



# BOARD MATTERS

## A Synopsis of the Chester County Intermediate Unit Board of Directors Meeting

The Chester County Intermediate Unit (CCIU) Board of Directors held its monthly meeting on Wednesday, September 18, 2019 at the Educational Service Center (ESC) in Downingtown, PA. Board members from Avon Grove, Coatesville Area, Great Valley, Kennett Consolidated, Octorara Area, Oxford Area, Phoenixville Area, Tredyffrin/Easttown, Unionville-Chadds Ford and West Chester Area school districts were in attendance and the following items were discussed:

### Items of Note

- Dr. Jacalyn Auris, director of student services introduced Dr. Anita Riccio and Sam Ewing, both assistant directors of student services who gave an overview of the student services division. Dr. Auris stated that one of the main roles of the division is to partner with school districts, both in-county and out-of-county who are presented with challenging student circumstances and create programming to help students succeed. She then highlighted a recent student success about a student, Kyle, who completed his 14<sup>th</sup> year at TCHS Pickering in June and through his experiences and the support of the staff at Pickering, just received paid employment at Donahue Hall at Villanova University. We received a letter from Kyle's father thanking us for helping his son achieve his success. Dr. Auris then turned the presentation over to Dr. Riccio and Mr. Ewing who highlighted some of our other programs created to help students. They highlighted the following programs:
  - Transition Pathways Program – This program serves 300 students every semester and is a community-based instruction program that helps prepare students to enter adult life by teaching them to plan for post-secondary education, employment and/or independent living.
  - Horticulture Program – This program is a pre-vocational program that provides students with instruction in all facets of the horticulture and landscape-gardening world. Some of the projects that the students have worked on is creating creative spaces at various locations, a Zen Wow Garden as a therapeutic space for students and staff at the CCIU Learning Center and Flower Power in which they create flower and plant arrangements to sell.
  - Social Emotional Learning (SEL) – This program is a way to support the whole child and equip students for success. Research shows that SEL can lead to improved academic achievement, employment, health and well-being. Through training, educators learn strategies that can be implemented in their classrooms, which create more supportive learning environments.
  - PREPaRE – This is a comprehensive training curriculum for school safety and crisis response. So far, 35 CCIU mental health therapists have completed training in the Keystone Crisis Intervention Team Training to assist schools and districts with support after a critical incident.
  - Question, Persuade and Refer (QPR) Program – 35 CCIU staff have been trained as trainers of QPR, which is a suicide awareness/prevention curriculum. Thus far and with the help of the Chester County Office of Mental Health, 3,100 9<sup>th</sup> grade students from Coatesville Area, Downingtown Area, Phoenixville Area, Octorara Area, Oxford Area and West Chester Area school districts have been given this training. In addition, there are 1,163 CCIU staff who have been trained.
  - Telepractice – This program began three years ago and has served 424 students. The program is an alternative to face-to-face therapies such as speech/language and occupational therapy, hearing and vision support and mental health counseling. The program serves students ages birth to 21 and continues to grow.
  - Verbal Behavior (VB) Project – The CCIU preschool special education department has participated in this project through PaTTAN for several years. The program is a very rigorous language program typically used with children with autism who have limited or no language skills. Ten out of 16 of our teachers have reached model status, meaning they are implementing the program with fidelity.
  - Remote Coaching – This program was developed to provide staff to remotely observe and provide feedback to teachers and related support staff. It allows staff to access highly-skilled

and trained coaches more frequently, while being able to schedule during critical situations. It has also saved money because it reduced travel time, cancellations due to illness and schedule changes.

## Student, Staff and Program Highlights

### Top Teachers List for 2019

- This past month, Main Line Today published their "Top Teachers" list for 2019. We are proud to recognize Mr. Jim Fusco, who was at the Board meeting, from our TCHS Brandywine as one of the teachers highlighted in the magazine. Mr. Fusco teaches Marketing and Finance and we congratulate Mr. Fusco for his efforts in support of the students of Chester County.

### Student Earns Eagle Scout

- TCHS Pennock's Bridge would like to recognize and congratulate Benjamin Arbaugh, a junior at Unionville and a student in the engineering and robotics program, on making Eagle Scout. Ben worked with the Kennett Food Cupboard to collect over 400 pounds of donated non-perishable items.

### Chester County College Fair

- The Chester County College Fair is scheduled for Monday, October 21 from 6:00-8:00 p.m. at the Exton Square Mall. Approximately 230 colleges and institutions and 5,000 students are expected to attend! The fair is open to the public and admission is free. Learn more at [www.cciu.org/College-Fair](http://www.cciu.org/College-Fair).

### CCIU Innovation Lending Library

- The Innovation Lending Library allows Chester County educators to borrow cutting-edge, innovative technology equipment from robotics to circuitry programming to virtual reality and more. The Innovation Lending Library has been used over the past year by nine out of our 12 districts, charter schools such as Collegium and PA Leadership Charter School, private schools like Saint Max and Saint Peter and Paul, as well as by the Child & Career Development Center, Brandywine and Philadelphia Virtual Academies and Technical College High Schools. The Innovation Lending Library has also created opportunities in and out of county for our consultants to provide workshops and trainings around and utilizing the many tools available as well as participate in co-teaching experiences. The Innovation Lending Library has also supported STEM Saturdays, STEM summer camps and STEM Day at CCIU and a Drone Challenge day for West Chester Area School District.

## New Business

The CCIU Board of Directors approved several contracts as part of the PDE funded Comprehensive Support and Improvement Grant, which assists schools in Chester County and the Commonwealth in their school improvement process.

## Personnel

The CCIU Board of Directors approved all recommended personnel action items, including routine terminations/resignations/retirements, nominations, changes in status, creation of positions, supplemental salaries and pay rates.

The next CCIU Board of Directors meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 16, 2019 at 7:30 p.m. at the Technical College High School – Pickering Campus, 1580 Charlestown Road, Phoenixville, PA. Additionally, prior to the Board meeting, we will be celebrating 50 years of providing Career & Technical Education in Chester County. All are welcome and the event begins at 5:15 p.m. at the TCHS Pickering Camp0us.