



educational excellence through leadership, partnership, and innovation

## Executive Director's Report January 28, 2010

### NEWS

Senator Jeffrey Piccola visited the CAIU on January 20 for a tour and to film a TV show about the value of IUs in general and CAIU in particular. The show will air in two, 30-minute segments on local cable channels in March and April. Highlighted programs included Deaf & Hard of Hearing, Blind & Visually Impaired, Capital Region Partnership for Career Development, professional development workshops, Regional Wide Area Network and PAIUnet, and application development. Senator Piccola believes that maximizing the services of IUs could generate greater savings for school districts.



The PA Association of Intermediate Units (PAIU) is now using CAIU's *AgendaMan*, with the Executive Directors getting started with it at their January meeting and the Curriculum Directors beginning to use it at their February meeting. Three intermediate units have already expressed an interest in using *AgendaMan*, with one in the pilot stage. NOTE: CAIU member districts receive a discounted price on this paperless meeting solution and collaboration tool created by CAIU application developers.

During the past month I have been involved in several meetings regarding the preparation of pre-service teachers. We are working with PDE's Bureau of Teacher Preparation and Certification and the PA State System of Higher Education to ensure that student teachers are well-versed in standards-aligned systems and research-based instructional strategies so that the acceptance of student teachers by a school does not adversely impact its ability to achieve AYP. This is particularly important as the Race to the Top initiatives are introduced which require student achievement to be a significant factor in teacher evaluation.

### NOTIFICATION of ACTIVITIES

- Agreed to work with a committee of PDE leaders on the first-ever Standards-Aligned Systems Institute for Higher Education, tentatively scheduled for late spring.
- Met with Charles Zogby, former Secretary of Education and currently serving as policy advisor to gubernatorial candidate Tom Corbett, on a proposal to partner with HACC to serve disenfranchised high school students.

#### *Upcoming Activities:*

- *Travel to State College on January 29 for monthly meeting with IU executive directors from the Central Region*
- *Meeting with Senator Piccola and his chief of staff, Dave Transue, on February 2 to discuss Harrisburg School District, his proposed legislation regarding IU*

*services, and potential funding support for CASA and the Partnership for Career Development*

- *Cabinet will begin its annual visits with District administrative teams next month. Scheduled for visits this year are: Big Spring, Camp Hill, East Pennsboro, Lower Dauphin, Millersburg, Northern York, South Middleton and West Perry*
- *I will begin my annual visitations to District Board meetings next month. Scheduled for visits this year are: Mechanicsburg, Middletown, Newport, Susquehanna Twp, Susquenita, Upper Dauphin and West Shore*
- *Minor surgery scheduled at York Hospital on Friday, February 19*
- *Meeting with Edison Learning in New York City on March 1 to expand on-line concept of district-based full-time cyber students to other states (all expenses paid by Edison Learning)*

**STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS UPDATE** – *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)**

- Act 93 and bargaining unit professional staff evaluations are the focus for this year. (Classified, support and paraprofessional staff evaluations were completely revised and piloted last year.) All evaluations focus on the qualities associated with achieving *educational excellence* as stated in our mission.

**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 CAIU safety team has been revitalized under the direction of Cindy Mortzfeldt. Progress continues in the areas of MOUs with local law enforcement, emergency planning, policy updates, AED guidelines, site visits for safety inspections, and staff development.

**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 first payroll run on January 15 with the new ALIO software was very successful. The HR and Business Teams continue to work on the rollout of new features for CAIU leaders and staff (on-line requisitions, expense reimbursement, etc.).

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

- AgendaMan continues to gain popularity, with the PA Association of Intermediate Units purchasing and using the solution with their job-alike groups. As a result, three IUs are currently working with the Technology Services Team on a pilot. CAIU member districts piloting are very enthusiastic and providing excellent feedback for future improvements.
- Schuylkill IU #29 has become a member of the Capital Area Online Learning Association and is utilizing the courses with their IU programs. Bermudian Springs SD, a CAOLA member from Lincoln IU #12 launched an initiative to bring back

cyber charter school students, and in during its orientation night for parents, immediately returned 3 full-time cyber students to their district mid-year.

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

- The Leadership Team continues to grow professionally through its continued book study using *Leadership Courage*. Each month the Team tackles a new chapter.

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

- With the completion of the Board Room upgrades, the conference rooms at the CAIU Enola Office are now equipped with state-of-the-art technology solutions to support interactive white board instruction, videoconferencing, and more.
- The CAIU continues to be the “go-to” meeting place for the PA Department of Education to accommodate videoconferencing with other intermediate units. The PA School Boards Association is also beginning to utilize the CAIU, with a videoconference scheduled between PSBA staff and Beaver IU #27 on January 30.
- Videoconferences with US soldiers in Iraq and the dog sledding team in Alaska have been very well received by our member districts. A videoconference with NATO is also on the schedule.
- District teachers in 20 districts are utilizing Moodle extensively, as well as wikispaces, for online collaboration and learning. Their efforts are supported by our technology integration specialists.