



educational excellence through leadership, partnership, and innovation

Executive Director's Report October 22, 2009

NEWS

The CAIU Superintendents' Fall Leadership Conference was held from October 20-22. Topics for discussion included *Future Thinking*, *Act 93 Plans*, *Regional Special Education Strategic Plan*, *Standards-Aligned Systems and PVAAS*, and *Student Planning for Post-Secondary Success*. These leadership sessions allow the superintendents to share problems and solutions, develop and maintain good relationships, and generate ideas for future collaborative efforts.

The CAIU submitted a letter on behalf of most of our superintendents to the Independent Regulatory Review Commission regarding the problems inherent in the current proposed regulations governing high school graduation requirements. Specifically, the letter addresses the provisions for counting state-developed, end-of-course exams as one-third of a course grade, and assigning the score of zero to a student performing Below Basic on the tests. Both of these elements of the proposed regulations are considered by the vast majority of our local education leaders as inappropriate.

CAIU Board Member Nancy Fishman, PSBA's Tom Templeton, and I presented a session at the PSBA/PASA Leadership Conference on how the Executive Director selection and evaluation process undertaken by the CAIU Board several years ago contributed to a stronger CAIU Board of Directors. The breakout session was well-attended and well-received.

The PA Department of Education has expressed a desire to connect to the CAIU to gain access to PAIUnet and provide faster virtual service between school districts and PDE. That connection has now been secured, and as soon as servers and routers are properly configured, the connectivity should result in improved speeds for transmitting data and downloading video-rich files.

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS UPDATE – *The following accomplishments to date should be attributed to the leadership of our CAIU Team Directors and Assistant Executive Director working with our supervisory staff. Progress on our strategic plan goals is reviewed and updated monthly by the full CAIU Leadership Team.*

Goal 1: Enhance employee professional growth, development and satisfaction by revising employee supervision processes, evaluation plans, policies and procedures. (continued from 2008-2009)

- A draft of the newly revised Act 93 evaluation instrument has been developed, including a draft tool for conducting a 360 degree evaluation. Both tools are driven by the CAIU mission, and assess each administrator's qualities in "leadership, partnership and innovation," as well as the qualities we have previously associated with "educational excellence."

- Speech Supervisor Ann Bailets and Cindy Mortzfeldt are working together on the revision process for the Professional Employees' evaluation tools (known as PDEP for Professional Development and Evaluation Plan).

Goal 2: *Ensure a safe and secure environment for all students, staff and visitors by institutionalizing safety and security plans, policies, and procedures. (continued from 2008-2009)*

- The state-required memorandum of understanding is now in place with the East Pennsboro Township Police Department.
- The Pandemic Flu Plan draft is nearly complete and scheduled for Board review this month.
- Len Kapp will be seeking design specifications and costs associated with securing the various office wings in the Enola Office. As our location attracts more and more conferences, we need to ensure that student records and staff offices are inaccessible to the general public.

Goal 3: *Enhance data-informed decision making, operating efficiencies and end-user satisfaction by implementing new software and procedures associated with human resources, financial services and student information systems. (continued from 2008-2009)*

- The new Alio software is fully functional and being used in the business office and training is underway to move to the next phase with the human resources applications.

Goal 4: *Achieve fiscal stability through new, sustainable funding sources.*

- New clients have been secured for several services, including Internet, 48 CARATS, and PowerSchool.
- Several new districts and IUs have expressed interest in our Capital Area Online Learning Association (CAOLA). Supervisor Holly Brzycki and Brian Griffith are following up with each LEA.
- Several local districts are piloting AgendaManager.
- Additional agency connections to our regional wide area network (RWAN) are likely in the coming months.
- A new and improved version of our Marketplace Services booklet has been distributed.
- A draft plan for proposing and evaluating the viability of new products and services has been developed.

Goal 5: *Establish a culture of excellence through supervisor growth and development and consistency in practice to reflect our mission at work.*

- CAIU Leadership Team continues its book study using Leadership Courage to develop a common understanding of the CAIU philosophy regarding leadership expectations. This month we studied "Creating Positive Change."

Goal 6: *Integrate the next generation of technology solutions which demonstrate leadership, partnership and innovation at work in service to students.*

- Conference room upgrades in the Enola Office are nearly complete, with Smartboards in smaller rooms and new sound systems and simple connections to sound and video available in every room.

- A newly remodeled room for videoconferencing and broadcasting has been completed and will allow for many new services to be developed.
- Most staff computers have now been upgraded to Microsoft Office 2007.
- Several technology integration sessions have recently been conducted with district staff, utilizing the most current software solutions for virtual collaboration.

NOTIFICATION of ACTIVITIES

- Participated via videoconference with ten other IU sites in a session with PDE to identify the role of IUs in the state's application for federal Race to the Top funding. CAIU was the host site for the PDE personnel.
- Developed with Brian Griffith, Dave Martin and Mark Hennes, a draft template for statewide use by PAIU to submit proposals for applications to run on PAIUnet.
- Developed with PDE's Holly Jobe and PATTAN's Janet Sloand, a job description and qualifications for instructional coach mentors as part of my responsibility as a member of the PDE Coaching Collaborative Board.
- Attended the PSBA legislative delegate session (as an observer) at the recent PSBA/PASA Leadership Conference.
- Provided greetings and remarks at the annual Shippensburg University School Study Council Teacher Recognition Luncheon in my role as Shippensburg Council president. Several teachers from our member districts were recognized at this event.

Upcoming Activities:

- *Will serve as the opening and closing speaker for the Title I Parent Conference in northwestern PA on November 5*
- *Will be traveling to Philadelphia for the November 6-7 PAIU Executive Directors monthly meeting*