

# BOCES BITS

November 2010 Vol. 6 Issue 9

Jessica F. Cohen, District Superintendent • Laurie Cook, Editor

## From the District Superintendent

Dear Staff:

We are now two months into the 2010-2011 school year and with the holidays fast approaching, I can't help but think that the new year will be here before we know it. How fast time flies! Wasn't it just the beginning of school?

During the past few months, our Student Services staff has been busy with some very successful open houses and parent conferences, bringing hundreds of parents and family members in to see the wonderful work that we do. Teachers and administrators in our component districts have participated in some exceptional conferences sponsored by the Regional Information Center, Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Department, and the School Library System. Jeff Craig, our Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services, has been the "guru" for our districts (and others across the state) in developing work plans for the Race to the Top applications. Shortly after the very successful CNYRIC Open House, the RIC launched a new initiative focusing on improving customer service. And, our non-instructional services continue to grow to serve our districts. Plans for new services to begin soon include energy management, medicaid support, and additions to our Central Business Office.

A highlight of this month has been the launching of the new OCM BOCES website. Please take a moment to go to [www.ocmboces.org](http://www.ocmboces.org) to see our new look and the new content that is available. Let us know what you think!

One of the things that I love about my job is that no day is the same. Recently, OCM BOCES Henry Campus CTE Programs were visited by a group of educators from the Russian Republic of Buryatia and several of us had a chance to meet and talk with these teachers and administrators. The group toured many of our CTE classrooms and were amazed and impressed with our facilities, our technology, and our teachers and students. After

the tour, we met with their group to answer questions. One of their questions was about attracting quality teachers because in their country, it is a huge challenge.

Listening to the Buryatian's account of their educational system, I know that I am thankful for our educational system. I am also thankful for the students who come to us each day and for their families who entrust us with their children. And, I am thankful for all of our wonderful staff and the great work they do everyday. Have a happy Thanksgiving!

*Jessica*

### BOCES BOE Endorses New Website

In mid-October, OCM BOCES went "live" with their new website, the work of a committee overseeing the labors of many employees. The site has been designed to give BOCES an improved web presence and provide users with comprehensive information about our programs and services. The site uses the same URL and has the same information about BOCES, with the addition of many updated and improved features, including a news blog and event information. The blog allows information about our students, programs and events to be made available in a more timely fashion. Many of the stories are generated from information submitted for *BOCES Bits*. In the very near future, the website will also showcase video features about OCM BOCES.

At the October 28 Board of Education meeting, members had the opportunity to "tour" the new site, guided by Assistant Superintendent Jeff Craig. Board members heartily approved the look and features of the new site. Many thanks to everyone involved for their hard work!

### OCM BOCES Board Members

Michael J. Brady  
Wayne Brownson, *Vice President*  
Catherine Cifaratta-Brayton  
Roseann DuBrava  
Mark W. Gilbert  
Mary Ann Haley

Mike Murphy  
Lisa O'Reilly  
David Paczkowski  
Joan Reeves  
Ann Wright, *President*

## School Library System Holds 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Fall Conference

OCM BOCES School Library Systems held their 13<sup>th</sup> annual Fall Conference on Thursday, October 28, 2010 at the Doubletree Hotel on Carrier Circle. The conference, featuring Keynote Speaker Dr. Ross Todd, was held in conjunction with Oswego County BOCES and the Syracuse City School District.

More than 200 participants from around the state, including the majority of OCM BOCES component districts, attended this year's conference. Audience members included superintendents, principals, technology directors and library media specialists.

Special guest speaker, Library Services Specialist Deborah Taylor, discussed multicultural literature and resources available for curriculum across the grade levels. The conference featured many workshops focused on technology, innovative programming and learning tools.

Congratulations on another successful conference!



*SLS Fall Conference Keynote Speaker, Dr. Ross Todd is an Associate Professor at Rutgers University School of Communication and Information. In his keynote address, and through two conference workshops, Dr. Todd discussed the integration of technology and learning and the key roll that libraries play in their fusion.*

## BOCES Staff Present at State School Boards Association's Conference

The New York State School Boards Association's 91<sup>st</sup> Annual Convention and Trade Show took place in New York City from October 21 - 24. As a new feature at this year's conference, a comprehensive series of workshops about BOCES was made available to attendees. The series, entitled, "BOCES – Unleashing the Potential," consisted of five interactive workshops.

One of those five workshops entitled "Show me the Money! Regional Cost-Saving Strategies Through Cooperative Efforts," was presented by OCM BOCES' own staff. District Superintendent Cohen, along with Assistant Superintendent for Administration, Deborah Ayers; Central Services Manager Sean Joyce; and Energy Services Coordinator Kathy Stokes presented the workshop.

The session was designed to provide attendees, which included board of education members, superintendents and assistant superintendents, with information on current cost-saving efforts available through BOCES. Areas explored in the presentation included cooperative and energy purchasing, central business office services and other cooperative initiatives such as fiber networks, workers' compensation/health cooperatives and shared food services.

Session attendees were given strategies for facilitating conversations with their own neighboring districts about saving money by consolidating with BOCES.

As an additional session at the NYSSBA Convention, OCM BOCES' Superintendent Jessica Cohen presented a BOCES 101 workshop, examining the purpose of BOCES as a resource for school districts, discussing the organization's history and teaching about programs, services and cost saving opportunities through BOCES.

The convention provided state-wide exposure for BOCES and our staff represented OCM very well! Great job!

## OCM BOCES Seeking LPN and Clinical Instructors

**Please feel free to pass this job opening on to family and friends:**

OCM BOCES has an immediate need for a full time evening lead classroom instructor and full and part time clinical instructors for their daytime and evening programs located in Cortland, Syracuse and Liverpool.

Candidate must have a current RN license and recent acute care/hospital experience is preferred. Long term/sub-acute experience will be considered. BS in nursing preferred; RN with Associate's degree considered. Salary range \$23.00-\$27.00/per hour depending on education and experience. No weekends or holidays.

Send cover letter and resume to: Linda Horton-Cook, OCM BOCES Assistant Director for Adult Education, Lee G. Peters Career Training Center, 4500 Crown Road, Liverpool, NY 13090.

## Flexible Spending Account (FSA) Year-End Reminder

### Participants of Flexible Spending Accounts - Your Plan Year is ending soon!

As a participant in OCM BOCES' Flexible Spending Account (FSA) Plan, you know the value of paying for out-of-pocket medical and/or daycare expenses "tax-free". By electing an FSA, you saved money by not paying FICA, federal and most state income taxes on your election amount.

### Use it – Don't lose it

Check your balance at the Benefit Resource, Inc. (BRI) website: [www.BenefitResource.com](http://www.BenefitResource.com). According to IRS regulations, you will forfeit any money left in your account at the end of the run-out period. Please check your Plan Highlights for information concerning claim submission details.

### Account Information Available

- [www.BenefitResource.com](http://www.BenefitResource.com), provides:
  - *Online Account Review: account balance and other detailed information about your FSA.*
  - *Claim Forms: fill in online, print, sign and submit to BRI with supporting documentation.*
  - *Plan Highlights: provides information about the run-out period for claim submission after the end of your Plan Year.*
  - *SPD, Plan Document: provides additional detailed information about your Plan.*
  - *FAQ's: for the important information.*
- **IVR Account Review:** Available 24/7 at 1-800-473-9595. Press 4 for information regarding account balances, deposits, transactions and reimbursements.
- **Live Chat:** BRI Participant Services Representatives are available online Monday - Friday from 8 AM - 5 PM Eastern Time. Participants simply log in at [www.BenefitResource.com](http://www.BenefitResource.com) to do an online Live
- **Chat with a BRI representative.** Call Center: BRI Participant Services Representatives are available Monday - Friday from 8 AM - 8 PM Eastern Time at (800) 473-9595.
- **Participant Services Email:** [participantservices@benefitresource.com](mailto:participantservices@benefitresource.com)

### Re-enroll

In order to continue your tax savings, you will need to re-enroll in the plan during your employer's open enrollment period. Use the BRI website to access Medical and Dependent Care worksheets and the Over-The-Counter (OTC) chart to estimate your next Plan Year election(s).

## New York State Senior Deputy Commissioner Comes to OCM BOCES



On Wednesday, October 27, New York State Senior Deputy Commissioner John King Jr., addressed more than 40 area superintendents and principals at OCM BOCES' Rodax Complex. Dr. King's presentation at BOCES was in order to discuss the New York State Regents Reform Agenda, which includes the following priorities: teacher preparation and effectiveness, curriculum and professional development, assessment, leadership, early childhood, raising graduation rates, replacing failing schools, building a P-20 data system and transforming the State Education Department.

During his presentation, Dr. King described the Department's and Board of Regents' vision for college and career readiness for all students. Dr. King was accompanied by Ken Slentz, Associate Commissioner of District Services. Mr. Slentz connected the State's *Race to the Top* application to the reform agenda.

After the meeting at OCM BOCES, Dr. King and Mr. Slentz traveled to Cayuga-Onondaga BOCES where they addressed area principals and board of education members.

*Pictured left: Dr. John King Jr. addresses an audience at OCM BOCES on October 27, 2010.*

## CONGRATULATIONS! KUDOS! GREAT JOB! WELL DONE! BRAVO!

If you know of an OCM BOCES student or employee that has done a great job on a project or if you know someone that should be recognized for an achievement they've made, please let us know about it! We'd like to get the word out about the great things that are going on in our organization. Send your information to Laurie Cook at [lcook@ocmboces.org](mailto:lcook@ocmboces.org) or call at 431-8597.

### Health & Safety Employee Furthers Education

Congratulations to OCM BOCES' Debra Eichholtz who recently graduated from SUNY Brockport with a Certificate of Advanced Study in School District Business Leadership. Debra has been employed as a Safety Officer with OCM BOCES since 2003. In October, she took on a part-time position with the Marcellus School District as a shared school business administrator. Through OCM BOCES, Debra also maintains a part-time safety officer position with the Fayetteville-Manlius School District. Congratulations and good luck Deb!

### School Library Systems Coordinator and School Librarian Co-Author National Magazine Article

Congratulations to School Library Systems Coordinator Judith Dzikowski and OCM BOCES School Librarian Mary Tiedemann for their recent collaboration, "The Data-Driven Library Program." Their article, focused on collaboration and the PALS (Partners in Achievement: Library and Students) program, was published in the August/September issue of the national publication "Library Media Connection Magazine." Judi and Mary co-authored the article with Justin Ashworth, a library media specialist at McNamara Elementary School in the Baldwinsville Central School District. The article is available online via the OCM BOCES School Library Systems' website at <http://sls.ocmboces.org/> and clicking on the article link. Congratulations Judi and Mary!

### Payroll Supervisor and Payroll Team Leader Present Through Webinar

In late September, OCM BOCES Payroll Supervisor Dennis Hill and Central Business Office Payroll Team Leader Trina Hapgood, were presenters in a webinar sponsored by the New York State Association of School Business Officials. The payroll webinar was designed for school business officials to help them examine their payroll functions and identify key problem areas within their departments. Dennis and Trina also provided a discussion on internal audit procedures. Great job Dennis and Trina!

### Here we Grow Again!

Please note that OCM BOCES' Central Business Office has moved to a larger space in Rodax 8 due to growth in requests for services. The Itinerant Services office (Steve Saya, Kathy Miller and Melanie Schreiner) is now located in the Henry Administration building.

### Holiday Stress? Think EAP!

The holidays can be a stressful time for everyone. If the holidays have you stressed and/or overwhelmed, call the Employee Assistance Program! Confidential counselors are available to help with family stress, financial problems, or simply feeling down at the holidays or anytime.

For more information about OCM BOCES Employee Assistance Program or to make an appointment, visit their website at: <http://eap.ocmboces.org> or call 1-800-EAP-8764, (315) 471-1361.

### BOCES Students' "Pop Tops" Collection Efforts Need Employee Support



Students in Janet Clark's laboratory technology classes and Robin Willey's health occupations classes at the Henry Campus have been learning about recycling and reducing as part of their science curriculum. Melinda Shimer is the science teacher instructing the lessons. While learning about recycling, students came up with the idea to support the Central New York Ronald McDonald house by doing some recycling of their own. The students have begun collecting pop tops to support

the charity, and their efforts have grown outside of their own classrooms. Culinary program students have joined in and are recycling mayonnaise jars to provide the containers for the collection. The graphic design program is also involved with students designing labels for the containers. The containers are being placed throughout BOCES in order to collect as many tops as possible. If a container has not yet been placed in your work area, please contact Janet Clark at [jlark@ocmboces.org](mailto:jlark@ocmboces.org) and let her know that you would like to help support the students in their collection efforts. *Pictured above: On October 27, 2010 Brian Hayes from the Ronald McDonald house came to the Henry Campus to talk to students about how their efforts will help children locally.*