

From the District Superintendent

Dear Staff,

I have often heard that the symbol for crisis in Chinese is made up of two words: danger and opportunity. It appears that this is an apt description of the current state of finances for school districts in New York State.

Concerns about the state aid for school districts have been raised over the past few months. As you know, school district budgets receive their revenues from three sources: federal, state, and local taxes. Federal aid provides a very small percentage of the funding that supports our school districts. Of the \$52 billion supporting education in New York State, state aid provides about 40%. Local tax payers provide the rest through property taxes.

On February 1, Governor Cuomo unveiled his budget proposals which provided:

1. A reduction in state aid of millions of dollars in our region,
2. A change in the funding for BOCES aid that would cost our districts more than \$10 million.

Both of these proposals, if enacted, would significantly impact the education of students in our school districts and at BOCES. In addition, in order for school districts to develop budgets that taxpayers could support, programs and staff would be cut.

BOCES does not receive any state aid directly. The monies supporting our programs come from the school districts' purchasing services: special education, alternative education, career and technical education, professional development, science kits, technology, central business office, labor relations, and a large number of other services. As districts weigh alternatives for balancing their own budgets, I expect that our services will be impacted.

During the next few months, the state legislature will review the Governor's budget proposal and develop their own budget proposals. School districts will also be reviewing services and developing their own budgets. This will be a difficult and unsettling time for us all.

I pledge that I will work to communicate about the benefits of BOCES services to our districts, our boards, and our legislators. I also commit to communicating

information to you so that you will understand what is going on and how it will impact you and your program. If you have questions about the budget and the budget process, please let me know. I suspect that this is a time of both danger and opportunity. I will work to mitigate the danger and increase the opportunities.

Jessica

Bring on the Books!

The United Way's Success By Six *Bring on the Books!* Book Drive distributes **new and gently used books** to child care centers, after school programs and other organizations in need of children's books. This initiative is an attempt to promote reading and literacy throughout Central New York.

Look for Success By Six collection boxes throughout the Henry Campus from March 7, 2011 to March 15, 2011.

Last year more than 13,000 books were distributed to 99 locations in Onondaga County. Let's help them exceed that number while supporting literacy for children.

For more information about the book drive at OCM BOCES, contact Linda Miller Shapess at Lshapess@ocmboces.org or 315/433-2671.



Making Connections in the Community

On December 17, 2010, students in OCM BOCES' Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program at Solvay High School participated in a service learning project at Loretto Nursing Home. The students prepared a holiday social by making cookies and cards, buying and wrapping presents and organizing games. The highlight was the time spent socializing with residents as they shared stories about themselves, their families and friends. The residents have invited the students to come back for another visit.



Daffodil Days are Here!

Each year, the American Cancer Society welcomes the arrival of Spring with thousands of Daffodils. The flower is the Society's Symbol of Hope...that cancer will be eliminated as a major health problem. OCM BOCES is again participating in the campaign. For \$10 each, you can purchase bunches of 10 flowers or potted plants. For \$25 each, you can order a Bear & Bunch (supplies limited) or a "Gift of Hope" to be delivered to a local health care facility. To place an order please contact Theresa Donnelly at the CNYRIC or Theresa Smith in the Administration Building.



Flexible Spending Reminder

The 2010 Plan Year has ended!

A reminder that the 2010 Flexible Spending Account (FSA) plan year ended as of December 31, 2010.

Use it - Don't lose it!

Check your balance at the Benefit Resource, Inc. website at www.benefiresource.com. According to IRS regulations, you will forfeit any money left in your account at the end of the run-out period. All claims for unpaid monies must be postmarked to Benefit Resource, Inc. **by March 31, 2011** for expenditures from January 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Spring 2011 Workshop Schedule

In addition to providing one to one counseling, the OCM BOCES EAP Program offers a variety of workshops each year. To download a registration form for any of the following spring 2011 workshops, visit the EAP website at www.ocmboces.org/teacherpage.cfm?teacher=599.

March 21, 2011 Monday	<i>Down on the Pharm: Facts About Prescription & OTC Drug Abuse</i> with Michelle Stolicker	Ithaca City School District Conference Room, Boynton Middle School - 1601 N. Cayuga St., Ithaca	4-5:30 PM
March 30, 2011 Wednesday	<i>How to Get Things Done and Still Have a Life</i> with Michelle Stolicker	McEvoy Conference Center, Room 701 OCM BOCES 1710 Rt. 13, Cortland	4-5:30 PM
April 6, 2011 Wednesday	<i>Just for the Health of It: Creating a Healthy Lifestyle</i> with Michelle Stolicker	CRC Conference Room - Oswego BOCES, Main Bldg., Mexico Campus 179 Rt. 64, Mexico, NY	4-5:30 PM
April 12, 2011 Tuesday	<i>Food & Mood</i> with Michelle Stolicker	Liverpool Public Library - Carmen Community Room 310 Tulip Street Liverpool	4-5:30 PM
April 27, 2011 Wednesday	<i>How to Dejunk Your Life</i> with Michelle Stolicker	OCM BOCES, IEH Campus Admin. Bldg., Conference Rm. B. Center 6820 Thompson Rd., Syracuse	4-5:30 PM
May 4, 2011 Wednesday	<i>NYS Employee Retirement System - Representative of NYS ERS</i>	OCM BOCES, IEH Campus Admin. Bldg., Conference Rm. B. Center 6820 Thompson Rd., Syracuse	4:30-6 PM

Career Academy's Cause For Paws Teams up With Local Animal Foundation

Be sure to get your tickets now for the Syracuse Crunch hockey team's February 19, 2011 home game against the Rochester Americans. And while you're at the game, be sure to look for OCM BOCES students involved with Cause For Paws (CFP) to be there selling leashes. The CFP group, of about 75 students from the OCM BOCES Career Academy, has joined forces with the Priscilla Mahar Animal Welfare Foundation (PMAWF) to raise funds for local rescues and shelters. The Priscilla Mahar Animal Welfare Foundation is Headed by CNY Central's Chief Meteorologist Wayne Mahar, with Lisa Chalenza as Vice President.

"Help Us Help The Animals"



This past November, Cause For Paws approached Wayne Mahar about ways to work together to allow the group to become more involved in the community. The groups met on February 1, and decided to come together for the 2nd Annual PMAWF night at the Crunch on February 19, 2011. Prior to the game, CFP students will make leashes for the foundation to sell at the event. The Priscilla Mahar Animal Welfare Foundation will also be selling T-shirts, autographed hockey pucks and raffle tickets for a lucky person to win the "Crunch experience" package, which includes a seat to watch a Crunch game from the Crunch's hockey bench as well as a visit to the locker room after a game.



For more information about Cause For Paws or the Priscilla Mahar Animal Welfare Foundation please visit www.pmawf.org or find them on Facebook!

McEvoy Health Occupations Students Go Red for Women's Heart Health

In celebration of **National Wear Red Day**, students in Kate Smith's Health Occupations Technology class at the OCM BOCES McEvoy Education Campus, wore red on Friday, February 4, 2011. The students researched the subject of heart health for women, made posters and wore red to show their support for awareness of women's heart health!



Pictured are OCM BOCES' McEvoy Campus Health Occupations Technology students at their clinical site, the Cortland Care Center.



Christmas Around the World at CTC

The Stellata, Crossroads, and IADT students at CTC, under the direction of Principal Beth Cooper, participated in a Christmas around the world contest as a way of promoting literacy skills and global studies. Students researched holiday customs from various places around the world, picked a country and then decorated their rooms to reflect their customs. All classrooms participating showed outstanding background knowledge of the cultures.

Judges visited Mrs. Cottrell's classroom for some traditional Puerto Rican Christmas faire (coconut pudding), they then went to Germany in Mr. Bullis' classroom where they found wooden shoes under the tree and learned about the custom of hiding a pickle. The next stop was Africa in Mr. Oyer's

Classroom, where the Kwanza candles were lit to represent their spirituality. From there, America was toured in Mr. Farruggio's room, where the stockings were hung by the chimney with care. Ireland in Ms. Martoccia's classroom was the final stop, where red candles shown bright in the windows. Kudos to all students and staff, as every classroom represented the winning spirit of sharing knowledge and team learning and sharing. All classes celebrated with a pizza lunch and a special cupcake treat went to Ms. Martoccia's classroom for having the best presentation.

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 Employees Donate to Locks of Love



OCM BOCES' employees Nicole Birmingham (left) and Theresa Flint both recently donated more than two (combined) feet of hair to Locks of Love, a public non-profit organization that provides hairpieces to financially disadvantaged children in the United States and Canada under age 21 suffering from long-term medical hair loss from any diagnosis. Nicole, who is the receptionist at the Henry Campus Administration Building, had nine inches of hair shorn off while Theresa donated 17 inches of hair to the organization! Kudos ladies on your generous donations!



Library Media Specialist and Teacher Partner Use BOCES SLS Resources to Help Students Create Online Materials for Teen Health and Wellness



Seventeen videos created by students at LaFayette Junior Senior High School, under the direction of LaFayette School Library Media Specialist Marcie Mann (pictured, right), and teacher partner Heather Amidon, will be featured as student-created content in the award-winning online resource, *Teen Health & Wellness*. Marcie and Heather Amidon, a health teacher at LaFayette JSHS, recently joined together to have students create videos for their end-of-semester capstone projects on illegal drugs. The students scripted and produced one-minute PSAs using the information from *Teen Health & Wellness*, a resource available to them through OCM BOCES' School Library System, and flip video cameras, also loaned to them by BOCES. Marcie recently said, "Through BOCES, we were able to give every student a camera to work with. SLS provides a huge variety of resources [and] touches every aspect of my library life from inventory to book purchasing to learning about best practices. I truly could not do my job without them!"

OCM BOCES Board Members

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The students used the video PSAs to warn their peers against the hazards and side effects of illegal drugs such as ecstasy, heroine, cocaine, steroids, and marijuana. The videos will be embedded within individual articles on relevant topics in the database and become part of the permanent content of the site. The videos from LaFayette JSHS will be available for viewing on the *Teen Health & Wellness* site in late-February.

Teen Health & Wellness, teenhealthandwellness.com, is an award-winning, critically-acclaimed online resource, providing students with non-judgmental, straightforward information and support on topics including diseases, drugs, alcohol, nutrition, mental health, suicide, bullying, green living, financial literacy, and more. The resource is available to all middle and high school students of OCM BOCES through the School Library System. For more information about *Teen Health & Wellness* or other resources available through OCM BOCES' School Library System, contact Judi Dzikowski, School Library System Coordinator at 315/433-2665.