A Word From Dr. Larry O’Shea

I just returned from meetings in Harrisburg. At the Friday PAIU Executive Directors meeting, the Secretary of Education designee, Mr. Ron Tomalis graciously met with us to introduce himself. Mr. Tomalis is a charismatic, vibrant gentleman who is clear about his vision regarding public education and the fiscal issues that face the Commonwealth. Of course, the “elephant in the room” was the issue of school choice. Mr. Tomalis approached the topic honestly and with ease. He indicated to us that in his new role he will view public education through the lens of a parent. He and his wife have two daughters who attend public schools in Maryland where they currently live. They are in the process of looking for a home in the Harrisburg area, but want to make sure that he and his wife select an area with good public schools for their daughters. With this backdrop, he explained why he believes public education needs to make a transformative paradigm shift. As an example, he talked about how, when he was growing up, his song choices were between side A or side B of a 45rpm record. His daughters have hundreds of digital song choices on their iPods. Likewise, when he was growing up, he had four or five TV channels from which to choose; his daughters on the other hand have hundreds of channels from which to choose. The point is that we live in an age of consumer choice. From choices about cars, restaurants, clothes, and electric providers, we choose what we buy and which service providers we will use. One of the only remaining bastions where choice is absent, according to Mr. Tomalis, is public education. That is, when we move into a community, we are told which school district and school our children will attend, as well as which teacher will instruct them. Mr. Tomalis believes that we need to open the educational environment up so that education is individualized and the consumer has choices about how, and by whom, that education is delivered. Whether or not you agree with Mr. Tomalis’ view, he presents an interesting analogy and he reflects the views of the new Governor. With the issue of school choice at the forefront of the Corbett administration and the state’s estimated $4-5 billion revenue shortfall, we are going to experience some serious shifts in public education over the next four years. We need to be poised to adapt to whatever those changes may be while maintaining our focus on efficiently providing effective services.

DCIU Welcomes ELL Supervisor, Joe Flynn

We are pleased to welcome Joe Flynn to DCIU as our new Supervisor, English Language Learners Program (ELL). Joe was principal of the Glenolden School since April 2005, where AYP status was attained each year since 2007. He was instrumental in coordinating a data-driven instruction model with professional staff and developed a school-wide positive behavioral support system in grades one through eight. He also worked with District leadership to develop a math acceleration program. Prior to becoming principal, Joe taught middle school Social Studies for 15 years at Glenolden School. Joe earned his BS in Secondary Social Studies Education from Temple University in January 1988 and his Masters of Education from Widener University in August 1994. He then received his Elementary and Secondary Principal’s Certification from Immaculata University in February 2001. Joe is married with three daughters.
February 11 Deadline Approaches for Foundation Proposals

The DCIU Education Foundation is now accepting proposals for the Spring 2011 Mini-Grant Program. Applications were emailed to all DCIU supervisors but can also be found on the DCIU website by signing in and going to IU Staff/Forms/Education Foundation. The deadline for submitting the applications is February 11, 2011.

A committee will review the applications and score them according to the rubric found in the application packets. Awardees will be notified shortly after the approval of our Board of Directors on March 2. All grant funds must be spent by March 2, 2012; any unused grant funds will be returned to the Foundation’s general fund.

Please note that all outstanding grant funds from the March 2010 funding cycle must be used by March 5, 2011. Any balances will be written off and returned to the undesignated funds account and used for future awards. For questions or further information, contact Adriene Irving at ext. 2058.

The DCIU Head Start Fatherhood Initiative

On November 17 and 18, 2010, all ten of our Head Start Centers hosted a special event, “Donuts for Dads.” The purpose of this day was to recognize and support the vital, yet different, roles fathers play in the lives of their children. Fathers, grandfathers, uncles, big brothers, step-dads, or other important male role models participated in an interactive classroom activity and were provided donuts and juice as an extra bonus. The turnout was tremendous and the event was a wonderful success! We look forward to increasing involvement from Head Start Dads.

DCTS Receives Competitive Grant

DCTS was one of 29 schools that were awarded an Equipment Grant for the 2010/2011 school-year. The amount of the award was over $196,000 (matching fund).

The Equipment Grant is a competitive grant. There were 71 grant applications with 29 schools receiving funds based on their ability to demonstrate student achievement in the following areas: skill attainment (NOCTI), curriculum development, links to High Priority Occupation, academic integration (PSSA and 4sight), industry certifications for students etc.

DCTS continues to be successful at raising student achievement and addressing the academic standards as they relate to the career area program. This grant award highlights our ability to provide the best CTE programing for the students of Delaware County.
Sharing Talent and Recognizing Service (STARS)

The following STARS were recognized at the January Board meeting:

Nina Krautzel, DCIU Reading Specialist (nominated by Chrissie Olinger, District Reading Specialist from the Chichester School District and presented by Maryanne Regan)
This is what Ms. Olinger said: “Nina has been an amazing resource for the Chichester School District. Our district began an intensive search for a phonetic program to help benefit our Special Education students. We were very lucky to come in contact with Ms. Krautzel. She went out of her way to answer many questions about programs, needs of our students, etc. Our Special Ed. staff were able to ask her any questions, she shared materials and allowed us to come and view the implementation of this program. Nina has helped us beyond what was expected. She is a continued support for our students through Literacy Camp and always meets to discuss their progress at the end of the summer. We feel confident and secure in knowing that our students will have her in the summer months, she will take care of them and share a wealth of information with our staff! Nina is a wonderful asset to DCIU and an amazing friend to Chichester! We want to thank her for her continued support and always readily answering any questions that we may have!”

Dr. Irene Merenda, DCIU Audiologist, in the Hearing and Language Department (nominated by Christy Marzzacco and students)
DCIU is fortunate to have an Educational Audiologist as part of the Hearing Support Program. Specifically, you provide exemplary services to enhance the abilities and learning for the students at Strath Haven High School. Here’s what one of her recent beneficiaries had to say about the extraordinary support that she provides:
Jessica Simone writes:
“I can say so much about Dr. Merenda. She has helped me ever since I first started in this program in second grade. I am now in tenth grade and, all through the years, I’ve tended to have some sorts of problems; whether it was when I needed a new ear mold, a loaner hearing aid, because my dog ate mine, or a loaner transmitter. Dr. Merenda was always there to help me regain what I had lost. Dr. Merenda cannot simple be called a great audiologist or an amazing audiologist because she is more than just great or amazing. I say this because she has been there as quick as she can even with all of her students in this county. She makes sure we all get what we need and she tries her hardest to help us receive what it is we need. For example, recently on the first day of school, I had no equipment to come to school with because my parents and I are currently trying to get new equipment for me. My mother had called Dr. Merenda to tell her I needed a loaner hearing aid but because Dr. Merenda has so many students she said, she’ll try her best to get it as soon as possible but it might take a few days. The very next day I had a loaner hearing aid waiting for me. I have to say I’ve never met someone as caring as Dr. Merenda. She truly is an extraordinary audiologist.”

DCTS teaching team of Paul Tresca and Rich Caruth (nominated by the DCTS administrative team of Phil Lachimia, Mark Ornstein, Gina Crawford, Ryan Coughlin and Jim Rogers)
Mr. Paul Tresca, the Emergency and Protective Services instructor, along with Mr. Richard Caruth, his Teaching Assistant, consistently provide their students with the education and training needed to enter the workforce in a wide range of career opportunities including Emergency Medical Technician, Police Officer, EMS Dispatcher, Fire Fighter, and other health and safety related fields. They do this with dedication every day and should be recognized for these efforts alone. But this recognition is something special and is linked to one of their students’ ability to utilize the skills she was taught in a real life setting and perform a heroic deed. That student is Darlene Dougherty, who is credited with saving her father’s life by using the knowledge and skills gained at DCTS.
Safe Lifting Techniques of Children

Do’s and Don’ts for Safe Lifting

Golden Rule: “Do not lift with your back, lift with your legs”

Do…
- Place your feet and knees at least shoulder width apart or front to back in a wide-step position. This will allow you to bend at the hips, while keeping your back relatively straight.
- Squat with your chest and buttocks sticking out. If you do this correctly, your back will be flat and your neck will balance in a relaxed neutral position.
- Take weight off one or both arms if possible. When you squat down or push back up, use your hand or elbow as support on your thigh or any available structure. This takes some of the compression and strain off of your lower back.

Don’t…
- Lift with your feet close together as it can result in poor leverage, instability, and a tendency to round your back.
- Lift with your knees and hips straight.
- Tense or twist your neck when lifting.
- Lift children that are too heavy for you.

Supervisor Joe Pardini Reviews Safe Lifting Techniques

In light of the recent inclement weather, this is a good time to review some concerns and issues with lifting small children. We must take great care when lifting a child and we should avoid lifting children whenever possible, especially on wet and slippery surfaces. You should make sure you have all the information you need before you make a personal decision to lift a child. In some cases, lifting a small child could be considered a restraint.

Is the child displaying a behavior and is the staff involved implementing a behavior plan for that student? Remember non-compliance and flopping in the hallway are behavior issues and we should not intervene on other staff implementing behavior plans unless they ask for assistance or we think they are in danger of becoming too emotionally involved in the behavior incident. At that point we are to say: “You have a phone call in the office.”

Some personal points:
- Set a personal weight limit based on your height and weight. NEVER exceed 50lbs.
- Know the child you are lifting (muscle tone, behavior, cognitive level)
- Learn how to lift properly
- THINK!!! about what you are going to do
- NEVER RUSH INTO A LIFT!!!

Info taken from Niagara Peninsula Children's Centre Handout:
Remember to always get the proper information that is needed BEFORE attempting to lift. If you have any doubts at all about your own physical well-being regarding lifting, don't be afraid to ask for help! Never put yourself or the child at risk for injury. Take your time, and only do as much as your body feels comfortable with. Exceeding your limits can result in severe back trauma and possibly irreparable damage! Take care! Your back will thank you.