A Partnership That Works

growing opportunities
A message from Marlin Miller:

Although 2008 marked the beginning of a difficult economic environment for our country, it was a good year for education in Pennsylvania. The governor and the Legislature reached agreement on a modification of state funding for education that provided much needed increases for urban school districts without seriously impacting all other districts. Hopefully this year’s state budget will continue this effort in line with the governor’s six year plan to improve urban educational opportunity with state generated funds rather than increased urban property taxes. If the Reading School District uses this increased funding wisely, and we believe that they will, we can expect real educational progress as measured by improved scores against state standards. Our Coalition has worked with many other groups in the state to improve school funding and we plan to continually monitor progress and success.

Monitoring progress by measuring results and making changes where indicated is a key activity in any successful organization. During 2008, and continuing into the current year, the Coalition has placed major emphasis on supporting the introduction of Performance Pathways measurement software into several of Berks County’s school districts and is supporting planning for such introduction in several more.

This has been a joint effort with the Berks County Intermediate Unit with the objective of supporting all districts in the development of tracking systems that measure the value added each year for each grade and each individual student. The Performance Pathways program provides approaches for validating and modifying curriculum or instructional approaches based on tracking of student progress. The Coalition believes Performance Pathways to be a powerful tool that can have a significant impact on student learning once it becomes embedded in a school district’s culture. For more information about this endeavor, please read the article on the following page. We look forward to reporting further progress on this initiative in future communications.

Throughout the year we continued to support our well-established programs: Career Pathways, InsideBerksBusiness, SAS inSchool Curriculum Pathways, and Higher Education/Basic Education Initiative. Bob Runkle, our Executive Director, continues to bring his high energy level and experience to all of these programs, and for this, we are fortunate and thankful.

Marlin Miller
Berks Schools Adopt Data-Informed Culture

A consortium of Berks County Schools has formed a partnership with Performance Pathways, Inc. and the Berks County Intermediate Unit to implement a “data-informed culture” into the educational process of their schools. Performance Pathways, named one of Pennsylvania’s top emerging businesses in 2008, will provide professional development services modeling the best practices for using curriculum and assessment data to improve student learning. The districts will follow a comprehensive professional development program developed by Dr. Kallick to utilize student assessment data to modify curriculum and instructional practices focused upon improving student achievement. Five additional districts have participated in a facilitated needs analysis with Dr. Kallick as of this writing, and will begin to participate in planning professional development for their faculty members.

Performance Pathways uses a suite of tools to assist educators develop validated student assessments around the Pennsylvania Academic Standards, map curriculum to the standards, and incorporate student assessment results into a data warehouse to facilitate the analysis of the data to modify instructional practices. This process enables teachers to constantly monitor each student’s performance against the state standards, and to offer intervention strategies for each student when appropriate to enhance his or her performance.

The Coalition is very interested in this data approach to improving student achievement. The private sector has known for many years that the appropriate application of data is crucial to any continuous improvement model. Performance Pathways is an excellent model for providing educators the necessary tools to apply student assessment data to a continuous improvement program in education.

Linda Stubits, Ed.D.
Assistant Superintendent
Oley Valley School District

We have worked with Performance Pathways closely for the past five years, and our partnership with Performance Pathways has grown to become an integral part of what we do in the Oley Valley School District. The products have really served us well. Performance Pathway’s powerful and extensive array of digital tools equips us well to fully engage our staff in creating an innovative, 21st-century, collaborative learning community. The software programs give teachers and administrators a format for saving all of their student data in one place so they can develop an excellent snapshot of student achievement. They can share the data with colleagues and parents, and the data can be used to provide presentation information to school board directors in support of new and current educational programs.

We use these tools to enhance our student learning outcomes, monitor their progress, and maintain data vital to continuous program improvement and increased student learning.
The Berks Business Education Coalition built upon the success of the previous year and remained focused on facilitating and supporting member schools’ efforts to improve career planning, academic performance, and higher education enrollment of students in Berks County.

**Career Pathways**

The Career Pathways Strategic Team met throughout the year to assist member schools in providing quality career development for the students of Berks County. The team surveyed the needs of the schools with respect to the resources required to implement the Pennsylvania Career Education and Work Standards. The standards provide direction to the schools of Pennsylvania for ensuring that all students within the Commonwealth receive quality career development instruction at the appropriate level from elementary through secondary education.

Training sessions were attended by more than 200 career educators throughout the year to assist them in incorporating the career education and work standards into their instruction, and to utilize resources for career instruction. The Pathways team also facilitated training sessions on Web resources, including the Career Cruising Web site (www.careercruising.com), providing students the opportunity to develop online career portfolios, which can be updated and maintained throughout their educational program. Programs also were held throughout the year at which districts could showcase their best practices in career development.

The Coalition facilitated the establishment of a countywide internship and workplace experience program called BerksWorks. This program will serve high school and college students and is funded by the Berks County Community Foundation, the Greater Reading Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Coalition. The coordinator for the program will maintain a database of employers and students interested in obtaining workplace experiences and will operate as a component of the career services department of the Penn State Berks campus. SympliCity Corporation software will provide the Web-based resource for the program.

The Coalition was fortunate to receive a third year of funding in the amount of $50,000 under the Regional Career Education Partnership grant. The funding is being used to support educator training in the Career Pathway model, and to support the BerksWorks and InsideBerksBusiness internship program for teachers.

The Coalition participated in the successful acquisition of a career development federal regional grant written by the Lehigh Valley Workforce Investment Board covering 10 counties. Berks County will receive $65,000 for the enhancement of its Career Pathways program, and two identified school districts will have the opportunity to receive $5,000 each for the successful development of a Career Academy program in their districts. Additional resources also will be provided for the expansion of Career Cruising software and Business Education Partnership enhancement.

**Performance Pathways**

The Coalition is pleased to support member school districts in an exciting innovation that provides educators with the tools and expertise to make informed decisions about instructional modifications necessary to continuously improve student achievement.

Performance Pathways is a suite of tools including Performance Tracker, a data warehouse; Tech Paths, a curriculum-mapping tool; and Assessment Builder, an assessment development tool. The tools provide educators the opportunity to view student performance in conjunction with instructional curriculum and practices and modify instruction accordingly to improve student performance.
Higher Education/Basic Education Initiative

The Higher Education/Basic Education Committee identified a need to facilitate dialog between college and high school faculty around strategies to increase post-secondary participation and to improve college readiness. The committee developed a survey to be administered to college and high school faculty. The survey is designed to collect information about each faculty member’s perception of the level of preparedness for entry-level college students in core academic subjects. Results of the survey will be shared with both faculty groups to inform discussions on the topic.

The Penn State Berks campus will host the first high school/college faculty meeting in February, which will include representatives from the county’s colleges and high schools. The Berks County High School Principals Association is providing support for the initiative and will assist the committee in the facilitation of the event.

The committee also supported and coordinated college tours and orientations for students in grades 8 and 9 from eight Berks County school districts. This activity provided students the opportunity to gain valuable insight into the key steps they need to take to prepare for college.
Berks Business Education Coalition

**goal:** To support member schools in their efforts to facilitate the improvement of student academic performance.

- The Coalition will support member schools in the utilization of SAS inSchool software, a Web-based curriculum resource in the core academic areas.
- The Coalition will support the county schools in the development of Performance Pathways, an innovation designed to improve student achievement by informing the modification of curriculum and instruction through the use of student assessment data.

**goal:** To support member schools in their efforts to increase the interest in and pursuit of higher education for all students in Berks County.

- To facilitate dialog between basic and higher education administration and faculty designed to achieve the stated goal.
- To facilitate high school student visits to Berks County college campuses.
- To facilitate an ongoing exchange of ideas between high school and college faculty targeted toward enhancing the college preparedness of incoming college students.
Goals and Objectives 2008-2009

**goal:**

To support member schools, employers and community-based organizations in providing quality k-12 career development programs for students in Berks County.

- The Coalition will support member schools throughout the year in offering training sessions on career resources and strategies to enhance career instruction.
- The Coalition will facilitate and support the implementation of a countywide internship program called BerksWorks for high school and college students.

**goal:**

To provide for the viability and sustainability of Coalition programs and services.

- To pursue grant opportunities in consort with the mission of the Coalition and in support of member schools and employers.
- To facilitate communication among Coalition members and promote membership in the Coalition through the enhancement of the BBEC’s communication tools, including the Web site, newsletters, and annual report.
- To facilitate an evaluation of programs and activities of the Coalition on an annual basis, and to recommend modifications where recommended and appropriate.
The Berks Business Education Coalition assisted the Berks County Intermediate Unit (BCIU) in a redesign of the Educator Internship program that the BCIU had operated for many years. The program provided educators a six-week internship program in the private sector designed to enable teachers to bring the lessons learned in business back to their students.

Participation in the program had declined to the point where it was no longer viable. The BCIU, in cooperation with the Coalition, met with the internship advisory committee during the 2007-2008 school year to retool the program. The new program, called InsideBerksBusiness, is a five-day educator-in-the-workplace program designed to give teachers an insider’s look at local businesses.

The program ran during the summer of 2008 and included 27 educators from 14 different school districts and 16 different Berks County employers.

The first part of the program includes a pre-internship meeting, where the intern becomes familiar with the host business and the business has an opportunity to learn about the intern’s background and interests. The first day includes a business orientation, including a company overview, discussion with members of the company’s human resources department, and a company tour.

Days two through four include department/site visits, job shadowing, special meetings and presentations, and a small business project. The fifth day is a seminar, which includes a company tour, sharing of experiences, and a presentation of a project by the educators to their business mentors.

Each participant is required to complete a school project that includes a slide show about his or her business experience and outcomes of the program and a classroom project abstract that describes plans for integrating career awareness activities into existing lessons. The benefits to business include the opportunity to market careers facing critical workforce shortages, to demonstrate which skills are vital to business success, and to influence the educational program.

“The internship gave me a greater understanding of the skills and experiences students need in a high-tech manufacturing company such as Carpenter Technology,” said Kevin Stump, a Boyertown Area Junior High West teacher, who served his internship at Carpenter. “I also learned of the activities and concerns faced by corporations.”

Cathi Witmer, a Conrad Weiser High School teacher, served her internship with the Reading Hospital and Medical Center. “It was exciting to see what businesses expect from our students,” she said. “I was intrigued by the technology that the hospital used in its day-to-day operations. We’re always concerned that we send students out into the ‘real world’ with useful tools to make them successful (with or without a college degree).”

The BCIU, the Coalition, and the entire advisory board for InsideBerksBusiness are very pleased with the outcome of the 2008 program and look forward to the session that will be held in summer 2009.

Information about InsideBerksBusiness can be found on the BCIU website at www.berksiu.org/ibb or by contacting Connie Skipper at 610-987-8496.
### Financial Statement – Calendar 2008 and 2007

#### Programs

**Program Funding:**

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<th>2008</th>
<th>2007</th>
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<tr>
<td>Business (Ed Impvt Tax Credit Contrib.)</td>
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<td>State and Federal Funding</td>
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<td>Foundation</td>
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<td><strong>Total Program Funding</strong></td>
<td><strong>$198,248</strong></td>
<td><strong>$347,450</strong></td>
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**Program Expenditures:**

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<tr>
<td>SAS in School Project</td>
<td>53,000</td>
<td>266,219</td>
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<td>Career Education Partnership Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>BerksWorks</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Program Expenditures</strong></td>
<td><strong>$196,625</strong></td>
<td><strong>$355,899</strong></td>
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**Program Gain (Loss)**

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,623</td>
<td>(8,449)</td>
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<td><strong>Total Gain (Loss)</strong></td>
<td><strong>($13,199)</strong></td>
<td><strong>$3,702</strong></td>
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#### Financial Position

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<th>2008</th>
<th>2007</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total Assets - Cash and Investments</td>
<td>$410,261</td>
<td>$447,885</td>
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<td>Less Assets Deferred for Future Program Projects</td>
<td>($344,050)</td>
<td>($398,476)</td>
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<td>Assets/Equity available for Operations</td>
<td>$66,211</td>
<td>$79,409</td>
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membership list

Albright College
Alvernia University
Antietam School District
Automotive Services, Inc.
Beard Miller Co., LLP
Berks Career & Technology Center
Berks County Community Foundation
Berks County Intermediate Unit
Berks Technical Institute
Bills Khakis, Inc.
Boscov’s Department Store
Boyertown Area School District
Brandywine Heights Area School District
E. J. Breneman, Inc.
Brentwood Industries
C.H. Briggs Hardware Company
Cabot Corporation
Carpenter Technology Corporation
Community Banks
Connors Investor Services, Inc.
Conrad Weiser Area School District
Daniel Boone Area School District
Dempsey’s Restaurants, Inc.
Diocese of Allentown
East Penn Manufacturing Company, Inc.
Easter Seals Eastern PA
J.C. Ehrlich Company Inc.
Elge Precision Machining
EnerSys, Inc.
Exeter Township School District
Fleetwood Area School District
Fulton Bank/Great Valley Division
Giant Food Stores, LLC
Governor Mifflin School District
Greater Reading Chamber of Commerce & Industry
Hamburg Area School District
Mr. Thomas Handwerk
Herbein + Company
Hofmann Industries
Home Builders Association of Berks County
J. F. Horrigan, Jr.
Junior Achievement of Berks County
Kutztown Area School District
Kutztown University
M&T Bank
Met-Ed, a First Energy Company
Muhlenberg School District
National Penn Bank
Offset Impressions, Inc.
Oley Valley School District
Olsen Design Group
Pace Institute/Pace Management
Penn State Berks
Penske Truck Leasing Co.
Performance Sports Apparel, Inc.
Quality Investment Castings, Inc.
Quadrant Engineering Plastic Products
Reading Area Community College
Reading Eagle Company
Reading Electric
Reading Hospital & Medical Center
Reading Precast
Reading School District
Reading Muhlenberg Career & Technology Center
David W. Rohrbach
Mr. Philip Rowe, Jr.
Mr. Rolf Schmidt
Schuylkill Valley School District
SFS intec, Inc.
Sovereign Bank Foundation
Stevens & Lee
Susquehanna Bancshares Inc.
Tray-Pak Corporation
Tulpehocken Area School District
Twin Valley School District
UGI Utilities, Inc.
VF Corporation
Verizon
Wachovia
Weidenhammer Systems Corporation
Wilson School District
Wyomissing Area School District
board members

Richard Bashore
Reading Electric

Dr. Thomas R. Chapman
Reading School District

James Connors
Connors
Investor Services

John D. Craig
EnerSys, Inc.

Rhoda E. Dersh
Pace Management, Inc.

Dr. Paul B. Eaken
Fleetwood Area
School District

Philip J. Fromuth
Diocese of Allentown

Brian Hard
Penske Truck
Leasing Company

Ellen T. Horan
Greater Reading
Chamber of Commerce & Industry

Dr. Helen Larson
Wyomissing Area
School District

Dr. Solomon Lausch
Schuylkill Valley
School District

William Long, Sr.
M&T Bank

Sallie Mikiewicz
East Penn
Manufacturing

Dr. Susan Phillips Speece
Penn State Berks

Roger Schmidt
E.J. Brenner

Rolf D. Schmidt
Performance
Sports Apparel

directors emeritus

Dr. Roger S. Hertz
(retired)
Berks County
Intermediate Unit

Carolyn H. Holleran
Jarlyn Foundation

John F. Horrigan, Jr.
(retired)
Horrigan American, Inc.

Dr. James E. Morrell
(retired)
Muhlenberg
School District

Dr. Gust Zogas
(retired)
Reading Area
Community College

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Steve Schumacher
Met-Ed.
a FirstEnergy Company

Bruce G. Smith
National Penn Bank

John Weidenhammer
Weidenhammer Systems
Corporation

Dr. Mary T. Weiss
Governor Mifflin
School District

Dr. Anna Weitz
Reading Area
Community College

Chester M. Winters
Worldnet Technology
Consultants, Inc.

Scott R. Wolfe, Sr.
Reading Hospital &
Medical Center

Dr. Jeffrey F. Zackon
Oley Valley School District

officers

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Former Chairman & CEO
Arrow International, Inc.

VICE CHAIRMAN
Dr. John George
Executive Director
Berks County
Intermediate Unit

TREASURER
Paul R. Roedel
Former CEO & President
Carpenter Technology
Corporation

SECRETARY
Alan Ottinger
PA Precision
Cast Parts, Inc.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Dr. Robert Runkle
Berks Business
Education Coalition