



## Montgomery County Intermediate Unit

### *To The Point. . .*

#### Key points and highlights from the February 25, 2009 Board Meeting

#### **Board Actions**

The Board approved 10 policies updated by the Policy Committee regarding Local Board Procedures and the MCIU Policy on Bullying/Cyberbullying.

#### **DIVISION REPORTS**

##### **Executive Director's Report**

Dr. Shiveley reported on the Federal Stimulus Plan based on information obtained from AASA lobbyists, Mary Kusler and Bruce Hunter last week. The roll-out to states is continually evolving. We do know that Pennsylvania is scheduled to receive increased revenues over the next two years to be used to stabilize funding for both higher education and basic education. There will be significant increases in Title I and Special Education. Districts will have access to the money in year one and three years to spend it. Governors will have considerable discretion in the distribution of some of the funding. In Pennsylvania, the Secretary of Education and Deputy Secretary will be forming a work group with superintendents and intermediate unit executive directors to discuss the distribution plans as more details roll out sometime in mid-March.

In March, all of the school district boards will receive a memo regarding the election of candidates to the MCIU Board. Twelve districts need to elect members for the Board. Nomination forms must be received at the MCIU by April 20<sup>th</sup>. The three-year terms run July 1 through June 30<sup>th</sup>. The districts that must submit a candidate this spring include:

Colonial	Perkiomen Valley
Jenkintown	Pottsgrove
Lower Merion	Spring-Ford
Lower Moreland	Upper Dublin
Methacton	Upper Perkiomen
North Penn	Wissahickon

##### **Human Resources—Jane Mansuy**

Mrs. Mansuy asked for and received approval on various personnel items.

##### **Management Services – Stan Wisler**

Mr. Wisler asked for and received ratification on a number of business items that were held over from the postponed January meeting including:

- Recommendation to Accept SEPA Regional Tobacco Project Funds
- Recommendation to Award the Fuel Bid for Montgomery County School Entities Joint Purchasing Board
- Authorization to Declare Equipment Surplus/Obsolete
- Recommendation to Authorize Application for Mandate Waiver of Quotation and Bid Threshold

- Title I School District Contracts
- Title II – Part A – District Contracts
- Bid Recommendation of Printing of Folders for PaTTAN
- Recommendation to Accept a Subcontract Agreement Between the Eastern Center for Arts and Technology and the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit
- Recommendation to Approve the 2009-2010 Special Education Division Budget

Mr. Wisler also asked and received approval on:

- An agreement with Management Partnership Services to conduct a Bucks and Montgomery County Transportation Study focusing on finding efficiencies in special education and nonpublic schools transportation. All of the Montgomery County school districts are participating and all but two of Bucks County school districts. The cost of the study is \$108,650 and will be paid for by grant money (currently \$20,000 is committed) and contributions from districts.
- Agreements to allow Vanguard as a 403(b) Provider. Under the new agreement, a \$10 fee will be paid by the employee participants.
- An agreement with Delaware Valley Healthcare Coalition (DVHCC) for Montgomery County districts that are part of the Independence Blue Cross (IBC) Consortium to join the DVHCC in order to take advantage of premium savings through participation in various wellness initiatives.
- A recommendation to accept the 2007-2008 Audited Financial Statements as prepared by Maillie Falconiero and Company
- A recommendation to accept the Grant Award of \$112,908,000 from PDE/Office of Elementary and Secondary Education for the Alternative Education for Disruptive Youth Programs at the Montgomery County Corrections Facility and the Anderson School

Information item: Mr. Wisler updated the Board on the search for a new facility to house the MCIU. A number of properties have been visited and reviewed, but there is no rush to settle on a new location given the current economic conditions. Options will continue to be considered.

### **Division of Technology and Information Services – Gail Kennedy**

TIS is collaborating with Steve Beck, Montgomery County School Safety Coordinator, in writing a grant for fire prevention and safety training for students and parents. The proposal includes a videoconferencing bridge to allow multiple schools to participate in interactive video training provided by county experts.

### **Division of Curriculum, Instruction, & Professional Development –Kendall Glouner**

Mrs. Glouner discussed the study conducted by Penn State University regarding local assessments used that can serve as an alternative high school graduation requirement for students who do not pass the 11th grade administration (or 12th grade retest) of the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA). Approximately eighty-five percent of school districts responded to PDE's request for copies of local assessments. District-level feedback from the Penn State research team may only be requested by Superintendents by emailing [localassess@psu.edu](mailto:localassess@psu.edu).

On January 20<sup>th</sup>, the MCIU hosted judging for the Governor's School for the Arts event which included 140 entries from around the county in the areas of creative writing, music, theater, dance, visual arts and photography. A sampling of the artwork entered in the annual event was on display at the board meeting. Successful students are invited to attend a five-week summer program at Mercyhurst College in July and August. Mrs. Glouner reported the unfortunate news that the Governor's proposed budget for 2009-2010 has completely removed funding for the event for next year.

## **Special Education Division – Dr. Jeanmarie Mason**

Dr. Mason reported that letters were sent to Superintendents thanking them for MCIU operated classroom space and requesting continued use of the classrooms. PDE has informed the IU Special Education Directors that if a district is unable to continue to host an IU class, another district must be identified to offer classroom space. PDE will not approve any revisions of classroom moves without another location for the class.

IEP teams have been meeting to make determinations regarding Extended School Year (ESY) for children with disabilities beyond the 180-day school year. Decisions for these groups of students must be made by February 28<sup>th</sup> of each school year.

## **Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN) – Dr. Janet M. Sloand**

PaTTAN is in the process of planning The Pennsylvania Department of Education Annual Conference 2009, Getting Results: Educating Students in a Standards Aligned System, scheduled from April 14 - 17, 2009, at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center in Hershey, Pennsylvania. A highlight of this year's conference is keynote speaker Michael Fullan, a nationally recognized speaker on school reform. Poster sessions will highlight effective practices used by school districts and programs throughout the state.

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

**GCAs:** Senator Jane Orié introduced Bill 281 to prohibit the implementation and development of any statewide requirements for high school graduation unless they are sanctioned and funded by the General Assembly. Our Senators Dinniman, Greenleaf, Rafferty and Wonderling are co-sponsors for this bill. Senate Education Committee Chairman Jeffrey Piccola is drafting Bill 307 is similar to Senator Orié's except it prohibits students who score below basic on the PSSA's from being promoted to the next grade. Exemptions would be made for students with disabilities or those with limited English proficiency. Representative Saylor is introducing a similar bill at the House. Representative Mensch is so far the only representative in our area to sign on to this bill. A State Board Hearing on GCAs is tentatively scheduled for Friday, March 13<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m. in Philadelphia at the main library.

**Consolidation:** In his budget address the Governor proposed creating a 12-member legislative panel to develop a plan to reduce the number of school districts in Pennsylvania from 500 to 100. The Legislative Budget and Finance Committee commissioned Standard and Poor's to provide a similar analysis in 2007. This report showed that 88 districts were "ripe" for consolidation. The concern is that in the Governor's speech he states that if the General Assembly rejects the recommendation by this newly formed legislative committee the law would vest authority for consolidation with the State Board of Education.

**PSBA:** PSBA Executive Director Tom Gentzel has a UTube presentation concerning a new theme called FREE --Focusing Resources on Educational Expenses. The presentation advocates for fewer unfunded mandates: e.g. a two year moratorium on prevailing wages, eliminating need for separate prime contractors, reviewing non-public transportation, school retirement system, strike laws, sabbatical and tenure laws, and allowing districts to control the size of payrolls by easing regulations on staff reductions. To view the video, log onto <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XoaJbsSgmK0&eurl=http://www.psba.org/free/psba-focus-free.asp>

## **Nonpublic School Services – Dr. Kenneth Voss**

Dr. Voss previously distributed brochures for five remediation and/or social skills summer camps held by the Nonpublic School Services Division. These free camps are directed by NPSS counselors, remediation teachers, and speech pathologists.

NPSS supervisors and director, in collaboration with CIPD and TIS staff, have been meeting with nonpublic school principals, in focus groups, to determine professional development needs under TITLE II funding.

## **Communications Division—Kristen Rawlings**

A communications survey (Zoomerang) was emailed to Board, superintendents, and school contacts to assess the effectiveness of MCIU communications strategies. Feedback is requested.

Board members and district staff were reminded to complete their nominations for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual “Voices of Inspiration Award for Teaching Excellence.” The deadline for nominations is March 11, 2009. Nominations may be submitted by students, parents, coworkers, administrators, and school employees. Details, guidelines and nomination forms are available at [www.voicesofinspiration.org](http://www.voicesofinspiration.org).

## **Spotlight: Human Resources—Jane Mansuy**

In addition to managing the internal personnel functions of the MCIU, the Human Resources Division provides a number of services to constituent schools and school districts. The HR Division supports external clients primarily by serving as a liaison to PDE for HR-related initiatives and providing consultation to districts on employment process/training and certification issues such as:

- Certification and staffing policies and guidelines
- Requirements
- Audit Issues
- PDE questions
- Creation of new positions
- Tenure
- Supervision and evaluation models
- Compliance and regulatory models
- Just in time surveys

The Division also hosts bi-monthly county HR meetings to discuss hot topics or pressing issues as determined by the school districts.

Mrs. Mansuy highlighted two specific projects that her division has been working on to support school districts:

**PIMS Reporting:** The HR staff has been assisting districts in uploading student and staffing data for the Pennsylvania Information Management System. The HR Division helped districts navigate through a number of glitches in the system and inaccuracies in the type of data being requested. They were also successful in getting additional time allocated for reporting the data.

**FBI checks:** The HR division assisted districts in the implementation of a new PDE requirement to secure a criminal background check for all school staff and contractors. Mrs. Mansuy served on a work group that allowed her direct access to PDE to address school districts’ problems related to this new requirement.

**The next MCIU Board of Directors’ meeting will be held  
on March 25, 2009 at 7:45 p.m.**