

**Erie County Technical School
Director's Report
January 2009**

Budget Process. The administration and staff have constructed a preliminary budget proposal for 2009-2010. The budget was presented to the Professional Advisory Council at their January meeting.

After some discussion about the impending spike in the PSERS rate in 2012-2013, the superintendents recommended an increase in district contributions to be used as a set-aside to meet this obligation. After a thorough review the superintendents recommended approval of the proposed budget.

Community College. The Clements Group of Salt Lake City, Utah, was on campus on Tuesday, January 13 to conduct a focus group with high school students as research for a community college. Elaine Shaffer observed the focus group and had the following comments:

The students who participated were mature, serious and sincerely wanted to help with the study that was being done. They were asked questions like: What do you think are the economical challenges preventing growth in our community? What are three top concerns you have relating to this region's employment climate? If a community college were to be built in this region - what three challenges do you think they would face? What programs should a community college have?

The students responded seriously and sincerely. They said such things as:

- I like the idea of staying in this area and commuting to school."
- Regarding the economy: I think we have too many chains in this area - I would rather go to a nice locally-owned restaurant.
- We will have to compete for jobs with older, layed off workers. This is going to be a real challenge for those who lack real job experience.
- My concern is reasonable class size. Some classes have too many students and individualized attention from instructors is impossible.
- A community college should make efficient use of its money - put it into instruction and programming, not landscaping.
- Make sure what is taught in college relates to the job openings in this region.
- I like the idea of an inexpensive college option - especially for undecided students. This would give them more opportunity to explore different programs without investing huge amounts of money.
- Deciding on where you will locate a community college would be a huge factor in it's success.
- It would be nice to have less homework so we can work in the evenings to pay our college tuition.

- A community college should have a childcare option and a commuter lounge.
- After it got going, it would be nice if the faculty would have meetings to brainstorm how to make the community college better.
- More experienced faculty seem to be more helpful with career counseling than brand new teachers.

The discussion group leaders raved about the responses and the quality of students present. They were extremely pleased about the focus group and felt that some unique input was received - unlike what they are getting in adult focus groups.

Getting Results in CTE. As part of our participation in the Bureau of Career & Technical Education's (BCTE) Technical Assistance Project, we have completed the Getting Results in CTE planning document. The Getting Results document is the planning tool used by school not making adequate progress toward NCLB goals.

The planning tool required analysis of data in mathematics, reading, NOCTI, attendance and graduation. From the analysis, determinations were made about the root cause of low performing areas. From that information, action plans were developed. The ECTS plan was shared with the superintendents at their January meeting. We will submit the document to BCTE. The document is available for review in the supplemental section of the agenda.

Special Education Transition Center. Under the guidance of Steve Sceiford the construction trades, facilities maintenance and networking programs continue to make progress on the construction of the center. The project is still on schedule for completion this spring.

Director's Travel and Meetings. The director's recent and scheduled meetings include:

- *Employer Luncheon—Erie Metropolitan Transit Authority*; January 8; with Dennis Solensky, Dave Renner of EMTA and Elaine Shaffer, Mary Ellen Camp, Fred Brockman and Dave Michalak; to discuss potential employment opportunities
- *County-level Workforce Development Meeting*; January 13, Intermodal Center; an interagency meeting focused on county workforce development issues
- *Employer Luncheon—Mechanical Contractors of NW PA*; January 14; with Doug Armstrong, Mechanical Contractors of NW PA and Chris Coughlin, Hallgren, Restifo, Loop & Coughlin Architects, and Elaine Shaffer, Mariea Sargent and Tracy Massello; to discuss potential relationships between the contractors association and ECTS
- *Feasibility Study Meetings*; January 21-22; with Paul Abramson and Chris Coughlin; to finalize concepts for proposed building addition and renovation

Thank You. Please accept our warmest thanks for your service as an ECTS joint operating committee member. Between home, work and community commitments, you all lead active lives and appreciate your willingness to share some of your time and energy with ECTS. We are grateful!