



MONTGOMERY COUNTY INTERMEDIATE UNIT

An Educational Service Agency Supporting School Excellence

To The Point. . .

Key points and highlights from the January 25, 2012 Board Meeting

Board Actions

The MCIU welcomed nine new members to the Board of Directors, including the following individuals:

- Maura Buri, Upper Merion
- Julie Knudsen, Colonial
- Matthew Holliday, Souderton
- Howard Jones, Methacton
- Holly Kisailus, Springfield Township
- Carolyn Murphy, North Penn
- Virginia Pollard, Lower Merion
- Nancy J. Landes, Pottsgrove
- William Scott, Upper Perkiomen

Burunda Prince-Jones, Wissahickon, was elected to serve as the new vice president of the board.

As part of Board Recognition Month, the board was recognized by Dr. Shiveley for their service and dedication to the MCIU. The Board also recognized three employees for 25 years of service.

Executive Director Report

Dr. Shiveley explained the MCIU Board of Election Procedures and reviewed the list of districts required to submit 3-year term, two year term and one year term board candidates in spring 2012.

DIVISION REPORTS

Human Resources—John Knebl

Mr. Knebl (filling in for Jane Mansuy) requested and received approval for various personnel items including: 5 appointments for professional staff; 2 requests for leave, 1 resignation, 2 returns to service and 1 retirement; 3 appointments, 1 request for unpaid leave, 2 resignations, 2 retirements and 2 salary adjustments for teacher assistant/support staff; 1 appointment and 1 resignation for administrative position; the appointment of a volunteer induction professional and 6 substitutes; and 4 conference requests. The 2012-2013 holiday list was also approved.

Management Services – Stan H. Wisler

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

- Recommendation to approve the proposed 2012-2013 Special Education Division budget in the amount of \$76,711,626
- Recommendation to accept three RFP proposals for Demand Response Services
- Recommendation to accept a grant from PDE in the amount of \$601,762.28 for PaTTAN to improve educational results for children with disabilities
- Recommendation to approve a reduced grant amount from PDE for early intervention purposes

Wisler also reported that the State Auditors completed their audit of the MCIU with no findings or observations. The audit of the financial statements for the 2010-2011 school year have been completed and the final report will be reviewed and presented for acceptance at the February board meeting.

Special Education Division – Dr. Lois Robinson

Dr. Robinson reported that Senator Daylin Leach attended a classroom celebration for the MCIU Hearing Support Class. The senator enjoyed learning about the program which develops auditory, speech and language skills for students with hearing impairments.

The 2nd Annual Autism Resource Fair will be held on February 16th, from 6:30-8:30 pm at North Penn High School Cafeteria. It provides families the opportunity to network and learn about advocacy, behavioral health, community organizations, camps, social skills groups and more.

Legislative Services and Grants Development Division – Valentina Viletto

Ms. Viletto reported that partisan politics have created an impasse on changes to Reauthorization of ESEA (No Child Left Behind). The House Education and the Workforce Committee released two pieces of draft legislation to address teacher quality and accountability. The Committee's draft policies are outlined in the Student Success Act and the Encouraging Innovation and Effective Teachers Act. However, the policies have not been embraced by democratic members.

Also at the federal level there has been much discussion on FY12 and sequestration (the term for the across-the-board cuts the economy will face as of Jan. 2013, because the Super Committee was unable to identify \$1.2 trillion in revenues/spending cuts). There has been a marked increase in media attention detailing efforts by Republicans to step up their efforts to exempt defense from the sequester. Exemption of any sector is at the direct expense of any other sector, including education.

Ms. Viletto reported that in the wake of the Penn State sex abuse allegations legislators are seeking greater reporting requirements regarding sex offenders, including:

- Senate Bill 1378 introduced by Sen. Boscola that would limit how close registered sex offenders can live to schools, day cares, recreation centers and school bus stops. The measure would also require school administrators to consult the "Megan's Law" offenders registry annually when deciding where to locate bus stops. Registered sex offenders could not establish residency within 1,000 feet of any school, day care center, recreation center or playground; and within 500 feet of a school bus stop. In annually consulting the Megan's law offenders list, if school administrators learn that an offender already lives within 500 feet of a bus stop, they would be required to notify police and the parents whose children use that bus stop.
- Senate Bill 1381 sponsored by Sen. Williams to amend the School Code to require school employers to conduct an employment history review for all prospective school employees, not just professional staff. The bill would require prospective employees to identify EVERY employer they have ever had, and would require school officials (public and private) to send a special form to each of those former employers to determine if the person had ever been named in any kind of situation related to child sexual abuse. The bill would allow hiring on a provisional basis, pending final responses to the request. The bill also would penalize any former employer who did not supply that information up to \$10,000.
- Act 111 of 2011, was signed into law by Governor Corbett on December 20, changing Pennsylvania's Megan's Law to comply with the federal Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006 by expanding the availability of information on sex offenders, including juvenile

offenders. Also known as the School Assault law, Act 111 creates the offense of institutional sexual assault in a school or child center.

- On January 9, members were named to the Task Force on Child Protection, a panel created by the General Assembly to thoroughly review state laws and procedures governing child protection and the reporting of child abuse.

There has been discussion about the Reading School District situation and an Auditor General's report stating that the district illegally used funds to provide board members with meals. PASA, PSBA and PASBO are discussing drafting a recommended policy concerning those uses of school funds to counter the Auditor General's report. The plan is to share that draft with the PDE and ask them to distribute it to districts as guidance.

A divided Pennsylvania Supreme Court on January 25 invalidated a plan to redraw state House and Senate district lines, calling the redistricting approach "contrary to law." The justices voted 4-3 to send the plan back to the Legislative Reapportionment Commission. The high court's ruling immediately threw into disarray plans by candidates and parties for this year's General Assembly races. Part of the court order changed certain deadlines for the primary petition process for candidates, and the majority said any signatures on nominating petitions that were collected on Tuesday and Wednesday, the first two days of the three-week petition circulation period, would be considered valid.

Technology and Information Services – Gail Kennedy

Mrs. Kennedy reported that nine school districts and one technical school are participating in a consortium to bundle SIP trunk lines for telephone service. Four vendors responded to an RFP. Substantial savings are expected based on the vendor responses.

Curriculum, Instruction & Professional Development – Dr. Robert Shields

Dr. Shields reported that CIPD will again offer Advanced Placement Summer Institutes for teachers. The following courses have been added: Calculus AB; Environmental Science; English Language and Composition; and World History.

Nonpublic School Services – Dr. Kenneth Voss

Dr. Voss reported that 12 archdiocesan elementary schools in Montgomery County have been recommended for closure and pairing with other schools in the archdiocese. This will impact about 1,700 students.

Beginning March 1, 2012, MCIU will partner with Edward Savioz Driver Training School to offer students a state-approved online 30-hour driver training theory course. Students will pay \$100 for the course of which a portion will be remitted to MCIU by Edward Savioz.

PaTTAN – Dr. Janet Sloand

Dr. Sloand highlighted that nearly 1,000 participants statewide attended the Assistive Technology Expo 2011, which provided families, students with disabilities, and educators with hands-on experience with assistive technology and interaction with AT vendors.

Communications Division—Kristen Rawlings

Mrs. Rawlings reported that the Communications Division completed the first issue of a countywide newsletter developed for all 21 school district as a means of communicating educational news that is

common across the county. Several MCIU publications were also completed and distributed including the 2012-2013 Guide to Services and the 2010-2011 School District Service Reports, outlining all services provided to each district. Additionally, the division supported Pottsgrove and Springfield school districts with the development of newsletters for their districts.

Division Spotlight: The Anderson School- Dr. Lois Robinson and Principal Chris Stultz

Dr. Robinson and Anderson School Principal Chris Stultz provided a presentation on The Anderson School, which provides services for regular education students (without an IEP) and special education students, beginning in 6th grade, who are in need of emotional and behavioral supports. The goal of the program is to provide students the tools they need to successfully transition back to their school districts, a post-secondary setting, the military or career. The school also provides three hours of academics for young people admitted to Explorations, the new partial hospitalization program.

Highlights of the program include:

- **Individualized Intake Process:** This includes counselor/student interviews, follow up communication, a parent/student program overview and a student-led tour of the school
- **Education Remediation:** The school is exploring hybrid learning options to extend across content areas and has incorporated Khan Academy and Read 180
- **Positive Behavior Support System:** The staff and students develop contingency contracting that pinpoints specific behavior goals and rewards. The program also includes a goal driven level system, individual counseling with a licensed social worker, group counseling, and a self-evaluation system
- **Intensive Behavior Support Wing:** This newly developed area of the school allows students with more severe behavioral issues (i.e. conduct disorders) and students with emotional issues (i.e. anxiety, phobia, depression) to be separated and programmed in different parts of the building. The intensive behavior support area was requested by school districts.

To ensure greater success with the transition in to college, the working world or other career path, the Anderson School works closely with the MCIU's Transition Program team. The team provides work exploration and opportunities through 23 job sites, conducts vocational assessments and teaches students essential skills such as how to succeed in a job interview.

The tuition for the Anderson School was dramatically reduced this school year to \$26,500 - a competitive rate that is lower than other similar institutions such as Lakeside and Life Works.

The Board was encouraged to help spread the word about the Anderson School in order to boost enrollment. The school can accommodate up to 72 students, but currently has only 25 enrolled.

**The next MCIU Board of Directors meeting will be held on
February 22, 2012
at 7:45 p.m.**