



Berks Business Education Coalition

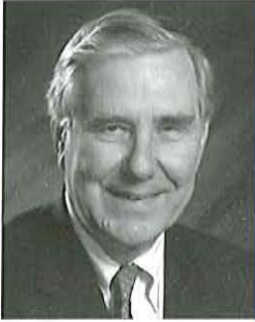
"A Partnership That Works"

Annual Report 2007



www.berksbec.org

BBEC Annual Report



Marlin Miller, Jr.
Chairman, Berks Business Education Coalition
Arrow International, Inc.

Our Business Education Coalition has experienced another good year of progress in supporting educational effort across the County. I want to particularly thank our Executive Director, Dr. Robert Runkle and the many supporters that have worked with him for taking many of our initiatives to new levels of support as outlined in this report.

We believe it is very good news for Berks County that Governor Rendell has put basic education at the top of his list for spending increases in his 2008 budget. The Governor understands the vital importance of a well educated workforce in the competitive world economy of today. With challenging educational standards now in place and increasing emphasis on early childhood learning, the state is moving in the right direction.

Our Coalition works closely with all eighteen school districts in the County, however over the past few years we have made a special effort to understand and support the unique circumstances of the Reading School District, a very large urban school system with rapidly changing demographics. The need for increased urban educational spending is critical. If we do not meet this need we will be seriously shortchanging the future potential of Berks County and urban centers across the Commonwealth.

The recently published "Costing Out" study supported by the legislature shows clearly the need for the state to increase its investment in public education. It also shows that urban centers of the state are falling woefully behind in educational spending per student.

Although these urban centers have a more diverse educational challenge than many suburban school districts the "Costing Out" study showed that spending per student in Reading is only \$7,458 compared with \$9,000 - \$10,000 per student in suburban Berks County. This pattern of urban versus suburban spending is played out across the Commonwealth and has its roots in a declining urban tax base relative to the suburban tax base.

The study also shows that some suburban and rural districts with high local tax effort and low per pupil state support need an increase in spending per student if they expect their students to meet state educational standards and prepare students to work in an increasingly knowledge based society.

The Berks Business Education Coalition urges our members and our legislators to support the Governor's six year plan to increase state spending, as opposed to increased property tax spending, to provide a reasonable learning opportunity for all Commonwealth children. An improved formula for distributing state provided educational funding will necessarily need to favor urban school districts, but should not do this at the expense of suburban districts.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marlin Miller".

Marlin Miller

Berks Schools Implement Career Education and Work Standards

Berks County schools have taken advantage of the strong foundation in Career Education they have developed through the Career Pathways initiative to begin the implementation of the Career Education and Work Standards adopted by the Pennsylvania State Board of Education. The Career Pathways Strategic Team and the Berks County Regional Career Education Partnership Committee have focused their efforts throughout the year to provide resources to the schools to assist counselors and career educators in meeting all of the requirements of the new standards. The Standards identify activities and outcomes to prepare students to explore and develop an appropriate career plan.

Career Cruising, a web-based resource, was identified by the Strategic Committee as a valuable tool to assist students in college and career research. The Committee recommended that the Coalition provide funding through the Regional Career Education Partnership grant to implement this resource in all of the Berks County schools. Career Cruising was customized to reflect the four Career Pathways in the Berks County model. Students are able to begin their career plan in a broad Career Pathway and continue to refine their career plan in any of the four Pathways to Career Clusters and finally to a Career Plan. The Berks School Counselors Association in cooperation with the Berks County Intermediate Unit and the Berks Business Education Coalition have coordinated the planning and implementation of educational programs for counselors and career educators throughout the school year to assist all of the districts in the utilization of these resources.

The Berks Career Pathways website, www.berkscareerpathways.com was redesigned by the staff at the Berks County Intermediate Unit under the direction of a sub-committee of the Career Pathways Strategic Team and deployed during the summer of 2007. The site is an excellent portal for college and career searches, and provides students, their parents, educators and business representatives the opportunity to explore many of the resources available on the world-wide web in a very organized fashion. The site also provides customization to Berks County including the five Berks County Colleges, and the priority occupations in Berks County. Educational programs were provided to the schools on this resource during 2007.

Berks County schools have been recognized state-wide as a leader in the providing quality career programs to students. The additional resources provided by the Regional Career Education Partnership grant and the vision of the Career Pathways and Partnership Committees have accelerated the implementation of the Career Education and Work Standards in Berks. The cooperation that is evident among higher and basic education, and business and industry in Berks County ensures that every student has the opportunity to explore and prepare for the career of her or his future.



2007 Year In Review

The Berks Business Education Coalition continued to build on the success of the previous year and remained focused on supporting schools' efforts to improve the Career Planning, Academic Performance and Higher Education enrollment of students in Berks County. The following highlights mark the significant progress made by Berks County Schools for the 2007 year.

Career Pathways

The Career Pathways Strategic Team was combined with the Regional Career Education Partnership Committee from Berks County to focus their efforts and the resources of a Regional Career Education Partnership grant of \$100,000 to promote quality career education and planning for all students in Berks County. The Partnership utilized the grant funding to update and deploy a new website www.berkscareerpathways.com which serves as a portal to numerous college and career search resources on the web. The website was developed by a subcommittee of the Pathways Committee and designed by the staff at the Berks County Intermediate Unit.

The Partnership also utilized the grant to provide funding for Career Cruising. Career Cruising is an international web resource for college and career planning, and is currently being utilized to assist students in many Berks County School Districts to develop a Career Planning Portfolio.

Information sessions have been scheduled throughout the year for counselors and career educators to assist them in deploying these resources to their students, and to assist the school districts in meeting the Pennsylvania Career Education and Work Standards.

The Coalition was fortunate to receive a second year Regional Career Education Partnership grant for \$75,000 to continue the implementation of goals identified by the Committee. The additional grant will be utilized to support a retooled Educator Internship Program called Inside Berks Business, and to deploy an employer/student database designed to facilitate communication between employers and students interested in internships and career information. This new application will be utilized as a resource for high school and college internships, and career exploration activities. Employers are encouraged to contact the Coalition Office for registration information.

In addition, request for proposals related to new Career Pathways activities were solicited from all member school districts to support career activities. Eleven grants were awarded totaling \$80,132. Two grants will be utilized to establish a career search laboratory in a high school guidance office, and to support the deployment of Keys to Work, a national resource to prepare students with the appropriate skills to enter the workforce. The balance of the grants will be utilized to support the implementation of SAS inSchool Curriculum Pathways.

SAS inSchool Curriculum Pathways

Improving student academic achievement remained the major focus for member school districts throughout the 2007 year. SAS inSchool Curriculum Pathways is a web-based curriculum resource for all of the academic subjects in grades 8 through 12. Many school districts continued to utilize this resource to enrich instruction in all of the academic disciplines including gifted programs. Science and Mathematics teachers have identified this web-based resource as an excellent tool to teach abstract concepts in higher level mathematics and science courses.

Over \$280,000 was donated to the Coalition under the Educational Improvement Tax Credit program during 2007 to support member school districts' efforts to improve student achievement. The businesses who contributed to this initiative include:

Carpenter Technology

Community Bank

East Penn Manufacturing

Fulton Great Valley Bank

Giant Foods

Sovereign Bank

UGI Incorporated

Carpenter Technology focused two \$100,000 Educational Improvement Tax Credit donations in the Exeter Township, Muhlenberg, Reading and Wilson School Districts to assist those districts in improving student achievement in mathematics and science. The districts utilized the resources from Carpenter to purchase technology equipment including SMART boards for math and science classrooms, and to provide extensive professional development for teachers on this new technology

Throughout 2007 more than 7500 students have been impacted by the generous donations from business, and many of those students have demonstrated improved academic performance in mathematics and reading in both state assessments and local benchmark assessments. In addition, over 75 classrooms have received new technology to facilitate the utilization of web resources, and over 90 teachers have received intensive professional development on the utilization of web resources.

Higher Education/Basic Education Initiative

The Higher Education/Basic Education Strategic Committee developed attractive posters which identified important steps students must take to prepare for higher education. The posters were developed for different grade levels from sixth through twelfth grade by a committee of school counselors and college admissions professionals. The posters have been distributed to all Berks County School Districts.

The Committee supported and coordinated college tours and orientations for 8th and 9th grade students from 8 Berks County schools. This represents a 60% increase over the previous year. This activity provides students the opportunity to gain valuable insight into the key steps they need to take to appropriately prepare for college.

The Committee has identified a need for dialog among high school and college faculty to increase the percentage of the high school population who enroll in college prepared to do college level work. Secondary and post-secondary faculty will participate in a survey to inform discussion on the critical areas both faculty need to address to develop a strategy for success.



Berks Business Education Goals and Objectives 2007-2008

To support member schools, employers and community-based organizations in providing quality k-12 career development programs for students in Berks County.

Objective 1:

To facilitate, in consort with the Career Pathways Strategic Team, the revision and update of the Berks Career Pathways web site.

Objective 2:

To facilitate the development of a web-enabled employer database for the purpose of providing career exploration and verification experiences for high school students.

Objective 3:

To facilitate the revision of the "Pathways to Success" Career Resource Guide and publish it to the Career Pathways web site.

Objective 4:

To complete the objectives of the Regional Career Partnership grant including the final report of the grant activities.

To support member schools in their efforts to facilitate the improvement of student academic performance.

Objective 1:

To facilitate the implementation of SAS inSchool software into the academic curriculum of member schools through the utilization of Educational Improvement tax credit funds.

Objective 2:

To facilitate, through the direction of the Curriculum Pathways Strategic Team, the planning and implementation of professional development activities in support of the SAS inSchool program.

Objective 3:

To facilitate, in consort with member schools, the acquisition and/or training on the utilization of data tools for data-driven curriculum decision-making.

Objective 4:

To support member schools in the implementation of the vision of Project 720.

To support member schools in their efforts to increase the interest in and pursuit of higher education for all students in Berks County.

Objective 1:

To facilitate dialog between basic and higher education through the direction of the Basic Education/Higher Education Committee.

Objective 2:

To facilitate member school student visits to college campuses in Berks County.

Objective 3:

To support additional initiatives, identified by the Basic Education/Higher Education Committee, targeted to increase student interest in higher education.

To inform policy decisions on education at the state and federal level.

To provide for the viability and sustainability of Coalition programs and services.

Objective 1:

To pursue grant opportunities in consort with the mission of the Coalition and in support of member schools and employers.

Objective 2:

To enhance communication among Coalition members and promote membership in the Coalition through the development of a BBEC web site and the publication of newsletters and an annual report.

Objective 3:

To facilitate an evaluation of programs and activities of the Coalition on an annual basis, and to recommend modifications where recommended and appropriate.



Posters Promote Higher Education

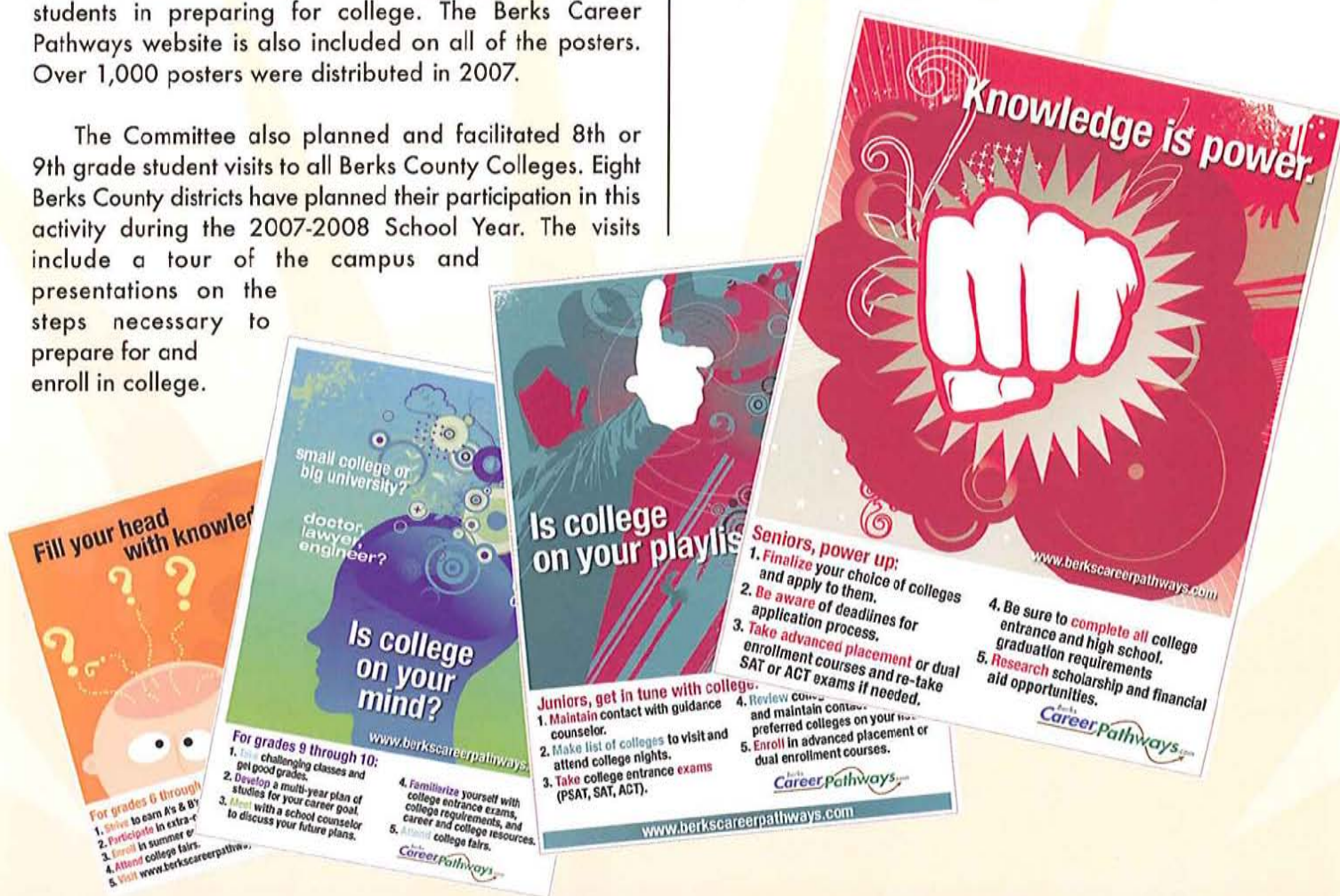
The Higher Education/Basic Education Committee of the Coalition focused their efforts during the 2007 year on developing resources to promote participation in higher education and to provide resources to Berks County Schools to assist them in encouraging more students to enroll in college with the necessary skills to succeed.

The first initiative of the Committee was to develop posters that could be distributed throughout the classrooms in the schools of Berks County which encourage students to consider college, and provide them with some tips on how to appropriately prepare for college. Four posters were developed; grades 6-8, grades 9-10, grade 11 and grade 12. Each poster contains information that is age appropriate to assist students in preparing for college. The Berks Career Pathways website is also included on all of the posters. Over 1,000 posters were distributed in 2007.

The Committee also planned and facilitated 8th or 9th grade student visits to all Berks County Colleges. Eight Berks County districts have planned their participation in this activity during the 2007-2008 School Year. The visits include a tour of the campus and presentations on the steps necessary to prepare for and enroll in college.

Discussions on time management and college life are also provided. A brief discussion on financial aid is also provided. Over 1400 students will participate in the college visit program during the 2007-2008 School Year. It is anticipated that this program will increase the number of students who enroll in Berks County's Colleges.

The Committee also began to plan for an ongoing faculty-to-faculty dialog between basic and higher education faculty. The purpose of the dialog is to identify strategies that both faculty can consider to increase the percentage of high school students who enroll in college prepared to do college level work and succeed. A survey of both faculties will be conducted to inform the preliminary discussions on the priorities. The Committee will plan an ongoing dialog for each academic year.

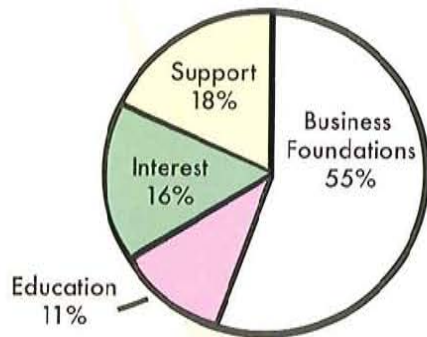


Financial Report

Financial Statement – Calendar 2007 and 2006

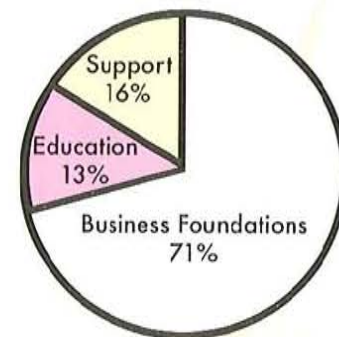
<u>Operations</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
Operating Income:		
Business/Foundations	61,950	63,930
Education	11,800	11,950
Interest on Savings	17,604	
Program Operating Support	20,317	14,683
Total Operating Income	\$ 111,671	\$ 90,563
Operating Expenses:		
Salaries and Benefits	67,886	63,551
Other Operating Supplies and Expenses	31,634	22,778
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 99,520	\$ 86,329
Operating Gain (Loss)	\$ 12,151	\$ 4,234

2007 Operating Income



\$111,671

2006 Operating Income



\$90,563

<u>Programs</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
Program Funding:		
Business (Ed Impvt Tax Credit Contrib.)	266,604	59,496
State and Federal Funding	80,846	19,971
Total Program Funding	\$ 347,450	\$ 79,467
Program Expenditures:		
SAS in School Project	266,619	59,496
Career Education Partnership Project	89,280	19,971
Total Program Expenditures	\$ 355,899	\$ 79,467
Program Gain (Loss)	(8,449)	\$ -
Total Gain (Loss)	\$ 3,702	\$ 4,234
Financial Position		
Total Assets - Cash and Investments	\$ 477,885	\$ 522,749
Less Assets Deferred For Future Program Projects	\$ (398,476)	\$ (447,042)
Assets/Equity available for Operations	\$ 79,409	\$ 75,707

Membership List

Albright College
Alvernia College
Antietam School District
Arrow International, Inc.
Automotive Services, Inc.
Beard Miller Co., LLP
Berks Career & Technology Center
Berks County Community Foundation
Berks County Intermediate Unit
Berks Technical Institute
Bills Khakis, Inc.
Boscov's Department Store
Boyertown Area School District
Brandywine Heights Area School District
E. J. Breneman, Inc.
C.H. Briggs Hardware Company
Cabot Corporation
Capital Blue Cross
Carpenter Technology Corporation
Community Banks
Connors Investors Services
Conrad Weiser Area School District
Daniel Boone Area School District
Dempsey's Restaurants, Inc.
Diocese of Allentown
East Penn Manufacturing Company, Inc.
J.C. Ehrlich Company Inc.
Elge Precision Machining
EnerSys, Inc.
Exeter Township School District
First American Title Insurance Co.
Fleetwood Area School District
Fulton Bank/Great Valley Division
Giant Food Stores, LLC
Governor Mifflin School District
Greater Reading Chamber of Commerce & Industry
Hamburg Area School District
Mr. Thomas Handwerk
Herbein + Company
Hofmann Industries
Home Builders Association of Berks County
J. F. Horrigan, Jr.

Junior Achievement of Berks County
Kutztown Area School District
Kutztown University
M&T Bank
Manufacturers Resource Center
Met-Ed, a First Energy Company
Muhlenberg School District
National Penn Bank
Offset Impression, Inc.
Oley Valley School District
Pace Institute/Pace Management
Penn State Berks
Performance Sports Apparel, Inc.
Quality Investment Castings, Inc.
Quadrant Engineering Plastic Products
Reading Area Community College
Reading Eagle Company
Reading Electric
Reading Hospital & Medical Center
Reading Precast
Reading School District
Reading Muhlenberg Career & Technology Center
David W. Rohrbach
Mr. Rolf Schmidt
Schuylkill Valley School District
SFS intec, Inc.
Sovereign Bank Foundation
Stevens & Lee
Tray-Pak Corporation
Tulpehocken Area School District
Twin Valley School District
UGI Utilities, Inc.
VF Corporation
Verizon
Wachovia
Weidenhammer Systems Corporation
West Lawn Graphic Communications
William G. Koch and Associates
Williams Metalfinishing, Inc.
Wilson School District
Wyomissing Area School District

Officers

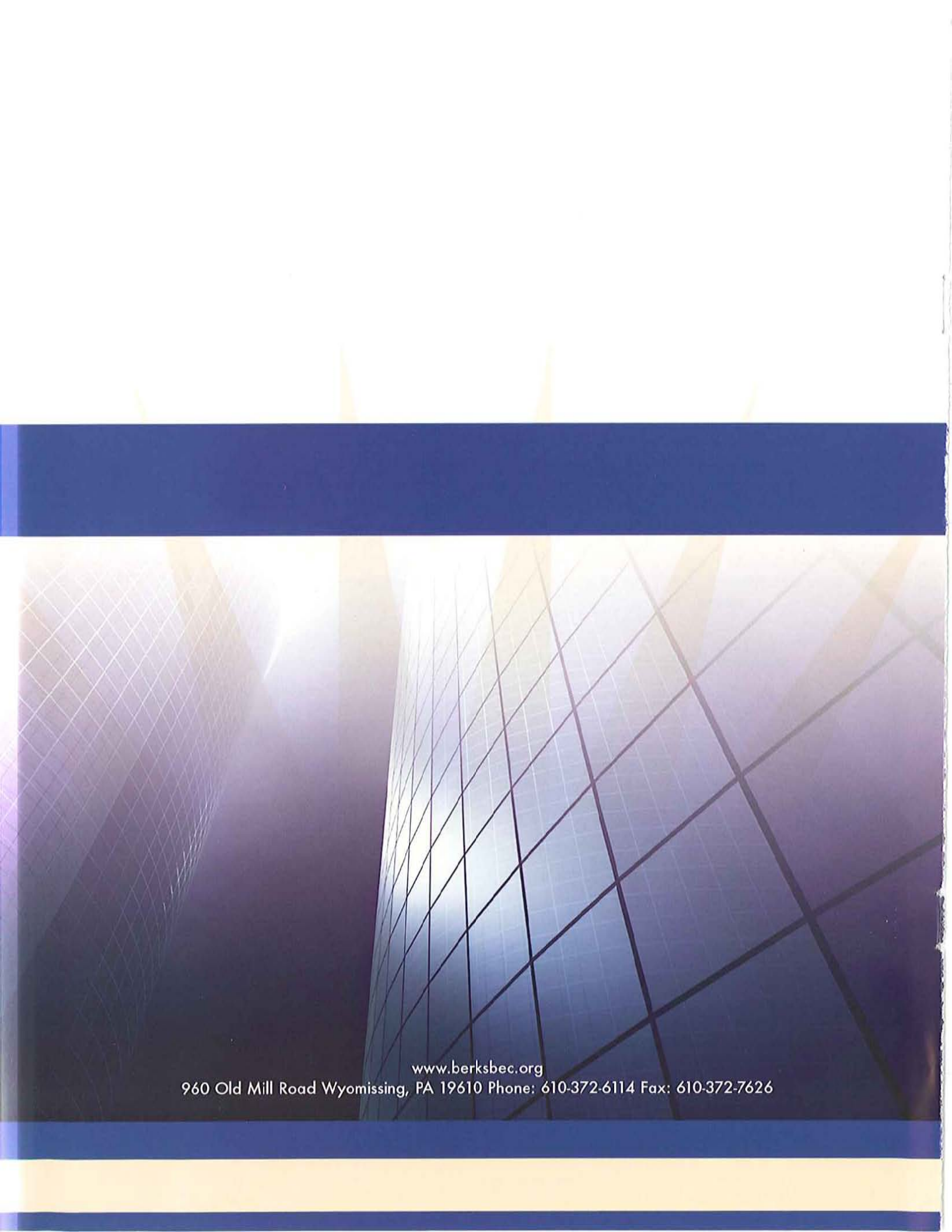
Chairman:	Marlin Miller, Jr.	Former Chairman & CEO, Arrow International, Inc.
Vice Chairman:	Dr. Nancy G. Allmon	Executive Director – Berks County Intermediate Unit
Treasurer:	Paul R. Roedel	Former CEO & President – Carpenter Technology Corporation
Secretary:	Alan J. Ottinger	PA Precision Cast Parts, Inc.
Executive Director:	Dr. Robert A. Runkle	Berks Business Education Coalition

Board Members

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Mr. James Connors	Connors Investor Services, Inc.
Mr. John D. Craig	EnerSys, Inc.
Ms. Rhoda E. Dersh	Pace Management, Inc.
Dr. Paul Eaken	Fleetwood Area School District
Mr. Philip Fromuth	Diocese of Allentown
Mr. Brian Hard	Penske Truck Leasing Company
Mrs. Ellen Horan	Berks County Chamber of Commerce
Dr. Richard Kratz	Reading Area Community College
Dr. Solomon Lausch	Schuylkill Valley School District
Mr. William Long, Sr.	M&T Bank
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Dr. Brenda Winkler	Kutztown Area School District
Mr. Chester M. Winters	Worldnet Technology
Mr. Scott R. Wolfe	Reading Hospital and Medical Center
Dr. Jeffrey Zackon	Oley Valley School District

Director(s) Emeritus

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Carolyn H. Holleran
John F. Horrigan, Jr. (retired)
Dr. James E. Morrell (retired)
Dr. Gust Zogas (retired)



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