

BOCES BITS

November 2011 | Vol. 7 Issue 9

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

From the District Superintendent

Dear Staff:

It is with very mixed emotions that I share with you my intent to retire effective July 31, 2012.

The past nine years have been marked by daily interactions with individuals who have been committed to the success of our students, service to our districts, and support to our community. I can honestly say that I have loved coming to work (almost) every day during the past nine years.

When I arrived in January 2003, I decided that I wanted my legacy to be in the ways we worked with and were successful with students who had not found their passion or success in other places. While there is always room for growth, I hope that legacy has been achieved. Our student

programs have soared in scope and in the opportunities that they provide for students.

What I realized was, while essential, a focus on students was not enough. We had the power to contribute to the education of students by also improving the instructional and technological supports to teachers, administrators, and other staff in our region. The growth in these services as well as the increased respect and credibility that we have achieved has been phenomenal.

Nine years ago, our non-instructional programs were limited in scope. Many of our districts felt that doing things on their own was the best way. Now our districts are turning to us for assistance with cooperative purchasing, central business office support, centralized food, and many more services. The savings realized by these cooperative efforts allow districts to redirect funding to students and their success, thus completing the circle.

There is still much more to be done. I am committed to working vigorously over the next months to meeting the challenges of a significant educational reform agenda within a difficult fiscal environment. As I see you at this year's round of Conversations with the District Superintendent, I will share with you the fiscal challenges we face and invite you to help us develop the solutions.

At a recent Open House at CTC, I watched as one of our Stellata students read to his parents the messages on the I am thankful for... bulletin board. The parents beamed as the child read to them and it was apparent that they were thankful for all that our teachers had accomplished with their son. As Thanksgiving approaches, I know that there are many things that I have to be thankful for—my family, my friends, and the staff at BOCES.

Have a wonderful Thanksgiving.

Jessica

Students in the Spotlight!



On Wednesday, November 2, 2011, students from the OCM BOCES McEvoy Education Campus SkillsUSA and Epicurean Club hosted a pulled pork fund raising dinner at the school's campus in Cortland. Meals of a pulled pork sandwich with coleslaw and a beverage, were sold for \$5.00 each, raising money to support the students in their ProStart and SkillsUSA occupational competitions.

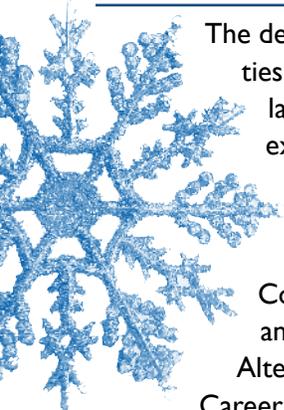
Pictured above: OCM BOCES students Carole (Graphic Communications) and Lena (Culinary Arts) Beckwith, sisters from the DeRuyter Central School District, sold tickets for the McEvoy Education Campus pulled pork dinner fund raiser.

OCM BOCES Emergency Closing Procedures for the 2011-2012 School Year

Since weather conditions can vary greatly across the OCM territory, different criteria are used to close our campuses. For this year, there are some slight changes to the procedure.



ONONDAGA COUNTY FACILITIES



The decision to close OCM BOCES student facilities is based on whether or not some of our larger districts decide to close impacting the expected attendance. If Baldwinsville, East Syracuse Minoa, Fayetteville-Manlius, Liverpool, and North Syracuse are closed, then OCM BOCES facilities in Onondaga County will typically be closed for students and instructional staff. These facilities include:

Alternative to Homebound, Career Academy, Career Training Center, Henry Campus, Kasson Road, Onondaga Alternative High School (STARS),

Cedar Street Educational Program, New Vision Program Sites, and Reach. Please note change: Kasson Road is closed only if OCM BOCES is closed.

The following BOCES classrooms that are located in component school district buildings will close if the district is closed: Behavior Management (Chestnut Hill Elementary in the Liverpool District,) Children's Village (Park Hill Elementary in the East Syracuse Minoa District,) SKATE (Allen Road Elementary in the North Syracuse District, Morgan Road Elementary in the Liverpool District and Onondaga Road Elementary and Camillus Middle School in the West Genesee District,) STAR (Homer Elementary, Intermediate, Junior High and High School in the Homer District,) and TEAM (Stonehedge Elementary in the West Genesee District, Solvay Middle School in the Solvay District and Liverpool High School in the Liverpool District.)

We will use several radio stations and television stations to air the announcements. They are as follows:

Radio Stations: AM 570, AM 620, FM 93.1, FM 94.5, FM 95.7, FM 104.7, FM 105.9 and FM 107.9.

TV Channels: 3, 5, 9 and 10

ADMINISTRATIVE, CLERICAL AND SERVICE PERSONNEL

Administrative, Clerical, and Service Personnel –

Administrative, clerical, and service personnel are expected to report to work when BOCES facilities are closed for students and instructional personal.

When Onondaga or Cortland area BOCES facilities are closed, and there is a “no travel” order declared in that county, no employees are to report to work, except maintenance personnel and other individuals designated by the District Superintendent. Employees who reside in, or must pass through a county where there is a “no travel” order in effect, will not be charged for workdays lost.

CORTLAND COUNTY FACILITIES

If Cortland and Homer districts are closed, then OCM BOCES facilities located in Cortland County will be closed. If only one of the aforementioned districts is closed, and the Career and Technical Education program enrollment by all districts totals one-half or more, OCM facilities located in Cortland County will remain open. Under certain extenuating circumstances a decision to remain open may be made. Under all circumstances, the safety of our staff and students will be considered.

The OCM BOCES facilities located in Cortland County include: McEvoy Campus, Cortland Alternative School, and New Vision Program Sites.

We will use several radio stations and television channels to announce the closing of OCM facilities located in Cortland County. They are as follows:

Radio Stations: AM 680, AM 870, AM 1290, AM 1430, AM 1470, FM 92.5, FM 97.3, FM 98.1, FM 99.1, FM 101.5, FM 103.3, FM 103.7, FM 104.1, FM 105.7 and FM 107.5.

TV Channels: 3, 5, 9 and 12

ADULT EDUCATION & WORKSHOPS



Adult Education –

Adult Education daytime classes will be closed for students if the OCM facilities are closed in the designated county. Evening class closings will be announced separately by JoAnne Flood (Onondaga County) and John Iorio (Cortland County).

Workshops –

Any workshops that are scheduled through OCM BOCES Instructional Support Services will occur unless there is a state of emergency.

34 McEvoy Students Inducted Into National Technical Honor Society



Thirty-four students from the OCM BOCES McEvoy Education Campus were inducted into the National Technical Education Society on Wednesday November 2, 2011. Students selected for the technical honor society represent the “best of the best” in McEvoy’s Career and Technical Education Programs. In order to be inducted into the technical honor society students must have an 85 average or higher, 12 or fewer absences from their program for the year and receive a teacher endorsement. Students must also demonstrate attributes that include: respect, honesty, skill, responsibility, leadership, service and citizenship. Congratulations to the students and their families!

Pictured above left: an OCM BOCES Culinary Arts student from the Cortland City School District lights one of the eight National Technical Honor

Society candles. The eight candles represent the core attributes of knowledge, skill, honesty, service, responsibility, scholarship, citizenship and leadership. Pictured right: an OCM BOCES NTHS inductee enters the auditorium prior to the evening’s ceremony. Pictured below: an OCM BOCES NTHS inductee shakes the hand of his instructor as he prepares to receive his purple rope to wear at his graduation this spring.

The complete list of inductees from the McEvoy Campus is as follows:

Cortland City School District: Lawrence Berry (Construction Technology), Frederick Brown (Automotive Collision Technology), Zachary Corl (Culinary Arts), Taylor Grossi (Health Occupations Technology), Stephen Sherman (Culinary Arts).

DeRuyter Central School District: Aaron Marshall (Construction Technology).

Fabius Pompey Central School District: Anthony Ashley (Automotive Technology), Steven Cook (Automotive Collision Technology), Eric Dow (Construction Technology), Jacob Holtham (Construction Technology), April June (Health Occupations Technology), Jay Vinson (Construction Technology).

Homer Central School District: Lidia Aristy (Health Occupations Technology), Michael Barron (Automotive Technology), Malin Belknap (Automotive Collision Technology), Jocelyn Dewey (Automotive Technology), Richard Gunn (Construction Technology), Alyson Pace (Graphic Communications), Nathan Poole (Construction Technology), Markus Proulx (Automotive Technology), Tyler Widrick (Computer Technology).

Marathon Central School District: Saraya DePuy (Criminal Justice), Ciaran McCall (Health Occupations Technology), Heather McCall (Graphic Communications), Samantha McMahon (Graphic Communications), Tessa Miner (Health Occupations Technology), Christian Seyerle (Criminal Justice).



McGraw Central School District: Ryan Burke (Automotive Collision Technology), Lisa Corl (Health Occupations Technology), Adrienne Francey (Criminal Justice), Thomas Miller (Health Occupations Technology), Wade Morse (Construction Technology), Cameron Thompson (Automotive Collision Technology).

Tully Central School District: Sierra Patriarco (Culinary Arts).



~November~ National Caregivers Month



For Information Contact:

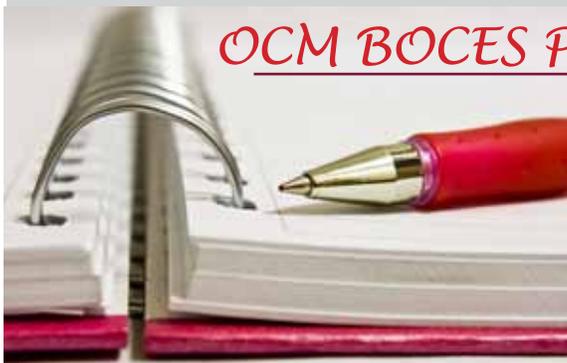
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www.eap.ocmboces.org

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OCM BOCES Personnel Office News & Notes...



Health Insurance Premiums

You may have recently read in the *Post-Standard*, that Excellus (Blue Cross/Blue Shield) will be raising premium rates by 8.32% on January 1, 2012. Every year about this time, the New York Insurance Department reviews the rate requests of insurers in the State, and publishes the increases they are approving for the next calendar year. These rates are for community rated plans in the State.

The coverage provided by the OCM BOCES to our employees is through the Central New York Health Insurance Cooperative. The Cooperative is a self funded health insurance plan that contracts with Excellus as our provider. By working together, the BOCES and the other school districts in the Cooperative are able to pool our experience and can usually keep our rate increases below those of community rated plans.

While we do not yet have rates set for next year, we expect that they will be well below the 8.32% mentioned in the news. The Cooperative works to keep our rate increases low by effectively managing the plan's finances and overhead costs. Still, health insurance is an expensive benefit. A family plan for the members of the OCM BFT and COMBO units costs \$15,537 per year. The family plan for all other BOCES employees costs \$953 less (\$14,584) because they are covered under a three tiered drug plan.

In total, the BOCES will pay nearly nine million dollars in health insurance premiums for active employees this school year. Each 1% increase in premium rates will cost the BOCES \$90,000. To the extent we can keep costs down, through effective management of the health insurance plan and changes in benefits that result in premium savings, we will better be able to protect programs and jobs.

Flexible Spending Plan Enrollment

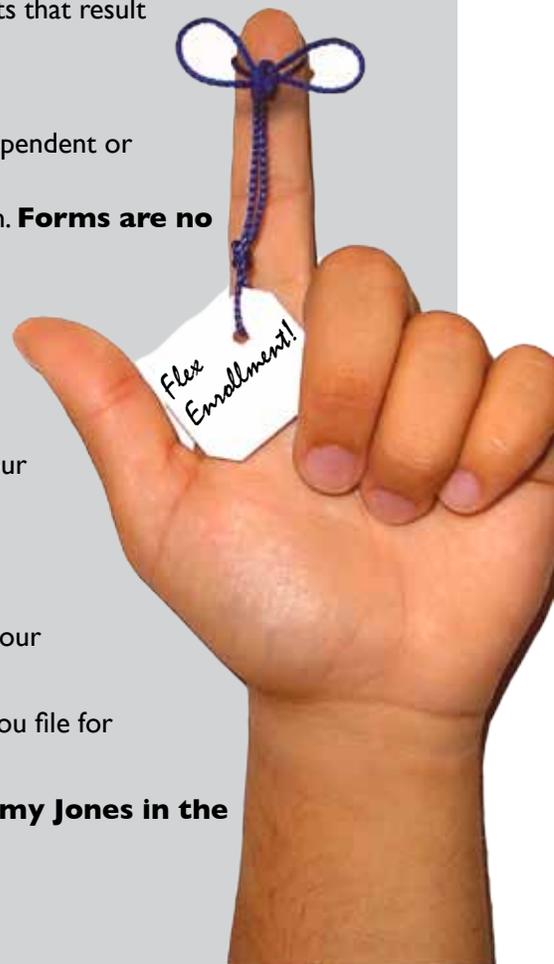
OCM BOCES employees wishing to participate in Flexible Spending (Medical, Dependent or Premium Reimbursement) during the 2012 plan year (January 1, 2012 through December 31, 2012) must enroll or re-enroll by completing a Flex Spending form. **Forms are no longer being distributed with paychecks.** Forms are available online at <http://www.ocmboces.org/teacherpage.cfm?teacher=1103>.

In addition to enrolling in a flex plan for 2012, this website will allow you to download forms for the following:

- SUMMARY PLAN DESCRIPTION - FLEXIBLE BENEFIT PLAN WITH BENIVERSAL MASTERCARD PREPAID CARD - This will answer many of your questions regarding the plan
- MEDICAL CARE EXPENSE WORKSHEET - This will help you calculate your out-of-pocket expenses for medical related expenses
- DEPENDENT CARE EXPENSE WORKSHEET - This will help you calculate your out-of-pocket expenses for child care
- FLEXIBLE SPENDING REIMBURSEMENT CLAIM FORM - This is the form you file for reimbursement of covered Flexible Spending Expenses

Flexible Spending Enrollment forms need to be returned to Tammy Jones in the Personnel Office by December 16, 2011.

For additional information on flexible spending through Benefit Resource, Inc., visit their website at <http://www.benefitresource.com>.



School Library System Holds 14th Annual Fall Conference

The OCM BOCES School Library System, in conjunction with the School Library Systems at Oswego County BOCES and the Syracuse City School District, held their 14th Annual Fall Conference, "School Libraries: Every Student's Future Starts Here..." on Wednesday, November 9, 2011 at the Doubletree Hotel in East Syracuse.

The keynote speaker, Doug Johnson, has been the Director of Media and Technology for Mankato Public Schools in Minnesota since 1991. He has also served as an adjunct faculty member of Minnesota State University since 1990. His teaching experience has included work in grades K-12 both in the United States and Saudi Arabia. Mr. Johnson is the author of five books, a long-running column in the *Library Media Connection* publication, the *Blue Skunk Blog* and his articles have appeared in over forty books and periodicals. Doug has worked with over 160 organizations around the world and has held leadership positions in state and national organizations, including ISTE (International Society for Technology in Education) and AASL (American Association of School Librarians.)

Workshops were also held throughout the conference, on topics related to school libraries in the digital age, social media, exploring new learning, electronic learning and Common Core Standards.

For more information on the School Library Systems at OCM BOCES, Oswego County BOCES or the Syracuse City School District, or on their fall conference, please visit the OCM BOCES School Library System's website at <http://sls.ocmboces.org> or call 315/433-2670. Congratulations on another successful conference!



Pictured: Keynote speaker Doug Johnson discusses Common Core Standards at the Fall 2011 SLS Conference

REACH Students Learn Outside the Classroom and Help Soldiers



OCM BOCES REACH students from the Lee G. Peters Career Training Center in Liverpool are taking part in several unique field trips this year. One such trip was to Syracuse's University Hospital for the "Let's Not Meet By Accident" program. Through the program, OCM BOCES students toured the hospital's trauma center, and visited the center's helicopter pad (pictured above.) While at the hospital, the students learned about living a healthy lifestyle and heard about professions in the medical field.

REACH students are also partnering with OCM BOCES Adult Education Dental Assisting teacher, Nancy Chappell, and her students to write letters to American soldiers and to collect donations for care packages which will be sent to the soldiers.

OCM BOCES Board Members

Ann Wright, *President*

Wayne Brownson, *Vice President*

Michael J. Brady

Catherine Cifaratta-Brayton

Roseann DuBrava

Mark W. Gilbert

Mary Ann Haley

Mike Murphy

Lisa O'Reilly

David Paczkowski

Joan Reeves

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 or call at 431-8597.

OCM BOCES Adult Education Welding Instructor Wins Multiple Awards



Congratulations to OCM BOCES Adult Education Welding Instructor Gordon (Gordy) McCaffer for recently having received two awards from the American Welding Society (AWS.) Gordy received the "Educator of the District" award for the Syracuse section of the AWS and the "District Educator of the Year" award for the local district, which includes Central, Northern and Western New York and Northern Pennsylvania. The awards were published in a recent issue of *The Welding Journal*, a national trade magazine.

Gordy has been an OCM BOCES Adult Education teacher for the past four years. He teaches both full and part time programs for BOCES. Congratulations Gordon McCaffer!

Kasson Road Physical Education/Recreation Teacher Honored

Congratulations to OCM BOCES Physical Education and Recreation teacher, William Myers, for being selected to receive a 2011 New York State Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AHPERD) Central North Zone Outstanding Educator award. AHPERD's awards are given annually to individuals who have demonstrated dedication, hard work and countless hours of service in the field of physical education, health recreation and dance. William was recognized at the association's awards ceremony on November 3, 2011 at the Rusty Rail in Canastota. Congratulations and great job William!

OCM BOCES Part of Newhouse School of Syracuse University's Fall Workshop



Shaping Lives At Work & At Home by Alyssa Stone

More than 100 students and coaches from the Newhouse School of Syracuse University were on location in Liverpool, NY from October 13 through 16, 2011 to learn about and photograph the community during The Fall Workshop, an annual multimedia and photo project. Over the four days, students documented life in Liverpool through photographs, sound recordings, video and writings.

The OCM BOCES Lee G. Peters Career Training Center in Liverpool was pleased to be able to host a portion of the Workshop by opening its doors to the students and staff and allowing them to tell part of Liverpool's story through BOCES. Two OCM BOCES students Tom Miller (from the Baldwinsville Central School District) and Queshawn Nuamah-Williams (from

the North Syracuse Central School District) also had the opportunity to work with the Syracuse University students and coaches and learn about photography.

Several pieces from The Fall Workshop have already been made available online at: <http://www.thefallworkshop.com>. Photos and video continue to be added to the website for The Fall Workshop so be sure to check back often.

Pictured above is a clip of a video taken by Syracuse University student Alyssa Stone as part of her work with the School's Fall Workshop at OCM BOCES. The video can be viewed online from the workshop's website.