
Erie County Technical School
Director's Report
August 2013
'Good Writing is a Reflection of Good Thinking'

Welcome to School Year 2013-2014

As intended, July and August have been relatively quiet months. Other than the sidewalk project, no other major projects were undertaken this summer. Administrative staff members have been fine tuning one aspect or another of various processes or procedures. As faculty, staff and students return for 2013-2014, they should notice only a few changes from last year. In particular, this year we will focus on writing and roll out the PDE Teacher Effectiveness model. Other than that, what was good in 2012-2013 will be even better in 2013-2014.

Writing

Employers place tremendous value on the capability of their employees to 'read, write and calculate.' For over ten years, ECTS has placed an equal amount of emphasis and resources on building the reading and calculating skills of our students. Moreover, the results have shown up in statewide testing results and other academic measures. There is a strong sense we have finally *engrained* into our instructional culture good practices in reading and mathematics. It is now time to take the next step—teaching writing.

Under the tagline of "Good Writing is a Reflection of Good Thinking," the campus will undertake a yearlong program of building the writing skills of each student. Using a progressive-skills model recommended by our Reading Coach, Robin Grimes, students will write every day. We will attempt first to 'overcome their dislike' for writing through daily, program-related prompts provided by their instructor. These early two- or three-sentence responses will grow each quarter to a complete paragraph, to a multi-paragraph essay, and ultimately to a two- or three-page essay.

Many of our faculty members already incorporate writing assignments into their instructional plan. We expect most of our faculty will easily incorporate the new practice into their daily routines and student grades. Just as we have used reading and mathematics as *instructional tools*, rather than *instructional content*, writing will be another tool to deliver and reinforce the technical content. The intent is to make writing comfortable, comprehensive, consistent, and effectual. We want our students to be able to 'reflect their good thinking' through good writing.

Comprehensive Planning

As a PDE Phase III school, ECTS, along with several other districts in the region, will undertake the PDE required Comprehensive Planning process. Comprehensive planning replaces strategic planning. We will spend the 2013-2014 academic year completing the planning process for submission in November 2014. The three-year plan would become operational in July 2014.

RCTC

Registration for Term I opened August 4 and closed August 17. Classes will start the week of September 4. At the time of this report, there were 124 registrations in 34 classes. Of the 34 classes, 25 met our 'break-even enrollment' criteria, resulting in 112 registrations. Projected gross revenue is \$31,235 and net profit of \$8,974. Registrations are down about 50 from last year and revenue is down \$9,000.

Camp Smiles

We were pleased that the Union City Family Center asked us to host an all-day, career-focused, STEM-reinforcing field trip for the participants of Camp Smiles. On Friday, September 16, 45 youth, ages 5 to 13, and eight counselors visited ECTS from 9:45 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. Seven ECTS faculty members volunteered their time to create age-appropriate activities that related to their programs.

Activities included license plate painting (Auto Body Repair), Mentos & Soda Experiment (Drafting & Design), Connecting Computers (Computer Networking), and Rod Turn/Hole Drill (Precision Machining). The day concluded with an engaging version of STEM & Careers Bingo. Thanks to Ken Balsiger, Mariea Sargent, Phylis Theuerkauf, Rob Suprynowicz, Joe Salorino, Elaine Shaffer and Lisa Sorensen for giving of their time to reach these kids.

Personnel

Please extend a warm ECTS welcome to our new staff members:

- Remle Moyak, Career Planning Coordinator
- Bob Lyle, Facilities Maintenance Instructor
- Kelly Sanders, Culinary Arts Instructor

Other Action Items this July and August

Other items the director has been working on in July and August include:

1. Reviewing current teacher evaluation process and how to integrate it with the new PDE Teacher Effectiveness System
2. Refining with the RCTC marketing plan for 2013-2014
3. Assisting with the United Way's 2013 Funding Raising Campaign as the education representative
4. Coordinating the customized training program conducted at Industrial Sales & Manufacturing
5. Working with Sue Barra, the new CTE Principal at the Corry Area School District

6. Revising the RCTC web page for 2013-2014 with course changes
7. Closing out the Great Lakes Building and Construction Trades pre-apprenticeship grant from the Erie Community Foundation
8. Submitting RCTC course approvals in the Commonwealth Workforce Development System, making 'sequences of courses' eligible for CareerLink funding
9. Working with a 'work group' to finalize plans and operational documents for the Career Street initiative
10. Submitting a PDE Equipment grant (non-competitive)

Director's Travel and Meetings—July & August 2013

The director's recent and scheduled meetings include:

- ❖ *Clarion County Career Center, New Director Visit*; Erie; July 8; Hosted CCCC's new director, Aaron Kline, for a campus tour and discussion with ECTS administrators
- ❖ *Workforce Investment Board*; Meadville; July 12; meeting of the northwest Pennsylvania Workforce Investment Board
- ❖ *Superintendent of Record, Transition Breakfast*; Edinboro; July 16; with Drs. James Tracy and Karen Downey; to review responsibilities of the Superintendent of Record
- ❖ *PA Teacher Effectiveness Training*; IU5; July 15-16; workshop on PDE's new observation and evaluation model
- ❖ *Senator Wiley's Secondary Education Advisory Committee*; Erie; July 19; advising the senator on secondary education matters
- ❖ *Career Street Meeting*; Erie; July 19; subcommittee working to finalize the project's plans and documentation
- ❖ *PA Comprehensive Planning Training*; IU5; July 23; workshop to acquire basic of the planning process and tools; with Natalie Fatica
- ❖ *PACTA Summer Conference*; State College; July 24 – 26; with Joe Tarasovitch, Jan Kennerknecht and Pat Holland; annual summer conference of career and technical education administrators
- ❖ *Pre-Apprenticeship Grant Summary Meeting*; Erie; July 31; with Debbie Thompson, President of Strategy Solutions; to gather project and grant details
- ❖ *Manufacturing Training Work Session*; Erie; August 5; an all-day event sponsored by Lord Corporation to identify and coordinate manufacturing training in Erie County
- ❖ *Career Street Meeting*; Erie; August 8; subcommittee review of web page
- ❖ *Corry Area School District*; Corry; August 13; with Sue Barra; to review Technical Assistance Program and department plans for 2013-2014
- ❖ *RCTC Supervisor Candidate Interviews*; ECTS; August 14; interviewing candidates for supervisor vacancy
- ❖ *New Teacher Orientation*; ECTS; August 15; welcome new faculty

- ❖ *Manufacturing Training*; Machining Concepts, Erie; August 20; with Kevin Smith, Advanced & Diversified Manufacturing Industry Partnership, and Jim Willats, President, Machining Concepts; to discuss credential-based training in the precision metal trades.
- ❖ *2013-2014 Faculty & Staff In-service*; ECTS; August 23 and August 26