

**Erie County Technical School
Director's Report
April 2006**

2006-2007 Applications & Enrollments. The application process for next year is essentially complete. All of the districts have submitted their initial applications for next year's first-year class. Some districts have indicated that other applications are likely to trickle in over the next week or two. While the applications from different perspectives reflect declines, this should be acceptable in light of the declining countywide high school population.

Total applications (Levels 1 through 3) are only down 7 students. Accepted applications are down 26. Accepted applications exclude students whom have applied to "over subscribed" programs and students whose applications need additional consideration by sending school counselors and ECTS admissions staff.

First year applications totaled 498, down from 531 in 2005-2006. Accepted first year applications totaled 382, down from 434 in 2005-2006. The "waiting list" total is actually up 19 applications to 116.

Several programs are showing strong applications including Auto Body, Automotive Technologies, Child Care, Computer Information Systems, Culinary Arts, Graphic Communications and Metal Fabrication.

District applications reflect mixed results. Some districts are down that are historically steady. Other districts are up, but only slightly. Overall, we are pleased with the number of applications received at this point.

Diesel Mechanic Training. We are pleased to be collaborating with the Erie Regional Chamber on an assessment and potential training program for diesel mechanics. In interviews with local companies, Chamber representatives kept receiving comments on the inability to find trained mechanics. After meeting with nine companies and hearing the same concern, Katrina Smith, Manager, Business Retention and Expansion Program, contacted the technical school to see if we could assist in some manner. The technical school will host a meeting of the companies on Wednesday, April 26.

Jan Kennerknecht, Katrina Smith and the Director will talk with nine company representatives from six companies to assess their staffing and training needs. Depending on those needs, we should be able to provide some form of training either in the form of students from our Automotive Technologies program, students from RCTC courses (yet to be developed), or from some model of a short-term training program. Significant work will have to go into this project as we have no equipment for diesel mechanics, qualified instructors will have to be located and space will have to be found on campus to house the training.

Precision Machining Training. We are also working on a curriculum and equipment update initiative in our Tool & Die program. At the prompting of the Occupational Advisory Committee and other local machining companies, we will assess the viability of transforming our

program from a manual machine program to a computerized numerical controlled machine program. Invitations have been sent to 24 companies inviting them to meet with us on May 19 to review curriculum and equipment.

Chapter 339 Program Approval Audit. On April 3 through April 5, 14 representatives from PDE and other vocational schools visited our campus and our participating districts to assess our compliance with the state standards for career and technical education, Chapter 339. The audit went very smoothly. The audit resulted in a final report. The preliminary results in the final report were shared verbally with ECTS staff. A final written report will be forthcoming from PDE.

In another matter related to Chapter 339 audits, the Director served as an auditor for the assessment of Lancaster County Career and Technology Center (LCCTC). Lancaster is one of the largest career and technical centers in the state with three campuses serving 16 school districts. The Director's participation in the audit provided an in-depth experience with the audit process as well as a close-up look at one of the State's leading technical schools. After completing the Lancaster audit, Erie County Technical School compares very favorably.

Legislators Visits. On May 23, the Pennsylvania Association of Vocational Administrators (PAVA) is sponsoring a legislative day in support of career and technical education in Pennsylvania. Last year, Mr. Bucksbee and the Director met with several of our local legislators to promote the school and our local initiatives along with statewide initiatives for career and technical education. The time spent with the legislators was very productive. If other JOC members are interested in participating in this type of activity, we welcome you to join us.

2006-2007 Budget. Five districts have reviewed and approved our budget. No concerns have been expressed by those districts. Thanks to the JOC members and superintendents from those districts for their support of our budget proposal.

County Land Purchase. Several districts have reviewed and approved the proposed purchase of the 20 acres by the county for their public safety building. A couple of districts hold their "legislative" meetings the last week of the month so we will have to wait for the outcome of the proposal until early May.

Regional Technical Community College. One of the issues noted in the mid-year leadership and management survey was concern with the effort put into the development of the community college. Principally, the concern is that this is a Director-driven initiative and counter to the mission of the school. Despite a presentation to the faculty and staff on the merits and needs of a technical community college, the concern persists. It is also worth noting that the superintendents have been reviewing this concept for nearly one and one-half years and they fully support the concept—albeit many details have yet to be developed. Another serious consideration is the fact that this is a six-county initiative rather than just an Erie County initiative.

The faculty received the same presentation as was made to the JOC. Board members have also been kept abreast of the progress of this initiative in monthly reports from the Superintendent of Record and Director. To assist with the faculty and staff members' concern, the Director is respectfully requesting the JOC consider a resolution in support of a thorough investigation of the rationale and merits of technical community college in Northwest Pennsylvania and the Erie County Technical School's role in its development.