



THE TWENTY



*This Month: Resolve Behavioral Health Services,
Special Education, Nonpublic School Services*

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Colonial Intermediate Unit 20

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Resolve to Offer an Exciting New Program

BY DR. JANICE E. CUNNINGHAM, *Director of Resolve Behavioral Health Services*

Resolve Behavioral Health Services is excited to report that we are applying to the PA State Department of Public Welfare to open an Outpatient Program that will be located at Colonial Academy. This licensed program will be very unique in that we are also applying for six satellite licenses for additional offices to be located at school buildings in Northampton, Monroe and Pike Counties. This will be a very cutting-edge program in several areas. One area is that the program will be supported entirely by mental health dollars. The second area is that currently, CIU20 will be the first entity in this area to offer this type of model to our districts. The third area is that we will be able to treat students and families in their home schools so that they will more quickly receive comprehensive services, which may help prevent the need for a higher level of care.

An additional cutting-edge aspect of the program will be the utilization of telepsychiatry equipment, which is a secure line of communication via a computer that will link a psychiatrist with the student. This will help overcome previous barriers to care, such as transportation and parent work schedules.

We are very excited about this new venture, as are the school districts, counties, and the managed care organizations. Look for additional information as we move forward to introduce this program.



DID YOU KNOW . . .

The first Pennsylvania law that provided auxiliary services to students in the nonpublic schools, known as Act 194, was declared unconstitutional because it violated the establishment (separation of church and state) clause of the U.S. Constitution's first amendment.

Executive Director's Message

BY DR. CHARLENE M. BRENNAN

The Twenty for October

The Pennsylvania Department of Education has embarked on developing a new teacher evaluation system that will take into account student achievement as well as observation in the evaluation of teachers. Much of this work has developed from the City of Pittsburgh schools, which received a grant from the Gates Foundation to explore the use of achievement data in teacher evaluation.

On Tuesday, November 1, 2011, from 7-9 PM, Colonial Intermediate Unit 20 and our school districts will participate from IU 20 in Easton in a statewide virtual town hall meeting (High Definition video conference) with all 28 other intermediate units to discuss the teacher evaluation system and the Phase II pilot of the system. I would like to invite you as our local board members to attend. If you are interested, please register with my secretary, Dawn Hales, at dhailes@ciu20.org prior to Monday, October 31, 2011.

Among the panelist members will be Secretary of Education Ronald Tomalis, Deputy Secretary Carolyn Dumaesq, and the following staff from the original four school entities that participated in the Phase I pilot last year:

- Donna Belas, Superintendent, Cornell School District
- Travis Bogue, Teacher of Chemistry, Cornell High School, Coraopolis
- Nina Esposito-Visgitis, President, Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers
- Jan Feleppa, Special Education Supervisor, Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit 5
- Lorree Houk – Assistant to the Superintendent, Mohawk Area School District
- Kristin Kruger, Principal, Harrison Morton Middle School, Allentown
- Allison McLean, Teacher, Pittsburgh Arsenal School, Pittsburgh
- Chantell Ridgeway, Emotional Support Teacher, Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit 5

The video conference will provide an opportunity to hear directly from our Department of Education and those who have already participated in exploring a new system of evaluating professional staff. The meeting is being sponsored by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Pennsylvania Partnership for Children, and the Pennsylvania Association of Intermediate Units.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at the intermediate unit, 610-515-6403.

Early Intervention Makes a Difference

BY ANN RIDER, Supervisor of Special Education, Early Intervention

October is Pennsylvania's Promise for Children Month. Children's first five years shape how they will learn and how they will relate with others for their entire lives. Quality early learning is crucial to our young children's intellectual, social and emotional development. Research has shown that at risk children who receive quality early education can catch up to their peers before they reach kindergarten, so they are ready to succeed in school and life. The benefits that our children and families experience from quality early learning opportunities extend to all of our communities. The Office of Child Development and Learning has released the following statistics for children under the age of five: Northampton County has 17,280 children, with 8.6% receive some type of Early Intervention. Monroe County has 9,075 children, with 6.6% receiving Early Intervention and Pike County has 2505 children with 7.6% receiving Early Intervention. Programs, such as CIU20's Early Intervention program increase access to quality early learning. Two families from Northampton County shared their children's success stories on the PA Promise for Children's website:



Team Effort for Spencer

Thursday, September 1, 2011

For seven year old Spencer, communicating his wants and needs wasn't always easy. When his parents took him for his two year old well visit, they knew something was terribly wrong. After some persistence on their part, he began receiving Early Intervention Services and Supports like speech, OT and special instruction in his home. This is when things began to change for Spencer and his family. When his family relocated to Northampton County, he received his Early Intervention Services and Supports through IU 20. He attended a specialized setting for two years, receiving a quality education by caring staff who worked diligently to help Spencer attain his goals and begin communicating. When it came time for him to transition to a school-aged program, his entire team, including his Provider 50 services, felt that it would be to his benefit to receive his Early Intervention Services and Supports in his typical preschool. Through their efforts, Spencer was able to take the skills he had learned and generalize them to his typical setting with peers his own age. With this careful planning and team effort, he flourished and began to develop friendships and use the more than 8,000 words he now has thanks to quality early intervention services and supports. His family is so grateful for the team efforts, support and help Spencer and his family receives the care and services he needed!!! They credit this effort with the fact that he is now in first grade and is now 96% integrated with his peers!!!



Molly's 110% Improvement

Thursday, September 1, 2011

Molly is a kind, loving little girl whose family sought help from the pediatrician when she wasn't walking by age 19 months and did not have much language. She began receiving services at home and her parents felt that this was a step in the right direction. When her parent continued to be concerned about her lack of attention and focus, they had her evaluated by the IU 20. They took her to specialists who stated that Molly would benefit from quality Early Intervention Supports and Services. They feel that the care and concern of the staff helped Molly improve, "110%" and believe that this assistance has improved both her social and academic skills. They said the staff was always willing to help and showed great concern in meeting her needs. Molly is now getting ready for kindergarten this fall and more ready for the experience thanks to Early Intervention Supports and Services!!

Act 89 Remedial Program Off to a Moving Start

BY JANIE A. HECKER, Supervisor of Auxiliary Services

After a Supreme Court decision in the 1970s declared that publicly provided school services may not be provided in religiously based schools, Colonial Intermediate Unit 20 offered Act 89 (nonpublic) services in mobile classrooms and trailers. In the 1990s, the Supreme Court reversed that decision and declared that these services may be offered within religiously based schools with conditions that insured separation between church and state. When services are offered within the school, it results in more instructional time and increased safety for students and richer collaboration with the school staff. An effort to find in-school spaces for our remedial classes in trailers has been an administrative priority for the past five years.

The summer and fall of 2011 brought both planned and unplanned moves for the remedial teachers. Rachel Agzigian's classroom at Notre Dame Elementary in East Stroudsburg moved from a trailer at their former site to a classroom in a renovated former middle school on the Notre Dame High School Campus a few miles away. When Our Lady of Hungary, Northampton consolidated with Christ the King School, Coplay, Susan Raub's classroom moved to a new location down one floor. Christine Leitgeb's classroom at Our Lady of Perpetual Help School in Bethlehem Township moved to a newly renovated space on that school's lower level. At Holy Infancy School in South Bethlehem, worn inefficient furnishings were replaced with space efficient furnishings which, while in the same location, necessitated Denise Mazar to move all her equipment and materials from the old to the new.

The unexpected moves resulted from the heavy rain that we received from Hurricane Irene and tropical storm Lee. Two instructional trailers began emanating an intolerable odor when moisture leaked into the insulation between the exterior and interior walls. Envirahealth, an air quality testing firm, confirmed that these trailers should no longer be used by children or adults. At Notre Dame of Bethlehem School, Kathy Bossert moved her classroom into the school. This scenario was repeated when the Act 89 classroom was moved by Rhonda Levine into Sacred Heart School in Bath. When it appeared that all moving was finished, word was received that Seton Academy in Bethlehem has offered space for Mary Ann Bennett's Act 89 classroom to move from a trailer into the school in the next few weeks.

The Act 89 staff would like to express special appreciation to Ted Mitchell, along with Bill Holden, Flo Huth, and Keith Schlamp of the Intermediate Unit custodial staff for their hard work in moving countless boxes, equipment and furniture over the past few months.

For more information concerning CIU 20 Programs and Services, visit our website at www.ciu20.org or contact:

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SMARTInclusion: The SMART Thing To Do!

BY MICHELLE DAVIS, *Training and Consulting Staff*, and MARC BERNSTEIN, *Supervisor of Special Education*

Interactive whiteboards such as SMARTBoards and Promethean Boards are just two examples in a line of many new technologies in the classroom that promote increased engagement and motivation for students. These tools take classroom activities to new levels by allowing students and teachers to interact throughout the lesson. However, these interactive whiteboards require students to be able to walk up to the board and select items using their hands, fingers, or specialized pens to interact with them. For students with physical disabilities, direct selection is not an option.

In an effort to provide access to the SMARTBoard for all students, including those with physical disabilities, the Assistive Technology department, in conjunction with the Special Education department, at IU 20 is beginning the SMARTInclusion project. This project is modeled after a similar project that has been running with great success in Canada (<http://smartinclusion.wikispaces.com>). For students with physical disabilities, sometimes the only option to interact with the computer is to use a switch paired with a switch interface connected to the computer. They also can only interact with certain software that allows for scanning and switch access.

"The SMARTBoard is a great first step," commented Candy Wingate, an IU physical support teacher at Northampton Senior High School, "but if we could take it a step further by letting each child interact individually with the SMARTBoard by using his or her communication device, or a scanning tool activated by switch, they could be much more engaged in the learning process." Presently, many of the students need to rely on others to make use of the SMARTBoard, but ideally each student can access this

technology independently. "In our classroom at Northampton we are lucky to have such a great group of peer helpers to aid our students," Candy Wingate reflected, "but we hope that with the introduction of new technology, our students can become as independent as possible."

The SMARTNotebook software that allows the SMARTBoard to work via touch is not switch accessible. However, there are other programs that can run in the background that allow for students with physical disabilities to use switch access methods. Some of those software programs include Classroom Suite and Clicker 5.

The IU Assistive Technology department, Michelle Davis and Joana Spinelli, approached the Special Education department and the Technology Department to conduct a needs assessment on the physical support classrooms and determine what existing technology could be used and what additional pieces were needed. The overall purpose of this assessment was to determine how we could work to increase each student's access to their learning and improve their ability to interact and communicate regardless of their physical needs. The project expanded from Candy Wingate's class in Northampton to include 5 more physical support classrooms. The support of the Special Education Department's Director, Dr. Gail Vogel, and Supervisor Marc Bernstein, has been critical to the management

and implementation of the project. We all look forward to the potential learning value this project creates for our students with disabilities.



IU Physical Support classroom teacher Candy Wingate teaches a lesson using the SMARTBoard.

Pigs, Pancakes and PHP

BY GINA CASELLA, *Mental Health Treatment Specialist, Resolve*

During the past year, the Liberty High School Partial Hospitalization class has had the therapeutic focus of changing the perception students have towards individuals in authoritative roles as well as shifting the building administration's perception of the students themselves. Friday afternoons are utilized as an opportunity to build relationships between the students and their building principals.

On Wednesday, September 28th, 2011, the students took their relationship-building activity to a broader perspective, reaching out to the community. The staff and students invited the daycare children from across the hall to their classroom for a pancake breakfast. The daycare children were invited to listen to the Liberty High School building principal, Ms. Moore, read "If You Give a Pig a Pancake" to the class. The students from the Partial Hospitalization class then made pancakes for the daycare children, the administration, and Liberty High School Resource Officers.

The focus of this activity was to build relationships within their home school and decrease anxiety as they transition out of the program. The hope is that by building bridges between the students and school administration, the students will be met with greater successes upon returning to their home school. Along with relationship-building, the students also identified that reaching out to the community made them feel good about themselves and helped them build well-needed self-esteem which will carry over into their personal and academic lives. The students expressed that these activities have allowed them to view authority figures in a new light. It has also begun to break down the stereotypical walls that were previously built, giving them a sense of a fresh start moving forward because, as we all know, if you give a pig a pancake, anything is possible.

New Superhero Program Excites Emotional Support Students

BY ANN MARIE MARCHESKI, *Special Education Teacher, Paxinosa Elementary School*, and JENNIFER MURPHY, *School Psychologist, BCBA*

The Emotional Support Classes at Paxinosa Elementary School began the year with the introduction of a new Social Skills program called "SUPERHEROS." The students were thrilled to discover that videos, comics, and Superhero characters are all part of this new program.

Superheroes Social Skills teaches critical social skills that all children need to interact appropriately, develop and maintain friendships. The curriculum enhances social competence for students in Kindergarten to 6th grade and was designed specifically for high functioning children with Autism Spectrum Disorders. The evidenced-based curriculum uses a multimedia approach to instruction that includes a DVD component with fast-hands animation where the Superheroes come to life right in front of the students, a video peer modeling component where student watch peers modeling the appropriate social skills, and a comic book component that reinforces the skills being taught.

The ES classes reviewed Superhero rules and received Scooter cards. Scooter cards are given during the group to motivate the students to learn and follow the group rules. The cards are placed in a clear container and at the end of the group, one is randomly drawn. This student becomes the "Superhero of the Day." The student receives a sticker to wear for the day that recognizes them as the "Superhero." The "Superhero of the Day" also gets to spin a spinner which selects a reward for that day. This week everyone received a snack.

Good luck to everyone who is participating with this new program. I hope your students enjoy SUPERHEROS as much as ours.

Colonial Academy Students Use Art to Support a Cause and Remember a Teacher

BY SEAN LeDONNE, Supervisor of Special Education and MELISSA OWENS, Autistic Support Teacher



Josh Bowman displays the students' work before it is glazed and fired.

An event that started out as a fun summer activity for students in Ms. Melissa Owens' extended school year program turned into an opportunity to support animals in the local community and remember a teacher for his work. This past summer, students participated in an art activity that benefited a dog walk fundraiser for the Pocono Animal Welfare Society (PAWS).

Mr. Louis Squillace, an Art teacher at Colonial Academy, offered his instruction and provided the materials to teach the students how to make clay bowls. He would then dry and fire them to complete the process. After seeing the success and enjoyment on the student's faces, the teachers decided to embark on a new undertaking. The clay bowls made by the students would become pet bowls to be sold at the PAWS (Pocono Animal Welfare Society) meet and greet events. The money raised from the sale would then go to the society to help support animals in need.

Because the bowls were such a big hit at the events, the class decided to continue the project. PAWS held a dog walk at Tobyhanna State Park on September 24, 2011, and advertised that any

business sponsors who donated over \$50 would get a bowl customized with their name made by the students in the Pocono Mountain West High School's Autistic Support class. The water-filled bowls were lined along the walking trail displaying the sponsors' names.

Due to the unexpected and unfortunate passing of Mr. Squillace, completion of the bowls was put on hold. Without his assistance, the students and staff were faced with the dilemma of how to complete this activity on time. With support and assistance of Ms. Bohm, an art teacher at the Pocono Mountain West High School, they found a way. The general education students enrolled in her class were kind enough to put their personal projects aside and help the students in the Autistic Support class. Twenty bowls were sponsored through business donations and needed to be created. With no time to spare, the bowls were completed on time to be presented at this charitable event. In remembrance of Mr. Squillace, a moment of silence was held in his honor. He was remembered for donating his time and his talent to both the students he worked with and this charitable cause.

Revolutionary Thinking . . . Makes A Difference



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For information regarding this statement, or special accommodations, please contact Mr. Anthony Pidgeon, Director of Human Resources and Research Services, Colonial Intermediate Unit 20, 6 Danforth Drive, Easton, PA 18045-7899, (610) 252-5550, TDD/TTY Hearing Impaired (610) 252-3786.