

### Students Learn Banking on “Community Day”

Last month, Ms. Judy’s Life Skills Class went on a Community Based Instruction trip to the Forks Branch Office of the Merchant’s Bank of Bangor. The friendly staff at the bank gave the class a tour, and they saw the bank vault where they store the dollar bills and coins. The students were also shown smaller, special safes called security deposit boxes where customers pay to keep their valuables safe.



Bank tellers shared their daily routine and showed students how the drive-thru banking tubes worked. The students were taken to the second and third floors of the building on the elevators and toured the offices where people work to help customers borrow money when they need it for houses, cars, businesses or school loans. They were also shown the computers where people work on security.

The students’ last stop was the bank’s board room where they were served donuts and drinks by some of the bank executives. They had a very educational visit and learned about what happens behind the scenes at a bank.



Ms. Judy and her class thanked their new friends at Merchant’s Bank, expressing how they appreciate their kindness to our students and staff. The thank you card they designed and presented to the executives of Merchants Bank is shown here.

### IDEA Pass-Through Monitoring Now Includes Site Visits

Part of the responsibilities of being a liaison between the Pennsylvania Department of Education and school districts and charter schools is the distribution of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) funds. These funds include funding for school age and preschool students. CIU 20 passes through \$10,325,949 of school age IDEA funds to school districts and charter schools and \$52,641 of preschool IDEA funds to school districts and charter schools.

CIU 20 monitors these funds through various means. Each school district and charter school is required to sign a Use of Funds Agreement and submit a Budget Worksheet of how the funds will be used.

In order for the school district/charter school to receive the funds they must complete a Reimbursement Request form and backup documentation. This backup documentation is reviewed to determine if expenses are allowable. CIU 20 requests the funds from PDE and once received are passed through to the school district/charter school.

Recently, CIU 20 has increased its monitoring of the IDEA Pass-Through Funds to include site visits. For each school district/charter school CIU 20 makes a risk assessment. Several factors that contribute to this risk are:

1. Does the school district/charter school receive a Single Audit?
  - a. Are these funds reviewed under the Single Audit?
2. Has the school district/charter school had staff turnover in the Business Department?

The goal of CIU 20 is to monitor each school district/charter school once every other year based on their risk assessment.

# Employee Benefit Trust of Eastern PA Welcomes Wilson Area School District



On July 1, 1983, the Employee Benefit Trust of Eastern PA (EBTEP) was formally created as a 501(c)(a) Trust. EBTEP was established with other educational agencies as a means to contain the rising costs of employer health benefits by self-funding their benefit programs.

For the first time in many years, EBTEP added to its membership. On January 1, 2016 Wilson Area School District joined EBTEP and is currently self insuring their medical and prescription benefits. Wilson joins current members, Colonial Intermediate Unit 20, Pen Argyl, Nazareth, Northampton, Delaware Valley, East Stroudsburg, Pleasant Valley, and Stroudsburg School Districts, the Bethlehem Area Vocational-Technical School, Monroe Career and Technical Institute, and the Career Institute of Technology. The membership consists of four members (Trustees) from each employer. These Trustees represent the professional and employee support groups, the School Board, and the central administrative staff. Alternate Trustees are also appointed to exercise voting rights in the absence of another Trustee.

The Trustees meet periodically during the year to review Trust operations and finances. The Trust operations and finances are overseen by staff of the Colonial Intermediate Unit 20. As part of their regular meetings, Trustees are required to review claim processing appeals from employees and decide their validity. All appeals are presented to the Trust on a Jane/John Doe basis.

All members currently are self-insuring their medical and prescription benefits. Capital Blue Cross serves as claims administrator for medical claims for members located in Northampton County. However, Highmark Insurance Company serves as claims administrator for medical claims for members located in Monroe and Pike Counties. Express-Scripts administers the prescription plans for all members. However, there are differences between the two plans.

The Northampton County School's prescription plan is a carve out plan separate from their health plan, through an agreement with the Mercer Collective. While the Monroe and Pike County School's prescription plan is a partnership between Highmark and Express Scripts. Some of the members chose to self insure their

dental benefits as well. United Concordia serves as the administrator for dental claims for Colonial Intermediate Unit 20, Northampton, Pen Argyl, Delaware Valley, East Stroudsburg, Pleasant Valley, and Stroudsburg School Districts and the Monroe Career and Technical Institute. Capital Blue Cross Dental serves as the administrator for dental claims for Nazareth School District and Bethlehem Area Vocational Technical School. Vision plans are provided to the Colonial Intermediate Unit 20, Northampton, East Stroudsburg, Pleasant Valley, Stroudsburg School Districts and Monroe Career and Technical Institute.

Rob Glus, Partner and Consulting Actuary, Conrad Siegel Actuaries, EBTEP Consultant has stated the following:

*"It is inherently a difficult task to ascertain the exact value of the healthcare consortium, as this depends greatly on the basis from which you are comparing the cost structure of the Trust. For example, are the savings compared to member schools being INSURED on their own, or self-funded on their own? Some of the savings can be achieved simply through bulk purchasing, while other savings is a result of being able to self-fund benefits and remove risk charges, and the Trust being able to accept more of its own risk."*

If we compare the Trust costs to all member districts being insured on their own in the marketplace, we estimate approximately \$13.5 million is saved due to the combination of self-funding, bulk purchasing of benefits, as well as the elimination of certain healthcare reform fees.

If we compare the Trust costs to all member districts being self-funded on their own, we estimate savings of approximately \$4.6 million due to bulk purchasing of TPA fees, prescription drug pricing and rebates, self-funding of certain stop loss expenses, and premium refunds achieved from the stop loss vendors. It also should not be underestimated that the Trust generates hard-dollar savings, while at the same time creating a more flexible and stable funding mechanism, which limits volatility in year-to-year costs for the member districts.



## Colonial Academy Students Compete in Skills USA

Three Colonial Academy students competed in Skills USA in early February. Although they did not receive any medals, we are proud of their accomplishments. Dan Long from the Pen Argyl Area School District is in our woodshop and he competed in the electric drill competition. Cody Bicking from the Northampton Area School District is also in our woodshop, and he competed in the circular saw competition. Finally, Shaylee Futrell from the Bangor Area School District competed in the culinary arts competition.



## CIU 20 Administrators Presented at the Pennsylvania Educational Technology Expo & Conference (PETE&C)

CIU 20 administrators Susan Kandianis, Ed.D., Coordinator of Educational Technology and Renee Harris, Online Teaching and Learning Consultant, presented at the state-wide Pennsylvania Educational Technology Expo and Conference (PETE&C) in mid-February. The topic of their presentation was Formative Assessment and they had over 100 session participants. The session focused on how assessing student learning is undeniably vital to student success, as it is the bridge between the teacher's lesson and student learning. Participants explored free online digital tools to integrate in the K-12 classroom and learned how classroom assessment can fundamentally transform teaching and increase student learning. CIU 20's next Formative Assessment workshop is scheduled for May 9, 2017. To register visit [www.cpetracker.org](http://www.cpetracker.org) or [www.ciu20.org/noncpetracker](http://www.ciu20.org/noncpetracker).



## CIU 20 to Offer Informational Sessions on PBS LearningMedia & Discovery Education Streaming Services

PBS LearningMedia and Discovery Education will be presenting information on their online resources to the Curriculum and Technology Director's job-alike groups on February 23rd. The purpose of this information session is for the Curriculum and Technology directors to come to a consensus as to which service they'd like the IU to support moving forward. Both services provide an abundant amount of resources that include videos, lesson plans, interactives, images, documents, teacher tools and content management systems. In addition, both PBS LearningMedia and Discovery Education are aligned to state and national standards.

## CIU 20 Offers Lower Rate for High Speed Internet for 2017-2018 School Year

The IU 20 Technology department has provided internet service to most schools in the IU 20 region for about a year and a half. We have been able to work with our vendors over this period of time to make sure that we are continually offering the best price and product. The negotiating process for next year just ended and we are happy to report that beginning July 1st, 2017, our internet cost will drop down to \$0.37/mbps! This is 63% less expensive than the original price at the beginning of the 15/16 school year. This price reduction allows our member districts to choose between a price reduction of their monthly recurring costs or an increase in their bandwidth for no additional expense.

The IU 20 Technology department provides a variety of other services in addition to internet service. Many of the services we provide are "back office" services, such as phone systems and service, firewall, content filtering, hardware / software acquisition, and help desk services. Providing back office services allows our schools to focus on the primary task of educating children, without having to worry about managing the infrastructure on the back end. If you would like to speak with us about your schools individual needs and goals, please contact Tom Kalinoski, Director of Technology and Operations, [tkalinoski@ciu20.org](mailto:tkalinoski@ciu20.org).



## CIU 20 Students Cheer On Super Plungers!

On Friday, February 17, students from CIU 20 traveled to Easton to cheer on the participants of the 2017 Super Plunge event, a prelude to Saturday's Lehigh Valley Polar Plunge to support the Special Olympics of PA which was held at Easton's Scott Park, along the Delaware River. On Friday, the super plungers jumped into the ice-cold water starting at noon, and then every hour, for 24 hours, in a pool set up in front of the Grand Eastonian Hotel & Suites. After the event, super plungers moved on to Scott Park for the final plunge into the river. We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone that donated at the CIU 20 Central office to support this great cause.



**COLONIAL INTERMEDIATE UNIT 20**  
 6 Danforth Drive  
 Easton, PA 18045-7899  
[www.ciu20.org](http://www.ciu20.org)



[www.facebook.com/ciu20](http://www.facebook.com/ciu20)



@ColonialIU20

For more information concerning CIU 20 Programs and Services, visit our website at [www.ciu20.org](http://www.ciu20.org) or scan this image with your smartphone!

