features of the Smart Board such as using video content from various sources like Safari and Discovery Education. It will also cover linking, adding sound, and using Smart's Recorder and Video Player. Day 2 will focus on designing instruction that uses the Smart Board to further engage students in Science learning. Teachers will learn how to modify existing lessons to integrate Smart Board friendly activities.

Log on to [www.mciu.org](http://www.mciu.org) and click on workshops to enroll

## 2011-2012 MCIU BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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(left to right) The MCIU Brain STEPS team includes: Joan Evans, Julie Adinolfi, Dr. Lois Robinson, Robin Boehning, Dr. Brittany Lourea-Waddell, and Sue Alderfer (not pictured). The team will also include community members, Eileen Sellers (retired teacher), Dr. Edward Moss (neuropsychologist), Meaghan Wright (Main Line Health) and Christine Campbell (nurse).

Six members of the Special Education team attended a free two-day Brain STEPS training this September and will be holding monthly meetings throughout the next year. The training is provided through the Brain Injury Association of Pennsylvania through a Title V Grant from the PA Department of Health, partnered with the PA Department of Education.

“We service so many districts and have a very high incidence rate of brain injury in

our county,” said Dr. Brittany Lourea-Waddell, MCIU psychologist. “This will be an invaluable service to help support our students, families and districts.”

Dr. Lourea-Waddell said that over the next year, the team will be developing an understanding of brain injury, the resulting challenges, and the supports and interventions that will help students with brain injury achieve educational success through graduation.

Once their training is complete, the BrainSTEPS Teams will provide:

- Consultation with school and medical professionals
- Assistance to students returning to school after a concussion using accommodations and modifications to manage the student’s symptoms within the school setting
- School re-entry planning
- Educational programming
- Long term monitoring
- Training and support for district personnel
- Consistent and familiar contacts for hospitals and rehabilitation personnel working to successfully transition children back into schools

Services are expected to be available by mid-year 2012.

For more information,

contact Dr. Lourea-Waddell at [bwaddell@mciu.org](mailto:bwaddell@mciu.org) or 610-755-9433.

## The MCIU is Now on Facebook

This August, the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit launched a Facebook page offering a fun and convenient way to keep up with all the latest MCIU news, including program announcements, course offerings, special events, staff spotlights, photos and videos of events and activities. We also share important educational news from Montgomery County and across the nation. Don’t miss the conversation! We invite you to become a fan of our page today!

Simply log on to <http://facebook.com/mciu23> and click Like

## Virtual Locker Benefits

The Technology and Information Services Division is now offering Virtual Locker - a web-based file manager which will turn your standard browser into a file explorer-like user interface.

Virtual Locker’s key features are:

- Access via a browser from any computer with Internet connection and allows you to access the files 24/7
- Ties into your Active Directory or any directory service for management of user accounts and permissions
- Allows various permission levels (full access, read only, write, etc.) to be set based on the user roles
- Users can be grouped and managed as a group (ex. students, teachers, 8th grade science project)
- Sets limits on size and type of files
- When tied into the hosting, virus scanning, and backup plans offered by MCIU, it can replace the file servers that you have to manage
- Easy web-based administration page
- Fast response and easy user interface with different views (tree view, grid view, etc.)

Contact Troy Sosnovik at 610-755-9376 or [tsosnovik@mciu.org](mailto:tsosnovik@mciu.org)



Ten school districts, two career-technical centers and the MCIU are now working collaboratively to save education dollars through this consortium. The program involves setting pricing targets, procuring layers of electricity at times when the market conditions are opportune, forward hedging, and managing partner energy demands. A steering team comprised of 5 districts determines layered purchases in consultation with dedicated portfolio strategist.

As a result of their work, the year to date savings for the consortium members is approximately \$678,000. The members used about 7,700,000 Kilowatts from January through September 2011 (enough to power 7,200 homes). At the current PECO “price to compare” levels, the supply cost to the group would have been approximately \$4,055,247. But, through the Electricity Procurement Program, electricity was procured for members at an estimated discount of over 16%.

“Aggregating electricity requirements from all districts provided an economy of scale and access to wholesale markets. This has turned in to a successful strategy for saving schools money with the added benefit of conserving energy,” said Stan Wisler, MCIU Management Services Director/CFO.

In addition to the projected savings on electricity procurement, members actively participate in energy conservation analyses, which identify ways for each district to maximize the use of electricity per building and potentially lower their electricity needs.

In order to reduce school employee healthcare prescription costs - another big ticket item for school districts - the MCIU Management Services team is continuing its work on the county-wide self-insured initiative for Rx benefit plans. Recently, the division acted as the key facilitator to add the Keystone HMO Rx subscribers to the self-insured Trust (SEPaST), which serves approximately 11,000 employee Rx contracts.

## Electricity Procurement Consortium Members

Consortium Member	How do schools consume use electricity?
Eastern Center	Lighting – 26% Cooling – 26% Office Equipment – 20% Ventilation – 7% Refrigeration – 4% Heating – 5% Other – 12%
Hatboro-Horsham	
Jenkintown	
MCIU	
Methacton	
North Montco	
North Penn	
Perkiomen Valley	
Pottsgrove	
Spring-Ford	
Upper Dublin	<b>Total Savings: \$678,000</b> <b>January - September 2011</b>
Upper Merion	
Wissahickon	

To date, these initiatives have resulted in savings estimated at \$7.3 million. In the upcoming year, it is anticipated that SEPaST will derive additional financial benefits from the following:

- Beginning, July 2011, Montgomery County entities will be rated separately from the suburban schools affiliation yielding projected savings of approximately \$950,000.
- The fully insured HMO Rx program was migrated to the SEPaST program as of July 1, 2011, which will save a projected \$700,000.

## The Anderson School

Redesigned and Ready to Serve the Emotional Support, Alternative Education Population

The 2011-2012 school year brings many changes to the Anderson School - the MCIU’s alternative education school. The school has slashed tuition to \$26,500 and redesigned the program to be more competitive with comparable education settings.

Under the direction of its new principal, Chris Stultz, the school has incorporated value-added services including targeted remedial academics using Read 180 and an individualized math program for each child. “We’ve also implemented a behavior-changing, therapeutic environment that stresses personal responsibility, decision-making, and a heavy focus on transition for every student,” Stultz said. “Research-based educational strategies and best practices will be incorporated, preparing each student for the next level.”



The Anderson School’s new principal, Chris Stultz, joined the team in June 2011.

Each district will receive monthly, detailed progress reports, as well as quarterly, face-to-face updates on their students’

progress toward transition goals. “The new positive behavior support system is proving to have good results. The use of contingency contracts, individualized level systems, and a continuous stream of positive reinforcements, continuously challenges each student to realize that everything is earned by working to your best ability. The Anderson School has implemented a reward system that ‘catches students being good’ as well as the opportunity to earn a structured ‘free-time’ throughout the day by adhering to the norms and rules of the facility,” Stultz said.

Additionally, the staff has incorporated a new work-experience program that allows students to gain job skills by working with a job coach in local businesses such as Genuardi’s, Foulkways, Holy Redeemer Hospital and Marshall’s. “This has been a big hit, providing much needed transition skills for our older students,” Stultz said.

For more information about the Anderson School, contact Principal Chris Stultz at [cstultz@mciu.org](mailto:cstultz@mciu.org) or 610-635-2401.