

Executive Director's Report to the Board

January 22, 2009

News

After receiving reports from the superintendent co-chairs of each of the four on-line learning sub-committees, an overwhelming majority of Superintendents' Advisory Council members indicated their desire to engage in the on-line learning initiative as part of our broader regional effort to redesign high schools and fulfill our vision: *Engage, Achieve, Succeed: Options for Every Learner*. Mark Hennes is currently working with the Communications and Marketing sub-committee to schedule an evening for all district board members so they can learn about this potential on-line learning opportunity.

Don Smith from the Center for Safe Schools met with a newly reconstituted CAIU Safety Team on January 5 to provide an orientation to all team members on developing and implementing a safety and security plan. This Team will revise current plans and procedures and ensure that all CAIU sites are included. Currently, the CAIU also conducts regular meetings of the Workplace Safety Committee, which focuses policies and practices designed to reduce our workers' compensation premiums, and the Risk Management Team, which focuses on the Capital Area Adventures program. Members from these groups are serving on the overall CAIU Safety Team to ensure a coordinated effort.

Recent news coverage of the "Hill Top Puppies" has created a great deal of excitement and pride among Hill Top staff and students. The new logo for the school includes a profile of the black lab mascot, one of which gave birth last month to a large litter of both black and golden lab puppies. Local ABC news anchor, Valerie Pritchett, visited Hill Top Academy to see how Scarlet and her puppies help the students deal with their emotional and mental health concerns. A story aired on Thursday, January 15, and was repeated over the weekend.

The CAIU's Capital Region Partnership for Career Development Board of Directors hosted its annual luncheon for Superintendents on January 14, with almost all superintendents participating. District students who have benefited from the work of the Partnership were on hand to share their experiences. On a related note, the Partnership director and program coordinator will be moving from HACC to the CAIU in late January. *Many thanks to HACC for providing, without charge, office space for the Partnership during the past decade.*

Updates

The CAIU alternative work schedule pilot began this month. Curriculum Team members have commented how one clerical staff member with extended hours in exchange for one day off every two weeks has been a tremendous help in covering phones and visitors before 8:00 am and after 4:00 pm. The pilot ends on June 30 with an evaluation and decision to continue or abandon based on the results.

Negotiations with Comcast on the Wide Area Network are in full swing, with a deadline of January 31 for final resolution in order to meet eGrant requirements. District technology coordinators played a key role in achieving the reduction in cost and the doubling of bandwidth available for this next five-year contract with a new provider. The Technology Services Team is working with the current provider (Level 3) to ensure a smooth transition this summer. The WAN Utilization Committee has also met twice since being created by Dave Martin, CAIU Technology Director. This committee is comprised of both technology and curriculum specialists from our member districts and is working on maximizing the use of the WAN to provide the greatest return possible on the districts' investment in this service.

Capital Area Intermediate Unit

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Upcoming Travel:

- January 29-30 - Possibly going with Brian Griffith and Mark Hennes to visit an Ohio Educational Service Agency which runs Ohio's statewide on-line learning program
- February 18-22 – American Association of School Administrators (AASA) Annual Conference in San Francisco

Notification of Activities:

- Champions for Children Board Meeting – January 21, 2009
- PAIUnet Operations Committee/PAIUnet Council Meetings – January 8, 2009
- PAIUnet Project Management Team Meetings – January 5, 12 & 20, 2009

2008-2009 Standards and Goals

Standard 1: Policy and Governance

- Effectively works with board to monitor/develop intermediate unit policy
- Administers and supports policies throughout the intermediate unit (administrative procedures/guidelines)
 - Bullying/Cyberbullying policy reviewed at Cabinet and Leadership Team levels prior to first reading by Board

Standard 2: Planning and Assessment

- Utilizes or encourages the use of appropriate staff evaluation procedures, measuring for formative and summative purposes
 - Jason Conway, administrative intern, continues to work on the new evaluation tools and procedures for classified employees. He and I meet regularly to review his progress.
 - Modifications to evaluation forms used with professional employees to ensure the Team Directors review these prior to my review and signature.

Standard 3: Instructional Leadership and Student Performance

- Makes consistent efforts to observe classrooms to assure that the organization is fulfilling its mission
 - No activity this month.

Standard 4: Organizational Management

- Develops and implements operational plans and processes to accomplish strategic goals using practical applications of organizational theories
 - CASA Steering Committee – proposed the formation of a subgroup to recommend the future role of the Steering Committee; requesting planning grant from Council for the Arts
 - CASA – directed the appropriate staff to develop draft policy and procedures in determining use of CASA scholarship funds
 - On-line learning initiative – utilizing a formal committee structure including key stakeholders in coordinating this effort
 - Drafted action plans for two of four goals in the PAIUnet Strategic Plan, which were subsequently approved by the PAIUnet Operations Committee and PAIUnet Council

Standard 5: Communications, Board Relations and Community Relations

- Successfully builds intermediate unit-district partnerships that benefit students and staff

- Met with PDE Deputy Secretary Diane Castelbuono and Executive Deputy Secretary Tom Gluck to discuss a variety of statewide projects the CAIU administers on behalf of PDE
- Met with Secretary of Education Zahorchak, Deputy Secretary Harriet Dichter, and State Board Executive Director Jim Buckheit to begin collaborative effort on revisions to early childhood standards
- Met with Secretary of Education and Mayor Reed to discuss role of CAIU in working with Harrisburg School District
- Met with Dr. Dan Sheats, Susquenita SD Superintendent, to discuss a variety of concerns
- Met with PA Inspired Leadership Regional Coordinator, Dr. Mike Clemens, and PA Association of School Administrators professional development coordinator, Dr. Pat Crawford, to plan the Spring Superintendents' Leadership Conference scheduled for March 31-April 2.
- The CAIU Cabinet members met with Mechanicsburg Area School District's administrative team in the first of eight planned district visits this year to solicit feedback and input on CAIU's services. Mechanicsburg graciously hosted us to a working luncheon just before the Christmas holiday.
- Participated in a conference call with Dr. Linda Brewer, Derry Twp Superintendent, and CAIU Board Member Ellen Sheffey regarding the proposed change in health care provider
- Participated in the joint Superintendents'/Board Finance Committee meeting to discuss the 2009-2010 proposed General Operating Budget.

Standard 6: Professionalism

- Encourages board and administrative team to participate in professional development opportunities
- Continues professional development through coursework and/or conference attendance
 - Provided professional development session on CAIU finances to the CAIU Leadership Team

Annual Goal #1:

The Executive Director will improve student achievement by coordinating the development and implementation of a regional on-line learning solution.

- Met with the Superintendent Chairpersons for the online learning initiative on January 12 to finalize the pricing and committee recommendations for the January 14 SAC meeting
- Facilitated SAC meeting in which chairpersons reported and made recommendations to the SAC
- Communicated results of informal district survey so districts could budget appropriately pending formal approval to participate
- Met regularly with Mark Hennes, Special Projects Supervisor, regarding status of project, budget issues including eFund availability, etc.

Annual Goal #2:

The Executive Director will ensure that internal staff and external clients and stakeholders have multiple means of communicating and collaborating to achieve the CAIU mission.

- Made several more posts to website blog
- Met with Central Penn Business Journal staff on April publication focusing on CAIU programs and services
- See previous notes on district meetings with admin staff

Annual Goal #3:

The Executive Director will ensure that all CAIU staff and the students served by them in CAIU locations have a safe and appropriate environment in which to work and learn.

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- Held first CAIU Safety Team meeting with Don Smith from the Center for Safe Schools. He is currently reviewing our emergency plans prior
- Received notification of \$10,000 grant award for safe schools training for CAIU staff as well as member districts. The trainings are scheduled for May and June 2009.

Annual Goal #4:

The Executive Director will improve employee performance and satisfaction by implementing research-based approaches to supervision and evaluation.

- No specific activity this month.