



coordinate

promote

improve

enhance

aspire

support

25 YEARS OF MAKING IDEAS HAPPEN 1992-2016

“

Twenty-five years ago, the Berks Business Education Coalition was formed as a partnership of education and business leaders with a mission to collectively support initiatives that would improve the competencies of students attending public schools in Berks County.

It is gratifying to note the many successful initiatives implemented by the Coalition during the past 25 years that have provided support for schools and motivation for students.

Looking ahead in this fast changing world, a continuing commitment to the original mission of the Coalition remains as critical today, as it was 25 years ago. ”

Paul Roedel, founding member of BBEC

**BERKS BUSINESS
EDUCATION COALITION**
2016 ANNUAL REPORT



MISSION:

The mission of the Berks Business Education Coalition is to develop and to coordinate programs within the business and education communities which improve the competencies of students and ensure that they have the aspirations, skills, and knowledge to plan appropriately for their lives after high school.

GOALS:

1. Promote career awareness and development programs for students in Berks County.
2. Support member schools in the effort to improve basic academic performance.
3. Promote appropriate, differentiated interest in pursuit of post secondary education.
4. Facilitate continuing dialogue between, with, and among K-12 and higher education.
5. Provide for the viability and sustainability of Coalition programs and services.

This year we celebrate 25 years since the founding of our organization. The Berks Business Education Coalition (BBEC) came about in 1992 as leaders within the Berks County business and education communities correctly saw the need for an organization dedicated to collaboration among leaders in education and business.

Then, as now, the mission focuses strongly on ways to enhance the career awareness and the aspirations of Berks County's students. We have promoted initiatives to raise the academic standards for students, to foster preparedness for meaningful employment or higher education directly after high school, and to reinforce the "soft skills" that employers value in successful employees.

The mission set forth 25 years ago continues today. We are particularly focused on the needs of those students in our community that are at risk. As we set our path for the next 25 years, we realize also the critical need to prepare all children, especially at the earliest Pre-K levels, with the cognitive and social foundations that undergird all further learning success.

We are grateful for the vision of community leaders 25 years ago that led to the formation of the Berks Business Education Coalition. Moreover, we cannot thank sufficiently all of those that have supported the BBEC to achieve this landmark anniversary both financially and through their efforts.

Reading this report you will learn a bit more of our history, equally you will see that we are committed to sustained results and to advocacy for the resources that allow for those results to be realized.

John P. Weidenhammer

ING **IDEAS** HAPPEN

1992 – 1993

BBEC formally organized. Project 2000 Plus adopted for guiding set of principles.

1996 – 1997

Job Incentives '97 program. Teacher visits to businesses.

2000 – 2002

Career Pathways website developed to promote career pathways to parents, students, and educators.

1994 – 1995

School to Work. Workplace learning as important component of curriculum.

1998 – 1999

Learning for the 21st Century. High Schools that work.

2003 – 2005

Licensing for 25,000 students to access high quality, virtual curriculum, grades 8-12. Career resource guidelines available to all Berks County school districts.



Founding Board (from left to right): Charles Sullivan, Dr. Frederick H. Gaige, Robert J. Lesko, Dr. James S. Goodhart, Fred D. Hafer, Paul R. Roedel, Marlin Miller, Jr., Rhoda E. Dersb, John F. Horrigan, Jr., Dr. Roger S. Hertz, and Rolf D. Schmidt.

2006 – 2007

Career Cruising, a web-based career and college search tool provided to all school districts.

Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) funds to support academic improvement initiatives.

2010 – 2012

Elementary School Planner Booklets for career education. High school and college faculty dialogue.

Eduplanet 21

insideBerksbusiness (iBb), a five-day learning experience for educators.

2008 – 2009

BerksWorks, a web-based tool to connect students with employers for internships and other workplace experiences.

SAS in School, Curriculum Pathways.

EITC funding to support school-based curriculum initiatives.

Middle School Planner Booklets for career education.

2013 – 2016

insideBerksbusiness (iBb), Higher Education Campus Visits, Students Interacting with Business programs across all districts

Career exploration work-based internship programs in 9 of 18 school districts

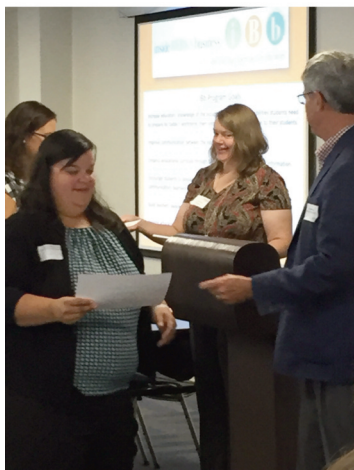
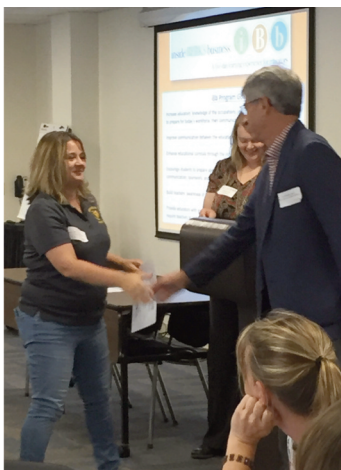
Advocacy for early childhood (Pre-K) education



inside BERKS business:

A five-day
learning
experience
for educators

In partnership with the Berks County Intermediate Unit, the Berks Business Education Coalition placed 27 Berks County educators at 18 participating businesses and organizations for one week this past summer. The educators gained direct insight into the culture, expectations, and employment opportunities at that business or organization and developed teaching materials to be used with their students in the classroom.



Our thanks to participating businesses and organizations and the educators assigned to them:

- Baker Tilly Virchow Krause, LLP |**
Lindsay Gerhart, GMSD
- Berks County Conservation District |**
Samantha Bolles, TASD
- Brentwood Industries, Inc. |**
Mille Bross, TASD + Emily Hershey, WSD
- East Penn Manufacturing Co., Inc. |**
Zachary Duncan, RSD + Jerry Galczynski, BCTC + Michelle Klusewitz, ETSD + Christine Woronko, GMSD
- Greater Reading Convention and Visitors Bureau |** Alyssa Demitis, TVSD
- Hawk Mountain Sanctuary |**
Rob Bekesy, BASD + Suzy Hoffman, BASD + Corriann Myers, SVSD
- Liberty Environmental, Inc. |**
Michelle Ehrhart, RSD
- Met-Ed, A FirstEnergy Company |**
Rebecca Donahue, CWASD + Mary Jo Kuhwald, BCTC
- Nolde Forest |** Christopher Hartman, DBASD + Joel Kleinspehn, SVSD
- Opportunity House |**
Samantha Moore, WSD
- PA German Cultural Heritage Center |**
Amy Kochel, TVSD
- Reading Eagle |** Jennifer Muriel, OVSD
- Reading Fightin Phils |**
Michael Culbert, TVSD
- Reading Health System |** Gregory Durland, WSD + Rachel Smith, TVSD
- Weidenhammer Systems Corporation |**
Tom Sweet, DBASD
- White Star Tours & Travel Center |**
Kaitlin Tackels, WSD
- Wyomissing Animal Hospital |**
Teresa McCarthy, HASD
- YMCA |** Cindy Cockrum, WSD

ING IDEAS HAPPEN



Reading Intermediate High School ninth graders learn about Pennsylvania horticulture at Ontelaunee Orchards.

Students Interacting with Business

For the fourth consecutive year, Berks County ninth graders interacted with Berks County businesses directly at a business site. The students learned about the operation of a business, the factors employers look for in a good employee, and about opportunities for employment in Berks County and beyond. In 2016, we had 3,803 students from 16 of the 18 Berks County school districts visit at 26 participating businesses in class-size groups from September 26 to 30.

FACTORS EMPLOYERS CONSIDER WHEN HIRING

School Performance:

Completion of high school diploma (indicating successful achievement of an important goal), mastery of basic skills, and participation in extracurricular activities.

Communication Skills:

Proper completion of employment application, ability to read instructions, to listen and understand, to speak and write and be understood.

Attitude: Neat personal appearance, record of good attendance, cooperative view toward shift work and overtime, ability to work as part of a team, and does not use drugs.

Computer Literacy:

Background and practice in fundamental principles and usage.

Work Experience: Prior work experience (paid or unpaid), volunteering a plus; demonstrates maturity, responsibility and commitment.

Reputation: Trustworthiness, honesty, reliability, good team member, able to work independently. What people think of you follows you!

Understanding of How and Why a Business Operates:

Businesses operate to make a profit, a good thing; businesses will continue to exist and to employ people only as long as their rewards are greater than their costs.

The businesses put their heart and soul into the program. We are indebted to them.

Participating in 2016 were:

- Alcon Research, Ltd.
- American Crane & Equipment Company
- BB&T
- Berks County Agricultural Center
- Brentwood Industries
- Cambridge-Lee Industries LLC
- Carpenter Technology Corporation
- DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel
- East Penn Manufacturing Co.
- EnerSys
- Fraser Advanced Information Systems
- Met-Ed, A FirstEnergy Company
- Ontelaunee Orchards
- Penn State Health St. Joseph
- Quadrant Engineering Products
- Reading Eagle
- Reading Health System
- Reading Royals
- Remcon Plastics
- R. M. Palmer Company
- Sealstrip Corporation
- SFS intec, Inc.
- UGI Energy Services
- UGI Utilities, Inc.
- Weidenhammer Systems Corporation
- WORLD electronics

Seniors at Berks High Schools Intern at Area Businesses In Rapidly Growing Program

Interest in offering work based internships as part of the senior year high school curriculum is growing rapidly across Berks County. The Boyertown Area, Brandywine Heights Area, Exeter Township, Fleetwood Area, Hamburg Area, Kutztown Area, Reading, Twin Valley, and Wilson school districts each have internship programs in place during the 2016/2017 school year. Three other districts are actively considering adding the internship elective in 2017/2018.

The internship placement offers students the opportunity to investigate thoroughly a career field where they have a perceived interest. Through the experience the student verifies that the career (work) area is one he/she does or does not wish to pursue after high school. Either outcome is worthwhile. The student learns, for example, if he/she wants to pursue post-secondary education studies in the career area he/she has just spent time exploring. Equally, the student may well have saved countless hours of undergraduate credits and study only to have found that the career for which he/she has been preparing is not the avenue he/she wishes to pursue.

High school internships are typically scheduled for two hours every day, for one or both semesters of the senior year. The program is carefully structured and closely monitored. Students receive one to three academic credits, dependent upon the time and duration of the internship.



Wilson High School seniors, Alexis Shollenberger and Eric Adam, pictured here with their supervisor, Tami Shimp, are interning at Berks Nature. Both are planning to major in a field of science in college. They report that the internship experience has “enhanced our knowledge and has given us the ability to apply it in real life situations.”

Students who work with both their minds and their hands during their placement (e.g., manufacturing) and for whom their presence adds value to the employer are paid for their work.

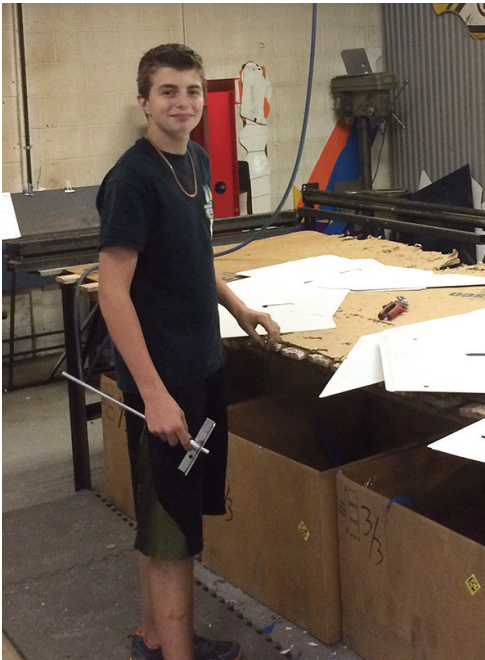
The Twin Valley School District has 80 senior students engaged in internships the current school year, about 25% of the senior class. Brandywine Heights Area, a smaller district, has 20 students placed, approaching 20% of the senior class in only the first full year of operation.

Internships are a win for everyone. Students learn in depth about a possible career path before leaving high school. The internship experience is itself a tremendously maturing experience.

Employers gain as they mentor students at a crucial decision point in the students’ lives, taking satisfaction in the mentoring relationship itself, and most important, helping to set the student on a path that is life sustaining and of real value to the American economy.

A great big thank you to the more than 150 businesses and organizations across Berks County that are offering internship placements to students this school year.

IDEAS HAPPEN



*Brandywine Heights Area School District senior **Dylan Hoch** interning at Speedway Entertainment in Myerstown, PA. Here he is working on the cutouts to do some fabrication for a racecar.*



Wyomissing Area High School ninth graders visit Alvernia University on March 30, 2016.

Ninth Graders From All 18 Districts Participate in Higher Education Campus Visits

For the 13th year, the Berks Business Education Coalition has organized and facilitated formal campus visits for ninth grade students from across the 18 Berks County public school districts.

Through the course of these years, some 21,500 students have experienced first time college campus visits at the start of their high school years to learn directly about the culture and expectations of higher education and the message of what it takes to succeed academically post high school. In 2016, 3,821 students participated from each of the 18 school districts.

Our sincere thanks to Albright College, Alvernia University, Kutztown University, Penn State Berks, and the Reading Area Community College for their partnership in this program.





A Case for Pre-K Education

by Dr. Solomon Lausch

Throughout all of the current political debate one theme has been constant, conservative or liberal, and that is the decline of the American middle class. In 2013, for the first time, 51% of public school students fell below the federal government's low income standard for free or subsidized school lunches. That standard is 300% of the defined federal poverty level.

In Pennsylvania, the standard applies also for students to be eligible for the state Pre-K Counts early intervention program for 3- and 4-year-old children. In Berks County, the total eligible number in 2014 was 4,949 children, about 48% of the approximately 10,500 3- and 4-year-old cohort. In the Reading School District, the 2,500 eligible children today constitute over 90% of the total 3- and 4-year-old age group in the city.

Why all this focus on 3- and 4-year-olds? The answer is that these are the years in which a child's brain is rapidly developing and equally, when the child is acquiring the social skills, self control, and persistence which matter for success in life.

For children raised in poverty, in disadvantaged backgrounds, the argument for enrollment in quality Pre-K education, 3- and 4-year-olds, is compelling. Poverty in and of itself does not predict for diminished school achievement and later life problems. The factors which so regularly associate with poverty, however, do predict.

Fifty years ago, the 1966 Johns Hopkins Coleman Report concluded that variation in academic performance among children in the United States relates directly to familial environment, not variations per se in per pupil expenditure or teacher pupil ratio. Let me hasten to add here, as a veteran of more than 40 years in public education, urban, suburban, and rural, I believe that dollars and class size absolutely do make a difference. The point above is that we must attend equally to the environment in which the child is raised, the early years assuredly, if we want children from disadvantaged circumstances to head into life on an equal footing with their peers.

And what are those disadvantaged circumstances? The landmark Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACE Study, 1997) by the Kaiser Permanente Health Maintenance organization and the Federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provided these insights. The study identified 10 types of childhood trauma (ACEs), which can associate with later life health problems:

- physical abuse
- mother treated violently
- sexual abuse
- household substance abuse
- emotional abuse
- household mental illness
- physical neglect
- parental separation or divorce
- emotional neglect
- incarcerated household member

Subsequent research over the 20 years since the report has

examined the cumulative effect of ACEs, determining a strong relationship not only to health but to numerous social and behavioral problems throughout the developing and later life span.

The Philadelphia Urban ACE Study (2013) focused specifically on children in an urban setting. The study found that 37.3% of Philadelphia's adults had experienced four or more ACE factors, representing 432,100 adults. Two of five Philadelphia adults, for example saw or heard violent incidents while growing up.

Clearly, children who experience several or more ACEs in their early years begin school significantly disadvantaged compared to their peers without the ACE factors trauma in their upbringing. Nobel laureate economist James Heckman, University of Chicago has researched extensively on the topic. In a 2007 paper presented to the Allied Social Sciences Association, he and his associate Dimitry Masterov concluded that "a principal benefit of early childhood education intervention is in shaping the non-cognitive skills – behavior, motivation and self control . . ." which matter for success in life. Paul Tough, in a major piece in the June 2016, *The Atlantic*, puts the cumulative findings of the past 40 years forthrightly: "Children with two or more ACE factors are eight times as likely as children with none to demonstrate behavioral problems; chronically elevated stress leads to physiological and neurological adaptations that affect the way the child's mind and body develops."

What then can be done? The answer, for me, is to use the vehicle of early childhood education, the Pre-K years to intervene, ameliorate developmentally for



the effects of toxic ACEs in the child's environment. We must intervene for those children whose environment predicts for stress and social dysfunction. We must use these years, the years of 90% cognitive development, consciously to inculcate motivation, ingrain the need to achieve, self control, perseverance, the capacity to act appropriately in the larger society.

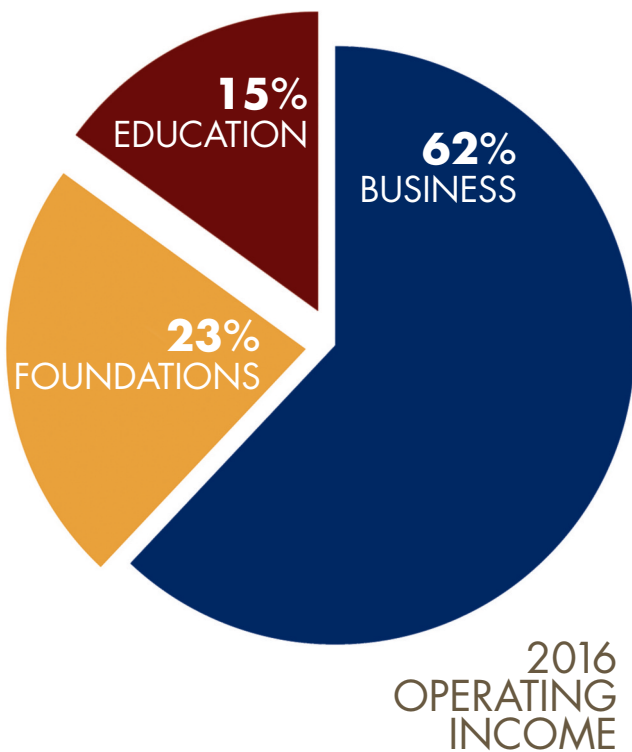
We can all do this if we have the will to do so. We can do this and more. We can teach to the precepts of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. We can teach to the arts. And equal to all, we can inculcate the need to achieve, we can model and teach perseverance, we can enable the capacity for delayed gratification.

We can do all of these things with organized, properly prepared formal programs of public and private Pre-K education. And we can do it only with the adequate provision of resources. It does no good to provide a 10-foot ladder to climb a 20-foot wall.

Pre-K education requires the resources to assure a well educated, properly trained teacher for each classroom, and the financial resources to attract and keep the teacher there. It requires a teacher to student ratio no greater than 20:1 with one or more properly vetted and appropriately trained classroom aides.

It can be done and must be done. We must intervene early and continue the intervention developmentally all through the early childhood and middle school years. Only then will we see real evidence of progress: higher outcomes on standardized measures of achievement; significantly reduced dropout rate in grades 9, 10, 11; better, more lasting integration into productive, self-reliant, independent living.

Since 1972, the United Negro College Fund has been reminding us that a mind is a terrible thing to waste. It is our moral obligation not to do so. It is in our national self interest to make sure it is not. So, why then are we so hesitant?

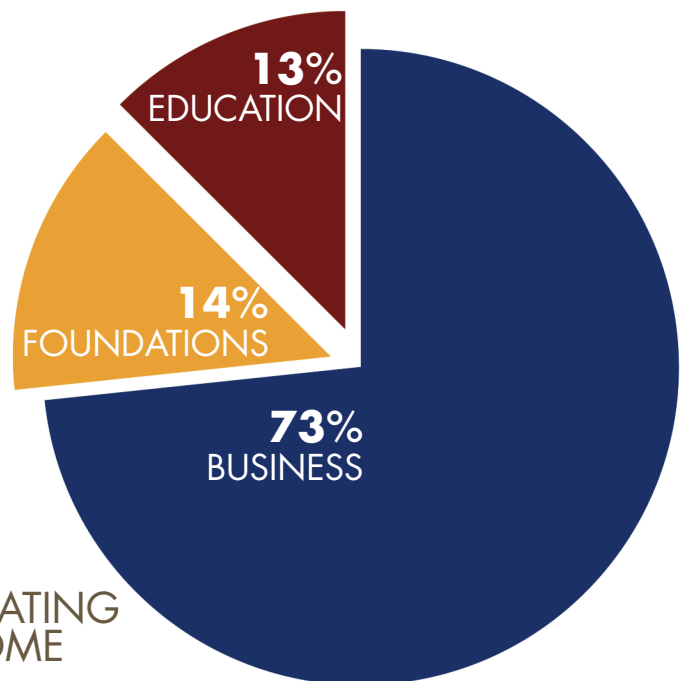


FINANCIAL REPORT

OPERATIONS	2015	2016
Operating Income:		
Business	85,550	68,500
Education	16,500	16,900
Foundations	14,600	24,600
Interest on Savings	62	66
Total Operating Income	\$116,712	\$110,066
Operating Expenses:		
Salaries and Benefits	81,026	85,289
Other Operating Supplies & Expenses	30,335	28,647
Total Operating Expenses	\$111,361	\$113,936
Operating Gain (Loss)	\$5,351	(\$3,871)

PROGRAM EXPENDITURES	2015	2016
Direct Payment to Schools	1,064	74,999
inside BERKS business	12,245	0
Higher Education Campus Visits	2,380	4,640
Total Program Expenditures	\$15,689	\$79,639

Financial Position	2015	2016
Total Liability and Equity	\$197,947	\$171,030





MEMBERSHIP LIST



- | | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| Albright College | Catherine V. & Martin W. Hofmann Foundation | Greater Reading Economic Partnership | Reading Muhlenberg Career & Technology Center |
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| Alvernia University | Conrad Weiser Area School District | Jerlyn Foundation | Reading School District |
| American Crane & Equipment Company | Customers Bank | Kutztown Area School District | Reinsel Kuntz Leshner LLP |
| Antietam School District | Daniel Boone Area School District | Kutztown University | Remcon Plastics |
| BB&T Bank | Diocese of Allentown | M&T Bank | Riverview National Bank |
| Berks Career & Technology Center | DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel | Marlin Miller Jr. Family Foundation | R. M. Palmer Company |
| Berks County Agricultural Center | East Penn Manufacturing Co., Inc. | Met-Ed, A FirstEnergy Company | Schuylkill Valley School District |
| Berks County Community Foundation | E. J. Breneman, Inc. | Meridian Bank | Sealstrip Corporation |
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| Boyertown Area School District | First Priority Bank | Penn State Health St. Joseph | UGI Energy Services |
| Brandywine Heights Area School District | Fleetwood Area School District | Penske Truck Leasing Co. | UGI Utilities, Inc. |
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| Cambridge-Lee Industries LLC | Fulton Bank | Quality Investment Castings, Inc. | Wells Fargo |
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| | Governor Mifflin School District | Reading Eagle | Wilson School District |
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BERKS BUSINESS EDUCATION COALITION

2016 ANNUAL REPORT

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