

Pennsylvania Association of Career and Technical Administrators
March 2009 Newsletter

Annual PACTA Symposium: Preparing Students for the Workforce of Tomorrow

The 2009 PACTA Symposium was held in Hershey on February 11th and 12th with educators and industry officials from around the state attending the two-day program. Participants were involved in multiple days of workforce initiative discussions, innovative program developments, and learning about the effects of the recession on employment and training. Presentations from state government focused on the governor's initiatives and how the Department of Labor is implementing those initiatives. Each presenter offered differing perspectives on workforce development and provided opportunities for the over 400 attendees to discuss workforce development in Pennsylvania. The main session speakers included Dr. Bill McNeal of The International Center for Leadership in Education, Dr. Ken Gray, Professor Emeritus of Penn State, and Mr. Fred Dedrick, Deputy Secretary for Workforce Development with the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. To obtain presentation materials from the 2009 PACTA Symposium, point your browser to: <http://www.pacareertech.org/resources/>

PACTA Strategic Plan

On June 30, 2009 the three year PACTA Strategic Plan will come to a conclusion. The strategic plan is the official document explaining the goals of PACTA for the next three years and details the objectives that the organization will focus its collective energies on to accomplish before June 30, 2012. Activities are now being planned to renew the five year strategic plan covering July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2012. Many changes have taken place in Career and Technical Education since the current strategic plan went into effect on July 1, 2006. For example, there are new changes with Perkins, Program Approval, Chapter 339, Act 1, Professional Development PIL regulations for administrators, and a pending increase in the number of credits required for an individual to obtain a Vocational II certification. Additionally, new PSSA assessments have been created in science with an increasing focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) in CTE. Plans are now underway for executive committee strategic planning activities for the spring of 2009. The 2006-2009 PACTA Strategic Plan can be accessed by pointing your browser to: <http://www.pacareertech.org/about/>

ACTE National Policy Seminar

The 2009 National Policy Seminar will be held at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Arlington Virginia from March 9-11. The National Policy Seminar is offered by the Association for Career and Technical Education and is the year's best event for learning about and influencing legislation involving career and technical education. Attendees will receive first-hand information on possible legislation, the federal economic stimulus package, any new directions proposed by the Obama administration, and the views of legislators from across the country. If you will be attending, please contact PACTA Special Projects Coordinator John Pulver at johnpulver@verizon.net as he is coordinating legislative visits to make sure that all Pennsylvania legislators are visited. If you are unable to attend the entire seminar but are willing to come to Washington on March 10 or

11 for legislative visits, please let John know as well. PACTA will be taking the lead in scheduling visits to Senator Specter and Senator Casey's offices. For more information on the seminar including registration and lodging, please point your browser to: <http://www.acteonline.org/nps.aspx>.

Local Assessment Validity Report

The Pennsylvania Department of Education recently released a study that compared the local graduation assessments of school districts with PSSA to determine how well the local assessments measure student achievement. To meet graduation requirements, Pennsylvania allows students to demonstrate proficiency on the 11th grade math and reading PSSA or a locally designed 11th grade math and reading assessment. The study found that only 18 of the 500 Pennsylvania school districts have a local assessment that appropriately measures student achievement in math and reading at the 11th grade level. The study, conducted by the College of Education at Penn State at the request of the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), examined nearly 1,000 local assessments from 418 school districts. Assessments were reviewed and rated by eight panels of public educators from across Pennsylvania according to: 1) whether the assessments are aligned with the state's 11th grade proficiency standards in reading and math, and 2) whether the assessments are conducted in a way that ensures the integrity of the results. The study found that there was considerable variability in the nature of the local assessments across districts regardless of district size or location.

In reading, 99 of the state's 500 school districts provided an 11th grade assessment for review. Only 19 districts were identified as using the reading assessment in a way that protects the exam's integrity and is the basis for making graduation decisions. In math, 314 districts provided an 11th grade assessment for review, of which only 31 were deemed to be appropriately using the assessment for diploma-granting determinations. The study identified only 18 districts with both a math and reading assessment appropriately used for awarding high school diplomas. To read completed copy of the Penn State study report, point your browser to: <http://www.ed.psu.edu/educ/lavs/lavs-full-report>. This link will take you to the official news release from PDE: <http://www.pdenewsroom.state.pa.us/newsroom/cwp/view.asp?a=3&q=148536>

Governor Ed Rendell's Proposed 2009-2010 State Budget

In early February, Governor Rendell released his 2009-2010 proposed budget. Total expenditures are projected to be \$61.7 billion of which \$26.6 billion are general fund expenditures. Proposed education funding includes:

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| • Basic Education Subsidy | \$5.5 billion (\$300 million increase – 2.7%) |
| • Accountability Block Grant | \$271.4 million |
| • Education Assistance Program | \$65.1 million |
| • Special Education | \$1.05 billion (\$20.5 million increase – 2%) |
| • Project 720 | \$10.7 million |
| • PA Pre-K Counts | \$95.1 million (\$8.6 million increase – 10%) |
| • Science: It's Elementary | \$13.6 million |
| • Dual Enrollment | \$10 million |

- Classrooms for the Future \$22 million
- Career and Technical Education \$64.3 million (0.5% increase)

Legislative hearings for the 2009-2010 budget are now underway. Both the Senate and the House will be offering their views on the budget and a final compromise will have to be crafted between the legislature and the governor. For more information on the governor's proposed budget, point your browser to: <http://tinyurl.com/as96q5>.

Governor Rendell's Proposed Career & Technical Education Subsidy for 2009-2010

The Governor's budget includes \$64,314,000 for the 2009-2010 Career and Technical Education appropriation. This amount is a \$305,000 (0.5%) increase over the amount appropriated in 2008-2009. Of this amount, \$50,280,000 is allocated for the Secondary Career and Technical Education Subsidy. A chart of the subsidy for each CTC under the proposed budget can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/cf45vv>

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

President Barack Obama signed into law the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (often referred to as the Stimulus Package) in late February, which includes more than \$100 billion for education, college grants and tuition tax credits and billions more for school modernization. According to preliminary estimates released by the U.S. Department of Education, Pennsylvania is slated over two years to receive \$398.775 million in Title I grants to local education agencies, \$427.178 million in IDEA Part B grants to states, and \$878.787 million in Federal Pell Grants. [Click here](#) for more information on education stimulus funding on the U.S. Department of Education website. Additionally, part of the act involves direct assistance to the states. To receive funding, states will have to show they are making progress in four areas which include:

- Boosting teacher effectiveness and getting more good teachers into high-poverty, high-minority schools
- Establishing "data systems to track how much a student has learned from one year to the next,"
- Advancing academic standards and tests,
- Supporting struggling schools.

To learn more about the appropriations of the stimulus page for states related to school modernization and school construction, click on the following link and read the section titled Division A – Appropriations Provisions: <http://www.ncef.org/school-modernization/>

Federal Fiscal Year 2009 Appropriations

Recently, the House and Senate Appropriations Committees released final program allocations for Fiscal Year (FY) 2009. The FY 2009 bill should have been completed by Congress in the fall of 2008, but a variety of competing priorities and political concerns kept the legislation from moving forward. Most of the education funding in the bill will be distributed to schools on July 1, 2009, for the 2009-2010 fiscal year. Congress proposes to level fund the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins) in the omnibus at FY 2008 levels. These numbers represent a restoration of the funds that were proposed for elimination by the Bush Administration early last year. Although there

is still a tremendous need for increased funding levels, these numbers demonstrate the support for the Perkins program on Capitol Hill. Specifically, the FY 2009 funding bill includes:

- Perkins Basic State Grant \$1.161 billion
- Tech Prep Programs \$103 million
- National Programs \$7.86 million

ACTE Initiatives of Interest

ACTE released a new policy research paper, entitled "[Joining Forces for Student Success: The Emergence of State and Local Policies to Support the Recognition of Academic Credit for CTE Coursework.](#)" The paper provides information on the new trend of states and localities recognizing CTE courses for academic credit. It includes findings from a state survey, describes innovative ways states and localities are employing this strategy and offers recommendations on how to effectively implement and systemize course development. Additionally, ACTE has formed a partnership with Dr. Williard Daggett's International Center for Leadership in Education to create the Institute for 21st Century Leadership. The institute is based on the idea of preparing students to be work-life-college ready and promotes the incorporation of rigor and relevance while providing a framework for integrating academic and career-related instruction. For more information, point your browser to: <http://www.leadered.com/pdf/ACTE%20Flyer.pdf>

ACTE also has resources available on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act at this link: <http://www.acteonline.org/issues.aspx>. Scroll down to the box entitled ACTE Working for You! And click on the "download presentation slides" to see specific information on how the stimulus bill may affect CTE.

Technical Assistance Program for Career and Technical Education

PACTA is continuing to work with PDE to provide leadership to the Technical Assistance or TAP program. Career and Technical School Distinguished Leaders are working closely with their assigned schools to provide guidance and advisory services focused on improving student achievement in math, reading, and end of course occupational competency assessments in career and technical education. The CDTSLs are focusing on helping schools utilize student achievement data to drive decisions about instruction and about curriculum innovations.

Actions to Improve America's High Schools

[Accelerating the Agenda: Actions to Improve America's High Schools](#), a joint report of the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, National Conference of State Legislatures, National Association of State Boards of Education and the Council of Chief State School Officers, measures states' progress (since 2005) in preparing high school students for college and career success in a global economy. The report makes several recommendations to state leaders on how to restore value to the high school diploma, redesign high schools, provide excellent teachers and principals, hold high schools and colleges accountable and improve education governance.

Tuition Waiver Program

Westmoreland County Community College (WCCC) in partnership with the Workforce Investment Board of Westmoreland/Fayette and PA CareerLink is offering a [tuition waiver program](#) for people who have lost their jobs due to plant closings or layoffs that occurred on or after January 1, 2008. The tuition and fee waiver will apply to high-priority occupation programs that have plentiful openings in the region such as: early childhood education, medical office technology, machine technology, computer technology, welding, emergency medical technician and nurse aides.

Senate Bill 55 on Employing Persons with a Criminal Record in Public Schools

[Senate Bill 55](#) would expand the list of criminal offenses that would prohibit a person from being employed in public or private schools. It also restricts individuals who have been convicted of certain misdemeanors from being employed in education until at least 10 years after completing their sentence, extending the current five-year waiting period. The bill would allow school administrators to request that an employee submit a current state and federal background check when it is believed that an employee has been convicted of a crime.

Senate Bill 56 on School Violence

[Senate Bill 56](#) would expand the duties and responsibilities of the Office of Safe Schools (within Pennsylvania Department of Education), school entities and police departments in reporting incidents of school violence. Charter schools would be required to report incidents of school violence in the same manner as other school entities. The bill adds a list of crimes and offenses that must be reported to PDE and replaces current law pertaining to memorandums of understanding (MOU) with language that requires school districts to enter into an MOU with police departments that have jurisdiction over school property. The MOU must contain certain conditions, including immediate notification of police, emergency plans, and a data review process. *The bill allows PDE to take disciplinary action against any chief school administrator or principal who intentionally fails to submit the report, enter into MOU, or report an incident.* Administrators would be subject to criminal prosecution and possibly civil penalties ranging from \$2,500 to \$5,000.

Upcoming Events

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| March 9 – 11 | ACTE National Policy Seminar
Crystal Gateway Marriott Hotel, Arlington, VA |
| March 20 | Spring Western Region PACTA Meeting
Wexford, PA |
| March 27 | Spring Central Region PACTA Meeting
Nittany Lion Inn
State College, PA |
| April 1 | PACTA Eastern Region Meeting |

Reading Muhlenberg Career & Technical Center
Reading, PA

May 13

PACTA Executive Committee
Strategic Planning Meeting
State College, PA

May 14-15

PACTA Adult Education Workshop
State College, PA