



THE TWENTY



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

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Colonial Intermediate Unit 20

January 2010

Executive Director's Message

BY DR. CHARLENE M. BRENNAN

The Twenty for January

One of my personal goals as Executive Director of the Intermediate Unit 20 is to create understanding of the intermediate unit, what we are, how we operate, and how we can assist our school districts.

Over the past four years we have worked to communicate much more clearly about what we do for you and the children and families you serve. We are embarking on two important new initiatives that I believe will improve, to an even higher degree, our efforts to create understanding.

First, we are working on a cost-effectiveness study, modeled after work that Chester County Intermediate Unit 24 has done. We are taking our largest programs and analyzing our costs vs. those of other providers to demonstrate our cost-effectiveness. One outcome of our initial work in this area is how much "value-added" service we provide to you compared to other providers. We do so much more work for you and provide much more service for you than most providers do for the same investment.

Second, we are working on an electronic Orientation to Colonial Intermediate Unit 20. We are planning a 4 or 5 part series delivered to our superintendents and school board members in local school districts using an electronic application called Elluminate. You will be able to participate from your home and interact with us.

We are excited about these initiatives and hope they demonstrate our commitment to transparency in everything we do. If you have any suggestions on things that you would like to see in the orientation to the IU or other communication vehicles, I'd welcome your input. Please contact me at the intermediate unit office 610-515-6402 or cbrennan@ciu20.org.

DID YOU KNOW . . .

Not all nonpublic schools eligible for Act 89 services are run by religious denominations. CIU 20 also serves schools like Gateway School in Bethlehem, which tailors the curriculum for learning disabled students, and The Growing Concern in Tannersville, which is a Montessori school.

Resolve Behavioral Health Services Holds 5th Annual Family Fun Night

BY MIKE MATLOCK, Coordinator of Therapeutic Activities
SOBEIDA RAMOS, Resolve Support Associate

On November 4, 2009 the Resolve Behavioral Health Services Department held its 5th Annual Family Fun Night. What started as a casual get together for families to meet the staff and administration of the Resolve Department, has turned into a night of fun activities and delicious food. Families were able to leave behind the day-to-day monotony for a few hours and enjoy an evening of fun. This year's Family Fun Night was a huge success, as over 200 students and family members attended.

The purpose of the Family Fun Night is to strengthen the relationship between the school program and the home. If this linkage remains strong, services are better coordinated, the family's input is more easily obtained and incorporated into the treatment plan, and the services are ultimately more effective.

At the Family Fun Night, families were treated to hot dogs, beef barbecue, salad, and baked ziti. Families also got to enjoy many delicious desserts prepared by the Resolve staff. Brownies, cupcakes, popcorn, and cookies were all served. The students and families even had the opportunity to design and make their own candy apple.

After dinner, families were able to spend some time with one another, joining in one of the several activities that were planned. Pumpkin-decorating, a movie, face-painting, and bingo were offered. The families also enjoyed creating a family mural by drawing pictures of their families and attaching them to a background. Most of the families took part in at least one of the activities and enjoyed spending time with one another.

Many thanks go out to all who donated food and time for this event. Without their help and generosity, Family Fun Night wouldn't have been such a success.



Corey Otto (Stroudsburg Area School District) and Tyra Caudill, Resolve Provider 50 Wraparound Facilitator, enjoy Family Fun Night.

Provider 50 Program Hosts FBA Trainings

BY KEN SMITH, Treatment Coordinator for Provider 50 Services

CIU 20's Provider 50 program will be hosting, on an ongoing basis, Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) Trainings for P50 staff from both CIU 20 and surrounding community agencies. Each of these three 12-hour trainings will take place during the evening hours in order to accommodate the day-time work schedules of individuals. CIU 20 has three Bureau of Autism Services (BAS) certified trainers that can provide the BAS-approved training curriculum.

As of July 1, 2009, this particular curriculum is required by the BAS for all Behavioral Specialist Consultants (BSC) providing services to children and adolescents diagnosed on the Autistic Spectrum. The Provider 50 Program has had two of these trainings over the past 12 months. These trainings are free of charge and open to the public but are designed for practicing BSCs. Trainings are generally held in the summer, fall, and spring, and are posted on the CIU 20 and CPETracker websites.

In order to meet the BAS requirements for active BSCs, attendees must pass the certification exam provided at the end of the three-evening training. Make-up exams are offered to those who do not pass the first exam. For those who do not pass the makeup exam, a retraining on the entire 12-hours of content is required along with retaking and passing the certification exam. For the three previous trainings conducted by the CIU 20, each session has averaged about 25 participants consisting of IU employees and surrounding district and community behavioral health agency personnel. Act 48 hours are offered for all training sessions and a certificate is issued for those who pass the final exam.

Contact Ken Smith, Treatment Coordinator for P50 Services, at (610) 515-6469 with any questions regarding the FBA training.

CIU 20 Offers Programs on Development Skill Sets by Age Level

BY BOBBIE PINCKNEY, Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services

Over the last decade, CIU 20 has noticed an increase of referrals of children entering kindergarten with below average skills in fine-motor and sensory motor development. Due to this trend, the CIU 20 Occupational Therapy (OT) Department has developed and implemented programs to address fine motor, visual motor, gross motor and sensory motor developmental skills.

Current research supports the development of programs to provide more consistent implementation of these developmental skills to enhance student ability. Training is provided by the OT staff upon request to regular education teachers in the elementary schools to help them identify prerequisite skills needed by students for higher level learning and to assist students in acquiring these skills.

Programs offered include:

- *What Constitutes a Good Occupational Therapy Referral?
- *How Does Your Engine Run?
- *Handwriting Without Tears Approach
- *Handwriting Not Just in the Hands: Foundations for Learning to Write
- *Strategies to Advance Fine Motor, Visual Motor and Sensory Processing Skills

For additional information, please contact Bobbie Pinckney, Director of Pupil Personnel Services at 610-515-6451.

Colonial Academy Supports Student in Time of Need

BY THE COLONIAL ACADEMY PARTIAL HOSPITALIZATION TEAM

Each new school year begins bright, encouraging, and full of hope, so it was particularly tragic when a member of the student body at Colonial Academy experienced the loss of his beloved mother very early in the school year. This painful event could have set a tone of loss and grief for everyone for the year, but instead, this is a story of hope against all odds.

Upon learning of the loss, the classroom students and staff immediately became a cohesive and supportive group that offered compassion and sympathy to their fellow classmate. They also used the opportunity to talk about their own grief histories and how their loss had and perhaps still impacts them today. They were able to share how they blamed themselves for the loss of their loved one and how they had to deal with feelings of depression, despair, and even suicide. Typically these feelings may have led to expressions of inappropriate behavior. Instead, the class spent numerous group sessions discussing grief and loss, sharing information that had previously been too difficult to express. Throughout this process, the class got closer to one another, joined together as a supportive unit, and consequently, supported each other from outside influences such as bullies or other negative influences.

The class discussed at length how to support their peer. The previous year the student body had conducted a fundraising event for another student who had lost a parent in a tragic accident. This year, the students decided to do a gift-card-raising campaign. The response was astounding. The students and staff at Colonial Academy raised \$752.60 for the student. He was presented with gift certificates for grocery stores, restaurants, diners, and a department store. This project could not have been achieved without the full consent and support of the administrative staff at Colonial Academy and the CIU 20 main office.

The student was very appreciative. He wrote the thank-you note below:

"I would like to thank all of the Colonial staff and students for helping and supporting me and my family through this tough time. It means so much to me and my family that so many people care. You are all great people. Straight up, it's so hard to lose someone that means so much to you. My mother was a wonderful person. She was a great mom who had always been there for me and my brother, thick and thin, and all of my friends, and will be tremendously missed. Thank you so much for being there for me and helping us. I couldn't be more thankful."

Our students, time after time, surprise us with their strength and courage. We are very proud of them.

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

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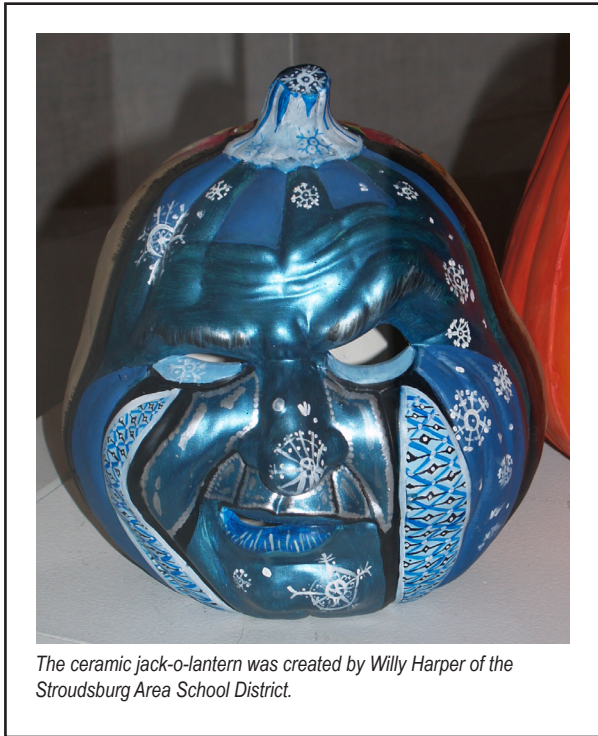
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Colonial Academy Students' Art Showing at Allentown Art Museum

BY TIM GLICK AND LOUIS SQUILLACE, Art Teachers

The Allentown Art Museum exhibited the Colonial Academy students' art for community viewing from November 11 through November 29, 2009. This was the second annual exhibit that was held at the museum. Once again, it was a huge success. The Allentown Art Museum worked with CIU 20 and Colonial Academy in a number of projects. They believe in supporting future artists and promoting new young talent while helping to inspire and build the confidence of the students. The art on display was created by students from Colonial Academy, CIT, and Partial Hospitalization classes from Palmer Elementary, Asa Packer Elementary, Pleasant Valley Elementary, Farmersville Elementary, and Moore Elementary Schools.

On Sunday, November 15, a reception was held at the museum to celebrate the opening of the exhibit. Approximately 70 people, including the students, their families, teachers, and administrators, attended and joined in the celebration of our students' creations. The Culinary Arts program, under the direction of its Chef Instructor, Mr. Dario Chavez, made and served food that could be classified as art in itself.



The ceramic jack-o-lantern was created by Willy Harper of the Stroudsburg Area School District.

Over 100 pieces of art were on display at this year's show. On display was a selection of traditional artworks, which included Chinese art screens and scarecrows, made for the Peddlers Village contest, which had been featured on the Channel 10 News broadcast in October. Some students studied Pop Art and relief sculptures, while other students focused on the wonderful world of ceramics, freeform, and fantastic mold creations with a professional glazing technique.

Therapeutic focus in the areas of art production, art history, art appreciation, and art criticism is stressed for each piece that is created. The Colonial Academy Art Program is a vital component in the rehabilitation of students. Throughout this project, the students participate in a prosocial manner in a community atmosphere and benefit from learning about culture and their future vocational aspirations in the artistic community. This is a positive experience for the students' self-pride and self-esteem and celebrates the successes of their art.

Thank you to all team members who helped make this year's show a success.

Act 89 and Title I Services Extended to More Kindergarten Students

BY JANIE HECKER, Supervisor, Auxiliary/Nonpublic School Services

In the past, nonpublic school students were not considered for remedial services until they struggled in reading skills for a portion of first grade. Even then, parents were reluctant to send these children for "extra help" because they did not want them "labeled" as having a learning problem. Educators know that the earlier reading skill deficits are addressed, the sooner the student becomes a fluent, confident reader and that struggling with reading in the early years does not necessarily mean that the student has a disability.

Several years ago, the Act 89 staff sought to provide remedial services to students in kindergarten who were not able to demonstrate success with pre-reading skills. It was difficult to determine eligibility because an assessment was needed that would indicate that the student would fall behind his peers without remediation. The solution at the time was to use the Instructional Support Team (IST) process which looked at reading progress in the classroom curriculum. If the team, which included the parents, recommended remediation the student entered the Act 89 program. Only a small number of students entered the program through this process.

Beginning with the 2009-10 school-year, a number of our nonpublic schools began administering DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) a universal measure used to demonstrate student growth in the skills needed to become an effective reader. This measure is not specific to a reading series or arbitrary in design but measures where a child is on the continuum of skills needed by every child. It provides the classroom teacher with data that informs him/her what skills are mastered and what skills need instruction. It also identifies students who will struggle unless additional targeted instruction is received.

The data from DIBELS is now being used as eligibility criteria to place struggling kindergarten students in the Act 89 remedial program. The desired result is to address reading issues in an earlier grade in order to get the students back on a track and keep their motivation to learn to read high.

Early Intervention Receives \$215,000 in Grants to Promote Inclusion

BY BECKY ELLER AND ANN RIDER,

Supervisors of Special Education, Early Intervention Services

This school year the Early Intervention program was awarded three state grants to promote inclusion in community preschool and daycare programs. These grants focus on the areas of Behavior, Assistive Technology, and Inclusion.

The funds for these grants were awarded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, Pub. L. 111-5. The grants have afforded the Early Intervention Program the opportunity to reach out to and expand community early childhood programs and to further develop partnerships with Northampton Community College and the Bethlehem Area School District SPARK program.

With over \$215,000 in funding given over the next two years, the Early Intervention Program will be able to provide more supports and training to make inclusion a reality for more young children with disabilities. The Early Intervention program has been working towards more inclusionary practices following the state trends and legislation for the past few years. They are very pleased and grateful to receive these funds to continue to promote inclusion for young children in Northampton, Monroe, and Pike Counties.

Paxinosa Elementary Emotional Support Classrooms “Buddy Up”

BY ANNMARIE MARCHESKI, Teacher

On September 25, 2009 the Emotional Support (ES) 2 classroom of 3rd and 4th graders at Paxinosa Elementary School in the Easton Area School District put on a play entitled “The Gingerbread Man” for an ES1 classroom of 1st and 2nd graders. The ES 2 children worked on Fairy Tales during journal time throughout the month of September. Some activities they have completed for the Fairy Tales included Venn diagrams, sequencing, and story maps. They also made pig puppets, bear cutouts, castles, and they made up their own fairy tale. Then, the ES 1 class was invited to enjoy the project and to have some fun.

After the students enthusiastically performed the play, the children and their “buddy” from the ES1 class visited two “centers.” At the first center, they each had a chance to make a yummy gingerbread cookie face that they could take home. They used big, round cookies, icing for glue, and raisins for the eyes, nose, and mouth. At the second center, the children made their own gingerbread boy puppet so that they could participate along with the CD version of the story. Here, the children all worked diligently to trace the pattern, color, and decorate the gingerbread boy, carefully cutting him out.

The afternoon seemed to fly by, and the children in both classrooms all had a great time!



Left to Right: Kayleigh Cummings (Easton), Logan Knauss (Pleasant Valley), Kiree Davis (Easton), Tristan Zawick (Saucon Valley), Aaron Katinis (Easton), and Hahmeir Booker (Easton) show off their puppets.

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.