



Montgomery County Intermediate Unit

To The Point. . .

Key points and highlights from the November 19, 2008 Board Meeting

Board Actions

The Board approved first reading of 10 MCIU policies relating to Board procedures and one policy on bullying/cyber-bullying. The review and revision of policies and procedures has been an ongoing process with a committee comprised of board members and the MCIU Assistant Executive Director.

DIVISION REPORTS

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 approval on a number of business items including:

- Recommendation to approve a financing plan to purchase the Anderson School building
- Recommendation to approve the 2009-2010 General Operating Budget for the MCIU which will be sent to district school boards for a vote
- Recommendation to approve a Pennsylvania Department of Education Safe School's Initiative Grant in the amount of \$10,000 to help the MCIU in its capacity to assist schools with emergency response, crisis management, and other school safety and security issues.
- Recommendation to authorize the Computer Lease Agreement with TD Bank
- Recommendation to authorize the administration to enter into an agreement to secure EasyProcure cards through the EasyProcure program which will increase MCIU's ability to obtain best pricing and reduce administrative processing costs.

Division of Technology and Information Services – Gail Kennedy

TIS is exploring a potential new service for school districts called the "BIG FIX™" – a Computer Policy and Power Management system that would save energy and reduce costs by putting computers into sleep mode when not in use and shutting systems down at a designated time.

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

From November 1, 2008, through January 1, 2009, the Barnes and Noble (Plymouth Meeting location) will be asking customers if they would like to purchase a book to donate to a Reading Olympics child. A kick-off event for the book drive on November 15 raised nearly \$1,000 for the Reading Olympics.

The CIPD division continues to facilitate council meetings in many areas. The Science Council met in October and heard a presentation from Dr. Steven Dear, Science Adviser in the Pennsylvania Department of Education. He offered advice to the group on interpreting the Science PSSA.

A preliminary analysis of the results showed the majority of Montgomery County schools performed above the state average at all levels. Official results will be released to the public sometime in late November.

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

PaTTAN has been working on developing accessible instructional materials, including audio/visual, for students who have difficulties seeing, manipulating, or comprehending standard instructional materials such as textbooks and other print materials. Provisions within the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004) and PA Chapter 14 require that textbooks and related core instructional materials in specialized formats be provided to students who need them.

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

Secretary of Revenue Tom Wolf reported that General Fund revenue in October was 14.7 percent less than anticipated. Fiscal year-to-date General Fund collections was \$564.8 million below estimate. Several education initiatives have been targeted for reduction in the current fiscal year, but specifics concerning how each program will be reduced are not yet available.

The election had little impact on the Pennsylvania Senate. In most cases Democrats held onto seats held by Democrats and Republicans held onto seats held by Republicans. In the House 27 new members were elected and several House districts changed party allowing the Democrats to secure a 104-99 margin. Outgoing House and Senate members will conclude their service on November 30. New members take office on December 1 and will be sworn in when the House and Senate convene the new session on Tuesday, January 6, 2009. All House and Senate bills and resolutions introduced this session that were not enacted or passed will die when the chambers officially adjourn later this month.

Nonpublic School Services – Dr. Kenneth Voss

NPSS staff continues to seek student enrollment forms from all nonpublic schools which impacts Act 89 funding and the services provided by the division to the schools.

The division is actively working to resurrect meetings with nonpublic school technology directors and the MCIU Technology Division to support and facilitate technology needs in the schools.

High school teachers are distributing the publication *How To Get Good Grades In Ten Easy Steps* to freshmen students as a means of assisting them in their ongoing transition to the academic expectations of high school.

Communications Division—Kristen Rawlings

The MCIU is joining Freedom Credit Union in hosting the 3rd Annual “Voices of Inspiration Award for Teaching Excellence.” Hold the date for the ceremony-- May 7, 2009. Mrs. Rawlings encouraged schools to submit their nominations for both public and private school teachers. Nominations may be submitted by students, parents, coworkers, administrators, and school employees. Details, guidelines and nomination forms are available at www.voicesofinspiration.org. The deadline for nominations is March 11, 2009.

Spotlight: Special Education Division – Dr. Jeanmarie Mason

Dr. Mason presented the proposed 2009-2010 Special Education Division budget for first reading and provided an overview of division programs and services.

Highlights: The Special Education Division operates two main programs—Preschool (Early Intervention) for ages 3-5 and School Age Programs for ages 5-21. Preschool services also include the Age of Beginner program for those children whose parents elect another year of early intervention programming for their children. Enrollment in the preschool programs is estimated to increase to 1,996 students next year. Children with autism have almost doubled since 2003 to a projected 371 students next year.

School age services are provided through classroom programs, supplementary services and itinerant programs. The estimated number of students served in classroom programs next year is 360. Enrollment in classroom programming is decreasing due to educating students in the least restrictive environment- their home school district. Students served by MCIU have more severe disabilities with intensive needs and multiple services. The Special Education Division has supported the districts with an autism consultation team and inclusion specialist to support least restrictive environment.

Dr. Mason also highlighted the services of the Training and Consulting (TAC) team and Behavior Management Specialists (BMS). The MCIU has 5.6 full-time TAC staff members who are federally funded to provide professional development consultation for PDE initiatives. Examples of current PDE initiatives include autism, behavior, inclusion, transition, reading and math. The training and consulting staff are responsive to individual school districts' needs and meet regularly with school district representatives.

The MCIU employs 6.2 full-time behavior management specialists who provide individual strategies and services to school districts through:

- o Consultation
- o Development of Verbal Behavior Classrooms
- o On-site support & training of personal care aides
- o Functional behavior assessments
- o Facilitating social skills groups

Budget: The projected 2009-2010 budget for the division represents a small increase of 3.18% and is broken down as follows:

Preschool programs:	\$18,033,442
School Age programs:	\$56,785,565
TOTAL	\$74,819,007

District contributions represent about \$47,953,000 or 47% of the Division's funding. IDEA funding and other federal funding represents 44% and state funding represents about 8%. The division has been able to keep the budget increase relatively low by unbundling costs of programs so that districts purchase only services they need and by billing the districts on actual usage

**The next MCIU Board of Directors' meeting will be held
on January 28, 2009 at 7:45 p.m.**