



MONTGOMERY COUNTY INTERMEDIATE UNIT

An Educational Service Agency Supporting School Excellence

To The Point. . .

Key points and highlights from the September 22, 2011 Board Meeting

Board Actions

The MCIU Board Facilities Committee recommended that the Board review the costs associated with the major maintenance projects needed on the current MCIU building. The MCIU Facilities Supervisor, Mark Brooks, provided a presentation outlining the deficiencies of the current site and structure, including ADA compliance issues, roofing, HVAC and electrical deficiencies, insufficient parking and inadequate and inefficient meeting room/office space. Estimated costs associated with the major maintenance items to the West Norriton facility are \$5.8 million. This does not include the costs to redesign and fit the building to current program needs. Mr. Brooks emphasized that even with correcting these deficiencies, the current building, the parking and meeting room/office space inadequacies cannot be rectified. At the October Board meeting, the Facilities Committee will present a recommendation to either seek a new facility or invest in the current facility.

DIVISION REPORTS

Human Resources—Dr. Robert Shields

Dr. Shields (filling in for Jane Mansuy) requested and received approval for various personnel items including: 1 appointment, two requests for unpaid leave and 1 resignation for professional staff; 21 appointments, 2 requests for unpaid leave and 1 resignation for teacher assistant/support staff; the award of a professional contract for 2 staff members, and the professional substitute list.

Management Services – Stan H. Wisler

Mr. Wisler asked for and received approval on a recommendation to accept a \$34,230 grant from the Pennsylvania Institute for Instructional Coaching which will be used by the Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development Division.

Mr. Wisler reported that the state audit of 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 was completed with no findings or observations by the auditors.

Mr. Wisler provided an update on the initiative to self insure medical insurance. The Southeastern Pennsylvania School Trust (SEPaST) continues to move forward with the initiative to self insure the medical insurance program of the entities (20) currently participating in SEPaST for the self insuring of the prescription programs. The Trust recently approved a change in the governance structure to include union representation. A benefit committee will be established with 50/50 representation of union and management and two union members from the benefit committee will be added to the current seven member executive committee. The Trust is asking districts to take action by the end of October indicating their commitment to self insure their medical insurance program through SEPaST effective July 1, 2012. A sample board resolution as well as a model memorandum of understanding (MOD) has been distributed to districts for their use.

Nonpublic School Services – Dr. Kenneth Voss

Dr. Voss reported that the MCIU NPSS Division is still the 2nd largest in the state. The PDE count of eligible nonpublic school students in Montgomery County for the current school year is 27,855 – a 2% decrease from last year.

Dr. Voss reported that the Catholic school teachers are back to work following a strike. During the strike, the NPSS staff were reassigned to work in different schools.

NPSS provided Elementary Student Assistance Program Training (ESAP) and Student Assistance Program Training (SAP) trainings this June and July to more than seventeen agency liaisons as well as faculty and staff from public, nonpublic and cyber schools.

Special Education Division – Dr. Lois Robinson

Dr. Robinson reported that an Open House for Explorations partial hospitalization program was held Wednesday, August 31st. In addition, Christopher Stultz, Principal of the Anderson School, provided an overview of the Anderson School redesign.

On September 22nd, the second Explorations Board meeting was held and the staffing was approved. Dr. Robinson anticipates that the program will receive its license from the Montgomery County Behavioral Health Department by October 6th which will allow the program to begin accepting referrals the week of October 10th.

Dr. Robinson recognized and thanked the 13 school districts that host MCIU special education classrooms.

Legislative Services and Grants Development Division – Dr. Charles Amuso

Dr. Amuso has been hired to fill in for the Legislative Services Division until a replacement can be hired for Dr. Mary Jane Gales.

Dr. Amuso and Dr. Shiveley attended the Association of Educational Service Agencies annual conference in Washington, DC on September 19-21. They attended a number of briefings on proposed legislation and met with the staff of both U.S. senators and Congressmen Todd Platts', Glenn Thompson's, and Mike Kelly's offices to discuss educational issues, including adequate IDEA funding, eRate funding, impact of possible cuts to ACCESS funding, vouchers and reauthorization of the ESEA.

Dr. Amuso said the House is attempting to address ESEA issues through a number of individual bills, including HR 1991 which would eliminate 42 programs and HR2445 which allows more flexibility for districts to move federal dollars to programs needed locally. Four Senate Republicans have also introduced a package of separate bills that attempt to address the problems with ESEA without doing a complete reauthorization.

He reported that Secretary Arne Duncan is proposing a proposing a NCLB "waiver" program which requires states to agree to school reform provisions similar to those in the "Race to the Top" applications in return for waivers of some NCLB requirements. Secretary Duncan's proposed waivers may contain additional requirements for districts to qualify for waivers. The announcement is expected on Friday, September 23rd.

At the state level, Dr. Amuso said Senate Bill 1 is expected to move out of the Senate Education Committee soon. If it passes the Senate, the House leadership has indicated that more study and discussion will be required during any consideration. A pilot voucher program may result.

Both the Senate and House Education Committees have held hearings on charter school reform. Senate Bill 904 would establish a commission to regulate charter schools, including cyber charter schools, and expand colleges and universities as agencies that can approve the establishment of charter schools.

Curriculum, Instruction & Professional Development – Kendall Glouner

Mrs. Glouner reported that the first meeting of the Montgomery County Instructional Council (MCIC) will be held September 23, which kicks off a number of job alike council meetings scheduled for the year. Focal points of the meeting will be dialogue regarding a variety of major initiatives from the PA Department of Education as well as eliciting input for rolling out support for several programs and initiatives this year such as the Common Core Standards and Keystone Exams.

This is the fourth and last year of the Teaching American History grant. In order to assist districts with their curriculum alignment efforts in response to Common Core and Keystone adoption, CIPD will assemble county-wide teams to create model, K-12, US History and Civics curricula. These products will utilize the curriculum mapping tools housed on the 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 12 members will be chosen for each project (24 total) with special priority being given to teachers who have been active participants in the Teaching American History (TAH) grant. Dr. Jodi Bornstein, Social Studies Education Program Director at Arcadia University and Sally Flaherty, Social Studies advisor from the PA Department of Education, have been asked to give leadership in this work. This curriculum project is funded through the TAH grant. The cost for substitutes and mileage will be reimbursed to districts that have personnel who work on the project.

PaTTAN – Dr. Janet Sloand

Each August, PaTTAN is responsible for planning, organizing and conducting the *Pennsylvania Low Incidence Institute: High Expectations for Achievement* in State College. This Institute provides skill-building sessions for parents and professionals living and working with children with low-incidence disabilities. These include blindness/vision impairment, deaf/hard of hearing, and significant intellectual disabilities. A new session this year focused on adaptive physical education. Dr. Sloand reported that 362 individuals attended the Institute this year and 26 parents received scholarships through PaTTAN to attend.

Communications Division—Kristen Rawlings

Mrs. Rawlings highlighted the work of the Communications Task Force comprised of Dr. Melissa Jamula, Dr. Wendy Royer, Dr. Bob Milrod, Dr. Charles Amuso, Dr. Jerry W. Shiveley and Gail Kennedy. The group developed a proposal for a collaborative county-wide communications strategy to better promote the successes of our public schools. The plan, which includes collaborative publications, press releases, a website and Facebook site, was presented to the Superintendents' Council on September 15th. A survey is being sent out to determine the districts' interest in participating in the initiative.

Division Spotlight: Technology & Information Services – Gail Kennedy

Mrs. Kennedy was joined by TIS supervisors, Troy Sosnovik and Sheldon Wedemeyer, to spotlight the division's technology initiatives and services. The Division's budget for 2011-2012 is \$3.8 million with nearly \$1.7 million generated from fee-based services. The fee-based revenue stream continues to grow as TIS works to reduce to expand its contracted services with school districts/nonpublic schools. Member service fees constitute \$1.4 million.

Member service fees include a wide range of value-added services that districts have requested such as advisory councils, eRate for consortium application, grant writing for technology, Internet2 access, basic

Moodle hosting and video conferencing/streaming. However, districts are able apply their member service fees toward more applicable fee-based services if needed.

During the 2011-2012 school year, TIS will work on the following division goals:

- Coordinate and implement at least two technology special events to bring in revenue and showcase our distance learning capabilities
- Develop at least two new services that demonstrate cost-savings for our districts
- Provide at least one new PAIUnet service that can be marketed and sold statewide
- Evaluate TIS Staff training needs and provide professional development opportunities for staff to stay a half step ahead of our districts in technology trend.
- Expand our web/data services to include at least one new mobile application for education
- Implement a new consolidated financial and HR system that includes data dashboard capabilities
- Develop an online library of professional development workshops available for purchase on demand through the MCIU website

TIS also has four focus areas:

- Developing & providing cost effective services such as PowerSchool, Laptop Insurance and Phone Consolidation
- Expanding online learning through the use of video conferencing/streaming/bridging and hybrid learning. The goal this year is to enlist two schools to expand their hybrid learning model incorporating more online learning in the classroom
- Developing and offering cloud based applications and services, which reduces districts' expense of housing and managing applications. New applications this year include EZGoalTracker
- Enhance marketing efforts to expand the customer base

**The next MCIU Board of Directors meeting will be held on
October 26, 2011
at 7:45 p.m.**