On Oct. 13, 2010, Auditor General Jack Wagner stated that the state’s flawed charter school funding formula is costing taxpayers hundreds of millions in additional tax dollars, at a time when the state is facing its toughest economic crisis since the Great Depression, and that there has been no leadership by the Department of Education, the general assembly or the governor to address this fiscal problem.

Wagner, a strong supporter of public education, was one of only two Democrats who voted for the charter school law in 1997. He released a special report on charter school funding last week and called for a moratorium on the creation of new charter and cyber-charter schools until the General Assembly and the Rendell Administration fix the flawed funding formula to bring equity to school districts, charter and cyber-charter schools and to taxpayers who paid an additional $225 million in tax dollars to school districts who lost students to charter and cyber-charter schools.

“As auditor general, the independent fiscal watchdog of the commonwealth, I cannot turn a blind eye to the inefficiencies in the way charter and cyber-charter schools are funded in Pennsylvania,” Wagner said. “My call for a moratorium signifies the importance of fixing a funding system that the state cannot afford to ignore and it is my hope that the call will hasten the state leadership to address this problem sooner rather than later for the sake of students, school districts, charter and cyber-charter schools and Pennsylvania taxpayers.”

Wagner’s call for a moratorium does not restrict a family’s ability to exercise its right to send its children to a charter or cyber-charter school. Existing charter and cyber-charter schools would still accept students and also have the ability to expand their school.

Editorial boards across the commonwealth have opined and agreed with Wagner that the charter and cyber-charter

Clarence Kegel Recognized for Work in School Law

BY PAULA WOLF

PASBO General Counsel Clarence C. Kegel Jr. has received the 2010 President’s Award for Distinguished Career Achievement in School Law from the Pennsylvania School Boards Solicitors Association. The award recognizes an attorney who has contributed to Pennsylvania school law; served the solicitors association with dedication; and worked for the common good of public schools.

“I was very honored,” Kegel said in a telephone interview. A partner with Kegel Kelin Almy & Grimm LLP, he was presented with the award at the association’s school law workshop at the Hotel Hershey on October 13.

In a letter to Kegel, solicitors association President Chris Mattie wrote: “Your achievements greatly exceed the criteria for the award.” He praised Kegel, a 1983 president of the association, with being “more than generous in sharing information and providing your insights ... on legislation dealing with tax reform and tax collection.”

An alumnus of McCaskey High School and a 1969 graduate of Franklin & Marshall College, Kegel serves on various boards and organizations and is active in the community.

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Leaders in school districts know all too well that a wide variety of stakeholders have different expectations and different measurements of success. It is, in fact, common for different stakeholders to measure organizational achievement in a variety of ways. For example, some school districts’ stakeholders measure achievement by how well we do at keeping taxes to a minimum (profit), while other external stakeholders measure achievement based on student test scores or accomplishments. The concept that stakeholders measure organizational goal achievement in a variety of ways makes the role of leadership critical.

Lafley (2009) stated that leaders are accountable to often competing stakeholders, which makes their jobs extremely difficult. There are four critical tasks that allow leaders to address diverse expectations of a variety of stakeholders: (1) Define the most critical stakeholders (for example, in school districts the most critical stakeholders are probably students), (2) Decide exactly what your core business is (for example, the core business of school districts is student achievement for all students), (3) Balance present goals with future goals (short term and long term goals) and (4) Shape and communicate organizational values and standards (what will guide decision making) (Lafley, 2009).

Based on the above discussion, it is critical for organizational leaders to manage and shape the expectations of stakeholders (Susniene & Sargunas, 2009). Susniene and Sargunas (2009) stated that most organizations focus on only one external stakeholder group at a time. A more effective approach to stakeholder management is to view them as interrelated parts and develop a comprehensive approach for management and communication (Susniene & Sargunas, 2009). It has been my experience that using this integrated approach to stakeholder management is critical to the success of public school districts.

Many school business officials are involved in their school district’s strategic planning process, which has a primary focus on a successful educational program. It is just as important for school business officials to work with other school district leaders to address, develop and implement a strategic plan for stakeholder management and communication.

One way for school business officials to manage the needs of stakeholders is to take a customer service view. Working toward win-win solutions with parents, staff and community members as well as community groups and municipalities often results in positive relationships.

School district business offices have many ‘customers.’ One of the main customers of the business office is the other staff in the district. The business office must function in a way that helps facilitate the entire educational process. The more the district can work together coherently as a team, the more successful the organization will be. Ways to facilitate this teamwork approach include developing committees to study the budget process and the efficiency of the entire district. The business office cannot hope to be successful if they work in isolation. Major stakeholders of the organization must be involved.

A strategic approach to developing partnerships in the community is one way school business officials can develop meaningful and successful relationships with external stakeholders. For example, at Southern York, we have a cooperative services agreement with the local YMCA, where we provide maintenance services in exchange for use of their swimming pool. This partnership has provided many more positive benefits than cost savings.

School business officials align goals to reflect a commitment to school district stakeholders. This approach can be taken in all aspects of school operations. A comprehensive and collaborative approach to school operations and school district stakeholders will provide many demonstrated positive outcomes.

A way to involve the community in important changes or decisions in the schools is through communication and soliciting input. The website, district newsletters, cable television and district events are excellent ways to inform and request feedback. An informed community is generally a more supportive community.

References:
ASBO recently celebrated its 100 year anniversary at the most magical place on earth—Walt Disney World in Lake Buena Vista, Florida. Disney World is known all over the world for its theme parks, which for over 25 years, has thrilled, delighted and exceeded customer’s expectations. The secret to Disney’s success has nothing to do with magic. The Disney organization is known for its well-trained, enthusiastic and motivated work force. Walt Disney was the ultimate storyteller, but he realized early in his career that dreams are not enough. He needed people to make his dreams a reality. The secrets to Disney’s success are shared with the rest of the world through the Disney Institute, which provides training in areas such as leadership excellence, people management, quality service, brand loyalty and inspiring creativity. It was only fitting that ASBO’s First General Session speaker was Austin Brock (yes she’s from Texas) of the Disney Institute. Ms. Brock demonstrated how to build a business through the art of storytelling.

According to Ms. Brock, storytelling can make a significant difference in how you communicate. Disney Institute has storytelling down to a science. The main components of your story must include your culture (both internally and externally) and your business practices. Your story should start with storytelling your culture. Every district is rich in its history. Conveying local traditions (especially if you don’t live in the district) along with a clear organizational identity is a must for any story. Every district has a unique culture and getting the culture right will build trust and support.

Another significant part of your story should deal with business practices. This is where you can strut your stuff or tell your readers how you will overcome your deficiencies. Business practices should start out with your year in review. For school districts, the year in review mostly relates to numbers. Don’t just include spreadsheets and call it done – make it memorable and very colorful with charts/graphs and clear and concise explanations. Make a point to tell how your district gives back to its community. Talk about how your district strives for continuous improvement and how you plan to do things better. If you made mistakes, admit to them, apologize and move on, but never rest on your laurels.

There are six elements of storytelling: structure, flow, dynamic tension, character, tone and mood. First, all good stories have a clear beginning, middle and end. Walt Disney always began his stories with “Once upon a time” and ended with “Happily ever after.” Your story also needs to move listeners through the following phases: set-up, action, outcome and the lesson. If one of the phases is missing, the flow of your story will be impaired. Dynamic tension is the energy that makes a story engaging (conflict, suspense, expectancy, completion and marketplace). Since we all live with dynamic tension every day, be very mindful of your intended readers.

A story that doesn’t have energy will never entice a reader to proceed to the end. A great story has great characters. The characters in your story must project elements of trust, values, passion, knowledge and sense of fairness. What better characters for our story than our students? Children will add an array of color and can be the glue that holds your story together. The tone of your story is very powerful. Tone can influence the listener in a positive or negative way. Your tone should be sincere, candid and transparent, pleasant, not condescending and truthful. Finally, the mood of a story will set the desired outcome. If the mood is inspirational, your listeners will feel uplifted; if it is motivational, you will get action and if it is transformational, you will get change.

Most districts develop ways to communicate their financial data to their constituents, but how effective is it? Are the colorful charts/graphs and columns of numbers easily understood by non-financial individuals? We are in challenging times and we need to look for more creative approaches in order to gain the support of our customers. Are you willing to bring clarity to your constituents or simplify how you interact with them? Are you ready to begin a new era of focused leadership that will inspire excellence in your organization? Disney’s approach to storytelling can be a model to emulate.

“All our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them.” - Walt Disney

ELECTION RULES

The following rules have been adopted by the PASBO Board of Directors and shall govern the 2011 election:

1. Information regarding a candidate will be published in PASBO Report prior to the election. No other information shall be published or distributed by the candidate.
2. Advanced mailings supporting candidates are prohibited.
3. Distribution of information about a candidate is restricted to what is prepared and circulated by the PASBO Nominations and Elections Committee.
4. Badges and stickers promoting a candidate are not permitted.
5. Hospitality rooms may not be used to support a candidate.
6. Exhibitors may not display or distribute information on candidates in exhibit booths, hospitality rooms or any other location during or prior to the conference.
7. Two copies of these rules will be mailed to each candidate to be signed. One copy shall be returned to the Chairperson of the Nominations and Elections Committee on or before January 14, 2011.
Here we are in November on the cusp of a newly elected Governor in PA and the possibility of newly elected legislators that could change the funding direction of educational institutions across the state.

Legislative uncertainty as well as fiscal stability will impact the ability of our schools and institutions to maintain the educational programs and successes we have achieved in the last eight years. The critical issues pending, (such as pension funding, substantial reduction in assessment valuations, employee contracts, loss of transfer taxes and interest income) create a perfect storm that could lead us to reduce educational programs that become more critical in these uncertain times.

Now, more than ever, we much seek an equal partnership between local educational institutions and state government in the funding of public education to ensure the future of our children. In our world of school finance we must continue to press our new governor and legislators to keep funding levels in education adequate and equitable.

Examples of the types of legislation for which we should lobby with our legislators will vary according to each of our regional areas. I offer the following suggestions to get you started on your legislative list of this critical path of funding levels that should be addressed:

- Legislate a proper sound and fiscally reasonable way to handle the current pension crisis
- Legislate and enhance the ability of school districts to appeal real estate assessed values to fairly equalize proper values of home and commercial properties that will stabilize our financial situation
- Legislate funding or remove unfunded mandates that draw down our district resources that could be used for local and regional needs to educate our students.
- Legislate the return of local school district rule to set a proper mix of local taxes to meet the needs deemed necessary by each school district
- Legislate full reimbursement of all actual costs for non-residential children who are placed in homes or institutions by the courts.

Each school district should add or delete items on this list with the types of legislative needs in their respective regions. These lists of legislative needs to support education are easily developed, however it takes the vigilance of all our educational institutions to make our legislative needs a reality. All PASBO members must be active to achieve the goals of financial stability in the midst of these most trying economic times.

We must also recognize that legislative action alone will not get this financial stability goal accomplished. We must continue through our PASBO committees to be creative in cutting local costs while maintaining quality educational programs in our schools and institutions.

The task I place before our PASBO membership in this article are difficult and seemingly impossibly hard to overcome. It is for this very reason that our PASBO organization was instituted. Collectively we can overcome this legislative and financial uncertainty that looms in PA.

Embrace President Wayne K. McCullough’s theme: “Teamwork: Together We Are More Effective”

Congratulations to Wilkes Graduates!

Congratulations to the following individual who have earned their Master of Science Degree in School Business Leadership from Wilkes University.

SEPTEMBER 2010 GRADUATES:
- Randall Buffington, PRSBO, Facilities Manager, Southern York Co. SD
- Phil Martell, Assistant Business Manager, West Mifflin Area SD
- Doreen McCord, Accounting Manager, Pocono Mountain SD
- Christine Petrow, Financial Analyst, Downingtown Area SD
- Coleen Schrecengost Steim, Business Manager, Northern Westmoreland CTC

The Master’s Degree program is offered through a partnership between PASBO and Wilkes University. The degree program consists of ten online courses that address specific topics crucial for succeeding in today’s school business environment and are available for graduate or continuing education credit. For more information, visit http://www.pasbo.org/wilkesprogram.asp.

Online registration is NOW OPEN for PASBO’s Annual Conference and Exhibits! Go to: www.pasbo.org and click on the conference logo.
GOP in Control
BY JAY HIMES, CAE

The Harrisburg housing market will get a boost as a new administration descends on the Capitol. Governor elect Tom Corbett led a Republican victory parade that will result in GOP control of the Governor’s Office and both chambers of the General Assembly. The Republican sweep will return the GOP back to control of the House of Representatives. Republicans have been the majority in the House for all but four of the last 15 years.

The return of a Republican majority in the House may have been predictable but the number of seats that turned was surprising. Eleven of the twelve House incumbents who were defeated were Democrats. The only Republican defeated was former House Speaker John Perzel of Philadelphia. Republicans only lost one seat where there was no incumbent while retaining six seats and gaining four formerly Democratic seats. Republicans will control 111 votes—18 more than the Democrats and nine more than necessary to pass legislation.

The Republican victory in the House will mean a new chair of the Education Committee. The current Minority Chair is Rep. Paul Clymer of Bucks County who will be in line to replace Philadelphia Democrat James Roebuck. Senator Jeff Piccola from Harrisburg will assuredly continue as the Senate Education Committee chair.

Meanwhile it was status quo in the Senate. All seats were held by each party and the 30-20 Republican edge will be sustained.

Certainly, the speculation will soon begin on who will be named as the new Secretary of Education. The financial dilemma for education plus the Governor Elect’s pro voucher platform means the choice may likely be an outsider. Cutting school funding and leading a voucher effort may not be appealing to many educators.

PASBO Honored with EPLC Partner Award

On October 20, PASBO received the Education Policy and Leadership Center’s (EPLC) Partner Award at the 2010 EPLC Leadership Awards Reception, held at the Sheraton Harrisburg-Hershey Hotel. PASBO Executive Director Jay Himes, CAE accepted the award on behalf of the association.

PASBO has played a major role in EPLC’s policy forums, leadership and candidate workshops, finance symposiums and other major events throughout the past twelve years. PASBO staff and leaders have given their time to serve as speakers and panels for these events several times every year in all regions of the state. PASBO has also provided an annual scholarship for one or more PASBO members to participate in EPLC’s year-long Education Policy Fellowship Program. In addition, PASBO has played a major role on the Steering Committee and Management Team of the PA School Funding Campaign since its inception and has been a key partner to EPLC in all of the advocacy work to improve school funding in Pennsylvania.

Corbett and his Lt. Governor, Bucks County Commissioner Jim Cawley, will be staring into a fiscal mess when they transition to Harrisburg. The state budget is facing shortfalls from tax revenues and from the failed enactment of the Marcellus Shale extraction tax. On top of that the new Governor has taken a no new taxes pledged.

The next budget will also see disappearing revenues in the form of federal stimulus money. This combination of factors virtually assures that we will see the first reduction in Basic Education Funding (BEF) since 1975. The loss of stimulus money now in BEF is more than $650 million.

SCoRE Card
School Cost Reduction & Revenue Enhancement

Lancaster-Lebanon IU #13
Twenty-one school districts and the Lancaster-Lebanon IU #13 have formed a special education legal consortium. The consortium will grant access to an open, unlimited email forum for posting questions and answers related to special education legal matters. A regional legal firm has been contracted to host the forum. Savings are expected in expenses for legal fees and staff time. Contact: Gina Brillhart, CFO/Director of Business Services, Lancaster-Lebanon IU #13, gina_brillhart@iu13.org, 717-606-1766.

Erie City School District
The Erie City SD adopted an early-retirement incentive program for teachers, administrators and nonbargaining unit personnel. They are offering $5,000 a year for five years to individuals signing an irrevocable notification of intent to retire by March 31, 2011. Erie estimates that 46 staff members may benefit from this arrangement creating a savings of $1.2 to $1.5 million. If they do not fill those positions, the savings can rise to as much as $4 million. In a similar program, non-instructional employees will receive a one-time incentive of $5,000 for their irrevocable notification of intent to retire. Contact: Richard D’Andrea, Business Administrator, Erie City SD, 814-874-6000, ext: 6040. rickdandrea@eriesd.org

Carlisle Area School District
The district will save $170,000 per year on the expense side of the budget due to reduced electrical costs. On the revenue side, the district will now have a new revenue stream. This revenue will come from the selling of our SREC’s (Solar Renewable Energy Credits) generated by the solar array. We estimate that revenue to be $450,000 per year. The total project cost is $4.9 million. However, the district received multiple grants in order to accomplish this project. They received: $1 million DEP/ARRA grant; $950,000 DCED grant and $500,000 grant from PPL Act 129 funding. The total favorable budget impact is $620,000 per year. Contact: Thomas D. Longenecker, Director of Finance/Board Secretary, Carlisle Area SD, (717) 240-6800 x-16808, longeneckert@carlslseschools.org
School Funding Formula
Continued from page 1

The school funding formula is flawed and needs to be fixed.

Wagner’s report found that the funding problem was accelerating at an unaffordable rate, with taxpayers spending a total of about $1 billion a year during the 2008-09 school year. In that school year, just over $700 million was spent on charter and cyber-charter schools and about $225 million in reimbursements went to school districts, for approximately 73,000 children enrolled in Pennsylvania charter and cyber-charter schools, without knowing what it actually cost to educate a child in a charter or cyber-charter school. Consequently, taxpayers paid an additional premium payment of $3,122 per child to school districts for students who transferred to a charter or cyber-charter school.

In addition, Wagner’s report found that 45 percent of charter and cyber-charter schools had a cumulative “reserve” fund balance exceeding 12 percent of their annual expenditures, the maximum allowable reserve percentage for school districts during the 2008-09 school year. In fact, the review found that the reserve fund balance percentages for charter and cyber-charter schools exceeding the 12 percent ranged from 13 percent to 95 percent of their annual expenditures. Moreover, Wagner’s report found that based on state law, school districts paid different tuition rates for students attending the same charter/cyber-charter school, resulting in some school districts subsidizing others.

Everyone would agree that the cost of educating a child at a bricks and mortar charter school is different than educating a child at a cyber charter, but the funding formula is the same, said Wagner.

“Ensuring that Pennsylvania students have the opportunity to obtain a cost-effective quality education is of the highest importance,” said Wagner. “As auditor general, I have taken decisive action to make education a top priority in my administration by completing various education-related reports, and I will continue to do so in the years to come to improve Pennsylvania’s educational system.”

Registration has opened for the 56th Annual Conference and Exhibits in Pittsburgh, March 15 – 18, 2011. The PASBO Education Committee, in coordination with the PASBO conference committee, has worked diligently to prepare a quality and “value added” professional development program. The currently planned conference sessions cover virtually each and every area of school business including facilities, food service, transportation and technology. Tips or best practices that you learn at the conference can easily payback to your LEA fourfold! Plus, the variety of networking opportunities provides an opportunity to talk with colleagues about how their LEAs are adapting to the current economic climate. Register early (before 1/31/2011) and online for a 5% savings off the base conference registration fee.

The 2011 conference has added value in that there will be a significant number of sessions that focus on the PASBO’s cost reduction and revenue enhancement best practices. Looking for clarification on healthcare reform or IT cost cutting strategies? Trying to get a handle on the new GASB fund balance classifications? Each and every session at the annual conference is guaranteed to pay dividends back to your LEA! Information on the session topics as of 9/30/2010 is available on the PASBO website under Annual Conference, then click on General Information. On behalf of the PASBO Education Committee we look forward to seeing you in Pittsburgh!

Mr. Malinowski is the Director of Business Affairs at Cheltenham Township School District and is a member of the PASBO Education Committee.

“Based on early projections, Conestoga Valley needs to trim $467,000 to have a balanced budget for 2011-12. But even such cuts won’t solve a longer-term squeeze being placed on the district’s finances by rising costs for teachers’ pensions, state limits on the district’s tax-raising ability and the lingering effects of a slow economy. It is rather sobering when you look into the future.”

- Kim Seldomridge, PRSBA, Dir. of Administrative & Business Services at Conestoga Valley SD; Intelligencer Journal Lancaster New Era; Oct. 19, 2010

It’s not too late to nominate a deserving member for the GARY E. REESER MEMORIAL AWARD!

Go to: www.pasbo.org/awards.asp and click on the link to the Reeser Award for criteria as well as the nomination form.

DEADLINE IS NOVEMBER 30!
Guidance Targeting Harassment Outlines Local and Federal Responsibility

White House to Convene Conference on Bullying Early Next Year

The Department of Education issued guidance to support educators in combating bullying in schools by clarifying when student bullying may violate federal education anti-discrimination laws. The guidance makes clear that while current laws enforced by the department do not protect against harassment based on religion or sexual orientation, they do include protection against harassment of members of religious groups based on shared ethnic characteristics as well as gender and sexual harassment of gay, lesbian, bi-sexual and transgender individuals.

The guidance, which comes in the form of a “Dear Colleague” letter sent to schools, colleges and universities, explains educators’ legal obligations to protect students from student-on-student racial and national origin harassment, sexual and gender-based harassment and disability harassment. The letter provides examples of harassment and illustrates how a school should respond in each case.

The White House and Department of Education also announced next steps to address bullying and harassment in schools. Early next year, the White House will host a conference to raise awareness and equip young people, parents, educators, coaches and other community leaders with tools to prevent bullying and harassment. This conference will build upon efforts led by the U.S. Department of Education and other federal agencies to spark a dialogue on the ways in which communities can come together to prevent bullying and harassment.

“We’ve got to dispel the myth that bullying is just a normal rite of passage, or an inevitable part of growing up. It’s not,” said President Obama. “We have an obligation to ensure that our schools are safe for all of our kids. Every single young person deserves the opportunity to learn and grow and achieve their potential, without having to worry about the constant threat of harassment.”

“Bullying is a problem that shouldn’t exist. No one should ever feel harassed or unsafe in a school simply because they act or think or dress differently than others,” said U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan. “To every student who feels threatened or harassed -- for whatever reason -- please know that you are not alone. Please know that there are people who love you. And please know that we will protect you,” Duncan continued.

“Students cannot learn if they feel threatened or harassed,” said Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Russlynn Ali. “We want to keep students safe and learning, and today’s guidance will help us do that.”

Following the release of this guidance, the Department plans to hold technical assistance workshops around the country in early 2011 to help educators better understand their obligations and the resources available to take prompt and effective steps that will end harassment and bullying in schools and on college campuses.

The guidance issued is just one of several efforts in the Department of Education’s comprehensive approach to end bullying. In 2009, the Department joined the Departments of Defense, Justice, Health and Human Services, Agriculture, and the Interior to form the Obama Administrations Inter-Agency Task Force on Bullying. In August of this year, the Obama administration hosted the first ever National Bullying Summit and launched both the Stop Bullying Now campaign and www.bullyinginfo.org, a national database of effective anti-bullying programs.

For more information about OCR and the anti-discrimination statutes that it enforces, please visit http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/aboutocr.html. To review the “Dear Colleague” letter, please visit: http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201010.html.

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Technical Instruction & Procedures

School Safety

Chemical Management in the School Environment

BY LISA BOLIN, CIH
Member, PASBO School Safety Committee

Schools use a wide variety of chemicals from maintenance closets to chemistry labs. When chemicals are not properly handled, they can put students and school employees at risk. Chemical incidents can disrupt the school day and present a significant liability for the district. In many schools chemical purchasing is initiated from various areas…from the facility engineer to the art teacher. Compliance with the Right-to-Know requirements mandates that Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) are maintained for most chemical products. Obtaining these sheets is only half the battle. Chemical acquisition policies are often lacking and staff may not have the expertise to evaluate the impacts of various chemical substances being ordered. In many cases safer options are available but never considered. Determining which product is “safer” is not a simplistic task as some “green” product manufacturers would have us believe. A chemical acquisition review process can help your organization assure that the materials being approved for purchase are reasonably safe and precautions are in place to minimize risk. A Chemical Review Program (CRP) includes:

- Chemical Acquisition Review Process
- Central Purchasing Policy
- “Approved Chemical” List
- Chemical Review Board

For expanded information, download a CRP template at www.highsafety.com/CRP.
BENCHMARKING

Some school districts are using formalized benchmarking to address severe financial challenges. The steps of the benchmarking process are:

- Identify benchmarking topic
- Identify comparative organizations
- Establish data collection method and collect data
- Estimate performance gaps
- Determine performance targets
- Communicate findings
- Establish goals and action plans
- Implement actions; recalibrate benchmarks
- Reprioritize efforts

Studies have been prepared on topics affecting both cost reduction and revenue enhancement. For example, energy management programs can be benchmarked using the resources on the Energy Star website, which is organized to facilitate benchmarking. Revenue from ACCESS/Medicaid for health related services can be benchmarked against other school districts using data found on the state website. Transportation can be benchmarked with peer districts that are geographically similar to compare costs by type of transportation as well as operating methods. User fees for items ranging from high school course lab fees to building rental fees can be benchmarked against other districts. Copying costs can be compared to other districts as well as the related costs of computer printing.

Benchmarking is much more than just comparing data. It involves comparing details of processes used in that function against better/best practices. It provides a positive approach to learning from the best can overcome resistance to change and often leads to breakthrough innovation. At this time when it is important to keep all staff focused on the positive whenever possible, benchmarking offers some welcome relief.
Now that the start of the school year has come and gone, hopefully the most stressful time of year for most of us in school transportation has passed. Sure, we still have the parents calling that are not happy with how the bus driver is dealing with their child on the bus or the bus that never stopped to pick up their children. And of course, winter is still ahead of us which can be a challenge for dealing with treacherous roadways and weather related early dismissals. Dealing with disgruntled parents, shrinking transportation budgets and the occasional bus driver shortage can all factor into the stress that comes with our jobs.

Webster’s Dictionary defines stress as a force that tends to distort a body or a factor that induces bodily or mental tension. Stressful situations are everywhere in our lives. Whether it is dealing with our jobs, teenage children, elderly parents that require more attention, financial matters or health issues, stress is something we must all live with and learn how to manage. Many articles have been written about how to avoid stress in our lives. Knowing that there will always be situations that cause us to worry or dwell on, I find it more important to understand techniques that allow us to effectively deal with pent up anxiety.

Experts claim that stress can have a huge impact on our health. Health effects from stress can include depression, heart disease, hair loss, anxiety disorders, obesity as well as sexual dysfunction. It has been estimated that as many as 90% of doctor visits are for stress-related ailments. Stress can also take its toll on our personal relationships, leading to divorce, job loss, or family problems that become transportation conflicts.

So what can we do to manage stress? First, you need to determine what causes you stress. Obviously, it is different for everybody. I equate this to a bus driver that is able to concentrate while driving with the bus with the AM/FM radio on and the students screaming. That particular driver has no problem with tuning out the background noise and can concentrate on driving while another driver may need to have the students quiet and the radio off in order to concentrate on driving. There are differences in what triggers our stress levels. There is an old saying that goes something like this: “Grant us the serenity to accept things that we cannot change, the courage to change the things that we can and the wisdom to know the difference.”

Some ideas for managing stress can include:

1. Realize that we are not able to fix every situation. A lot of the problems that are presented to us in transportation are not necessarily issues strictly related to transportation. Many times there are custody issues, or family problems that become transportation conflicts.

2. Realize that other people are equally stressed. Many times, the parent on the other end of the phone that is yelling at you is struggling to deal with stressful situations in their own lives and is taking it out on you. Be patient and hear the person out completely before interjecting your own rebuttal. Even though you may not be able to solve this person’s particular problem sometimes the person just wants somebody to listen to them.

3. Find the time to exercise. Exercise is good not only for your physical health, but also for your mental health. It releases pent up frustrations, relaxes your muscles and releases hormones that allow you to feel and sleep better.

4. Find time for yourself. Whether it is just a day off from work to catch up on odds and ends or a vacation planned for some extended rest and relaxation, everybody needs time away from work.

Just as stress “triggers” are different for everybody so are the ways that people are able to manage their stress. No one technique will work for everybody. However, keep in mind that stress is the same as being angry. Neither one can control you without your permission.

Mr. Lutz is the Director of Transportation at Cocalico School District and is a member of the PASBO Transportation Committee.

School Business Officials Can’t Wait for Their Superman!

BY JONI MANSMANN

The challenges facing a school business official are often many and from various fronts. On any given day we are scaling Act 1 legislation to overcome revenue challenges, dangling close to the state funding cliff that may be on our horizon. All of this while hunting and gathering for the most current AARA rules and regulations, fighting for fair employee contracts that we can afford, and ensuring student achievement is a top priority in the process. Leaping communication and political barriers to follow legislative acts and what role they will have on our school communities. To battling internally to guard our budgets ensuring we stay right on budget. Not to mention the sinister PSERS dilemma. This just scratches the surface of the challenges we face.

Many of these challenges beckon to our own School Business Superman to help us out, but in reality we can’t wait for our superhero.

Ms. Mansmann is the Director of Business and Finance at Canon-McMillan School District and is a member of the PASBO Membership Committee.
Senators Call for Halt to State’s Student Data Collection System

Citing serious privacy and constitutional concerns, the Majority and Minority Chairmen of the State Senate Education Committee called upon the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) to immediately suspend and slow down the implementation of a program that collects data on college students from “womb to the workplace” until a host of fundamental questions can be answered.

In a two-hour hearing on the state’s longitudinal student-level data system known as PIMS, (the Pennsylvania Information Management System), Sen. Jeffrey Piccola (R-15) and Sen. Andrew Dinniman (D-19) said that PDE lacks the statutory authority to collect this data, never gave public notice or sought public input, and could lead to huge breaches in the security of individual student Social Security numbers, counseling sessions, grades and other private data. The state began collecting data on students in grades K-12 in 2007 and expanded it to higher education institutions this past year.

Dinniman said the Department has become “data crazy” and keeps asking for “more, more, more.” Yet, they have not yet identified how the data will be used, which Piccola called “putting the cart before the horse.”

Piccola said he has introduced legislation this session to stop the data collection process and pledged to reintroduce it in the next session if the department does not slow down the process and address concerns regarding cost, constitutionality, security and liability. Noting that the department never secured the statutory authority to collect this data, Piccola said, “You need to shut it down until we can get answers.”

Dinniman was especially concerned that parents and students at the Commonwealth’s institutions of higher education have no knowledge that this information is being collected.

Pointing out that banks and mortgage companies give notices to customers on their privacy practices and uses of secure data, he questioned why PDE is immune from such disclosures.

Lauren Steinfeld, a security expert at the University of Pennsylvania, said that a lost or stolen laptop, an honest mistake by an employee or a malicious hacker can all lead to compromised data.

Testimony from University of Pittsburgh’s Provost Patricia E. Beeson said a search for information on a “J. Smith” could reveal the personal information of every “J. Smith” in the system.

Also in dispute is whether PIMS complies with federal privacy laws under the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

For more information, contact: Diane McNaughton (Piccola’s Office) at (717) 787-6801 or Adam Cirucci (Dinniman’s Office) at (610) 692-2112.

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Safe Computing
BY BRUCE A. MICKEY, PRSBO

October is national Cyber Security Awareness Month. Please help bring awareness of cyber threats to families in your community.

Everyone is at risk from a very real and growing cyber threat. If a person has a cell phone or uses a computer to access the Internet, they are at risk of infection from a computer virus, the possibility of identity theft and even loss of privacy.

Increasing one's awareness of this threat and taking precautionary steps can significantly reduce their vulnerability and help to keep their family safe.

Get started today in educating your community to protect themselves and their families by following these simple steps: a) keep anti-virus software up to date on all of their computers, b) never open e-mail attachments or click on links unless the sender is known and trusted, and c) always secure wireless routers with a complicated password that includes random characters instead of words or number combinations that could be easily figured out by a good hacker.

The Southern York County School District in Glen Rock, Pennsylvania supported the cyber security month effort during a Safe Computing Workshop for students, parents, and all members of the community. The district’s technology leaders presented topics on Cyber Threats, Safeguarding your Computer, Web and Email Content Filtering and Digital Citizenship. Each of these topics will be summarized over the next four issues of the PASBO Report.

Mr. Mickey is the Coordinator of Information Systems at Southern York County School District and is a member of the PASBO Technology Committee.

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STATS CORNER
How Has Your District Improved its Lunch Line?

• 95% of schools districts are increasing offerings of whole grain products
• 90.5% of school districts are increasing availability of fresh fruits/vegetables
• 69% of school districts are reducing or eliminating sodium in foods
• 66% of school districts are reducing or limiting added sugar
• 51% of school districts are increasing vegetarian options
• 63% of school districts with a la carte services are implementing nutrition standards
• 65% of school districts are limiting the size and/or weight of their a la carte food and beverage offerings
• 67% of school districts with vending services are increasing the availability of healthier beverages in vending machines

SOURCE: School Nutrition Association’s 2010 Back to School Trends Survey
Cooperative purchasing has been around since ancient times in one form or another and falls into one of two broad classifications or categories:

1. **True/Traditional Cooperatives** – formed when two or more organizations combine their requirements and solicit bids or offers for goods or services. These are typically more formal and very labor intensive such as a joint purchasing consortium of an IU, which aggregates volumes and does the solicitation. Third party aggregators, an organization which brings together multiple organizations to represent their requirements and manage the resulting contract, would fall into this category. These are usually regional and relatively low in member numbers.

2. **Piggyback Contracts** – a single contract via a single organization and includes an option for other organizations to “ride” the contract as awarded by the Lead organization, which can be a school district, a state agency, a regional or a national cooperative, whose sole purpose is to promote cooperative purchasing and its associated benefits.

Models used by both of the above categories of cooperative purchasing are:

1. **Definite quantity and delivery** – these are usually used by traditional cooperatives to a greater degree. Advantages are they generally produce the lowest possible price because of the guaranteed demand. Disadvantages are local agencies are often unable to accurately predict and commit to specific requirements and delivery schedules. Fulfilling commitments to suppliers may also be a challenge.

2. **Indefinite quantity and delivery** – local government agencies may have economies of scale and reduced administrative costs by participating in an indefinite quantity and indefinite delivery cooperative purchasing contract. Participants are identified and requirements are not specifically committed, but may be estimated based on historical data. Pricing is often a matter of confidence of the bidders in the estimate of volume. Advantages are that the development of the solicitation may be easier since local agencies do not need to commit to definite quantities.

Cooperative purchasing will not be ending anytime soon. It is just one more important tool in the procurement toolbox for maximizing your school’s spending dollars. As Director of Purchasing at Neshaminy School District, I purchased over $1 million dollars under various US Communities contracts mostly in support of our high school renovation project from 2005 through 2009. This resulted in hard dollar cost savings through the use of comparatively bid prices. It reduced our administrative cost and cycle time to complete deliveries in support of a very tight multiphase schedule. We also avoided the cost of our AE fee (4.5% of purchases) by utilizing the design services of the US Communities suppliers at no additional cost to spec out the product specifics.

In the last decade, the public sector has done more cooperative purchasing than the private sector because public sectors are not direct competitors in their marketplaces and usually are not afraid to share information, resources or knowledge to achieve the common goal – maximizing each taxpayer dollar in procuring goods and services. Most of the 13,522 school districts nationwide started cooperatives by combining geographically close school entity’s quantities to achieve economies of scale in purchased commodities and services. Early efforts were very local and regional or sometimes statewide. In the most recent decade these efforts have grown exponentially in favor of national aggregation. The spread and growth of cooperative purchasing is a direct result of our digital age and the Internet which has virtually eliminated geography from the mix when developing, planning or participating in cooperative contracts. In Pennsylvania, schools usually have used one or more of the 29 state Intermediate Units (IU) to start their participation in cooperative contracts. Our local IU (BCIU#22) does cooperative purchasing for paper, lamps, groceries, cafeteria disposal products, nurse& trainer supplies, AV equipment and supplies, custodial supplies, mulch and chips, tires, general office & school supplies, sound enhancement systems for special needs applications, vehicle fuels, heating oil, natural gas, electric energy and catalog discounts. Most IU cooperatives (as good as they are and as beneficial as they still are) have been dwarfed in the last ten years by the various state procurement agencies and very large regional and national cooperative organizations promoting widespread multi-state or national coverage. In total there are approximately 88,000 public sector agencies when you total school districts (13,522), counties (3,034), municipalities (19,431), towns and townships(16,506) and special districts (35,356).

One of the premier national cooperative organizations supporting public agencies is US Communities Government Purchasing Alliance (sponsored and endorsed by PASBO). Its membership includes almost 50% of the 88,000 public agencies and non profits in the USA. They have grown in membership from 12,000 public agencies in 2006 purchasing 5.5 billion to 42,000 public agencies/nonprofits in 2010 purchasing over $1 billion in goods and services. It is one of the larger cooperative organizations in the US. Another large cooperative is the Western States Contracting Alliance (WSCA) whose volume has grown to $6 billion in purchases in 2008 from $4.5 billion in 2007 and $3.3 billion in 2006. WSCA was formed in 1993 by state procurement directors from 15 western states in cooperation with National Association of State Procurement Officials (NASPO). A few other larger cooperatives are: Educational & Institutional (E& I) Cooperative- made up of 1,600 colleges, universities, k-12, teaching hospitals and other educational organizations; Houston Galveston Area Cooperative (HGAC) a government to government cooperative started in 1973 with 3,000 members in 38 states. The Association of Educational Purchasing Agencies (AEPA) consists of 23 member states. PEPPM, COSTARS, TCPN, MiCTA, NJPA, KPN are a few more of a very long list of cooperatives to choose from. How you make the choice of which cooperative is best for you may be the subject of a future article. There are many choices. Turn on your computer, explore your options and enjoy the sea of choices and begin stretching your taxpayer dollars today.

* Source GFOA, GAFFER 2005

Mr. Szgorich is the Director of Purchasing at Neshaminy School District and is a member of the PASBO Materials Management Committee.
Phone Notification Systems
Continued from page 16

example, my messages typically begin something like this: “Good morning, it’s Wednesday, December 1 and this is an important message from the Solanco School District.” The date is especially important when the phone notification system may be used on consecutive days, such as for delays or cancellations in the winter. Including the date tells listeners they are receiving a new and timely message.

Be prepared for return calls. I am surprised by the number of people who call our school district after a message has been sent. Calls begin practically the minute a message first goes out. Callers commonly say something like, “I saw on my caller ID that the district has called me and I was wondering why?” perhaps they did not receive or completely understand the message. Or maybe they like a live voice to confirm the information.

Whatever the reasons, be properly prepared. If the message will be sent during the school day, notify all appropriate staff. Before the message is sent, email it to all administrators and staff who need to know and who may answer incoming calls about the message. Include in the email the day and time the message will be sent and to whom it will be sent.

When recording and preparing a message in your phone notification system, be sure to select the phone number that you want to show on caller ID. I make sure it is the number to the phone in my office. I record the same message on my telephone greeting so if people call my number because it appears on their called ID, they will have another opportunity to hear the message.

Global Connect, Alert Now, School Connects, Blackboard Connect – there are many phone notification systems available to us, some of which specialize in school district/education communications. Using them effectively makes us better communicators and enables us to better protect our students.

Mr. Kaufman is the Director of Communications at Solanco School District and is the chair of the PASBO Communications Committee.

Employment Opportunities
Continued from page 15

are selected for a second interview, all three current clearances must be presented at the interview.

DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATIVE & SUPPORT SERVICES
- Philadelphia SD: 12-month position is available January 2011. Duties include but are not limited to: overseeing technical, administrative and financial management of all food service division management information systems, food/material acquisition processes; managing payroll and other financial functions; and management of PDE/USDA subsidized meal application procedures and more. Requirements: Bachelor’s degree; five years of professional experience in a large-scale school system or institution, two years of which have been in an administrative or supervisory capacity with responsibility for systems design, budget preparation, materials and inventory control. Master’s of Science and Pennsylvania certification as Registered Dietician preferred; Prior profit center or cost center financial accountability preferred. To apply, send a letter of interest in the position which highlights the applicant’s experiences and qualifications to serve as Director of Administrative and Support Services, a complete résumé, the names and contact information of three individuals who would recommend the applicant for the current position. Send to Rachel Shenkman, Office of Talent Acquisition, 440 N. Broad Street, Suite 222, Philadelphia, PA 19130. Application materials must be postmarked by November 19, 2010.

BUSINESS ANALYST/SENIOR ACCOUNTANT - Propel Charter Schools: Growing charter school system in the Pittsburgh area with 2,000 students is searching for a business analyst/senior accountant. Minimum of a bachelor’s degree in accounting or business required with a CPA preferred. Successful candidate will have: working knowledge of school district accounting, strong analytical, problem solving and communication skills, and experience with Microsoft Excel, Word and CSIU software. Responsibilities include pro-forma and budget development, expense analysis, state and federal reporting and other business and accounting functions as assigned. Requirement: 4-year college degree in accounting or business. Salary Range: $40,000 to $50,000. Resumes should be submitted to: mhhughson@propelschools.org.

U.S. Communities Government Purchasing Alliance Now to Include Food and Paper Products
BY BARBARA B. NISSEL, PRSBO

U.S. Communities is a national government purchasing cooperative, providing government procurement resources and solutions to local and state government agencies, school districts (K-12), higher education institutes, and nonprofits agencies looking for the best overall supplier of government pricing. By combining the potential cooperative purchasing power of up to 90,000 public agencies, participants of the program are able to access the best overall supplier government pricing on thousands of products and services. There is no fee to school districts to participate.

North Carolina State University is proud to be the lead public agency for an extensive U.S. Communities food and food supply bid. The contract will offer tiered pricing that follows the pricing offered to North Carolina State University. Additional discounts may be offered based on the spend of core products. This contract will be awarded in November 2010 for implementation in early January 2011. Pricing on this contract could greatly benefit schools who currently do not joint purchase or when current pricing is higher than U.S. Communities.

The food and food supply bid could eliminate the need for districts to execute their own food, paper and produce bids, thus decreasing the number of invoices written and administrative time. Minimum drop requirements would be easier to meet with all products coming from potentially one vendor. Unlike current paper bids which often offer a short purchasing window and require large storage space, the U.S. Communities bid would be in place for four and a half years with three optional one year extensions and allow for just in time purchasing.

Great Valley Food Service currently joint purchases with EPAR (Eastern Pennsylvania Regional) Buying Group. However, I plan to compare pricing, evaluate time saved and look at the incentive purchasing discounts before deciding how to proceed. It isn’t just a process of evaluating pricing on individual items as much as it is the total overall savings of both time and money.

Ms. Nissel is the Food Service Supervisor at Great Valley School District and is a member of the PASBO Food Service Committee.

November 2010
PASBO is pleased to welcome 33 new members: 19 Active, 1 Education, 3 Support, and 10 Business Associates.

**ACTIVE:** *Vincent M. Belczyk, Business Manager, Uniontown Area SD; Megan M. Buck, Accounting Supervisor, Abington Heights SD; David M. Cohick, Assistant Director of Maintenance, Williamsport Area SD; Sharon Gologram, Business Manager, Western Beaver County SD; Thomas Graham, Director of Student Services, York County School of Technology; Denise L. Green, Cafeteria Manager, Dauphin County Technical School; Kristina D. Kline, Director of Human Resources & School Safety, DuBois Area SD; Andrew G. Lechman, Assistant Business Administrator, Allentown City SD; Raymond Lemon, CPA, Senior Business Manager, Planet Abacus CS; Bryan E. McCaffery, Director of Maintenance and Facilities, Williamsport Area SD; Thomas McHugh, Transportation Supervisor, Southeast Delco SD; Kara D. Onorato, Business Manager, Conneaut SD; Judith Reichard, Tech Group Program Assistant, Central Susquehanna IU #16; Jerilyn Reinking, Purchasing/Warehouse Supervisor, North Penn SD; Shelly Ritter, SPHR, Director of Human Resources, Central Susquehanna IU #16; Rebecca A. Roberts-Malamis, Esq., Director of Human Resources, Bucks County IU #22; Augustine Santiago, Food Service Supervisor, Esperanza Academy Charter High School; LuAnn Schellhammer, Assistant Business Administrator, Northwestern Lehigh SD; Valerie Shaver, Accounting Assistant, Woodland Hills SD.

**EDUCATION:** Curtis J. Griffin, Superintendent, Hatboro-Horsham SD.

**SUPPORT:** Mary Beth Brennan, Cooperative Purchasing Program Assistant, Central Susquehanna IU #16; Brenda Mell, Secretary - Operations (Facilities), Berks County IU #14; Amanda R. Smith, Accountant, Pocono Mountain SD.

**BUSINESS:** *Dorothy M. Bollinger, Esq., Attorney, The Bollinger Law Firm; Karen B. DeNardo, Contract Manager, First Student; Susan M. Farrell, Vice President, JPMorgan Chase, N.A.; Kimberly A. Hayes, General Manager, Sodexo; Jennifer Lee, Senior Director, Marketing Strategy, TIAA-CREF; William Lindstrom, Sales, Contrax Furnishings; John W. Molloy, Senior Marketing Representative, PA Local Govt. Investment Trust; Jennifer Pegg, Vice President, JPMorgan Chase, N.A.; Brian Sanker, Senior Marketing Representative, PA Local Govt. Investment Trust; Damion Spahr, Vice President of Business Development, Reynolds.*

*Previous member returning after a lapse in membership

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### CALENDAR

**For updated information, go to:** www.pasbo.org

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<tr>
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<td>Elements of School Finance</td>
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<td>Four Points Sheraton Inn Pittsburgh North</td>
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<td>11/12/2010</td>
<td>Elements of Human Resources</td>
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<td>Holiday Inn Harrisburg/Hershey</td>
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<td>Half Day Webcast, AM</td>
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<td>11/17/2010 to 11/18/2010</td>
<td>Food Service Conference</td>
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<td>Radisson Penn Harris Hotel Convention Center</td>
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<td>11/23/2010</td>
<td>Increasing Purchasing Power Through Cooperative</td>
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<td>Half Day Webcast, AM</td>
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<td>12/1/2010</td>
<td>Elements of Leadership and Management</td>
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<td>Mini Webcast, AM</td>
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For more detailed information and regional chapter meeting schedules, please go to the PASBO web site at www.pasbo.org.

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Have something to share with the membership? Submit your Awards of Achievement Application today!

The top winner receives a $2,000 scholarship from PLGIT so don’t miss this opportunity!

Go to: www.pasbo.org/awards.asp for more information.
EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS MANAGER - Central Columbia SD: Permanent 12-month position available January 24, 2011. Rural school district located in Columbia County with approximately 2,000 students, 260 employees and a 2010-11 budget of approximately $25 million. Responsibilities include: oversee all fiscal activities including payroll, accounting, employee benefits, insurance, investments, debt services, taxes and other assignments from the superintendent. The individual will supervise business department, transportation and food services. A bachelor’s degree in accounting, business, finance or related field required. Experience as a school business administrator with PASBO registered status is preferred but not required. Send letter of interest, resume, college/university credentials, three current letters of reference and Acts 34, 114 and 151 clearances to Harry Mathias, Superintendent, Central Columbia School District, 4777 Old Berwick Road, Bloomsburg, PA 17815. Telephone inquiries should be made to Rosey Nagle at (570)-784-2850, ext. 4016. Deadline for application is November 11. Interview process to begin November 23. EOE.

SUPERVISOR OF TRANSPORTATION – Bethlehem Area SD: Full-time position. Plans, directs and coordinates the transportation and motor vehicle maintenance programs. Develops an efficient and effective transportation network that provides safe transportation for the resident children within the district. Qualifications: Bachelor’s degree preferred and three years of experience in school transportation required. Must possess CDL Class B license with P and S endorsements and certification as school bus driver trainer. Application available www.beth.k12.pa.us or contact the Human Resources Department (610) 861-0500, ext. 60239. EOE employer.

PAYROLL BENEFITS SPECIALIST - Manheim Central SD: This position is responsible for preparing the district bi-weekly payroll. Critical areas currently include calculating annual increases for all staff, determining voluntary deductions, reconciliation of taxes and administration of benefit program including healthcare, dental, life insurance, unreimbursed medical, pension (PSERS), COBRA, FMLA and workers compensation. Note: This job description is subject to change. The position requires a thorough understanding and extensive knowledge of payroll and benefits processes and procedures. A high school diploma or the equivalent is required, as well as three years payroll and benefits experience and an understanding of employee handbook, union contract, support staff and administrator’s handbook. Applicants should send a letter of interest, resume, recommendations, Act 34 and 151 (*Act 114) clearances and other supporting documentation to: Sandy Emerich, Director of Human Resources, Manheim Central School District, 71 N. Hazel Street, Manheim, PA 17545.

WEB AND DATA APPLICATION DEVELOPER - Montgomery County IU #23: Bachelor’s degree in computer science or related field, or graduate of technical school/institute focusing on computer application development required. Must be able to create applications in an ASP.NET/MS SQL Server environment. Must be able to develop and manage relational databases in an MS SQL/Oracle. Must have a strong working knowledge of the software development lifecycle (SDLC) and able to take on new challenges involving emerging technologies. Must have effective verbal and written communication skills to interact professionally with a diverse group of users and support staff. Minimum of one year experience producing web and database applications. Full-time position beginning as soon as possible after expiration of deadline. Salary in the range of $58 - $61,000 plus full benefits and retirement package. Please send letter of interest, updated resume, two current letters of reference and either Current Act 34, Act 114 or Act 151 clearance to Francine Flowers, Montgomery County Intermediate Unit, 1605 West Main Street, Norristown, PA 19403. Please note: if you are interested in the above positions, you must complete an employment application from the following website: www.mcyi.org. EOE employer.

MEMBER NEWS

Vaughn D. Shope, PRSBA retired from Upper Dauphin Area SD as Business Manager on October 4, 2010.

Richard A. Meily, II is the Business Manager for Upper Dauphin Area SD. Meily was Director of Business/Comptroller with Newport SD.

Trevor S. Jackson has been promoted from Acting Chief Financial Operating Officer to Chief Financial Officer at Allentown SD.

Allentown SD also appointed Kris M. James as Director of Child Nutrition Services. James was the Assistant Director, Division of Food Service, with Philadelphia SD.

Lisa A. Myers filled the position of Supervisor of Transportation for Harrisburg City SD. Myers started late September and came from Southern York County SD as Coordinator of Transportation.

Hatboro-Horsham SD hired Andria Morly as Payroll Supervisor.

Montgomery County IU selected Michael Keeley as Supervisor of Financial Services.

William Addy was chosen as Director of Human Resources for Mountour SD.

Northern Lebanon SD announced Daniel Heckman as Director of Business Affairs and started in early October.

LuAnn Schelhammer began her position as Assistant Business Administrator with Northwestern Lehigh SD.

Pocono Mountain SD hired Amanda R. Smith as Accountant.

Upper Dublin SD appointed Thomas Segafoss as Director of Human Resources. Segafoss will begin his new position in December.

Starting Jan. 4, 2011, Leonard Kresfnski will be Business Manager at Springfield Twp. SD. Kresfnski comes from Phoenixville Area SD as Business Administrator.

Business manager and athletic director Thomas E. Shetterly was appointed to acting superintendent at Frazier SD until a replacement is named.

Catherine Lanks has accepted the position of Assistant Payroll Secretary and started mid-October for Coatesville Area SD.

Coatesville Area SD also announced Tammy Kirby moving from Assistant Payroll Secretary to Payroll Secretary and started mid-October.

Timothy E. Vail, PRSBA, Business Administrator for Centennial SD, has accepted the position of Business Administrator with the Radnor Twp. SD with an effective date of December 1, 2010.

See Employment Opportunities, page 13
Effective Use of Telephone Notification Systems

BY KEITH KAUFMAN

Telephone notification systems are an important communications tool and an increasing number of schools are using them. A message can be recorded and sent to thousands of home, office and cell phone numbers in only a few minutes. While they can be used to increase parental involvement and enhance two-way communication, they are an especially valuable tool when bad weather forces early school dismissal or during other unusual or emergency situations that require the rapid and widespread transmission of important information.

The Solanco School District has used a phone notification system for more than six years and a vast majority of the feedback from parents and guardians has been very positive. We have developed and follow guidelines that we feel provide for the most effective use of the system.

Do not over use it. Safeguard the sense of “urgency” a message should have when it is delivered by a phone notification system. We use it to announce school delays and closings; other school districts do not. Avoid using it for information that can be delivered in other more traditional ways such as letters sent home with students. Use the phone notification system primarily for important information that needs to be communicated quickly.

Identify someone (most likely in the district office) who will manage and approve the use of the phone notification system. I am that person in my district. I develop and send urgent or emergency messages that originate from the district office. Principals in my district who would like to use the system to call their parents must first email me their request along with the message and the date and time they would like to send it. I monitor all messages sent via our phone notification system and it is my responsibility to ensure that we are not sending messages too frequently and that the messages being sent are appropriate for the phone system.

Messages should be as clear and as brief as possible. If time allows before the message has to be sent, type the message and time yourself as you read it aloud. Thirty to 35 seconds is recommended. You risk losing the attention of listeners with messages that go more than 45 or 50 seconds. Only one important topic should be covered in a message; including several topics weakens the message and may make it confusing.

Include the date at the beginning of the message. For example, “Today is February 12th.”