



## Montgomery County Intermediate Unit

### *To The Point. . .*

#### Key points and highlights from the May 27, 2009 Board Meeting

##### **Board Actions**

The Board recognized Amy Shelby and Merck & Co, Inc. as the individual and organizational recipients of the annual Cynthia Welder Award, named in memory of a former MCIU school psychologist and special education supervisor. The award recognizes outstanding contributions to serving children with disabilities. Ms. Shelby has worked for the MCIU for the past 17 years and is currently a highly qualified teacher in the Secondary Life Skills Program at Wissahickon High School.

Merck has been a major sponsor of the MCIU Education Foundation's annual golf classic since its inception 10 years ago. Their financial support helps fund summer camperships and post secondary scholarships for children with disabilities.

The Board also recognized Sandy Edling, Assistant Director of Management Services for the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit (MCIU), who was granted status as a Pennsylvania Registered School Business Administrator (PRSBA) by the Board of Directors of the Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials (PASBO).

The Board accepted the nominating committee's report for board officers for 2009-2010. They are:

- John Grispon as President and Joseph Chmielewski as Vice-President through November 2009
- Joseph Chmielewski as President and Marc Lieberman as Vice President beginning in December 2009

Election will take place at the June meeting.

The Board voted to approval the renewal of the contract for Stan Wisler to serve as the MCIU Chief Financial Officer and Director of Management Services for another four-year term. The Board also approved the hiring of Arthur Mitchell as the new Assistant Director of the Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development Division.

##### **DIVISION REPORTS**

###### **Executive Director – Dr. Jerry W. Shiveley**

Dr. Shiveley invited the board to attend the graduation ceremonies for the Anderson School (9 am on June 9<sup>th</sup>), the Montgomery County School (9 am on June 10) and the Lynch Home (1 pm on June 10).

Dr. Shiveley discussed a new booklet created by the MCIU which outlines some of the MCIU services that qualify for American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds. The MCIU is ready to assist school leadership teams in helping districts meet the goals of ARRA.

###### **Human Resources—Jane W. Mansuy**

Mrs. Mansuy requested and received approval for various personnel items.

###### **Management Services – Stan H. Wisler**

Mr. Wisler asked and received approval on:

1. Recommendation to accept the 2009-2010 Student Accident/Football Insurance Quotations
2. Recommendation to accept a lease renewal between the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit and Upper Merion School District.
3. Recommendation for the Trash Bid for school years 2009-2010, 2010-2011, and 2011-2012
4. Recommendation of the Nonpublic School Services Budget for 2009-2010
5. Recommendation to submit application to PDE/Special Education for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. This allows the MCIU to receive flow-through monies of \$24,358,846.

**Information Items:**

- Mr. Wisler reported that the transportation study for Bucks and Montgomery counties is underway and a report is expected by early September
- The members of the Montgomery County Independence Blue Cross (IBC) Affiliation are investigating self insurance options for the affiliation's current prescription plan with the intent of saving dollars

**Division of Curriculum, Instruction, & Professional Development –Robert Shields (Interim Director)**

Dr. Shields thanked school districts for their support of a very successful 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Reading Olympics.

The 2009 Professional Development Summer Catalogue is now available detailing the training opportunities offered through the MCIU. It is available online at [www.mciu.org](http://www.mciu.org)

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

Dr. Mason reported that during the month of May, the special education administrative team met with the special education staff to review a draft of the 09-10 goals for the division. She said the annual exercise is very affirming in terms of the positive impact that staff makes serving students with disabilities.

**Technology & Information Services – Gail Kennedy**

Mrs. Kennedy highlighted a new contract with Cavalier Commercial Services to provide a redundant Internet connection for members of the Regional Wide Area Network. This will provide an independent fiber link to Philadelphia preventing the possibility of the service becoming temporarily inoperable due to a car accident or fire.

TIS will be hosting "Technology Day" at the MCIU next Wednesday, June 3rd. All district technology staff and administrators and other interested individuals are welcome. For more information, contact Gail at 215-755-9352 or go to the website at [www.mciu.org](http://www.mciu.org).

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

Dr. Sloand highlighted PaTTAN's publication department which provides writing, editing, design, printing, and mailing services for PaTTAN and the Bureau of Special Education (BSE), as well as the Pennsylvania Departments of Education, Health, and Public Welfare. PaTTAN creates more than 100 new materials each year and distributes more than 300,000 publications.

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

Dr. Gales reported that the state budget is still being debated and is expected to have a late settlement, perhaps stretching past the June 30<sup>th</sup> deadline. The Senate passed SB 850 along straight party lines. It reduces the Governor's budget plan by about \$1.35 billion by cutting more than \$728 million in state funding for public education and using federal stimulus funds to flat-fund the basic school subsidy at the 2008-2009 level. Last week the House Appropriations Committee discussed that even if the basic education subsidy was level-funded districts would receive additional funds through the increased federal stimulus funds in IDEA and the Title programs. Education groups are actively engaged in explaining the restrictions placed on these federal monies.

Dr Gales is also closely following SB 624 which requires a school district to permit any private or nonpublic school student living within that school district to participate in the extracurricular programs of the district.

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

NPSS has completed its yearly needs assessment meetings with the more than 150 nonpublic schools the division serves. Dr. Voss reported that many of the schools are requesting additional services which will be particularly challenging to deliver next year due to budget cuts and reduced staffing in the division.

Dr. Voss reported that the demand for three new summer camps for nonpublic school students as well as the popular Camp Ophelia and the Boys Leadership Camp was overwhelming this year. About 225 students are registered for the various camps. The camps are being held as follows:

- Jump Start to First Grade (June 15-19 at St. Alphonsus, The French International School and Blessed Teresa of Calcutta)
- Social Smarts Camp for students entering the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grades (June 15-19 at St. Alphonsus)
- High School Smart Camp for students entering the 9<sup>th</sup> grade (June 15-19 at Kennedy-Kenrick Catholic High School)
- Camp Ophelia (June 15-19 and June 22-26 at Manor College, Merion Mercy Academy and Mt. St. Joseph Academy)
- Boys Leadership Camp (June 15-19 at LaSalle College High School)

### **Spotlight: Communications Division—Kristen Rawlings and Legislative Services & Grants Development –Dr. Mary Jane Gales**

**Communications Spotlight:** Mrs. Rawlings highlighted the services of the Communications Division. Her division manages the internal & external MCIU communications, including media relations, special events, oversight of website/electronic content and publications.

The Division creates and distributes the following publications:

- Quarterly external newsletter, *MCIU Update*
- Bi-weekly employee newsletter, *MCIU Connection*
- MCIU Annual Report
- *To the Point* –highlights of the Board meeting
- Divisional brochures/flyers, etc. This year, more than 20 promotional/educational brochures were created to market services or events.

The division is also available to provide communications services on a contractual basis to school districts and nonpublic schools, including:

- Publication Development
- Media Relations
- Strategic Communications Planning
- Developing Website Content

- Special Event Assistance
- Trainings in graphic design and PR topics
- Communications Audits

Some of the highlights from the past year include:

- Receipt of PenSPRA's Award of Excellence for the 2007-2008 Annual Report
- Services to Wissahickon School District, including newsletters, press releases and web content. Mrs. Rawlings also provided consultative services to Cheltenham School District.
- Positive press coverage including 3 spots on TV and more than ten newspaper placements
- Receipt of a record number of nominations for the Voices of Inspiration Awards for Teaching Excellence, sponsored by the MCIU and Freedom Credit Union

**Legislative Services & Grants Development Spotlight:** Dr. Gales works closely with the MCIU Board, Cabinet & Administrators, educational organizations, county superintendents & school boards, and the Montgomery County Legislative Committee to advocate on the behalf of the county school districts on issues that impact education. In order to stay on top of pressing issues and prioritize advocacy efforts, Dr. Gales regularly researches legislation, attends meetings with legislators and staff; participates in conference calls and attends meetings with associations, legislators and districts. Dr. Gales keeps superintendents and school boards apprised of any activity that might impact their district.

Dr. Gales provides the following services:

- Updates and alerts regarding legislative issues impacting education. These updates are also available on the website, [www.mciu.org](http://www.mciu.org)
- Position papers
- Workshops/Presentations on grant writing, legislative issues, etc.
- Montgomery County School Board Legislative Committee
- District Requests: Additional Resources, Resolutions on various topics
- Identification and application for grants supportive of the MCIU's goals and MCIU Education Foundation (this year, grants applications included Transportation, Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program (EITC) and a 2009 Homeland Security Grant)

Over the past year, Dr. Gales has focused advocacy efforts on the following hot topics/issues:

- 2009-2010 Education Budget
- Reinstatement Intermediate Unit funding
- American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009
- State-wide health care
- Reauthorization of ESEA (NCLB)
- GCA/Keystone Exams
- School Consolidations

In the upcoming year, Dr. Gales has the following initiatives planned:

- Grant Writing Workshop and Assistance to School Districts
- Workshop on Navigating Foundation Center Website (95,000 Grants available)
- Assistance in analyzing voter statistics for future referendum
- Work with Statewide Intermediate Unit on advocacy efforts
- Working with PAIU to establish a statewide networking system for IU Legislative Directors

**The next MCIU June 23, 2009 at 7:45 p.m.**  
**\*\*Please note this meeting will be held at PaTTAN**  
**200 Anderson Road, King of Prussia**  
**Directions can be found at [www.pattan.net](http://www.pattan.net)**