

**Superintendents' Report
Erie County Technical School
Joint Operating Committee Meeting
Thursday, September 22, 2005**

On September 9, 2005, the Erie County Superintendents' Professional Advisory Council met to discuss the following topics:

► **Creating a Reporting System for Office of Children and Youth (OCY):**

Robin Adams, Director of Policy and Evaluation at OCY, met with the superintendents to share her commitment to develop a better relationship with school districts in Erie County and to provide better service for students and families. Superintendents shared concerns about situations that had occurred in their districts when principals, teachers, or counselors reported a variety of issues—neglect, abuse, etc.—to OCY.

Robin explained that OCY had received additional money to hire new caseworkers. She also stated that she hoped truancy issues would become part of her department in the future so the OCY could better help school districts deal with all the issues surrounding why students do not come to school. She also offered to meet with individual superintendents and their administrative teams to get a better grasp of problems school districts are facing with mandated reporting.

► **RCI Update:** Currently, school districts in Erie and Crawford Counties have just completed a grant in partnership with the IU to benefit students attending the courses for college credit program taught at the Skill Center. If we receive grant monies, they will help offset the cost of tuition students pay to take their college/university courses in the fall and spring semesters this year. Bill Nichols, Director of the RCI program, is very optimistic about receiving the grant because the state seems to be looking at Erie County's RCI program as a model of what should be happening with dual enrollment courses and student/parent choice.

► **Regional Collaboration:** Dr. Jackson suggested that we incorporate all career and technical education courses under one umbrella at ECTS for several reasons—reimbursement for equipment and the auditing process. Superintendents have requested that Dr. Jackson develop a proposal to consolidate all the vocational/technical programs taking place in school districts across the county as permitted under Section 339.2 of the Pennsylvania Public School Code.

► **Recruitment, Admissions, and Enrollment Process:** ECTS wants to attract well-qualified students for a variety of technical programs. To do this, ECTS feels that all of us need to remove any roadblocks that may be preventing

students from applying for admission to ECTS. Dr. Jackson has suggested recruiting at an earlier time during the year and allowing ECTS to take ownership of the application process. He further proposed that recruiting move from 9th grade to 8th grade, giving students more time to think about applying to ECTS. It is his hope that the application process would be finished by winter.

Superintendents agree that moving the recruiting process to 8th grade is a good idea, but they also feel that the counselors know the students well and promote ECTS. They have asked Dr. Jackson and his staff to rethink the approach and not completely cut out guidance counselors from the application process.

- ▶ **General Advisory Council Membership:** Under section 339 of the Pennsylvania Public School Code, it is necessary to create an advisory council to help determine the kinds of career training needed throughout the county. Each superintendent will recommend one or two business leaders to participate on this council. The input from the council will also help shape the direction ECTS takes and the programs it offers.
- ▶ **Regional Technical College:** Superintendents continued their discussion regarding the development of a regional technical college. Dr. Jackson and Mr. Busksbee met with Senator Jane Earll about the need for having a regional technical college in Erie County. During their meeting, she expressed an interest in learning more. Dr. Jackson wrote Senator Earll a letter outlining why we need a technical community college. Superintendents recommended reviewing the topic again in October and sending a follow up letter to Senator Earll with an invitation to visit with us.
- ▶ **Reports Cards:** Superintendents expressed an interest in including the ECTS report card with the report card sent to parents from the sending district. They see ECTS as an integral part of students' education and therefore, should not be separated from that of the home school. There will be more discussion about this topic.
- ▶ **Alternative Education Program:** Dr. Jackson reported to the superintendents that the alternative education program is running smoothly. There are 35 students participating in the traditional middle school program and 6 high school students participating in the new high school alternative education program. The superintendents asked me to again thank JOC members for approving the expanded alternative education program.