



educational excellence through leadership, partnership, and innovation

Executive Director's Report

March 21, 2013

NEWS

Preschool Partnership

Our preschool program will be partnering with Shippensburg Head Start program as they apply for a Pre-K Counts grant to serve 72 children from Big Spring and Shippensburg School Districts. This partnership would allow the CAIU to have integrated placements for students with disabilities in the program, allowing for greater inclusionary opportunities in that area.

Sad News about Sawyer, one of the Hill Top Academy Therapy Dogs

This week, Sawyer, one of our Hill Top therapy dogs, passed away rather unexpectedly at the veterinarian's office. Sawyer was 6 years old and was undergoing a surgery for removal of a growth. He was a friend, co-therapist and provider of unconditional love to adults and children at Hill Top Academy and in our classes since he was a puppy.

Preschool Space

We continue to look for appropriate space for four classrooms and therapy rooms for our preschool program in the West Shore area. We have not met with success in obtaining space in school districts and are looking for space to lease.

Summer Camps

On the CAIU Website under Resources for Families, is a listing of many summer camps that have programs for children with disabilities or siblings and friends. This has been shared with all district special education contacts as well.

Evaluative Conciliatory Conference (ECC)

At the February Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) meeting, Cathy Skidmore from the Office of Dispute Resolution presented to district special education contacts about a new resolution process called Evaluative Conciliatory Conference (ECC). This is an option for schools and families who are seeking a resolution to a dispute but who may not want to begin formal due process.

CAEA Announces 2013 Scholarship Program

The Capital Area Education Association (CAEA) is pleased to announce their 2013 Special Education Scholarship Program. This year, one scholarship of \$500.00 will be given to a qualified applicant. Applicants must either be seniors currently attending a high school in one of the CAIU member districts **OR** paraprofessionals currently working for the CAIU who are volunteer members of the CAEA. Applicants must plan to enroll or be enrolled in a program of study that leads to a degree in Special Education, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Audiology, Adaptive Physical Education, or School Psychology.



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High school seniors may obtain applications from their high school guidance counselors. Interested paraprofessionals should contact Patricia Benner at pdhannon@aol.com to request an application. Completed applications are due by April 15, 2013. Results will be announced in early May. Further information can be obtained by contacting Scholarship Committee members: Kathy Coffey, Cindy Shaul, Patricia Benner, Monica Edwards, or Janelle Paul.

New Charter Allows Show to go on for CASA

On February 26, Harrisburg School Board of Directors approved the charter application for the Capital Area School for the Arts (CASA) Charter School. The charter proposal was submitted by Capital Region Arts and Education, a non-profit organization founded in Harrisburg to support arts in education.

CASA, located in Strawberry Square in downtown Harrisburg, was formed in 2001 as a partnership between the Capital Area Intermediate Unit (CAIU) and its 24 member school districts to provide accelerated study for grades 9-12 in the areas of visual arts, dance, music, creative writing, theatre, and film and video. In its current model, students attend CASA for arts instruction and return to their home school district for the rest of their academic studies. In better economic times 17 of the 24 districts paid the full tuition costs for students accepted into the program. Today, only three remaining districts cover the cost of tuition, which is \$5,500 per year.

CASA Charter School will offer a full academic program for grades 9-12. Admission will continue to be contingent on portfolio submission and auditions.

Mobile Device Management

Mobile device (tablets/phones/etc.) utilization has been increasing in school districts. This has challenged school districts to find a cost effective and efficient way to manage the devices. The Technology Advisory Council (TAC) is exploring different regional management solutions. On March 7th, prior to the TAC meeting, districts evaluated three different solutions. We narrowed it down to two solutions and the CAIU is currently working on consortium pricing for our member school districts.

NOTIFICATION OF ACTIVITIES

- Attended Regional PAIU meeting in State College where we discussed the effects of sequestration on IUs, safety and security programs, the Governor's budget proposal and the pension plan revisions
- Participated in the Harrisburg SD Recovery Advisory Group meeting where we discussed methods to improve education for the students while addressing the budgetary concerns
- Attended PAIU Executive Directors meeting and met with PDE staff members and Budget Secretary Zogby. Secretary Zogby discussed the pension plan revisions and its impact on staff



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- Participated in the Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators (PASA) Women's caucus in preparation for the conference in May where we will have Dr. Cheri Lovre discuss, "Media Relations for Schools: Crisis Communications."
- Held the third Communications Meeting at Enola where we had 25 employees in the audience with an additional 25 online
- Attended the Superintendent Leadership Conference at Bedford Springs. The focus this year was on legal issues, teacher and principal evaluations, and summary of the districts' technology and staff development survey
- Attended the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) National Conference on Education in Los Angeles, CA. The title of the conference was, "Where Education Leaders Unite." One of the best presentations was from Charlotte Danielson on "Making the Most of Teacher Evaluation." She discussed her 2013 Evaluation Instrument that is available for free from her website.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

- The Pennsylvania Middle School and High School **Regional Computer Fair** will be held on Monday, **March 25, 2013** at the Capital Area Intermediate Unit (CAIU) from 7:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
- **Champions for Children 14th Annual Basket Bingo** will be held on **April 19, 2013 @ 6 p.m. at CAIU**. Prizes will include bags and baskets, and the event is featuring an exciting new bag vendor this year. Food and raffles will be available and held throughout the evening. This is a fun night out and for a great cause! Doors open at 6 p.m., bingo starts at 7 p.m. Adults only. Tickets are \$25 for 20 games of bingo.
- **CAIU Retiree and Staff Recognition Dinner** - The 12th Annual CAIU Retiree and Staff Recognition dinner will be held on **Thursday, May 16, 2013** at the Holiday Inn, Grantville.