



**Superintendent's Report
Erie County Technical School
Joint Operating Committee Meeting
Thursday, March 23, 2006**

▮ **YES—Your Employability Skills Program:** For the past year, a subcommittee of superintendents have been meeting with Manufacturers' Association of Northwest Pennsylvania (MANP) to identify ways that school districts and businesses can work together to create a skilled workforce. Both groups agreed that the YES program would help "students develop the fundamental skills employers require to maintain a well-trained work force. It also addresses key employability issues and offers a pathway to a secure and rewarding future."

On Friday, March 3rd, Angie Angus, Program Coordinator, along with Ralph Pontillo and John Krahe, presented the YES program to Erie County superintendents. Angie shared the origins of the program, the results of the program in York County, and the excitement the program is generating among Erie County business leaders. Five high schools, including Central, Fairview, Fort LeBoeuf, Northwestern, and Seneca expect to pilot the YES program in 2006-07. MANP will underwrite the cost of the curriculum and the school districts will use their personnel to teach the course. If students successfully complete the 120-hour course, they will receive a certificate that signals employers that they have learned the skills they need to be successful on the job. Interested employers and public can find information about this program at the Manufacturer's Association of Northwest Pennsylvania website.

<http://www.manp.org/association-news/archives/yes8482-certificate-program>

▮ **Chapter 339 (Vocational Education) Proposed Amendments:** PDE has prepared amendments to Chapter 339 that will require changes in how comprehensive public high schools offer vocational education courses. Among the changes is the requirement that high schools create vocational courses that span 360 hours of instruction. Courses with less than 360 hours would not qualify for state reimbursement. Dr. Jackson wrote a response to PDE reflecting superintendents' concerns that such a requirement is a roadblock to providing a variety of vocational and technical opportunities for students.

▮ **2006-07 ECTS Budget:** Dr. Jackson again shared the ECTS budget proposal with superintendents on March 3rd. The budget reflects an 8% overall increase. The actual increase for each school district varies depending upon enrollment and services. Some school districts will experience a larger increase than others. The superintendents understand the need for the increase.

▮ **Regional Community and Technical College:** Recently, Dr. Jackson and I met with Crawford County superintendents regarding a technical community college. We covered the same points as we have in other presentations, including the following:

- Advances the Region's Workforce
- Provides Affordable Technical Training to the Community



- Provides Seamless Secondary and Post-secondary Technical Training
- Makes Training Available in Occupational areas not Currently Available
- Mandates that State Universities automatically transfer/accept community college credits
- Allows for Use of In-Kind Contributions from Local Sponsors
- Taps into Commonwealth Funding Currently Not Being Accessed in Northwest Pennsylvania
- Coordinates well with Project 720, Dual Enrollment, and other PDE High School Reform Programs

▮ **Land Purchase by County:** Dr. Jackson reported that all school districts had approved the agreement to sell 25.5 acres of ECTS land to Erie County for the purpose of building an Emergency Management Facility. Dr. Jackson and county representatives met with ECTS neighbors, and Mr. Sennett moved forward with all the legal requirements. Both Mr. Sennett and Dr. Jackson will provide further information in their reports.

▮ **Special Education:** Superintendents discussed the appropriate placement of IEP students in ECTS courses to help ensure their success. They also agreed on the need to develop transition programs for special education students in their home schools or through an RCI program. Currently, state law requires that public school have transition programs for special education students to help them make the transition from school to work or post-secondary training. ECTS programs can satisfy this requirement, but the question superintendents have is whether this is the best use of ECTS. The subcommittee will review this issue and bring suggested solutions to the entire group of superintendents.