

Pennsylvania Association of Career and Technical Administrators

September 2009 Newsletter

PACTA Summer Conference

On July 29-31, the annual summer PACTA conference was held at the Nittany Lion Inn in State College, PA. This year's theme was "*Career and Technical Education: Leadership for Success.*" Career and technical administrators in technical centers and school districts from across the state convened to receive updates and professional development in CTE. Major presentations included: 1) Current Legal Issues in Education, 2) Change Driven by Data: Improving NOCTI Scores, 3) Green PA – What It Means to Career and Technical Education 4) BCTE Programs of Study and Statewide Articulation Updates 5) A National Perspective on Career and Technical Education 6) Getting Results in Career and Technical Education and 7) Career and Technical Education Updates for Pennsylvania. Additionally, break-out sessions were held on a myriad of subjects related to academic and career and technical education.

PACTA Special Education PIL

This year, PACTA is offering a 45 hour Special Education PIL program entitled "Improving the Achievement of Special Education Students in Career and Technical Education." The program includes a two day initial session, embedded job assignments, online discussions, and a follow-up session next summer. The first two day session was held in August. The second two day session is being held at the Nittany Lion Inn in State College on Tuesday September 15th and Wednesday September 16th. The first day focuses on the legal issues and requirements of delivering special education services in Pennsylvania and the second day will target strategies towards improving student achievement through effective IEP design and the use of specially designed instruction. The presenters include an attorney with extensive expertise in CTE and special education, two CTE supervisors of special education, and a PDE specialist. For more information including the registration form, point your browser to <http://pacareertech.org/calendar/> and look under September 2009.

PSSA PIL Program for 2009-2010 – October 5th

PACTA is offering the PSSA PIL program for 2009-2010. The PSSA PIL is designed for individuals to enroll each year and implement a continuous improvement process. The PSSA PIL will take place on October 5th at the Nittany Lion Inn in State College. Additionally, there will be job embedded work and a final session. The PSSA PIL will be data intensive and participants will be asked to bring any PSSA or local CTC or district student achievement data for analysis during the October 5th PIL session. While PSSA data is not always readily available to shared time career and technical centers, participants can bring other benchmarking data such as 4-sight or other relevant locally generated assessment data. For more information, point your browser to <http://pacareertech.org/calendar/> and look under October.

NOCTI / OCA PIL Program for 2009-2010 – October 6th

PACTA is offering the NOCTI / OCA PIL program for 2009-2010. The NOCTI/OCA PIL is designed for individuals to enroll each year and implement a continuous improvement process. The NOCTI/OCA PIL will take place on October 6th at the Nittany Lion Inn in State College. Additionally, there will be job embedded work and a final session. The NOCTI/OCA PIL will be data intensive and participants will be asked to bring NOCTI data with them for data analysis exercises. For more information, point your browser to <http://pacareertech.org/calendar/> and look under October.

September 2009 PACTA Professional Development Activities

The following professional development activities will be taking place on September 29 and 30 at the Nittany Lion Inn in State College:

- Workshop on Technology in Career and Technical Education
- Workshop for CTE Business Administrators
- Workshop for CTE Guidance Counselors
- Workshop for Adult CTE Coordinators

For more information, point your browser to <http://pacareertech.org/calendar/> and scroll down to September.

PSSA Results for 2009 Announced by PDE

The PSSA results for 2009 have been released by PDE. Seventy-eight percent of schools and 95 percent of school districts met the state's academic achievement targets for adequate yearly progress (AYP) in 2009, according to [new PSSA results](#) released by the PA Department of Education (PDE). To make AYP in 2009, a school or district must have at least 63 percent of its students performing at grade level in reading and at least 56 percent of students performing at grade level in math; have a 10 percent reduction in the number of students who scored below grade level in reading or math in 2008; or make gains that put a school on track to reach academic targets in two years. For the most recent PSSA and AYP results, check out these resources from PDE:

www.pde.state.pa.us/a_and_t/cwp/view.asp?a=3&pm=1&Q=150034 and <http://paayp.emetric.net/>.

Pennsylvania Department of Health Announcement on Swine Flu

The PA Department of Health has released [guidance on the H1N1 virus \(swine flu\) for K-12 schools](#) in an effort to limit the spread of the influenza while reducing disruption to learning. These state guidelines are consistent with the newly released recommendations from the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**. The state departments of Health and Education are conducting a series of webinars with school districts across the state to inform them about the new guidelines and what is expected this coming school year. The Secretary of Education is urging all school district officials to maintain close contact with their local health departments and to share flu prevention information with

families. For more information, contact the PA Department of Health at 1-877-PA-HEALTH or visit www.health.state.pa.us.

2009-2010 State Budget

Pennsylvania still does not have an operating budget for the 2009-2010 fiscal year. The Pennsylvania 2009-2010 state budget impasse continues. The joint House-Senate Budget Conference Committee met publicly this week to discuss a budget spend number and recurring revenue sources to balance the budget, but remain divided on both issues despite some earlier apparent narrowing of differences. House and Senate Democratic leaders said they and Gov. Ed Rendell support a \$28.1 billion budget plan, while House Republicans presented an alternative \$27.5 billion budget. Legislative staff will prepare a comparison of the two plans to be reviewed at a future meeting, the date of which has not been determined. In education, districts and higher education institutions are not receiving state funds and will not be receiving state funds until the budget impasse has been resolved. What does this mean for career and technical education? In their proposal for 2009-2010, the house keeps career and technical education level funded at that amount while the senate budget reduces career and technical education by almost ten percent. To receive federal funds (Perkins), a state must maintain its current effort in the same program from year to year. PACTA is working through many channels to make the members of the conference committee aware of the maintenance of effort requirements from the federal government and that state contributions to CTE are not reduced.

Technical Assistance / CTDSL Program

A total of thirty-six career and technical centers will be involved in the TAP project this year. The purpose of TAP is to significantly raise the academic and technical achievement of all students at Career and Technical Centers (CTCs). Through TAP, PDE will assist CTCs and sending school districts with strategies to improve student performance on the PSSA and end of course NOCTI assessments. Career and Technical Distinguished School Leaders (CTDSLs) will be providing expertise the TAP schools on improvement strategies as well. For more information on the Technical Assistance Program please contact, Dr. Lee Burket, State Director, BCTE at: lburket@state.pa.us or Ms. Jackie Cullen, Executive Director, PACTA at: jackie@pacareertech.org.

Pennsylvania State Board of Education Announces New Graduation Requirements

In August, the State Board of Education gave its approval to [Chapter 4](#) (Academic Standards and Assessment) final regulations which establish new high school graduation requirements. The regulations will provide new ways in which school districts can fulfill high school graduation requirements.

Beginning with the graduating class of 2014-2015, school districts may voluntarily use one or more [Keystone Exams](#) as final course exams or locally-approved and independently-validated assessments to demonstrate a student's level of proficiency in core academic areas. The plan would also allow successful completion of Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate coursework and exams to be used instead of Keystone Exams to demonstrate a student's academic proficiency.

The regulations require the state to provide ten end-of-course exams, beginning with English literature, algebra 1 and biology in 2010-11, with other English, math, science and social studies subjects being phased in through 2016-17. The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) will seek approval of the U.S. Department of Education to replace the current 11th grade PSSA tests in reading and math with Keystone Exams in English literature and algebra I. Upon such approval, all high school students will take these two Keystone Exams at the end of the appropriate course work for school and school district AYP accountability under NCLB. The exams would count for one third of the student's final course grade. Unlike the earlier Keystone Exams proposals, the regulation removes the high stakes aspect of the tests but they still will hold a significant weight toward the student's final grade. Students who score below basic on a Keystone Exam would earn zero points on the exam, which would be calculated as such in the final course grade.

The regulation gives discretion to local school boards to permit students who score at the advanced level on a particular Keystone Exam (prior to taking the course) to be given credit for that subject and exemption from taking the course. Students who do not pass one or more of the Keystone Exams or validated local assessments required for graduation would be offered supplemental instruction. Students would be permitted to retake any Keystone Exam or a module in which they did not score proficient.

Research on Student Achievement

For the first time, a report which uses the results of three **international assessments** in reading, math and science to analyze how the United States compares with other countries in student performance and meeting internationally-benchmarked performance levels is now available through the **National Center for Education Statistics**. Bringing together results from the most recent Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), taken by nearly one million students from 85 countries, showed that students in several countries consistently outperformed U.S. students across the core subject areas. According to the report, although mathematic scores of U.S. students have improved since 1995, there have been no gains in science or reading. For more about this special analysis of international assessments, [click here](#).

Upcoming Events

September 15-16	Special Education PIL – Nittany Lion Inn, State College
September 29-30	Technology, Business Administrators, Guidance Counselors, Adult CTE Coordinators Workshops – Nittany Lion Inn, State College

October 5	PSSA PIL – Nittany Lion Inn, State College
October 6	OCA/NOCTI PIL – Nittany Lion Inn, State College
October 6	PACTA Executive Committee Meeting – Nittany Lion Inn, State College
October 7	PACTA General Membership Meeting – Nittany Lion Inn State College
November 2-4	Integration Conference – State College
November 19-21 TN	Association for Career and Technical Education Convention – Nashville, TN