

BOCES BITS

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

From the District Superintendent

Dear Staff,

I thought I would share a discussion that I was a part of at a meeting of the Student Services Leadership Team. Colleen Viggiano began the meeting by sharing something that she received at a recent conference.

Be the Hero

People: *The hero sees others' challenges and feels empathy.*

Situation: *The hero sees what s/he has done and feels gratitude.*

Self: *The hero sees what can be done, feels hope and takes action.*

What stories are you telling? *The stories you tell yourself shape your happiness and success. Shape your stories to give people the benefit of the doubt, see the best things in your life, and recognize that you do have choices.*

You can choose to be the victim or the hero.

We are very lucky at BOCES that we have many people who choose to be the hero to students, staff, and the community. Sometimes being a hero just means doing a seemingly small thing for someone; giving a smile, a pat on the back, or encouragement. Other times, the hero's actions are more overt and require significant support and effort. They happen every day in our classrooms and

offices. While I have the opportunity to witness or learn about some of these stories, I know that I don't know about all of them.

I thought about this as I learned about our Career Academy and Reach students participating in the International Day of Peace. I thought about it again when I received an email from Charlie Wilson about the New Visions Criminal Justice students raising money through the Memory Walk for Alzheimer's Disease. And again, when I heard about many of our staff participating in the Making Strides against Breast Cancer walk. I had the opportunity to participate in the 2010 Boston Marathon Jimmy Walk to raise money to support research on brain cancer. Colleen Viggiano is in training to participate in a half-marathon in January to raise money in support of the leukemia and lymphoma society. And these are just the activities I have heard about in the past few days.

We have many heroes amongst us...as you go about your work, think about how you can be the hero.

Jessica

Thank You OCM BOCES Board of Education!

October 25 - 29, 2010 is National School Board Recognition week!



Each year the Governor of the State of New York proclaims a week in October as School Board Recognition Week in New York State. The proclamation is part of statewide efforts to commend school board members for their service. 2010 is the seventeenth year for this event. We would like to use this week to thank our Board members for their dedication to learning, to our children and to the community!

Important Benefits Updates for OCM BOCES Employees: Health Insurance for Age 26 Dependents, Flu Shots and 403(b) Plans

You may have heard news about Federally mandated changes in health insurance benefits resulting from the Health Care Reform Act passed earlier this year. One of the major changes that is part of the new law, is the requirement that dependents up to age 26 can be retained on their parent's health insurance plans, even if they are not full time students.

The law states that providing coverage for dependents to age 26 must begin upon each plan's first renewal occurring on or after September 23, 2010. Since our plan through the Cooperative Health Insurance Fund of CNY is renewed on September 1 each year, this mandate will take effect on **September 1, 2011**. Provided there are no changes in the Law, dependent children under the age of 26, will at that time, become eligible for coverage under our plan. Our plan provider, Excellus, will be sending out more information on this shortly. Prior to September 1, 2011, they will also provide you with information for enrolling your dependents who might be eligible for coverage.

As Flu season approaches, we wanted to remind you that under our health insurance plan **pharmacist-administered** immunizations, including the flu shot, are not covered. If you get your flu shot at pharmacy clinic, just make sure the person giving it to you is a nurse or doctor, not a pharmacist.

For employees who currently participate in the 403b plan, or those who would like to start participating, we encourage you to visit the Omni Group web site. Omni is the Administrator of our 403b plan and they have recently started releasing quarterly bulletins "The Omni Observer," that may be of interest to you. The Omni web site is omni403b.com.

BOCES Employees - Get Your Flu/Pneumonia Shot!

BOCES has once again approved on-site flu clinics at several key sites throughout our organization. Having the clinics allows employees to conveniently get flu and/or pneumonia shots without having to make a doctor's appointment or travel to area clinics. Access further information about the flu and the flu vaccine at www.cdc.gov/flu/keyfacts.htm.

The 2010 vaccine provides protection against A/H1N1 (pandemic) influenza and two other viruses: Influenza A/H3N2 and Influenza B.

The cost for the vaccines is: flu - \$33.00; Pneumonia - \$70.00. Payment can be made by cash or check, payable to Regional Medical Services. Insurance forms will be available to submit for reimbursement. Flu shots are covered by our present Excellus Blue program. For those with Medicare, the cost is covered in total.

Site schedule after October 15, 2010:

Henry Campus on **October 18**, 2010 from 2:30 PM - 3:15 PM (Administration Building Large Conference Room)

Lee G. Peters Career Training Center on **October 21**, 2010 from 3:00 PM - 3:45 PM

Cedar Street Summer School Students Create Colorful Outdoor Mural



Students at Cedar Street Day Treatment Program did a wonderful job creating an outdoor mural this past summer session. With the help of art teacher, Carrie Contento, students learned about the life and work of artist Keith Haring. After learning about the artist's many simple symbols and figures, students created a self portrait. The young artists utilized only shape, color, and a personal object. The students' figures were then drawn and painted with bright colors on a concrete wall in the courtyard area. A background city-scape was added to bring all the pictures together and create a mural reminiscent of the work of artist Keith Haring. After six weeks of hard work on hot summer days, students had completed the entire 300 square foot mural, achieved a sense of community, and brought

new life to their recess area. Please congratulate them on their creativity and hard work, and stop by to take a look at the wonderful piece of art created by OCM BOCES' talented young artists!

McEvoy Students/Teachers Learn “Happy” Habits and Support OCM BOCES’ Literacy Initiatives



Students in Mrs. Breneman’s and Mrs. Comolli’s classroom began the year reading *The Seven Habits of Happy Kids* by Sean Covey. This book ties into the Social-Emotional Learning component of their program. As the class read the book they created their classroom tree to illustrate the habits. The seven habits are:

Habit 1 – be proactive, you are in charge (of making your own decisions, fun, choices, etc.)

Habit 2 – have a plan

Habit 3 – work first, then play

Habit 4 – everyone can win

Habit 5 – listen before you talk

Habit 6 – together is better

Habit 7 – balance feels best

Mrs. Breneman’s and Mrs. Comolli’s classes are supporting the BOCES literacy initiatives through their work with the Natalie Babbit’s novel, *Tuck Everlasting*. Students have been immersed in reading, discussions, and journaling each day.

Living Environment Students Learn about Controlled Experimentation

Students in Mrs. Aguayo’s Living Environment class at McEvoy started out the year learning about controlled experiments. Students were given an opportunity to brainstorm and come up with an experiment of interest to them that could be tested in class. As a class, students decided to test the hypothesis that Mentos candy causes soda to fizz. The experiment was 100% student created – from how they would collect data to determining the independent and dependent variables.



Students in Mrs. Aguayo’s Living Environment Class at McEvoy created an experiment to test their hypothesis that Mentos candy causes soda to fizz. Students are pictured testing the theory and documenting their findings.

Check-Out Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Website for Year-Round Wellness Information

Be sure to check out the Employee Assistance Program’s website at www.eap.ocmboces.org for year-round wellness information and much more! The website contains links to websites for each month’s wellness topic, including: Diabetes awareness – October, Eating Disorders – November, Stress Awareness – December, Depression – January, Heart Health – February, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder – March, Anger Management – April, National Employee Health and Fitness – May and Anxiety – June.

Energy Services Offers Web-Based Database for Participants

After more than a year of development and testing, the OCM BOCES Energy Services Department has made available a web-based version of the NYSMEC (New York State Municipal Energy Consortium) database for participant use. Users now have first-hand access to up to the minute information and reports that were typically available only through OCM BOCES Energy Services Consortium. In order to gain access to the database, each user needs a login and password. For more information, please contact Kathy Stokes in Energy Services at kstokes@ocmboces.org.

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.

Henry Campus School Counselor Melissa Muller Welcomes Daughter



Congratulations to OCM BOCES' Henry Campus School Counselor Melissa Muller and her husband Greg on the June 18, 2010 birth of their daughter, Gianna J Muller. Gianna was born weighing 6 pounds, 9 ounces and was 20 inches long. Congratulations to the Muller family!

Career Academy and Reach Students Celebrate International Day of Peace



On Tuesday, September 21, OCM BOCES' Career Academy and Reach program students and staff celebrated International Day of Peace at the school and into the village of Liverpool. During the morning, students created pinwheels with inspiring messages

of peace and then "planted" the pinwheels outside the school in order for the wind to carry their messages around the world. Following the pinwheel ceremony, students created banners and posters conveying messages of peace and then participated in a peace march starting at the school and going through the village of Liverpool.

2010 was the first year that OCM BOCES' students participated in the International Day of Peace and all activities were arranged completely by students!

International Peace Day was established by a United

Nations resolution in 1981 to coincide with the opening of the United Nations General Assembly. Beginning on the 20th anniversary of this date, the United Nations General Assembly set September 21 as the permanent date for the International Day of Peace. Millions of students throughout the world currently participate in International Day of Peace activities. For more detailed information about International Day of Peace and Pinwheels for Peace, visit: <http://www.pinwheelsforpeace.com/pinwheelsforpeace/home.html>.



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