



# THE TWENTY

*This Month: Executive, Business and Human Resources Offices*



Volume 4 Issue 10

Colonial Intermediate Unit 20

June 2009

## IU 20 Virtual Town Hall Meeting Proves a Success

BY DR. CHARLENE M. BRENNAN, *Executive Director*

A "virtual town hall" meeting to provide IU 20 staff with an opportunity to hear updates from top administration and to ask questions was held on May 6, 2009 and was deemed a success by all those in attendance.

Using Elluminate, a type of webinar software allowing web-based meetings, Charlene Brennan, IU 20 Executive Director, and top administration met with staff online. All CIU 20 staff were invited to participate.

The webinar technology is an affordable and convenient method for IU 20 administration to reach out to its large staff, most of whom are assigned to work in classrooms in school district buildings over a 1,200 square mile area that covers 3 counties.

Dr. Brennan gave the participants an overview of current happenings and priorities at the IU, including an update on IU capital improvement projects and budgets. Top administrators participated as well and gave brief overviews of happenings in their departments. Staff were able to attend the meeting from their classrooms, offices, or home. If they had a microphone connected to their computer, they were able to interact with the central office staff directly. If they did not have a microphone, they were able to communicate and ask questions using a chat window.

The Early Intervention staff at the IU participated as a group as part of their regularly scheduled staff meeting. A representative from the professional union also participated and thought the format and technology used was very appropriate and beneficial.

For 2009-2010, a regular series of virtual town hall meetings will be held to provide valuable opportunities for staff interaction and input.

## Executive Director's Message

BY DR. CHARLENE M. BRENNAN

### The Twenty for June

Believe it or not, on Thursday, June 25, the staff here at IU 20 will begin our budget process for the 2010-2011 school year. The meeting is very preliminary but is important because we identify all of the data elements we need to put the budgets together.

As in all school districts we have been looking for ways to save costs. Although it seems like a simple thing, Tom Baileys, our IU technology director, did a complete review of the copiers we use at the IU and the leases we pay for them. With this one item alone, Tom was able to negotiate a lease with a single vendor that will save \$85,000 over three years. We are constantly looking for ways to trim costs without affecting services to students. And we will continue to doggedly pursue those types of cost-savings, among others.

In addition, we will be working on a board member orientation to the Intermediate Unit given all the new board members in our districts. It will be a multiple series that we plan to deliver virtually using a webinar format. That means that board members will not have to travel to the IU to attend a meeting that we know is difficult for them to fit into their busy schedules. We are excited about this new initiative and hope to have it ready for December 2010 when new board members will be seated.

Our goal is to communicate with you frequently regarding what the IU is, what services we provide, and what value you get for the money you invest with us.

If there is anything we can do for you in this current, difficult budget season, please call me at the Intermediate Unit, 610-515-6402. Have a wonderful summer.

## CIU 20 Capital Projects Moving Toward Completion

BY DR. MARY BETH BIANCO, *Assistant Executive Director*

The Colonial Intermediate Unit began the first of its three capital projects for the Central Office Building in April. The first, replacement of the roof, began on April 20th and is now complete. The final phase, completion of the "A" at the main entrance of the Central Office Building was completed last week.

The second and current project is the parking lot replacement. This project will be completed in three phases, the first of which is the rear parking lot near the loading dock. With some minor hiccups and several rain delays, phase one is now complete. Phase II involves the employee lot on the northeast side of the building. This is the largest parking lot and is



Individuals from Alan Kunsman Roofing & Siding, Inc., work on completing the roofing project at the CIU 20 Central Office.

expected to be the most time-consuming of the three. With this phase comes a redesign of the spaces and alignment, adding an extra eight parking spaces which are desperately needed. The replacement of the front lot completes Phase III of the project with the addition of replacement lighting and new space alignment.

Finally, with the third project we will replace the HVAC system beginning in the month of September. Preparation for this third and final project begins in August and completion is expected prior to January 2010. Bids are expected to be awarded at the June 24 Board Meeting.

# The CIU 20 Annual Strategic Plan Continues Toward Implementation of Goals

BY DR. MARY BETH BIANCO, Assistant Executive Director

In 2007, Colonial IU 20 created and began to implement a five year Strategic Plan to assist in focusing on positive growth. As a service agency, CIU 20's primary goal is to maintain an efficient, cost-effective means of service delivery while also serving the needs of employees.

The Strategic Plan contains five overarching goal areas, each led by Cabinet Level Administrators and implemented through team and committee work. This plan is overseen by a steering committee comprised of various Intermediate Unit, school district and vocational/technical school and university representatives.

A brief description of the progress made toward each goal follows.

**Goal 1: Student Achievement & Growth** is led by Dr. Gail Vogel, Director of Special Education and Dr. Jan Cunningham, Director of Resolve Behavioral Health Services. Accomplishments of this goal within the last year include a comprehensive curriculum needs assessment coordinated through the Resolve Behavioral Health, Special Education and Curriculum Departments. Through this collaboration, current curriculum was reviewed and needs identified. Mental health supervisors used research data to inform them of best practices in mental health and new, program specific, curriculum was purchased. Supervisors and site staff have been trained and supervisors are continually monitoring the fidelity of delivery through classroom observations. Training needs were also determined via surveys and an in-service committee was identified and meets regularly to develop trainings, training schedules and sites.

Further developments of this goal include data collection and analysis on the implementation of new curricula. Program supervisors are in the process of categorizing data they collect in order to identify and determine any additional data needs.

The **Communication** Goal, led by Kelly Pauling, Director of Curriculum, emphasizes increased communication throughout the organization and with our stakeholders. This is being accomplished through the use of a new CIU 20 Intranet site for employees; redesign of our public website for districts, parents and community; and a comprehensive marketing packet highlighting our programs and services. Through the use of our intranet site we have been able to increase communication to IU 20 staff. Our redesigned public website is in the final review stages and will provide easier navigation for users and contain many more links and information for the districts we serve as well as parents and community members.

In conjunction with the Technology Department, the Human Resources Department has been working to complete the HR section of the redesigned intranet site and public websites to further assist in communication to our staff and stakeholders. This effort is part of the third strategic planning goal, **Personnel**, led by Tony Pidgeon, Director of Human Resources. In an effort to attract and retain highly qualified employees, the redesigned website will contain highlights of all currently open positions prominently displayed on the front page. HR administrators

have also attended job fairs and student teacher seminars to address recruitment goals.

A new Human Resources software package has been purchased and employee data is currently being entered and verified. The goal is to launch the new HR system for Central Office staff within the next few months and further reach our field staff for full implementation in the fall. The current focus for the immediate future is the implementation of the new Human Resources System throughout the IU employee network.

In **Goal 4: Finances**, led by Hans Baltzersen, Business Manager, in conjunction with Executive Director, Dr. Charlene Brennan, the group has redesigned the 'Budget Timeline' to provide more time for accurate budget development. This assists CIU 20 in working with constituent districts in helping them to budget for students in CIU 20 programs as well as our own directors in planning for programs for the following year. A three year trend analysis was developed and prepared for the current year and a process was developed for collection and analysis of data required for budget development. A billing timeline was developed for major programs. Additionally, more informative budget estimates were included to show detail of how the estimates were developed.

As CIU 20 continues to reach out to various constituents, included is the creation, design and delivery of an annual new board member/new superintendent orientation to the IU through the use of current technology tools. Included will be accompanying text with examples to explain the template for cost analysis of IU programs.

The final goal, **Technology**, is led by Tom Baileys, CIU 20 Director of Technology. A major focus of the technology goals in the strategic plan has been the completed connection and testing of connection to the PAIUNet statewide network.

Technology has also prepared for the implementation of a Virtual Computer Lab through secured funding and acquisition of equipment and provided IU-wide Lightspeed anti-virus, anti-spam and content filter training for Network Administrators. Through the IU Wide Area Network, a Podcast Producer Server, Wiki Server and Blog Server have been created and hardware installed.

As CIU 20 continues to assist our districts and staff in the area of technology, an additional three year Technology Plan is being developed as a sub-goal of the strategic plan. Included will be the increased use of the Wide Area Network through the provision of additional services based on the needs of our constituents and expansion of Educational Technology initiatives.

Through ongoing evaluation and monitoring CIU 20 continues to strive to improve and refine services through the implementation of our goals.

For more information on the CIU 20 Strategic Plan, contact Dr. Mary Beth Bianco at [mbianco@ciu20.org](mailto:mbianco@ciu20.org) or 610-515-6406.



The new CIU 20 website hopes to provide easier navigation for the public, as well as students and parents, and school district staff.

For more information concerning CIU-20 Programs and Services, visit our website at [www.ciu20.org](http://www.ciu20.org) or contact:

### Colonial IU 20 Board of Directors

Mr. Kenneth N. Butz, President  
Ms. Sharon L. Spadoni, Vice-President  
Mr. Hans E. Baltzersen, Treasurer  
Ms. Dawn M. Miller, Secretary

### Colonial IU 20 Administrators

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## CIU 20 Celebrates Public Education

BY LINDSEY SMITH, *Coordinator of Professional Development*

On Tuesday, May 5, 2009 Colonial Intermediate Unit 20 celebrated public education by combining the annual Excellence in Education awards with the annual Merit Scholar brunch, into a dinner event celebrating the outstanding educational programs and students in Northampton, Monroe and Pike counties.

Approximately 200 guests including district employees and student honorees with their families; CIU 20 and school administration; board members; and distinguished guests including Representative Craig Dally; Charles Lewis, Legislative Aide to Representative Richard Grucela; and Gwen Stettler, Legislative Aide to Representative Mario Scavella gathered at the Candlelight Reception and Conference Center in Bethlehem, PA.

The ceremony honored students who achieved the status of Finalist, Semi-Finalist or Commended in the National Merit Scholarship Program, an honor bestowed upon the recipients who score in the top 3% of students nationally on their PSAT/NMSQT test. Students at the event introduced themselves to the audience and proceeded to explain their plans for the future. Additionally, honorees received a gold paperweight engraved "National Merit Scholar" and certificates of achievement from CIU 20 and their local legislators.

The Crystal Awards for Excellence in Education were also presented to recognize the outstanding efforts of educators, schools and community entities in public education. Awards were presented to seven entities in three categories based on the following criteria:

- **Category One:** This award is presented to educational programs or activities that integrate creative approaches toward providing highly effective teaching and learning opportunities.
- **Category Two:** This award is presented to educational programs or activities that are built around active engagement of parents, families, and/or the community in school efforts that strengthen or enhance student performance and schools' success.
- **Category Three:** This award is presented to a non-school entity that demonstrates commitment to supporting efforts to strengthen and preserve public schools.

Award winners in Category One included the Career Institute of Technology (serving Bangor, Easton, Nazareth, Pen Argyl and Wilson School Districts) for the program "Health Related Technology;" Smithfield Elementary School, East Stroudsburg Area School District, for the program "The World is Everyone's Home;" and Pleasant Valley High School, Pleasant Valley School District, for the program "Exploring a Whole New Mind in a Whole New Way."

Award winners in Category Two included Moore Elementary School, Northampton Area School District, for the program "Moore Bucket Fillers;" Nazareth Area Middle School, Nazareth Area School District, for the program "Student Led Conferences;" and Nitschmann Middle School, Bethlehem Area

School District, for the program "We Exceed (W.E.) Mentoring Program."

The award winner in Category Three was Families First for the program "Families First After-School Tutoring Program."

The ceremony featured a reception and dinner followed by remarks from Dr. Charlene M. Brennan, CIU 20 Executive Director and Dr. Angelo Senese, former superintendent and East Stroudsburg University Professor.



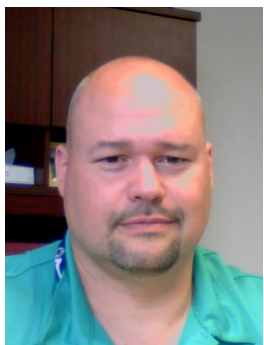
*Awardees from Nitschmann Middle School, Bethlehem Area School District pose with their award and some of their program mentors. Pictured are (back row, left to right) mentors Anita Shannahan, Norma Ferguson, Nancy Marsac, Dick Thompson and Fred Henderson. Pictured (front row left to right) are Samantha Sommer, Sara Hriniaik and Jacqueline Santanasto, Nitschmann Middle School Principal.*



*Colin Page and Michael Pierce, honorees from the Pleasant Valley School District, explain their plans for after graduation.*

## CIU 20 Welcomes New HR Director

BY DR. MARY BETH BIANCO, *Assistant Executive Director*



Introducing – Tony Pidgeon! The CIU 20 Central Office is pleased to welcome Tony Pidgeon as the new Director of Human Resources and Research Services. CIU 20 is pleased to have Tony on board full time in his new role and is sure that Tony is happy to be settled into this new position.

Tony has been employed by Colonial Intermediate Unit 20 for 17 years and served as an Adaptive Physical Education teacher and Crisis Intervention Specialist, as well as Assistant Principal and Principal of Colonial Academy. He is a graduate of East Stroudsburg University and his experience as a teacher and an administrator for the Intermediate Unit has helped prepare

him with the knowledge of our diverse staff. Tony's commitment to the service of our students and districts has already allowed him to become a leader in the realm of Human Resources.

Tony is married to Amy Pidgeon and has four boys between the ages of 2 and 12 who keep him very busy. In his spare time, Tony is actively involved with Special Olympics, golf and fishing with his boys.

The Central Office is pleased to welcome Tony and know he will do a fabulous job in this new position. We wish Tony all the best in his new role.

## “Flu Crews” Sponsored by EBTEP Vaccinated Over 2000 Employees in 2008

BY HANS BALTZERSEN, *Business Manager*

The Employee Benefit Trust of Eastern Pennsylvania (EBTEP) was established to allow school districts in Eastern Pennsylvania to pool their resources in order to self-insure employee benefits. The Trust currently has 11 member school employers—Colonial Intermediate Unit 20, Pen Argyl Area School District, Nazareth Area School District, Northampton Area School District, Bethlehem Area Vocational-Technical School, Career Institute of Technology, Delaware Valley School District, East Stroudsburg Area School District, Monroe Career & Technical Institute, Pleasant Valley School District and Stroudsburg Area School District. Annually, EBTEP sponsors the flu shot program for its member districts/schools and pays for it from the Trust's Interest Reserve Fund.

In 2008, as in the past, Colonial Intermediate Unit 20 offered the flu shot to all active CIU 20 full and part-time employees, all persons on waiver, those on COBRA and covered retirees (covered by CIU 20 Health Benefits). Dependents, substitutes and other hourly personnel also were offered the flu shot at a self-pay rate of \$15. In an effort to vaccinate more employees/retirees who reside and/or work in Monroe and Pike counties and reduce the length of wait times a second location was added at Colonial Academy in Wind Gap. The addition of this second site made this the most efficiently run flu shot campaign in years. In addition, CIU 20 utilized a new vendor, Wellness & Recovery Center from Belvidere, NJ to administer the vaccinations. The Wellness & Recovery Center offered a generous discount of \$15 per shot

with no on-site nursing fee. In total, 278 people were immunized at both the Colonial Academy on October 14 and the CIU 20 Administration Building on October 16. Of the 278 people immunized, 245 active, full-time and part-time employees, all persons on waiver, those on COBRA and covered retirees received the flu shot at no cost to them; \$3,675 was paid from the EBTEP Interest Reserve. Additionally, 33 dependents, substitutes and other hourly personnel received the shot at a cost of \$495.

In 2008, CIU 20 celebrated many successes with this program by offering the flu shot program at two locations, by scheduling it for October rather than waiting until November and by starting at 3:00pm rather than 3:30pm more individuals were able to receive immunization. CIU 20 looks forward to another successful program in 2009 with other quality improvements.

Pen Argyl, Delaware Valley, MCTI, Nazareth, CIT, BAVTS, Northampton, and East Stroudsburg also hosted their own flu shot programs. They consulted with Pocono Healthcare Management, Pocono Medical Center and HealthWorks, Lehigh Valley Hospital. These vendors charged \$20 and \$25 per shot, respectively, with HealthWorks charging an additional \$40/hour on site nursing fee.

All together 2,031 employees were vaccinated in nine districts/schools resulting in a total cost of \$41,975 to EBTEP. \$40,340 of this amount was paid from EBTEP's Interest Reserve account and therefore at no cost to the employees receiving it.

*Revolutionary Thinking . . . Makes A Difference*



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*For information regarding this statement, or special accommodations, please contact Mr. Tony 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.*