



MONTGOMERY COUNTY INTERMEDIATE UNIT

An Educational Service Agency Supporting School Excellence

To The Point. . .

Key points and highlights from the February 23, 2011 Board Meeting

Board Actions

The Board was recognized for their dedication and support to the MCIU as part of Board of Directors Recognition month.

The Board recognized 15 employees who completed 25 years of service with the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit during 2010.

The Board accepted the resignation of Board member, Mitch Zimmer, Colonial School District, and appointed and welcomed Mel Brodsky to complete the board term vacated by Zimmer.

Executive Director's Report – Dr. Jerry W. Shiveley

Dr. Shiveley reviewed the procedures for the 2011-2012 Board member election. Districts required to submit 3-year term board candidates in spring 2011 include Cheltenham, Hatboro-Horsham, Norristown, Pottstown and Upper Merion. Colonial School District is required to nominate a candidate to complete the balance of the vacated term caused by district changes in appointments to the MCIU board. The nomination forms must be received by the MCIU by April 18, 2011. Local boards must vote on their candidate in May or June with ballots returned to the MCIU by June 17, 2011.

Dr. Shiveley invited Dr. Charles Amuso, former superintendent of Souderton Area School District, to provide a report on the Superintendent's Task Force on Cooperative Services. The task force, staffed by Dr. Amuso and comprised of six superintendents, has been meeting since October 2010 with the mission of identifying new cooperative services that will reduce districts' infrastructure costs to help them focus their shrinking resources on classroom instruction. The Task Force is reviewing services of educational service agencies throughout Pennsylvania and other states as part of the planning for these new services. The six superintendents include Dr. Melissa Jamula (Upper Merion), Dr. Marsha R. Hurda (Spring-Ford Area), Dr. Christopher McGinley (Lower Merion), Dr. Timothy Quinn, (Methacton), Dr. Robert Milrod (Upper Moreland), and Dr. Timothy Wade (Jenkintown).

To date, the Task Force has developed a list of possible cooperative services and received feedback from the school districts about their priorities. (Dr. Amuso distributed the list of ideas to the Board). On February 8th, the Task Force participated in a day-long symposium on budgeting and staffing. This was attended by more than 65 Montgomery County superintendents, business managers, human resources directors and MCIU staff providing the opportunity to foster discussion on new and innovative ways to reduce expenses as well as opportunities for the districts to save money through cooperative services, personnel changes and salary/benefits negotiations. The Task Force will meet again on February 28th to refine the list of possible initiatives to pursue for 2011-2012. Additional reports will be made to districts through superintendents, business managers and the MCIU Board.

DIVISION REPORTS

Human Resources—Dr. Leticia Rodriguez

Dr. Rodriguez requested and received approval for various personnel items, including 16 professional recommendations, 16 teacher assistant and support staff recommendations, 3 administrative requests, including one revision of resignation date, 1 request for a 1:1 temporary teacher assistant, 1 issuance of a professional contract, two conference requests and five professional additions to the substitute list. Dr. Rodriguez also requested and received approval on the 2011-2012 holiday calendar and the mileage reimbursement rate for 2011.

Management Services – Stan H. Wisler

Mr. Wisler asked for and received approval on the following action items:

- Recommendation to accept the 2009-2010 audited financial statements as prepared by Maillie Falconiero and Company
- Recommendation to approve the 2011-2012 MCIU General Operating Budget. Local districts must vote on the budget in March and early-April and return their reports to the MCIU by April 18, 2011. The final budget must be sent to PDE by May 1, 2011.
- Recommendation to authorize computer lease agreement with TD Bank
- Recommendation to accept the state Personnel Development Grant from PDE in the amount of \$1,167,632
- Recommendation to approve the 2011-2012 Special Education Division Budget, totaling \$75,120,439
- Recommendation to accept the Special Education Performance Grant Program from PDE in the amount of \$35,000 to establish or expand programming of transition from school to community –based competitive employment for students with autism

Special Education Division – Dr. Lois Robinson

Dr. Robinson, the new Special Education Director effective February 1, reported that she is working with Dr. Barbara Burke – Stevenson and Jane Mansuy on her transition in to the organization.

Dr. Robinson reported that the verification by OCDEL (Office of Child Development and Early Learning) for the MCIU's Early Intervention program is scheduled to take place in March. This process ensures compliance with federal and state requirements for children identified as eligible for Early Intervention Services.

The search for a new Anderson School principal is underway. The administrative and teaching staff have interviewed 8 candidates for this position and will have second interviews in March. George Carlino has agreed to stay on as the interim principal until April.

Dr. Robinson also reported that in working through the EI budget for 2011 – 2012, a need to modify service delivery has become apparent. The EI administrators have worked diligently to analyze data to support these changes. Programs will continue to provide appropriate services for children, but in more cost effective ways.

Division of Legislative Services and Grant Development - Dr. Mary Jane Gales

Dr. Gales reported that the Montgomery County School Directors Legislative Committee (MCS DLC) met with Representative Warren Kampf, 157th District (Methacton and Norristown) and Todd Stephens, 151st District (Abington, Hatboro-Horsham, North Penn, Upper Dublin, Wissahickon) to discuss educational issues. The freshmen representatives stated that since funding will be so tight in the next few years, there will be more open discussions on providing districts with relief from some of the mandates. In particular, Rep. Kampf wanted more information about which state special education regulations exceed federal requirements. There was also interest in making changes to prevailing wage legislation.

Representative Scott Boyd, Lancaster, will be introducing a bill allowing school districts to furlough employees for economic reasons. The bill also allows furlough decisions to be based on employee performance and qualifications rather than solely on seniority. The bill is expected to be similar to House Bill 382 which was introduced in the 2010 session.

Hearings on Senate Bill 1 took place last week, which provides funds for low income students in failing schools to attend private or schools outside their district. Advocates of the bill testified that children cannot wait for failing schools to improve. Those opposed stated that the bill does not provide parents school choice since schools can pick and choose students. Tom Gentzel, executive director of the Pennsylvania School Boards Association, summed up the opposition best by his statement that SB 1 would implement a system that "is unaccountable, unaffordable, unpopular, unproven and unconstitutional." The bill is scheduled to be voted on in the Senate Education Committee on March 1.

At the federal level, Dr. Gales reported that Congress is still working on the budget for fiscal year 2011. Legislators were unable to pass any appropriations at the end of the last session so they have been working on continuing resolutions (CR) that provided level funding for government operations. The current CR expires on March 4, 2011. The House Appropriations Committee released their proposal that, for the first time in history, recommends spending reductions including \$100 billion in cuts. They propose cutting almost \$5 billion from the U. S. Department of Education. This proposal will go before the House on Thursday and then to the Senate where there is hope that moderate cuts will be made. President Obama released his FY 2012 budget proposal which included a 4% increase in education.

Dr. Gales invited the Board to attend the annual Legislative Breakfast on Friday, April 29, 2011 at the William Penn Inn. Those interested in attending should contact their superintendent. The deadline for reservations is April 15, 2011.

Dr. Gales also announced that Tim Allwein, Assistant Executive Director of Governmental and Member Relations for the Pennsylvania School Boards Association, died on Friday, February 18.

Technology & Information Services – Gail Kennedy

Mrs. Kennedy brought to the Board's attention that there are new restrictions regarding gifts provided by vendors that provide eRate eligible services. These new rules apply to everyone, including school board members, in any district participating in eRate. The new law disallows accepting gifts from any vendor who may bid on a district's eRate eligible services -- primarily vendors that provide telecommunications, internet, phone, and cell phone services.

Curriculum, Instruction & Professional Development –Kendall Glouner

Ms. Glouner reported a new partnership with Drexel University's School of Education, Chester County Intermediate Unit and Delaware County Intermediate Unit to offer the Master of Science in Educational Administration: Collaborative Leadership (EDAM) program which will begin in March 2011.

Ms. Glouner also noted that there are rumors about changes in graduation requirements related to the Keystone Exams. There is the potential for changes to be made, but nothing is official yet.

Nonpublic School Services – Dr. Kenneth Voss

Dr. Voss reported that his staff has started promoting the popular summer camps offered by NPSS. This year, there are five different camps being offered at 11 sites the week of June 20-24.

On February 24th, NPSS will host a meaningful consultation meeting for all the public school districts who contract with NPSS for the delivery of Title I services in the nonpublic schools. On March 28th, the division, in collaboration with the Special Education Division, has invited all nonpublic school principals to a meeting to discuss their needs related to Title II funds, providing for professional development, and equitable participation funds, providing services for students in nonpublic schools who have been identified as eligible for special education services.

This past month, the division provided PDE the public/nonpublic school enrollment which determines the state allocation for Act 89 funding.

PaTTAN – Dr. Janet Sloand

Dr. Sloand highlighted a new professional development opportunity entitled "Inclusive Education: Leading and Improving School-Based Practices." Presently, there are twenty school districts throughout the Commonwealth participating in this professional development series which is designed to support core school-based leadership teams to effectively implement evidence-based inclusive practices.

Communications Division—Kristen Rawlings

Mrs. Rawlings noted that the deadline for nominating teachers for the Voices of Inspiration Award for Teaching Excellence is March 10. Log on to the www.mciu.org homepage for a copy of the nomination form.

She also invited Board members to participate in the 12th annual MCIU Education Foundation Golf Classic on May 9, 2011 at the Blue Bell Country Club. Players and sponsorships are welcome.

**The next MCIU Board of Directors meeting will be held on
March 23, 2011
at 7:45 p.m.**