

## From the District Superintendent

Dear Staff:

Welcome to the start of what I hope will be a great year for our students and our staff. It will be a year with many challenges – fiscal pressures, student needs, changing requirements from the State Education Department, and others. But it will also be a time when we are more ready than ever before to help our students succeed and our districts to save money through sharing services.

Students in all of our programs will see a renewed emphasis on literacy with the implementation of our 7 – 12 literacy plan and the continuation of the K – 6 plan that was initiated last year. Special programs for students struggling with reading and writing will be available through a program that has been proven successful in other places, READ 180. Teachers participated in training this summer and the technology and materials are all in place in classrooms in each of our facilities.

In the non-instructional area, more districts are participating in our central business office taking advantage of our very highly qualified staff to process payrolls, pay bills, and audit claims. Our central food service program also continues to show success as it coordinates the breakfasts and lunches for students in all of Cortland County's schools and beyond! A recent article in the *Cortland Standard* cited the program for bringing the Cortland City Schools food service program from the red to the black in less than three years.

Instructional support has also been busy supporting the Race to the Top efforts of 20 of our 23 districts. Jeff Craig and his staff have been busy helping superintendents and principals understand the requirements and the changes needed to implement Race to the Top.

Our Regional Information Center continues to be the source of technology support across the region's 50 school districts. In addition to the purchase, installation,

and support of technology, the RIC recently received a contract with New York State that identifies the RIC as the primary processor of Medicaid claims from school districts in the state.

There are so many good things going on at OCM BOCES that it is more than I can describe in this letter. I am reminded of Thomas Edison's quote, "If we did all the things we are capable of, we would literally astound ourselves." Please check out our web page and the news articles that keep you informed about what is going on.

Have a great year.



## Students in the Spotlight!



For most OCM BOCES students, the start of the 2011-2012 school year was accompanied by lots of rain on Wednesday, September 7, 2011. Pictured above: an OCM BOCES Irvin E. Henry Campus student from the Baldwinsville Central School District puts up her umbrella as she prepares to head to her bus after class on the first day of school.

## Deaf Program Lemonade Stand Has Sweet Success for a Great Cause!

For the third year in a row, students in Lisa Austin's Deaf and Hard of Hearing class at North Syracuse Junior High School, a part of OCM BOCES Special Education Summer School, created a lemonade stand to

raise money for a great cause! During the summer program three years ago, Ms. Austin was teaching her students about money and the importance of giving back and thought a lemonade stand would be a great way to teach students about both concepts. After researching and finding several books on the topic, Austin came across the book *Alex and the Amazing Lemonade Stand*.

The book, about giving back and helping others, tells about Alex Scott, a little girl with cancer who set up a lemonade stand to help doctors find a cure for the disease. Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation, now a national organization, has raised more than \$30 million dollars in the fight against childhood cancer...part of that money coming from right here in Central New York!

Over the past three years, Austin's OCM BOCES students have raised hundreds of dollars through their efforts, thanks to the generous support of the stand's patrons! Austin is proud of the hard work her students did to promote and staff the stand, including making flyers and announcements and working various jobs and shifts at the stand. Congratulations to Lisa Austin and her students for a job well done! For more information on Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation, visit their website at <https://www.alexlemonade.org/>.



*On Wednesday, August 10<sup>th</sup>, students and staff from Lisa Austin's OCM BOCES Deaf and Hard of Hearing summer class at North Syracuse Junior High School set up and manned a lemonade stand at the school. 2011 is the third consecutive year that Lisa's class has held a lemonade stand to benefit the Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation, a national organization against childhood cancer. Pictured above: the group shows off their finger nails, which they had painted yellow and pink for the day to coordinate with the colors of lemonade for sale!*

### 2012 Spring Recess Re-Scheduled Pending Board of Education Approval

As many of you are aware, the New York State Education Department recently set the dates for mandatory 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade testing for the week of April 16, 2012. This is the same week that was scheduled on the BOCES calendar for our April break. Given the need to be open during the testing, the OCM BOCES and our component schools will be rescheduling the 2012 April break.

The BOCES Board of Education will be acting on a recommendation to modify the BOCES school calendar to change the April break to the week of April 9<sup>th</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup>. This will most likely occur at the September 15, 2011 meeting. If you are a member of OCM BOCES instructional staff, please do not make any plans for your spring break until the board has acted on the calendar change. Instructional staff is expected to be in attendance from April 16 - April 20, 2012.

It is understood that some staff members have already paid for vacations for the previously scheduled time and that changing those plans will have a financial impact. In consultation with the union, OCM BOCES will develop solutions for each staff person who is impacted because they made plans for a vacation for the week of April 16 - 20, 2012 and would suffer a substantial financial loss due to previously paid non-refundable airline tickets, rentals, or reservations made prior to September 1, 2011.

More information will be forthcoming about approved changes to the OCM BOCES 2011-2012 school calendar.

## EAP Fall 2011 Workshop Schedule

Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a free, voluntary and confidential assessment and referral service for employees and their family members who are experiencing personal or work related problems. In addition to individual counseling, EAP staff provide workshops on a variety of topics. For more information on the EAP or to print a registration form for any of these workshops, visit their website at [www.eap.ocmboces.org](http://www.eap.ocmboces.org).

All workshops are free of charge.

October 5 Wednesday	<i>Secrets of Slumber: Strategies for a Good Night's Sleep</i> with Michelle Stolicker	Oswego BOCES - CRC Conference Room, Main Bldg., Mexico Campus 179 Rt. 64, Mexico, NY	4-5:30 pm
October 12 Wednesday	<i>Retirement: Creative Planning for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Half of Life</i> with Michelle Stolicker	OCM BOCES McEvoy Conference Center Room 701 - 1710 NYS Route 13, Cortland, NY	4-5:30 pm
October 19 Wednesday	<i>How to DeJunk Your Life: The Sequel</i> with Michelle Stolicker	Liverpool Public Library Carmen Community Room - 310 Tulip Street, Liverpool, NY	4-5:30 pm
October 26 Wednesday	<i>Who Moved My Cheese? Managing Change</i> with Michelle Stolicker	OCM BOCES Henry Campus Admin. Bldg. Distance Learning Center - 6820 Thompson Road, Syracuse, NY	4-5:30 pm
November 1 Tuesday	<i>Food &amp; Mood</i> with Michelle Stolicker	Ithaca City School District - Boynton Middle School Conference Room - 1601 North Cayuga Street, Ithaca, NY	4-5:30 pm
November 9 Wednesday	<b>NYS Teacher Retirement System</b> with NYS TRS Representative	OCM BOCES Rodax Complex Building 8 Conference Room - 6075 East Molloy Road, Syracuse, NY	4-6:00 pm

## Teacher's Farm Pets Provide Hands-On Lesson for Summer Students



Twelve students in Lisa Austin's Deaf and Hard of Hearing program classroom in the OCM BOCES summer school at North Syracuse Junior High School, spent time learning about the circle of life. Austin, who owns a farm in Fulton, thought that hatching chickens would provide a real life lesson for the students so she brought in 25 eggs and kept them in the classroom in an incubator. Students had the opportunity to research chickens and in doing so, learned that it takes 21 days for a chicken to hatch so they built a countdown chain to "hatch day." The students also kept logs and created books and then presented information to their classmates.

On August 3 and 4, students had the opportunity to see 17 of the 25 chickens hatch! The students named the chicks and were able to hold them and care for them by providing food and water and they even read to their adopted chicks! The students enjoyed learning about the circle of life and truly appreciated the hands-on lessons. The chicks were returned to Ms. Austin's farm in Fulton where they will live out their lives as her pets!



## 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](mailto:lcook@ocmboces) or call at 431-8597.

### Kasson Road Staff Extends Thanks to Students and BOCES Administrators!



The staff of the summer program at the OCM BOCES Kasson Road School would like to extend their thanks to their students as well as some special OCM BOCES staff members. Principal Barbara Brigham recently wrote, "Thank you to all the students at the Kasson Road program for participating in our Science Fair. The students had a lot of fun experimenting, presenting and learning. We would like to congratulate all our students and give special thanks to our judges, Mrs. Koch, Ms. Viggiano and Dr. Cohen! The students are already starting to plan their next experiment!"

Kasson Road students pictured above are: front row from left to right – Kyle, Nate, and Shane; back row from left to right – Brandon and Michael.

## Zumba Classes Return to OCM BOCES!!

OCM BOCES employees – Don't miss the chance to participate in free Zumba classes this fall! Come try out the classes that you've heard so much about! Sessions will take place on Wednesdays from 4:15 - 5:00 PM in the Rodax Complex, Building 8 Conference Room. The schedule is:

[September 28](#)

[October 12](#)

[October 26](#)

[November 2](#)

[November 16](#)

[November 30](#)

[December 7](#)

[December 14](#)

For more information, contact Cindy Seeley by e-mail at [cseeley@ocmboces.org](mailto:cseeley@ocmboces.org).

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