



A Partnership That Works

growing
OPPORTUNITIES

annual report 2010

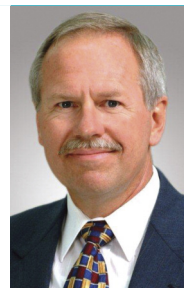




a message from Marlin Miller and Robert Runkle:



Marlin Miller, Jr.
Chairman
Berks Business
Education Coalition



Robert Runkle
Executive Director
Berks Business
Education Coalition



One of the most powerful outcomes of the Berks County Career Pathways initiative is the culture of collaboration which has been established between Berks County School Districts, Berks County Intermediate Unit, and Berks Business Education Coalition. As a result, the Career Pathways Strategic Team systematically meets to assess the needs of Berks County Schools, recommend and design quality resources and provide professional development for county educators in an effort to support the implementation of the Pennsylvania Career Education and Work Standards.



Connie Skipper
Program Administrator,
Office of Professional
Development & Curriculum,
Berks County Intermediate Unit



The Coalition continues to support member school districts in their efforts to improve student achievement through the use of data-driven continuous improvement processes. Performance Pathways, a comprehensive continuous improvement model focusing on student achievement data is coming into widespread use within Berks County's schools, and we believe will become an increasingly important tool for administrators and teachers as they work together to improve school and student performance.

Transforming student assessment data into information that can inform changes in instruction requires a focused effort on continued professional development and the development of a data-informed culture in schools. The Coalition will, in the upcoming year, begin to develop a county-wide data set that will establish a benchmark and track progress schools are making on student achievement utilizing this important initiative. This data set will provide members of the Coalition with valuable information regarding the progress districts are making in their efforts to improve academic achievement.

The Coalition continues to support the Berks County Intermediate Unit and member schools in the continued use of data-retreats for educators. Data

retreats provide teachers and administrators the tools necessary to interpret student assessment data and to set specific goals to improve instruction. These efforts are critical to the continuous improvement efforts and will be reflected in improved student performance over time. The Coalition is also supporting an on-line professional community called EduPlanet designed to offer quality professional development to educators on the Performance Pathways initiative, and to provide a vehicle for ongoing dialogue among educators on this critical initiative.

The Coalition is also pleased to continue their support of member schools efforts in utilizing a "Career Pathways" focus on their educational program for students. A recent report released from the Harvard Graduate School of Education titled, "Pathways to Prosperity" clearly identifies the need for schools and business to partner and to provide a "Career Focused" educational program to ensure that our educational system meets the challenge of preparing young Americans for the 21st century. The Coalition has long supported this view and remains a strong supporter in the Career Pathways focus for education.

We continue to be indebted to our business partners for their support of the Coalition initiatives, and believe that a sustained partnership between business and education will make a difference in the education of youth in our County.

PERFORMANCE PATHWAYS: A Continuous Improvement Consortium

The Berks Business Education Coalition has been supporting member school efforts to improve student achievement since its inception. A few years ago the leadership of the Coalition met with interested school district leaders, the Berks County Intermediate Unit and Performance Pathways to explore the possibility of establishing a partnership to implement a continuous improvement process for student achievement. The partnership is to provide resources, strategic planning, leadership, and professional development for the school districts as they implement this new “data culture” into each classroom.

The Partnership, called the Performance Pathways Consortium, includes school district commitment to acquire and use quality data tools, including Performance Tracker, a data warehouse for student test scores; Assessment Builder, a resource to assist teachers in developing validated test questions, and Curriculum Connector, a curriculum mapping program. School districts have also embraced the use of a “Critical Factors Model” that identifies the necessary components of the initiative and assists districts in planning and implementing the Performance Pathways initiative. Schools have also committed to supporting teachers in professional development workshops to ensure that teachers and administrators achieve and maintain high level skills in the use of data to inform instruction.



The Berks County Intermediate Unit has conducted data retreats for member district teachers and administrators during the last two years. The retreats provide teachers and administrators from each building the opportunity to gain insight into interpreting student test data for the purpose of establishing specific goals designed to improve student achievement. The intermediate unit also assists member districts in planning and delivering quality professional development for teachers in the areas of establishing professional learning communities and differentiating instruction. The BCIU has facilitated the collaboration of teachers from across the county for the purpose of developing standards-based curriculum and common assessments. Support is also being provided to schools in the alignment of curriculum and assessment to the college and career-ready standards.

Performance Plus, a division of Sun-Gard Public Sector Corporation, is an active member of the consortium and is providing special pricing for the software. In addition, Performance Plus is providing training for school district

staff and remains a strategic partner in planning the full implementation of this continuous improvement process. Performance Plus provides access to national consultants for the consortium and utilizes these resources to ensure that the Berks consortium maintains its position as a leader in “data-driven” continuous improvement.

The Performance Pathways Consortium has been in existence for slightly more than two years and already school districts are excited with the improvement they are seeing in student achievement. The results are particularly noteworthy in the classrooms where teachers are utilizing student achievement data on a regular basis to modify instruction and to inform discussions with other faculty on strategies to improve student performance. The Berks Business Education Coalition applauds the efforts of member schools and the Berks County Intermediate Unit in this endeavor and remains a strong partner in supporting schools in this continuous improvement effort.



“

Kutztown University students are consistently using BerksWorks to research local area employers for internships. Many students also take classes while interning, so a quality experience within driving distance to campus is what they need ... and BerksWorks delivers! It has become of great benefit to area students and employers.”

Kerri G. Gardi
Director,
Career Development Ctr.
Kutztown University

The Berks Business Education Coalition, with the support of business partners, continued to assist member schools in their efforts to improve student achievement, infuse career development throughout the curriculum, and to enhance the educational attainment level throughout the county. The goals of the Coalition adopted by its board of directors continued the focus on efforts to improve career planning, academic performance, and higher education enrollment for students in Berks County. These goals are addressed through the programs covered below.

Career Pathways

The Coalition has supported a career-focused educational program since its inception. Significant progress has been made by member districts in providing quality career resources to students to assist them in developing appropriate career goals. The Berks County Career Pathways Strategic Team, composed of representatives from member schools, the Berks County Intermediate Unit, and the local Workforce Investment Board, met throughout the year to provide resources to the schools. The Career Pathways Strategic Team organized a Best Practices seminar held in October for career counselors and educators. The event was well attended and provided district career educators an excel-

lent opportunity to share best practices in career education, including the utilization of Career Cruising, BerksWorks, Berks Career Pathways, and the integration of career standards into the academic curriculum.

The Coalition supported the implementation of “Keys to Work” in member districts as a tool to assist schools in ensuring that students graduate career ready. Keys to Work is a skills-based career development tool that helps individuals understand the link between academic proficiency and real-world jobs. The program is built around ACT’s powerful WorkKeys system. It provides students the opportunity to explore careers that match their interest, measure their current skill level in relationship to specific careers, improve the skills needed, and certify the skills they possess.

The Coalition funded the creation of a series of Elementary School Planners to foster career awareness in the elementary grades. Middle School Planners were developed through the funding of the Coalition during the previous year, which prompted the request for similar resources for elementary teachers. The Elementary Planners will be distributed to each school district and are available online for teachers to download for future classes.

BerksWorks

BerksWorks is an online database of local employers who offer workplace-learning experiences to high school and college students. The database also contains the resumes of college students who are interested in internships and other learning opportunities. Currently, more than 2,800 employers are represented in the database, and more than 900 students are registered. The employer outreach and recruitment for BerksWorks has transitioned from the coordinator of BerksWorks to the Greater Reading Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

“The Greater Reading Chamber of Commerce and Industry was pleased to work with the BBEC in initiating the BerksWorks website to better connect employers with emerging talent, and our educators with businesses willing to share their time and expertise to make the classroom more relevant. The site has the potential to connect employers with the 24,000 college students that attend our five colleges to strengthen the pipeline of young professionals that will enter the local workforce. We look forward to further assisting with the development of the K-12 component that will provide career awareness and business resources in the classroom. The BerksWorks website provides a great tool for our schools and for employers.”



Ellen T. Horan
President & CEO,
Greater Reading Chamber of
Commerce & Industry

The Chamber has graciously accepted this role and will include the marketing and promotion of this important resource to employers through the regular communications the Chamber has with its members. Teresa McCann is the contact for BerksWorks at the Chamber at 610-898-7777. Pat Swavely, office administrator at the Berks Business Education Coalition, has assumed the responsibility for contacts from educational institutions for BerksWorks at 610-372-6114. The Coalition would like to recognize the Penn State Berks Campus for their efforts over the past three years in ensuring the success of BerksWorks. More information on BerksWorks is available at www.berksworks.org.

Academic Achievement

The Coalition continues to support member school districts and the Berks County Intermediate Unit in their continuous improvement efforts in academic achievement. The Coalition provided funding for school district student data retreats. Data retreats provide educators the opportunity to develop specific goals to enhance student achievement through the analysis of student assessment data. The workshops were facilitated by professional development staff from the Berks County Intermediate Unit.

The Coalition also supported the development of an online “Critical Factors” assessment designed to assist school districts and the Berks County Intermediate Unit in assessing the degree of implementation of Performance



Pathways in each school building and to plan appropriate professional development for faculty and staff. Member districts utilizing the Performance Pathways tools and a focus on data-driven continuous improvement are reporting improved student performance scores.

Higher Education

The Coalition supported member school district visits to local college campuses throughout the school year. Currently, over half of the County school districts participate in providing an organized tour and presentation on the college campuses throughout Berks County. The activity is provided to students in ninth grade to encourage them to consider post-secondary education and to assist them in planning their program of studies for the balance of their high school experience. More than 1,200 students participated in this activity during the 2009-2010 school year.

The Coalition facilitated faculty dialogues in April and October between high school and college faculty. The purpose of the dialogue is to identify strategies to improve the college preparedness of high school graduates through the development of common expectations between high school and college faculty. Both dialogues were well attended with more than 130 faculty participating from all of the education institutions in Berks County.

The Coalition also supported the administration of college placement testing in a representative sample of the Berks County high schools. Additional placement testing will be conducted in the future to better inform students of their performance on college placement tests while still in high school and to offer them additional remediation, if necessary, to reduce the incidence of remedial instruction in college.

2010 Year in Review

bbec

goal:

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

- The Coalition will facilitate the development and implementation of a benchmarking and evaluation protocol to assist districts in the implementation and evaluation of the Performance Pathways initiative.
- The Coalition will facilitate, in consort with the Berks County Intermediate Unit, member schools and Performance Plus, a consortium for continuous academic improvement planning.

goal:

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

- The Coalition will facilitate a dialogue between basic and higher education administration and faculty designed to achieve the stated goal.
- The Coalition will facilitate high school student visits to Berks County college campuses.
- The Coalition will facilitate the utilization of college placement assessment for high school students to improve the college readiness of high school students.



“The 21st century partnership stresses all of the ways that we have to make changes in the ways we are teaching students if we want them to be prepared for the workplace (and I would add as citizens in a democracy). In order for these changes to take place, we need to model the same ways of working as educators. The consortium has provided a rich opportunity to do just that. We are thinking critically about our work, based on significant data from curriculum,

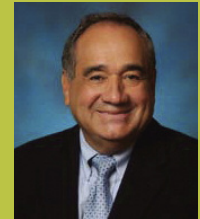
instruction, and assessment. We are collaborating as assessments that target career skills for the modern distributing leadership and coaching with “just-in-time. And, to add to the authenticity of this model, educator partnership with a coalition of businesses. This has been a success that should be replicated.”

Bena Kallick
Author and National Consultant, Performance Pathways

goal
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“ The Faculty Dialogues have been mutually beneficial for the high schools and five colleges of Berks County. Faculty from all the institutions have been able to meet in a very informal environment to share information about science, mathematics and English composition with the unique purpose of assuring the success of students as they transition from high school to college.



Penn State Berks faculty members who have attended the dialogues have learned a great deal about learning approaches and teaching methods in the high schools in each of the three disciplines since they share syllabi and other information. It is undoubtedly a two-way street where both sides (high schools and colleges) learn from each other. In addition, the interaction among faculty of the five colleges is very beneficial. The Faculty Dialogues is an initiative that should continue because its full impact will be realized only in the long term. At Penn State Berks, we fully endorse the initiative and praise the Berks Business Education Coalition for supporting the Faculty Dialogues.



Paul D. Esqueda Ph.D.
Professor of Engineering,
Associate Dean for Academic Affairs,
Penn State Berks College

s and ctives 2010

goal:

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

- The Coalition will support member schools in the implementation of Keys 2 Work curriculum and endorse WorkKeys credentialing.
- The Coalition will support member schools in offering training sessions on career resources and strategies to enhance career instruction.
- The Coalition will facilitate a sustainability plan for BerksWorks internship program.

goal:

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

- The Coalition will pursue grant opportunities in consort with its mission and in support of member schools and employers.
- The Coalition will facilitate communication among its members and promote membership through the enhancement of the BBEC's communication tools, including the Website, newsletters, and annual report.

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Transforming Data Into Academic Achievement



The data retreats were wonderful opportunities for school teams to have dedicated time for building a data-informed culture. Only by setting aside this time for analysis and reflection will schools be able to move in the direction of improving achievement for all students.



Dr. Cindy Mierzejewski
Assistant Director,
Office of Professional
Development &
Curriculum,
Berks County
Intermediate Unit



In November and December 2010, teams from Berks County school districts participated in a two-day data retreat at the Berks County Intermediate Unit. The overall goal of the two days was for the teams to analyze data and develop an action plan for improving student achievement. With the support of the Berks Business Education Coalition (BBEC), school teams had the opportunity to analyze and reflect on school processes. Participating school districts included Antietam, Brandywine Heights Area, Fleetwood Area, Hamburg Area, Oley Valley, Reading, Tulpehocken Area, Twin Valley, and Wyomissing Area.

Data retreats provide reflective collaboration that allows school teams to think insightfully about the information before them and adjust their actions accordingly. This results in clearly focused improvement strategies that bring about positive results for students.

The objectives of the data retreat were to answer six essential questions: 1) Why do we need to look at data? 2) What data can we review to evaluate all aspects of our students' achievement? 3) How do we determine root cause for the areas of strength and for opportunities for improvement? 4) How will we develop goals to

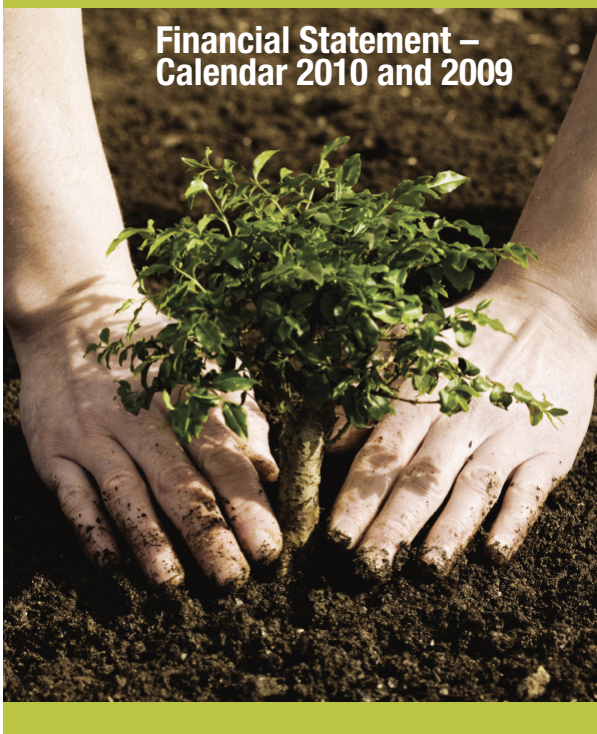
address our improvement areas? 5) How will we identify evidence-based strategies for addressing the areas of concern? and 6) How will we implement the evidence-based strategies and measure and monitor effectiveness?

At the end of the process, the schools had developed action plans for implementing strategies directed at addressing student needs. The process was based on the Continuous Improvement Cycle that is used for school improvement plans submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The teams began the retreat by investigating the need for data analysis and the various types of data that are available, such as student learning, demographic, perception, and school processes.

With the assistance of Marty Horner from Performance Pathways, they then spent time delving into the data tools and reviewing student data by using some data guiding questions. The teams used the data to identify priority areas of strength and areas for improvement.

The teams determined root cause for these areas by answering foundational school process questions, such as "Is there strong, observable evidence that the standards-aligned curriculum and effective instructional practices are consistently implemented across all classrooms?" Using the information from these questions, goals for student achievement targets were set, and evidence-based strategies were selected. At the end of the retreat, the teams had action plans that aligned their student data with goals, strategies, and steps for implementation.

Data analysis is an on-going process. As the schools are implementing the plans, they will need to monitor progress and effectiveness through the use of data and adjust instructional practices and school processes accordingly.



financial report

Operations

OPERATING INCOME:

Business/Foundations	52,124	37,398
Education	10,750	10,750
Interest on Savings	534	211
Foundations	0	35,000
Program Operating Support	41,843	28,496

TOTAL OPERATING INCOME

2009	2010
\$105,251	\$111,855

OPERATING EXPENSES:

Salaries and Benefits	72,725	69,726
Other Operating Supplies and Expenses	35,107	34,084

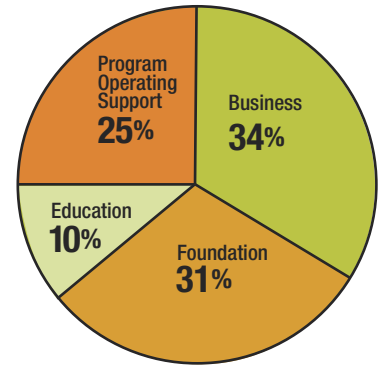
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES

\$107,832	\$103,810
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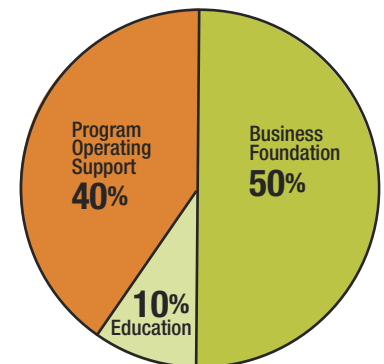
OPERATING GAIN (LOSS)

(\$2,581)	\$8,045
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2010 Operating Income



2009 Operating Income



Programs

PROGRAM FUNDING:

Business (Ed Impvt Tax Credit Contrib.)	61,908	17,000
State and Federal Funding	81,103	72,958

TOTAL PROGRAM FUNDING

2009	2010
\$143,011	\$89,958

PROGRAM EXPENDITURES:

SAS in School Project	73,123	0
Career Education Partnership Project	52,232	84,265
Wall Street West	29,359	3,496

TOTAL PROGRAM EXPENDITURES

\$154,713	\$196,625
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Program Gain (Loss)

(11,702)	2,197
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Total Gain (Loss)

(\$14,283)	10,242
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Financial Position

Total Assets - Cash and Investments

\$314,395	\$307,340
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Less Assets Deferred for Future Program Projects

(\$265,468)	(\$248,171)
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Assets/Equity available for Operations

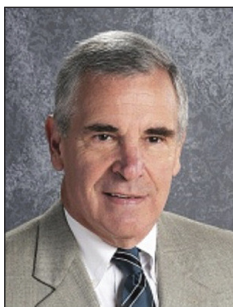
\$48,927	\$59,169
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membership list

“The Oley Valley School District, thanks to the help and support of the BBEC for several years, incorporated Performance Pathways throughout our schools. Teacher data teams have made significant changes to our curriculum resulting in improved assessment scores on the state and local levels. By studying the information collected on Performance Pathways, empowered teachers, working together, can and are helping all of our students improve.”



**Dr. Jeffrey F. Zackon,
Ed.D.**
Superintendent of Schools,
Oley Valley School District



Albright College
Alvernia College
Antietam School District
Automotive Services, Inc.
Berks Career & Technology Center
Berks County Community Foundation
Berks County Intermediate Unit
Berks Technical Institute
Bills Khakis, Inc.
Boyertown Area School District
Brandywine Heights Area School District
E. J. Breneman, Inc.
Brentwood Industries
C.H. Briggs Hardware Company
Carpenter Technology Corporation

Community Banks
Connors Investor Services, Inc.
Conrad Weiser Area School District
Daniel Boone Area School District
Diocese of Allentown
East Penn Manufacturing Company, Inc.
J. C. Ehrlich Company, Inc.
Elge Precision Machining
EnerSys, Inc.
Exeter Township School District
Fleetwood Area School District
Fulton Bank/Great Valley Division
Giant Food Stores, LLC
Governor Mifflin School District
Greater Reading Chamber of Commerce & Industry
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J. F. Horrigan, Jr.
Kutztown Area School District
Kutztown University
M&T Bank
Met-Ed, a First Energy Company
Muhlenberg School District
National Penn Bank
Oley Valley School District

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Pace Institute
ParenteBeard LLC
Penn State Berks
Penske Truck Leasing Co.
Performance Sports Apparel, Inc.
Quadrant Engineering Plastic Products
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Reading Electric
Reading Hospital & Medical Center
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Mr. Rolf Schmidt
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SFS intec, Inc.
Stevens & Lee
Susquehanna Bancshares, Inc.
Tulpehocken Area School District
Twin Valley School District
UGI Utilities, Inc.
Verizon
Wachovia
Weidenhammer Systems Corporation
Wilson School District
Wyomissing Area School District



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Dr. Thomas R. Chapman
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Commerce & Industry

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Performance
Sports Apparel

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Met-Ed,
a FirstEnergy Company

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Weidenhammer
Systems Corporation

bbec

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Muhlenberg
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Dr. Gust Zogas
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OPPORTUNITIES



bbec
Berks Business Education Coalition

2010 ANNUAL REPORT

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