All-in/NEWSLETTER

Executive Director's Report | February 2024



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Our Mission

CAIU provides innovative support and services in partnership with schools, families, and communities to build capacity and model courageous leadership to help them be great. #BeGreat

Our Vision

Recognized as a trusted and influential partner in achieving life-changing outcomes in the Capital Area. #ChangingLives

Inside this issue

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On the Cover: A child received a new My Bike from Variety Kids at an event on Jan. 29 at the Enola location.



Do you have a story about staff or students living our values, being great, or changing lives? Share these successes via email for All-In or social media to communications@caiu.org.

Deadline for March All-In: Friday, Feb. 23



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5 Ways to Building 5 Belonging on Your Team



Dr. Andria SaiaExecutive Director

From the Executive Director's Desk

I have often spoken of the value of the feeling of belonging at work, and the positive impact it has on the staff, the team, and the organization, not to mention the students, families, and communities we work with. A feeling of belonging has been shown to lead to lower stress, increased job satisfaction and well-being, higher projectivity, and to be a positive contagion that impacts others.

While the work of ensuring everyone feels belonging is something I hope we all value, sometimes we may be unsure what to do to support the feeling of belonging for others. Below are five behaviors you can model; as you and others demonstrate these, it will create a community on your team that everyone will feel they are a part of.

Share Information Openly: This doesn't mean sharing information that is not yours to share or sharing information that will cause harm to others. Rather, this refers to information about how decisions are made, planning for the future, accessing resources, etc. Sharing information facilitates and strengthens peoples' understanding. Being "in the loop" is a key factor in feeling like you belong. Also important is to be vulnerable and share about yourself. The more a team shares, the more people feel a sense of belonging.

Share Credit Widely: When wins happen, share the credit out widely. It is rare that one person stands alone in a successful venture, particularly in our line of work, where working collaboratively is a key to our acomplishment. Give credit where it's due, and ensure that everyone knows that we win as a team. We also lose together, so that no one person is blamed, which allows us the saftey to be innovative and creative, failing if we must, and moving on together.

Create Rituals: Rituals refer to regular behaviors or actions that have meaning because they are shared – think of ice breakers, or the creation of

a brave space prior to a meeting, or the sharing of an acronym or chant. It is important that these rituals be shared with everyone on the team so that there is a shared understanding and they feel included.

Ask for Advice: When you need to make a decision, ask your team for input. Be willing to say you don't have all the answers. It shows vulnerability, which demonstrates your authenticity, and it also shows you value their input and more importantly that you value them. After a decision is made, refer to number one and share how the decision was made and why.

Model Active Listening: Tune into others when they are speaking; be attentive, make eye contact and engage in non-verbals such as nods and words of understanding. Ask follow-up questions and repeat back what you heard to confirm understanding. Active listening demonstrates that you value what they have to say and respect them.

Creating a sense of belonging is a not a once and done. In fact, as you engage in the behaviors described above you will make mistakes, lose focus and sometimes despite best efforts you will fail. When this happens, apologize and refocus. The better we get at demonstrating these behaviors, the faster people will feel like they belong, and the farther we will go as individuals, teams, and as an organization.



Financial Wellness Planning

PNC WorkPlace Banking

By Daren Moran, Director of Business and Operations

PNC WorkPlace Banking and the CAIU recognize that financial wellness planning is different for everyone. The new PNC Financial Wellness Achievement Center is here — a personalized tool to help you meet the unique goals of every financial stage of your life.

The PNC Financial Wellness Achievement Center is a customized online learning experience offered at no cost to you. You have the opportunity to learn more about the areas that mean the most to you through how-to videos, engaging articles, worksheets, and calculators.

PNC will also continue to visit the Enola office and is looking to visit a few of our sites. Keep your eyes open for them and take advantage of their expertise when you have the chance to meet them.

Ready to Start?

 Access the PNC Financial Wellness Achievement Center from any laptop, tablet, or mobile device by visiting https://financialwellness.pnc.com/pnc/caiu

Authorization code needed to sign up: WELLNESS2024

- Begin by clicking SITE TOUR to watch a short video that introduces you to the many features of the PNC Financial Wellness Achievement Center.
- 3. Next, select CREATE ACCOUNT and fill in the required information. A verification email will be sent to the email address provided during account creation and must be verified within 3 hours of its receipt. When your email has been verified you can log in with the username and password you have chosen.

HSAs: The Savings Plan With Tax Benefits

By Daren Moran, Director of Business and Operations

Studies show that when an individual has financial health, they experience greater overall well-being and bring their best selves to the workplace. As part of a continuous process to help educate staff on some of the benefits that they have at the CAIU, I wanted to take this time to remind everyone of the advantages of their Health Savings Account (HSA). If you are part of the CAIU's healthcare plan you probably know that you also have a health savings account, but do you know all the tax benefits of an HSA?

The IRS updates the maximum contribution amounts for HSAs yearly; for 2024 they announced record-high contribution limits. Individuals can contribute up to \$4,150 and families can contribute up to \$8,300, which is about 7% higher than in 2023.

Here are some practical benefits to contributing to your HSA:

- Pre-Tax Contributions: HSA contributions are taxdeductible, so they are deducted from your taxable income.
 This reduces your overall taxable income for the year.
- Tax-Free Growth: The funds in your HSA can grow tax-free through investments. Any interest, dividends, or capital gains earned within the HSA are not subject to taxation.
- Tax-Free Withdrawals for Qualified Medical Expenses:
 Withdrawals from the HSA are tax-free if used for qualified medical expenses. This includes a wide range of health-related costs, such as doctor visits, prescription medications, and certain medical procedures.

- Portability: Unlike Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs), HSA funds roll over each year. There's no "use it or lose it" rule, allowing you to accumulate savings over time for future medical expenses.
- Triple Tax Advantage: HSAs offer a triple tax advantage, so contributions are tax-deductible, the growth is tax-free, and qualified withdrawals are tax-free. This makes HSAs a powerful tool for managing healthcare costs while minimizing tax liabilities.

With inflation and the cost of practically everything these days, finding any extra money to contribute to an HSA can be very difficult, but every extra dollar helps. For staff who get excited about this kind of stuff, here's an example:

Annual income of \$50,000 and maximum contribution for an individual in 2024 of \$4,150.

Without contributing to an HSA: The entire \$50,000 is considered taxable income.

With HSA: Taxable income is reduced by HSA contribution. (In this case, \$50,000 - \$4,150 = \$45,850 is the taxable income.)

Without contributing to an HSA: No tax savings on contributions.

With HSA: Contribution of \$4,150 is deducted from taxable income. (If we assume a tax rate of 20%, the tax savings would be \$4,150 * 20% = \$830.)

In summary, contributing to an HSA can provide immediate tax savings through pre-tax contributions and potential growth over time. Additionally, qualified withdrawals for medical expenses are tax-free, making HSAs a tax-efficient way to manage healthcare costs.

Capital Area Adventure Therapy Team

By Beth Walden, MSW, LSW, School Social Worker

Last summer, a group of social workers and teachers were able to spend a week of in-service training playing outside! During our time with Adventure Therapist, LLC, the Capital Area Adventure Therapy (CAAT) Team learned how to assess student needs, create appropriate activities, facilitate initiatives, and process through the stressful/exciting/frustrating/ empowering emotions that come with engaging in adventure-based team-building activities. This team is a re-brand of the Experiential Educational Learning (EEL) Team that used to offer adventure-based learning to our students and stakeholders. The CAAT Team hopes to be able to use the skills we learned last summer and through various other in-service days over the course of this year to offer adventurebased therapy and learning opportunities to students throughout our programs. Research has found that students who engage in adventure therapy programs have higher success rates than students who only participate in traditional talk therapy programs.

Some of our students and staff are already benefiting from adventure learning days. Social worker Michelle Sholder was able to bring her middle school CAMhP class out for a day of canoeing and fishing. Michelle uses these adventure days to help reinforce the skills and lessons that she is teaching her students during their classroom lessons, just in a different format. Michelle reports from her last trip, "Students chose a goal: Be aware of your surroundings, leave no trace, and protect the habitats. I am happy to say they met all three goals. I was so proud to see them look around before casting their line to make sure they wouldn't catch a classmate. Getting outside in nature is a great catalyst to see our students in a different light. Some who struggle in the building are completely in their element and soar in the outdoors."

Here are some photos to highlight Michelle's class in action for their trips and the CAAT engaging in some adventure training during their summer in-service! Please stay tuned for when Adventure Therapy will be available for your classroom.











By David Martin, Director of Technology Services

Completing transactions at the gas pump, transferring money to family members through Venmo or PayPal, conducting online banking, making purchases on Amazon, downloading apps, and browsing the Internet – what ties all these processes together? They not only serve to simplify our lives, but they also involve the exchange or storage of information about us that holds significant value.

In this age of deepening immersion into the digital realm, it is imperative that we become acutely aware of the personal data being stored about us on websites and with organizations. To the bad actor, data is like gold, and often untapped gold that is in abundance, just ready to be mined. The increased use of technology combined with a treasure trove of data is why cybersecurity has become a topic of conversation in the country and across the globe.

School districts have a wealth of information stored on their servers, computers, and web applications that are necessary to operate both administratively and in the classroom. When the bad actors successfully infiltrate a school's network, they not only have the ability to lock the school out of its own systems, but they can also copy and sell any and all data the school has,

including students' social security numbers. That data is valuable because school-aged children have spotless credit. "Imagine being 18 and hearing that your credit was already ruined by a criminal who stole your personal information while you were in fourth grade," said Charles Reisinger in his testimony to the U.S. Senate on behalf of the Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA).

So, what can we do as school districts to protect ourselves? While there is never a guarantee that you will stop a bad actor from accessing your technology systems, the very first step is to adopt a set of standards to follow that help lessen your risk. The Center for Internet Security (CIS), a national organization composed of government agencies and companies, has developed a set of critical security controls to follow. The CIS Controls list prioritized actions that can be taken to protect your school from cyber-attacks.

In the 2021-2022 school year, the Capital Area Intermediate Unit



(CAIU) established a multi-year cybersecurity strategic planning goal. We worked collaboratively with our school districts to form the Capital Area Taskforce Protecting Against

Cybercrime (CATPAC). Since its formation, the CAIU CATPAC team has been working with the technology staff at the CAIU and the CATPAC member school districts to support them with the planning of cybersecurity best practices. Steering committees, representing CAIU and CATPAC member school districts, have been established to identify deliverables for our region. Subsequently, a roadmap is developed to accomplish those deliverables. We are currently taking some of these measures we have identified and completed and are working with other intermediate units and school districts across Pennsylvania to assist them in fortifying their networks.

In this age of deepening immersion into the digital realm, it is imperative that we become acutely aware of the personal data being stored about us on websites and with organizations.

Unfortunately, cybersecurity is something that is not going away and there is no "silver bullet" to protect your data. Taking the proper measures to secure your district information is a multilayered, ongoing approach that begins with educating yourself and your organization on the necessary steps you can take to increase your security maturity level in the current, technologyimmersed world. Fortunately, in our region, we have formed a strong cybersecurity consortium that is working collaboratively, following industry standards, and looking at opportunities for cost savings. As we continue on our journey, the objective is clear – doing what we can to ensure our staff and students have a safe and secure technology environment to learn in.

Districts Protected by CATPAC Will Receive:

District-specific, customized cybersecurity consultation

Regional procedures, policies, and processes

Vulnerability assessments

Monitoring and reporting

Disaster recovery

24/7 intrusion detection monitoring





Feedback Creates Action

Question: What is one change that could be made to make the CAIU an even better place to work, learn, or partner? **Engagement:** This exchange resulted in 58 participants sharing 48 thoughts and completing 1,020 ratings.

Two of the top themes that were generated from the feedback included having a focus on meaningful, personalized professional learning and impacting the retention of employees through meaningful recognition efforts. Below are ways that we are working to actively address those areas:

- Personalized Professional Learning: In January, a cross-departmental Comprehensive Professional Learning Focus Team was created to explore ways of integrating professional learning into all employment positions.
- Impacting Retention Through Recognition of Staff: (1) The CAIU is working to develop a comprehensive mentoring program to support new staff, (2) a cross-departmental Recognition Focus Team was created in January to identify meaningful ways to recognize our hard-working staff, and (3) each month we dedicate a section of All-In (found on page 11) to celebrating each other's compliments.

Thank you for your feedback. Please engage in our current ThoughtExchange survey by sharing and rating thoughts here. We look forward to reviewing the feedback and working toward continual improvement!

Situational Awareness

- Points2Ponder What does situational awareness look like for me in my day-to-day routines?
 - When I enter a building, restaurant, theater, shopping mall or store, do I familiarize myself with the exits?
 - In an emergency, most people will default to exiting a building the same way they entered.
 - What would it look like if everyone attempted to leave through the same exit?
 - Are you aware of alternative exits for the places you visit?



AND WE'LL PAY YOU \$2

*YOU WILL RECEIVE A \$250.00 REFERRAL INCENTIVE INCLUDED IN YOUR PAY (subject to applicable payroll taxes) AFTER THE NEW EMPLOYEE HAS BEEN SUCCESFULLY ONBOARDED.

CLICK HERE FOR DETAILS



Miggion Moments Moments

Kindness Matters

The elementary, middle, and high school Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) classes collaborated on a book-making project using a Student Treasures Publishing book kit. The theme of the book is "Kindness" and each class went through the writing process and prepared a draft of what kindness means with an accompanying illustration. The three classes then got together to create their final drafts. The manuscript was submitted to the publisher and a few weeks later, the books arrived. The students were thrilled to be published authors and show off their books!







Pretzels & Pies Event

Classes at Hill Top Academy worked together to fill the positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS) board in an effort to earn a school-wide reward. Hill Top's December school-wide PBIS Pretzels and Pies event had classes voting for the staff member that Topper, the school mascot, would pie in the face. The students in each class enjoyed eating pretzels while they worked together to create a pie that would then end up in the face of the staff member of their choice. Smiles and laughter filled the room with both students and staff enjoying the event.





Holiday Shop

We are grateful to sponsors Captial Area Online Learning Association (CAOLA) and HEIM Company who supported Hill Top's Holiday Shop this year. A special thank you to Kelly Herman who secured the sponsors and organized the event with the help of other staff contributions and support to make the Holiday Shop so special for our students. Students were given an opportunity to select gifts for members of their family. These gifts were wrapped and ready for the students to give to their loved ones over the holiday break.





Training and events

The Capital Area Intermediate Unit (CAIU) hosts numerous innovative events and conferences throughout the year. Our team of consultants, staff, and specialists values and supports lifelong learning.

All events and conference offerings are available in the <u>Frontline Registration System</u> or in Eventsforce.

Check out our <u>Events & Conference</u> page often to see what opportunities are available to you!

Here are some of our upcoming trainings:

2/27/2024 - <u>CAIU School Improvement</u> Team Workshop

Audience: Schools designated with a school improvement status - CSI, ATSI, TSI

2/29/2024 - Elementary Principal's Network

Audience: K-12 Principals, Assistant Principals, Deans of Students, or other building level administrators

3/1/2024 - <u>Understanding and Designing</u>
<u>Assessments for STEELS Performance</u>
<u>Expectations Session B</u>

Audience: Science educators K-12, instructional coaches, administrators, curriculum leaders

3/6/2024 - Navigating the Future: STEELS Secondary

Audience: Secondary Science teachers, administrators, curriculum leaders

3/13/2024 - ELD Networking (Virtual)

Audience: Any educator of Multilingual Learners

3/13/2024 - <u>Listening to Understand Series-</u>
<u>"Doing Justice to Social Justice Initiatives"</u>
with Jitesh Jaggi

Audience: Educators working with Multilingual Learners

Welcome New Hires!—ibeling @caiu



Kalie Arvey is a PCA at Hill Top Academy. She has 3 dogs: a Saint Bernard, a Yellow Lab/ German Shepherd mix, and a Great Pyrenees.



Stacy Bickel is a Part-Time Cafeteria Worker at Hill Top Academy. She loves animals.



Shayla Bloes is an El Service Coordinator at the Enola office. She and her family have an RV and travel as much as possible.



Joseph Gartner is a Floater Teacher at various locations. He enjoys traveling.



Yisenia Maldonado Ruiz is an EPP at Foose.



Jamie Matthews is an Occupational Therapist at Enola and CAELC. She is a proud mom of 4 daughters.



Sherisa Nailor is a Special Projects Supervisor at the Enola office. She and her family (3 daughters) own and operate a dairy farm in Mechanicsburg.



Jordan Nash is an EPP at Middle Paxton. She likes heavy metal.



Kyleigh Outlaw is an EPP at Follow Me. She has 4 snakes, 3 cats, and 2 lizards.



Brittany Ryan is a PCA at Susquenita Elementary. She collects gems and crystals.



Jeffrey Snead is a PCA at Hill Top Academy. He is a pool shark.



Rebecca Wetzel is a LPN/EPP at Cumberland Valley School District. She loves to scrapbook and take photos.

YOU'RE one of US NOW-

Compliment Corner!



Here at CAIU we like to brighten someone's day with a compliment. CAIU Compliments is a Capital Area Intermediate Unit initiative that allows CAIU staff the opportunity to share words of thanks, tout successes, or tell a story about what makes us great as an organization, our people.

PARTNERSHIP

April Amos, ANPS School Counselor

April was integral in helping me coordinate translation services for a family to help them through the mental health intake process. Without her help, the family would not have had a translator at the intake meeting. Thank you so much for all your help. You are amazing.

- Rebecca Slavinsky, ANPS School Social Worker

EXPERTISE

Aimee Sheva, ELD Specialist/Consultant

Aimee consistently shares opportunities for high quality professional learning with her colleagues. These opportunities have provided our team with enhanced knowledge of evidence-based practices for multilingual learners. Aimee is committed to learning more about the field of ELD and shares that knowledge with her peers. Many staff members (myself included) have benefitted from her expertise and seek her out for guidance and support. Aimee is a shining example of our value to #Be Great! - Sally Lopez, ELD Educational Consultant

SERVICE

Dave Rouner,

Maintenance Technician

Recently, I needed a lot of things out of the warehouse. Most of what I needed was stored in different places; some of it wasn't stored where it was supposed to be at all; some of it couldn't be found. Dave patiently helped me look for what I needed. Once we found everything, he helped me move it to one, central location. As if that weren't enough, he spent the next several days looking for the missing items, and when he found them, he brought them to my office. He went above and beyond to help me!

- Lauren Gross, Marketing &

 Lauren Gross, Marketing & Communications Specialist

DEDICATION

Olivia Dunlap,

Certified Occupational Therapist Assistant (COTA)

Olivia has only been in my classroom a short time, but I continue to be impressed by her dedication to the children whom she serves. She is dependable, creative, and upbeat. I am always happy to see her walk through our classroom door!

- Becky Boone, El Classroom Teacher

DEDICATION

Kristy Martin, SLP

Ms. Martin truly cares about her students. Watching her work with them during her rotation is inspiring. She knows each kids needs and likes and uses those so well in her sessions to help them grow in either their speech or use of their device. It is nice watching someone who has the best of the students at heart. Thank you for caring and being dedicated to your students.

- Janna Zentichko, EPP

PARTNERSHIP

Heather McCleaf-Royle, Program Coordinator -Student Services

Though Heather has transitioned to more of a Student Services role, she still continues to help Early Intervention when we are in a bind. In the past two days we rolled out a brand new process and I was sure I had messed something up. She took the time to help me look through what I had processed to make sure everything was okay. Her partnership saved me a lot of time and stress. Thank you Heather for being such a great partner and team member!

- Bridgid Wills, El Data Coordinator

DEDICATION

Allison Conrad, ELD Specialist

Allison shows dedication to both her students and peers. She has held consultation meetings with content area teachers in order to give them the data and supports they need to provide linguistically responsive instruction to their multilingual learners. In addition, Allison consistently seeks out resources to provide her learners with quality language instruction. Her students feel safe, valued, and challenged when they are in her classroom. Allison is highly committed to her students' emotional and academic well-being. We are fortunate to have her on our team!

- Sally Lopez, ELD Educational Consultant

PARTNERSHIP

Michelle Straw,

Service Coordinator - El

El is transitioning to moving B3 referrals to paperless. As the B3 coordinator this is a very large task to take on and change, but Michelle has done it with ease. She is willing to try anything and give feedback as needed. She has partnered with me to make the B3 transition to paperless go as smoothly as possible and has done so with a positive attitude. We have gone live and the first stages have gone very well. Thank you!

- Bridgid Wills, El Data Coordinator

SERVICE

Vita Arena-Herchelroath, Program Secretary at the ELC

It is always a pleasure to see Vita in the morning at the ELC. She greets us with smiles and generally cares. Not only is Vita a true valued member of our ELC staff, she is committed to making our job a little easier by offering support whenever needed. Vita is the BEST!

- Jackie Schubert, Speech-Language Pathologist

Farewell, Ketirus!

Lisa McCarty

is retiring after more than 28 years of service!

Julie Harman

is retiring after more than 20 years of service!





A fundraising event



APRIL 12, 2024

CAIU | 55 MILLER STREET | ENOLA, PA

Reserve your seat at **BIT.LY/3S8ZIP1**



CASH ONLY EVENT

Tickets: \$25/6 cards (3 extra cards may be purchased for \$5)

Event starts at 6PMDoors open at 5PM

HUGE PRIZES | FOOD | FUN



The Capital Goods Café, located in the CAIU Enola Office, offers up sweet and salty snacks, hot and cold drinks, and frequent Lunch Specials. The Café is run by students engaged in work-based learning to grow their job ready skills as they transition to adulthood. If you are in Enola, don't miss out on the opportunity to work with our students and purchase snacks, drinks or a delicious homemade lunch!

View the Menu



