



Innovation Tech will open in September 2014

The world has changed. Work has changed. Technology has changed. Communication has changed. The pace of the world has changed. But for the large part, schools in Central New York have stayed the same. Until now that is. In September of 2014, Central New York will open the doors to Innovation Tech, the area's first-ever New Tech High School.

While there are more than 130 New Tech schools across the country, Innovation Tech will be the first in Central New York and will be located at the Lee G. Peters Career Training Center in Liverpool.

Pat Mahunik is the principal of the new program. On April 9, OCM BOCES held an Innovation Tech Open House at its future home. The event was very well attended by prospective students and their families. Innovation Tech is a school that understands the changes that are rapidly taking place in the world and recognizes and supports the need to be prepared with 21st Century Skills for life and work in our changing world.



Innovation Tech provides an empowering culture, with learning that is relevant, student-driven and truly reflects 21st Century Learning and the global environment in which we live.

"Without a doubt, New Tech Schools are redefining secondary education," said Jody Manning. "Students become self-directed learners who no longer depend on teachers and textbooks in a search of a single, right answer. They use technology on a regular basis, not just for special projects."

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CTE Hall of Fame nominations being accepted through May 15

This spring OCM BOCES will recognize the accomplishments of two deserving Career and Technical Education program graduates with induction into its Alumni Hall of Fame. One graduate from the OCM BOCES McEvoy Campus in Cortland and one graduate from the Henry Campus in Syracuse will be selected by the OCM BOCES Career and Technical Education Advisory Committee to be honored in June. The purpose of the Hall of Fame is to recognize individuals who have graduated from OCM BOCES programs and who demonstrate leadership in their field.

To be considered for the OCM BOCES Alumni Hall of Fame, individuals must be a graduate of an OCM BOCES Career and Technical Education program, must currently be engaged in a career related to their program of completion at BOCES, must demonstrate leadership in their field and show civic responsibility.

Nomination forms are available in the main offices of OCM BOCES' Career and Technical Education buildings and via the OCM BOCES website at www.ocmboces.org. Nomination forms and all supplemental materials must be received no later than May 15, 2014.

From the District Superintendent



Dear Colleagues,

I hope that each of you has had opportunities this month to spend at least a little bit of time outdoors. The weather has certainly been spectacular...although it does seem to vary quite a bit day-to-day! I'm keeping my fingers crossed that we will have an extended stretch of warmth and sunshine in the very near future!

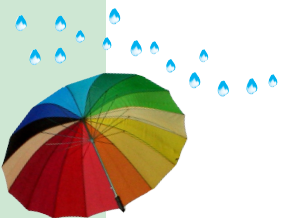
As the warmer weather has made appearances this spring and I've attended events such as our Annual Meeting, I'm feeling the end of the school year upon us and I'm excited about the many things that are happening for BOCES and our component districts in the near future.

As I'm sure you are already aware, each May, school districts present their budget proposals for the following school year to the community to be voted upon. This year's budget votes and Board of Education Member elections will take place in your local school district on Tuesday, May 20. Please take some time to learn about your district's budget process and proposal and be sure to exercise your right to vote on May 20th.

Last month, I wrote about Innovation Tech opening in September and you can see the article on the front page of this newsletter. I am very pleased to report that Senators John DeFrancisco and James Seward, along with Assemblyman Al Stirpe, were able to get \$200,000 in the State Budget line for Innovation Tech. The funds will go toward off-setting the cost of the contract to implement the program. We're very excited about bringing Innovation Tech to Central New York and were pleased with the great turnout at the April 9th Open House.

I wanted to take a moment to thank all our students and staff that helped prepare for this year's Annual Meeting. The weather that night was absolutely beautiful and we had a great turnout! As always, our culinary and pastry students did an outstanding job with the meal and desserts. I think all in attendance enjoyed the presentations and having the opportunity to visit with each other over dinner.

So as we say goodbye to April, let's keep our fingers crossed that we're also saying goodbye to those impromptu snow showers so that we can spend time enjoying the warmth and sunshine!



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jody". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

OCM BOCES School Library System to honor two component district administrators

Congratulations to Solvay Union Free School Assistant Superintendent for Instruction Eric Larison and Chittenango Middle School Principal Thomas Piatti, for having been selected by the OCM BOCES School Library System as recipients of their 2014 Administrator/Advocate of the Year award. The two administrators will be honored at a May 14, 2014 ceremony at the OCM BOCES Henry Campus Rodax 8 Conference Room at 12:00 noon.

The intention of the award is to honor an educational administrator or library advocate in the OCM (Onondaga, Cortland, Madison) region who has made significant contributions to school librarianship.

For more information about the OCM BOCES School Library System or their Administrator/Advocate of the Year Award, contact School Library System Coordinator Marcie Mann at 315/433-2665.



EAP News...

Your EAP is a free, voluntary, and confidential assessment/referral service for employees and their family members who are experiencing personal or work related problems such as:

- Alcohol and/or Drug Abuse
- Emotional problems
- Stress management
- Marital and/or family conflict
- Compulsive gambling
- Financial difficulties
- Aging parents
- Grieving
- Wellness
- Other personal matters



Confidential ~ Professional

April is Parenting Month

Your OCM BOCES EAP has a variety of educational information about this month's wellness topic, parenting. Please contact us to receive information about the following topics:

- Adventures in Parenting
- Survival Guide for Parents
- Timeout Tips
- Positive Parenting Prevents Drug Abuse
- Making Divorce Easier on You and Your Kids

For Information Contact:

EAP

1-800-EAP-8764 ● (315)-1361 ● www.eap.ocmboces.org

Students in the Spotlight!



Cory Rachlin, a 9th grade student in the OCM BOCES Transitional Classroom at LaFayette High School recently participated in his school's rendition of "Grease." Cory describes his experience as "AWESOME" and said that he made a lot of new friends.

Cory's advice to other students is to "Never give up and keep moving!" This is the first time Cory has participated in a school play. He also had many friends and family members attend the two performances.

Mrs. Amy Flemming, the play's director, was instrumental in supporting and encouraging Cory's participation. Cory received the Si Si Si (Yes, Yes, Yes) award at the Cast after party at the LaFayette Fire Department, because he was always willing to do whatever was asked and volunteered whenever she needed help.

Mrs. Amy Flemming states, "Never once did Cory refuse my requests and he always surpassed my expectations. Cory gave 100% every day of rehearsal and performances. He is truly a delight."

Annual Meeting showcases students' achievements



The OCM BOCES 2014 Annual Meeting was held on Wednesday, April 2 at the Irvin E. Henry Campus CTE Building. The majority of OCM BOCES 23 component districts were represented by the more than 40 attendees of the meeting, which began with a fine-dining experience in the Class Act dining room.

Prior to the meeting, Culinary Arts students prepared and displayed a fabulous meal and Pastry Arts students prepared a variety of elegantly displayed, delectable desserts for the attendees. Additionally, OCM BOCES Special Education students created colorful arrangements for each dining table. The decorations centered around reading and the celebrated each student's successes through OCM BOCES.

After the gourmet dinner and dessert, attendees convened in the conference room to be presented with a summary of the 2014-2015 OCM BOCES budget, be introduced to board candidates, view a video about OCM BOCES and learn about the Regional Vision for College, Career and Citizenship Readiness.

For more information on the April 4 Annual Meeting, contact Deb Ayers at dayers@ocmboces.org.

Pictured left: OCM BOCES Pastry Arts student, Olivia Orlando from the North Syracuse Central School District, dips strawberries in chocolate



for the dessert table (pictured below right) at the Annual Meeting. Pictured right: OCM BOCES Pastry Arts student, Gabrielle Coon from the Marcellus Central School District, prepares selections for each table's bread basket (pictured below left).



Words of Wisdom



“ Men are not prisoners of fate, but only prisoners of their own minds. ”

- Franklin D. Roosevelt

May is Better Hearing and Speech Month

Each May, Better Hearing & Speech Month (BHSM) provides an opportunity to raise awareness about communication disorders and the role of Speech Therapists in providing life-altering treatment.

At BOCES the Speech Department has had a very busy and productive year. We started the school year with a presentation from Nancy Booth, Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Consultant, on new tablet technology and AAC report writing for Medicaid. Additionally, Speech Therapist Kristen Sparling (pictured to the right)



technology in small group speech therapy.

Recently, Bob Reale with the OCM BOCES CNYRIC, shared new information on Medicaid and IEP Direct with department staff. Our Speech colleagues continued to share their knowledge with presentations on Building Vocabulary, presented by Cheryl Birkmier, as well as iPad Apps for Speech Therapy with Marianne Hunt. Mary Humphrey presented on Executive Function Disorders and how they impact our students.



In March, we were thrilled to welcome Sarah James (pictured left), a nationally known Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) author and presenter, who shared her expertise on Current and Best Strategies to help SLPs support student literacy skills. Sarah is a dynamic speaker who not only imparts practical information, but does it in a way that excites her audience. All therapists left the presentation with relevant information that they can put to use and that is aligned with our BOCES mission to improve the literacy skills of all our students.

It has been a busy and exciting year for us in the Speech Department. We have grown as a group and look forward to our continued role in supporting our students here at BOCES.

Innovation Tech Utilizes Project Based Learning Approach

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At Innovation Tech, the approach to learning begins with teaching that is engaging, utilizing a project based learning approach. Karen Clark has been the OCM BOCES Director of Alternative Education for seven years and is excited about her role in bringing Innovation Tech to Central New York. She said, "This model truly engages students through a technology based approach to solving real world problems by employing business partnerships for authentic learning and meaningful collaboration."

At Innovation Tech, students work in teams on authentic projects to develop critical thinking and communication skills. Teamwork builds social skills and encourages the strong work ethic that is critical in today's business environment. Teams embrace the talents and perspectives that each member brings to the project.

All students at Innovation Tech earn college credit, participate in internships, and give back to the community through service learning. The program is available for students in grades 9 to 10 in September.

Students are invited to apply through their home school district administrator or school counselor. School districts identify their pool of candidates for Innovation Tech. If needed, a lottery system is employed when the number of candidates exceeds the availability of seats at Innovation Tech. Once applications are reviewed, all potential candidates and their families will have an interview with staff from Innovation Tech. Enrollment is limited. If a student is selected to enroll at Innovation Tech, he/she will participate in orientation activities prior to the first day of school.

Interested students should talk to their school guidance counselors for more information.

For additional information about Innovation Tech, visit us online at innovatortech.us.

School Districts Save Money by Consolidating through BOCES

As an employee of OCM BOCES, you already know that school districts have a long history of working together to provide services collaboratively through the mechanism of Boards of Cooperative Educational Services.

While BOCES were initially designed many decades ago to help small and rural schools come together to provide occupational and special education, the organization has transformed and evolved over the years to offer additional services. In addition to its many well-known cooperative educational programs, OCM BOCES also offers administrative, management, technology and non-instructional services such as cooperative purchasing, and safety and risk management.

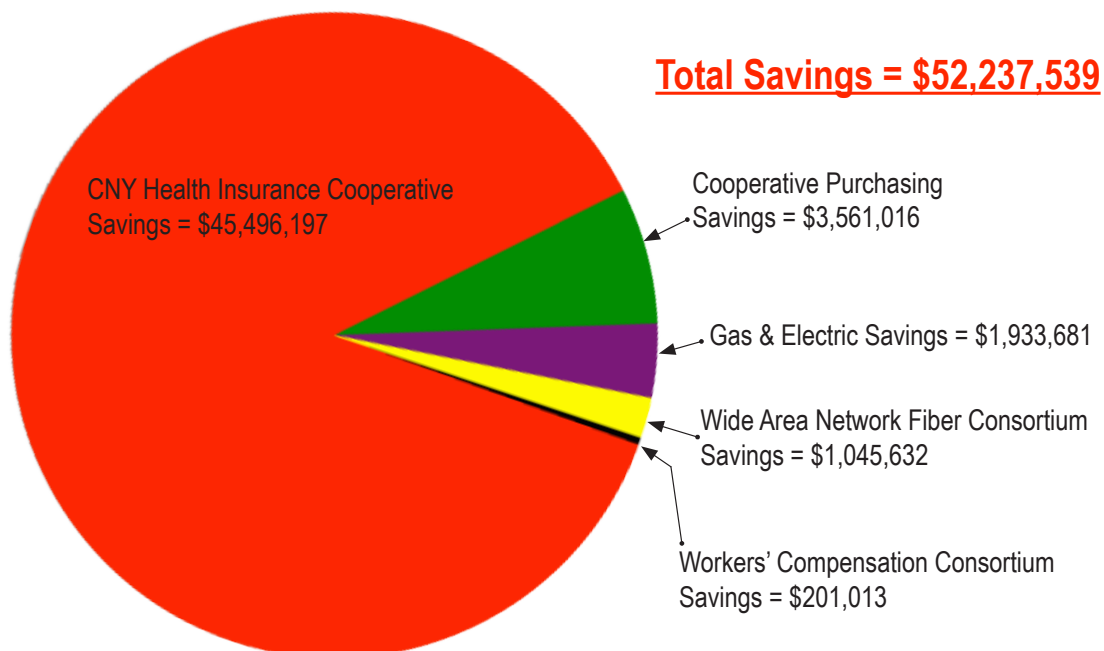
Each year, OCM BOCES saves its 23 component districts millions of dollars by coordinating their cooperative purchase of health insurance and workers' compensation coverage, natural gas, electricity, technology equipment, fuel and many other commodities. During 2013, OCM BOCES saved its 23 component districts more than \$52 million through such cooperative initiatives.

OCM BOCES District Superintendent Jody Manning said, "All districts have to pay employees and vendors. They have to buy goods and services and transport students to and from their buildings. And all districts need to heat and cool those buildings. But by sharing the cost of these necessities, OCM BOCES districts are saving a great deal of money and providing higher quality services. It is simply a win-win."

The \$52 million saved in 2013 is made up of a combination of cooperative efforts such as cooperative purchasing, a wide area fiber network consortium, an energy cooperative, a health insurance cooperative and a workers' compensation consortium.

The OCM BOCES cooperative purchasing service allows districts to join together and pool quantities of particular commodities for competitive bidding. Cooperative purchasing often allows districts to recognize cost savings because vendors typically offer more favorable pricing to districts when commodities are being bid out in greater volume. Additionally, districts may also realize savings in other areas since cooperative purchasing does not require them to devote as much of their staff's time, efforts, and resources toward procuring items as if they were to do so on their own.

Savings for OCM BOCES School Districts from Selected Cooperative Efforts - January 2014





Kudos to You!

OCM BOCES Staff recognized for leadership efforts

Congratulations to Pam Charron, Vivian Frye, Jeanine Wright, Chrissy Woodring, Dan McLaughlin, Anne DiNiro, Karen Kruth, Beth Cooper, Molly O'Hara, Roseann Panzica, Dan Hesler, Mary Bleskoski, Dawn Iozzo, Tom Garni, Terry Mitchell and Joan Sherman who were honored on Friday, April 4, in the OCM BOCES Student Services Employee Recognition program.

The program was implemented during the 2012-13 school year in order to recognize employees who have helped OCM BOCES achieve its organizational goals. The staff members recognized were all nominated by their supervisors in recognition of the leadership roles they have taken in moving the organization closer to its goals. Each staff member recognized was treated to a luncheon buffet at the Irvin E. Henry Campus, was presented a certificate of appreciation, and received a small token of thanks.

Congratulations on your great work and THANK YOU!

Staff Development Day brings together hundreds for learning activities

On Friday, March 21, 500 of OCM BOCES staff members took part in a variety of staff development activities at the McEvoy Educational Campus in Cortland. The theme for our Staff Development Day on March 21 was Utilizing Technology to Engage Learners. For the first time ever, all of OCM BOCES Adult Education, Special Education, Career and Technical Education and Alternative Education teachers spent time learning together on Staff Development Day. All 500 staff members attended a variety of sessions on topics presented by their colleagues as well as experts from TEQ, Department of Labor, and CR Fletcher and Associates.



Nearly 60 different presenters taught about topics such as Edmodo, educational apps for iPads, how to use iPads for progress monitoring, how to utilize technology to support students in their employment searches, and many more.

OCM BOCES is proud to have made such dramatic improvements in utilizing technology to enhance learning. Many thanks to everyone who contributed to making Staff Development Day a huge success!

OCM BOCES Board Members

Ann Wright, *President*

Wayne Brownson, *Vice President*

Catherine Cifaratta-Brayton

Barb Closson

Mark Gilbert

Mike Murphy

Lisa O'Reilly

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