

Pennsylvania Association of Career and Technical Administrators

January 2010 Newsletter

PACTA Symposium – The 2010 PACTA Symposium will be held Tuesday February 16 and Wednesday 17, 2010 at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center. The Symposium will begin at 12:30 p.m. on February 16, 2010 and will conclude at noon on February 17, 2010. National, state and local leaders will present their views on what steps Pennsylvania needs to take to increase student achievement that will lead to a successful workforce. Please click on the following link for registration information: <http://www.pacareertech.org/calendar/symposium2010.html>.

PACTA General Membership Meeting - The February PACTA general membership meeting will be held on the morning of February 16th at the Hershey Lodge from 9:30 -11:30. Please make your plans to attend to get the latest updates from PACTA, the Bureau of Career and Technical Education, and the Centers. The program will focus on the certification process for teachers of career and technical education in Pennsylvania. Lunch will be served at the conclusion of the general membership meeting and just prior to the start of the PACTA Symposium. Please click on the following link for registration information: www.pacareertech.org

Standards Aligned Systems Pre-session the PACTA Symposium - A special Symposium pre-session exclusively for PACTA members and their guests will be held on the Standards Aligned System (SAS) which is a comprehensive approach to support student achievement. The session will be held on Monday, February 15, 2010 at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Registration will begin at Noon. The main presenter will be Marla Witkowski from Performance Learning Systems. This hands-on session will provide an introduction to SAS and its six elements. Discussion will also be held on what SAS means for career and technical education. Please click on the following link for registration information: www.pacareertech.org

Standards Aligned Systems Pre-Session Computer Requirements

- All participants must bring a laptop with wireless connectivity to the session. Please ensure that your laptop meets the specifications listed below:
- Minimum browser version: Internet Explorer 6 or higher; Mozilla Firefox 2 or higher; Google Chrome 2 or higher; Apple Safari 3 or higher; Opera 9 or higher
- Browsers must be set to allow Javascript to run
- Flash version 8 or higher is required
- Pop-up blockers must be set to permit pop-ups from the SAS site
- Minimum screen resolution of 1024x768 is highly recommended

PACTA Special Education PIL – The online journaling website for the PACTA Special Education PIL is active with multiple posts, comments, and responses on special education issues from PIL participants. To register, visit www.pactatopics.org and follow the directions. Online journaling entries are required for those earning PIL credits. The journals will be assessed using the journaling rubric distributed in the PIL sessions.

Special Education PIL Mid-Year Meeting at the PACTA Symposium - A mid-year meeting of interested Special Education PIL participants will be held with Gae Bradley & Brenda Kauffman. The meeting will be held at 9:00am on Wednesday Feb. 17th as a session at the PACTA Symposium. All Special Education PIL participants are urged to attend. Please review the Symposium agenda for more information on the location of the Mid-Year Special Education PIL meeting. Please come with your questions and other information that you'd like to share with the group.

Career and Technical Education Week Celebration – This year, the annual Career and Technical Education Week Celebration will be held in the Capitol East Rotunda on Tuesday February 9th through Wednesday February 10th. The week kicks off with an opening ceremony at noon on February 9th and also includes a breakfast the following for attending students and their instructors.

ACTE National Policy Seminar – The 2010 ACTE National Policy Seminar will be held at the Marriott Crystal Gateway in Arlington, VA. NPS will update you on all the important legislative, regulatory and political activities of 2009 related to CTE and prepare you for policy action in 2010. You will learn how the new Administration and Congress addressed CTE issues and how you can take advantage of these opportunities for your school programs. [Click here](#) to view the tentative agenda. Additionally, [Registration \(print form\)](#) is now open via this link. Make hotel reservations [here](#) until February 12, 2010. The USDE Office of Vocational and Adult Education Assistant Secretary Brenda Dann-Messier will provide the closing keynote address which will be Wednesday morning during the 8:00 session. The session will be followed by a panel of speakers addressing the future of CTE. The National Policy Seminar is the bridge to connect CTE educators to legislators on Capitol Hill. PACTA is working to have a good representation at the Policy Seminar. If you are interested in attending please contact John Pulver at: johnpulver@verizon.net. John is coordinating PACTA's participation and legislative visits.

Pa. Virtual High School Study Commission – The commission has issued its [final report](#) to the Governor and legislative leaders in the House and Senate. The Commission was established by [Act 61 of 2008](#) to examine the feasibility and costs associated with creating a state-operated, Internet-based high school to provide students with equal access to expanded curricular offerings such as higher level math and science courses, foreign languages, advanced placement, summer enrichment and increased options for at-risk, homebound and alternative education students.

2010 PSSA Webinar - The PDE has posted on the web the PowerPoint and a recording of the recent webinar presentation "Getting Ready for the PSSA 2010." [Click here](#) to access the information.

Central Region Director's Academy in March at Penn State – The annual Central Region Director's Academy is being held at the Nittany Lion Inn on Monday March 22nd and Tuesday March 23rd. Additionally, the PACTA Central Region Meeting will be held during the morning of March 23rd. All Central Region directors are invited to attend and invited to arrive Sunday evening for an informal get together at the Inn to discuss CTE and network on related items. To register, please contact Robert Clark at rwcl107@psu.edu.

Technical Assistance Program (TAP) – The TAP program to improve CTE student achievement in math, reading, and end of course occupational assessments continues to provide assistance to 42 participating career and technical centers for the 2009-2010 school year. CTDSLs are visiting with technical centers to provide expertise. Additionally, all TAP centers have completed Getting Results documents which detail their efforts to determine root causes of student achievement levels, create new approaches to improve instruction, and implement assessment strategies that provide diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments.

Federal Race to the Top Program – Pennsylvania has submitted a grant application to the United States Department of Education that seeks \$400 million for education reforms that focus on implementing a series of initiatives at the state and local levels to enhance efforts at achieving the goal of ensuring that every child receives a quality of education. Additionally, participating schools have made a commitment to meeting ambitious student achievement targets over the next four years. A partnership of 120 districts and 59 charter schools will be involved in expending grant funds. The Pennsylvania Race to the Top application has the following objectives:

- Increasing student achievement and developing real-time data systems
- Turning around the lowest performing schools
- Creating a “model career ladder” for the promotion, compensation, and advancement of teachers
- Developing a robust evaluation system that include professional development, compensation, tenure, and the promotion and retention of effective teachers
- Evaluating programs to identify and spread best practices

News from the Pennsylvania Senate - Senator Jeff Piccola (R-Dauphin), Chairman of the Senate Education Committee, has announced plans to introduce legislation that would create a new Education Empowerment law intended to strengthen the options, incentives and penalties for schools and school districts that fail to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) under the No Child Left Behind Act. The state's current Empowerment law is set to expire on June 30, 2010. For more information on the hearings, contact Senator Piccola's office at 717-787-6801. [Click here](#) for a summary of the proposed legislation.

Decline in State Revenues - To address declining revenues, Governor Ed Rendell last week placed \$161 million of spending approved for 2009-10 into budgetary reserve. [Click here](#) for a

list of affected programs. As of December 2009, the state's revenue deficit exceeded \$250 million. The Rendell Administration is estimating that the Commonwealth will end the 2009-10 fiscal year in June with a \$450 million revenue shortfall. The effect of the “budgetary reserve” orders is to reduce funding available to affected agencies for administrative costs as well as various grant programs. This will affect many organizations and programs across the state.

Keystone Exams - Changes to state regulations establishing Keystone Exams took effect on January 9, 2010 with their publication in the Pennsylvania Bulletin. The exams would begin with the graduating class of 2015. The changes create a new system for measuring whether students have met the state’s academic expectations for high school graduation. Students will be able to demonstrate proficiency in English, math, science and social studies through one or a combination of the following assessment mechanisms: 1) successfully completing high school coursework, which includes a Keystone Exam that will count as one-third of a student’s final course grade; 2) passing a local assessment (which must be independently validated as aligned with the state’s academic standards once every six years); or 3) passing an advanced placement or international baccalaureate exam in the appropriate content area.

ACTE on Facebook – ACTE has created a Facebook page for members to engage in discussions and participate in information exchange for Career and Technical Educators. To explore the Facebook site for ACTE, visit <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=12935780305&v=info>.

Upcoming Events

February 9-10	Career and Technical Education Week
February 15	PACTA Standards Aligned System Symposium Pre-Session
February 15	PACTA Executive Committee Meeting – Hershey
February 16	PACTA General Membership Meeting – Hershey
February 16-17	PACTA Symposium – Hershey
March 8-10	ACTE National Policy Seminar – Arlington, VA
March 19	Western Region PACTA Meeting - Wexford
March 22 -23	Central Region Director’s Academy – State College
March 23	Central Region PACTA Meeting – State College
April 30	Eastern Region PACTA Meeting – Reading Muhlenberg CTC
May 12-13	PACTA Workshop for Adult CTE Program Coordinators - State College