

THE TWENTY

Division of Student Services

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PaTTAN Offers Resources to Special Education Supervisors

Whether you are a novice or a veteran supervisor in the special education field, PaTTAN offers a unique program called The Pennsylvania Fellowship Program for Special Education Leaders for those looking to advance their knowledge and leadership skills in the field. Every year, PaTTAN chooses fifty participants across the state for this cohort.

The program is designed to give the participants the skills and leadership needed in order to successfully run a special education program that both supports the students needs and maintains compliance. Those involved in the cohort meet monthly in Hershey and spend one week in Bedford, Pennsylvania. All trainings are collaborative in nature and include PaTTAN consultants, PDE advisors, and peers. This year, the cohort is covering interesting topics such as: Current Issues in Special Education, Building Effective Special Education Infrastructures, Quality IEP Process, and Tapping Pennsylvania's Resources.

Participants also build a network of peers in the same field with various special education experiences and job titles. These peers can be very useful when you have questions or need an opinion.

Participants also complete a cumulative project related to one or more of the special education indicators. This project is then presented during the Special Education Leadership Academy at Bedford. Individuals can choose from a presentation or a poster session. If participants complete the program, they receive a certificate of completion.

Many supervisors throughout the IU and its partnering districts have participated in this program. Those interested in the program should visit PaTTAN's website for the application and requirements.



Reaching Out For A Cause . . .



The student interns in the Project SEARCH program at Kalahari Resorts and Conventions, located in Pocono Manor, had a very productive December. They were busy collecting non-perishable items brought in by Kalahari employees to be donated to the VALOR Clinic. The VALOR Clinic Foundation reaches out to Veterans that are in need of shelter, food, supplies, and access to healthcare. As Project SEARCH Intern Paige Barthold pointed out, *"The military veterans helped keep us safe, and this is a nice way to give something back to them in a time of need."*



Overall, the interns collected 228 items throughout the month of December. Right before the holiday season, the items were loaded up by the Project SEARCH interns and dropped off at VALOR. As he was loading up items to be delivered to VALOR, Intern Jair Lawson noted, *"It feels good to help others and hopefully get them through some tough times to find some stability in their lives."* Intern Mikai Walker added, *"We learned about the needs of people living in our community, and it's also important to support their cause."* It was a learning experience for all the interns and also a way of helping others in need.



CIU 20 Celebrates Autism Awareness Month



In celebration of Autism Awareness month, the CIU 20 Autistic Support Program wanted to share our exciting program updates, as well as share the accomplishments of one of our students. Joshua, a Stroudsburg Area School District fifth grade student, participated in his school's Spring Concert. He was able to welcome everyone to the concert with a speaking part, and sing and dance with his classmates. Jessica Porter, his teacher stated, "He stole the show" and "Many who know him and the struggles he has overcome teared up that night." Joshua was beaming with pride, and was congratulated on his stellar performance by many members of the audience. Joshua's teacher remarked, "As my team prepares to say goodbye to Joshua for his transition to middle school, this moment will forever stay with us." All of us at CIU 20 would like to congratulate Joshua, his family, and his classroom staff on all their hard work and accomplishments!



Our vision is to expand our family engagement by offering more family training, resources for families, and greater family involvement in our classrooms. As our program grows, we are always striving to better our supports and services for the students and families with whom we work.

With the Autism Initiative, we continue to partner with PaTTAN in order to provide more training to our staff on the use of evidence-based practices in our classrooms. For four years we have held the highly successful Monroe County Transition and Community Resource Fair, which helps our students with transitioning into adulthood.

Our mission at CIU 20 is to ensure our students and families find success in their schools and communities. During the upcoming year, we will work diligently to establish an even more positive and supportive educational environment. Through community partnerships, purposeful training for our staff and district members, and greater family involvement, we can help all our students and families reach their goals. By all of us working collaboratively with students, families, and districts, we can develop a united vision for all children with autism spectrum disorder to help them reach their highest potential.

Colonial Academy Brings the Farm to School (Part II)

Colonial Academy will be continuing our Farm to School initiative this Spring and Summer. Since the beginning of the school year, students have been working together to prepare, build, and harvest their own organic garden. This project has helped to supply our Culinary Arts Program with its own fresh spices, herbs, vegetables, and fruits.

The students of our Alternative Education Culinary Arts class, along with our Emotional Support students, have developed a multi-leveled Farm-to-Table Project. These students will continue the base work that was started in the fall by our Landscaping Arts team. They have worked strategically on planning the garden layout, seed selection, and soil preparation for this spring's planting. Students can choose from numerous work areas such as project planning, hands-on gardening, potting plants, seed tracking, menu planning, and back-of-the-house restaurant record-keeping.

Students will begin to plant all the seedlings for the coming season and will learn about seed germination using our greenhouse. The students are responsible for setting schedules for waterings, checking on the growth of the seedlings, caring for the seeds through the germination

stage, and planting the seedlings in the garden. Our Landscaping Arts students are using soil testing results from Penn State to establish proper soil PH levels for the gardening process throughout the spring. As the season progresses, students will work on the maintenance and expansion of what will be planted in the Colonial Garden.

When the harvest season arrives, students will have a chance to harvest many different types of herbs and vegetables, and transfer them safely to the kitchen. The harvesting provides students the opportunity to observe how foods ripen at different times. During this stage, students will learn how to clean, prepare, and account for the abundance of food items they will use in dishes, and create menus based on products that are ripe and available.

The students will see through the vast process that is involved in taking a seed to maturity to the presentation of meals. The multiple steps of the project give students freedom to choose from a variety of areas in which they can become involved, focusing on their strengths and allowing them to be introduced to the entire farm-to-table experience. This project is designed to be year-round throughout all seasons.

Two Local Superintendents Were Guest Readers in Honor of Dr. Suess's Birthday!

On Tuesday March 2nd, Brittany Riker's Life Skills Elementary Class at the Forks Township Elementary School was visited by two very special guest readers. The guest readers were Superintendent of the Easton Area School District, Mr. John Reinhart and Nazareth Area School District Superintendent, Dr. Dennis Riker.



The reason for the visit was to celebrate the 113th birthday of the great Dr. Suess. Brittany reported that her students were thrilled with the visit and greatly enjoyed their guest readers! Both gentlemen took turns reading *The Foot Book!*

Pen Argyl School District Student Wins Educational Achievement Award!

Kylee Diaz, an eighth grade student in Mrs. Hettel's CIU 20 Life Skills Support class at the Wind Gap Middle School, was nominated by Mrs. Hettel for the Educational Achievement Award through The ARC of Lehigh & Northampton Counties. On March 23, 2017 Kylee was awarded and accepted the Educational Achievement Award for the tremendous progress she has made in reading and math.

Additionally, she had previously won the Wind Gap Middle School Principal's Award for the first marking period highlighting her dedication to her academics. Kylee serves as the class Store Manager serving the entire school community. Furthermore, Kylee volunteers at a local hair salon to enhance her career readiness skills. Congratulations Kylee! We are extremely proud of you!



Pictured here from left to right are: Tricia Viglione, Director of Special Education, Pen Argyl School District, Kylee Diaz, 8th grade student & Educational Award Recipient, and Amy Hettel, CIU 20 Life Skill Support Teacher, Wind Gap Middle School

PDE Measuring School Climate

In May of 2016, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) formally kicked off a statewide initiative related to school climate. As part of this initiative, each of the twenty-nine intermediate units across the state were asked to nominate one person from their organization to be part of this effort. Due to the large number of schools in its assigned area, the Philadelphia Intermediate Unit was asked to nominate a second person, bringing the total number of professionals involved in this initiative to thirty. These thirty people, known as School Climate Regional Coordinators, are required to participate in a year-long training in the theory and practice of measuring school climate, and implementing school climate improvement efforts. The training consists of monthly webinars, monthly individual coaching sessions, monthly cohort coaching sessions, assigned readings and reaction papers, online learning modules, journaling, and a practicum experience. The training is designed to be intensive and comprehensive.

To support this effort, PDE has partnered with the National School Climate Center (NSCC). The NSCC is the recognized worldwide leader in defining, measuring, and engineering a healthy school environment. From their perspective, school climate consists of four domains: 1. Safety, 2. Teaching & Learning, 3. Relationships, and 4. Environmental-Structural.

Educators are often inundated with new initiatives, teaching approaches, and curricula. A convenient way to conceptualize school climate is that it is not "another thing on the educator's plate"; instead, school climate "is the plate". Every effort within a school (behavioral, academic, professional learning communities, etc.) sits on the "plate" of school climate. School climate is considered to be a foundational issue. If a school's climate is lacking, all other efforts within that school will fail to reach their true potential.

The School Climate Regional Coordinators are being trained in ways to measure a specific school's climate. When done correctly, the measurement of school climate becomes a "gap analysis". This type of analysis measures the gap between a school's vision and its reality. Understanding this gap automatically leads to a process of strategic planning.

The person representing Colonial Intermediate Unit 20 (CIU 20) in this effort is Ron Prator, Ph.D., LPC, BCBA. The two local schools participating in this initiative are Pleasant Valley High School and Pleasant Valley Middle School.

The impact of this project is potentially quite large. PDE is looking for ways to connect the measurement of school climate to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), teacher and school effectiveness ratings, Safe School programs, and School-Wide Positive Behavioral Support programs.

4th Annual Monroe County Transition & Community Resource Fair

On April 11, 2017, CIU 20, in cooperation with the East Stroudsburg University CILLS Program, held The Monroe County Transition and Community Resources Fair for individuals with disabilities and their families. The event was held at the ESU Innovation Center in East Stroudsburg, PA and was open to all families in Monroe, Northampton, and Pike Counties.



The purpose of holding the Transition & Community

Resources event was to share information about community services for individuals with disabilities, and specific services related to transition into adulthood. The intent is to help match individuals and their families with the services they need. Navigating services for adults with disabilities can be confusing and frustrating for anyone not familiar with this system. The event answers important questions for families:

- How do I begin to plan for my child's transition from high school?
- What is the difference between entitlement and eligibility?
- What are these agencies and services, and how might they help my child?
- What resources are available for me and my family?

New to the event this year were two break-out sessions designed to engage the attendees and provide valuable information to them. The first session, "Transition to Adulthood



- Parent & Student Perspective", was a discussion panel comprised of parents and their children who have experienced the difficulties of transitioning from school to adulthood. The session, "Inclusive Post Secondary Education" was hosted by representatives from Think College. It addressed opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities to be included in regular educational settings.

Vendors at the event were comprised of representatives from almost 30 federal, state, and local agencies, and local service providers, displaying their materials and providing information to over 70 attendees. Vendors included Community Agencies, Financial Support, Employment Support Providers, Adult Training Facilities, Day Programs, Residential Providers, Recreational Providers, and Transportation Providers. It was an excellent opportunity for all who attended to gather information and make connections, with the the ultimate goal of success in inclusive independent living, employment, and postsecondary education for all.



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