



Citizens For Education



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The objectives of Citizens For Education are to ensure a quality education for all students of the Council Rock School District, to better inform the Council Rock community of educational issues, and to increase the involvement of the community in the decision making processes affecting the quality of education in Council Rock.

Information Technology in Council Rock

Citizens For Education recently set out to determine the current status and the future plans for Information Technology (IT) in Council Rock by meeting with CR's Director of Information Technology, Matt Frederickson. Mr. Frederickson, who reports to Superintendent Mark Klein, manages a \$1.8M annual budget and leads a team of nine employees who are responsible for technology implementation. This includes purchasing, managing, and servicing infrastructure comprising over 5,300 desktop and laptop computers, 700 iPads, 130+ virtual and physical servers, 300 wireless access points, 200+ printers/copiers, and Smart boards in each of the 734 classrooms in the district. Many of the laptops, iPads, and Smart boards were purchased by school PTOs or through grants from the Council Rock Education Foundation, but the IT department remains involved regardless of the funding source. Additional tasks include managing the district website, supporting school and PTO webmasters, and programming for CRTV. The average response time to close a technology-related service ticket is 4-6 hours, an impressive statistic considering the district has 13,000 users in 18 buildings spread over 72 square miles. Network technicians can often connect virtually to troubleshoot computer problems in the classroom, enhancing the

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Champions Half-Day Kindergarten Enrichment Program

Citizens for Education recently sat down with Joy McClendon, Director of Elementary Education, and Jen Weisenbach, Champions Area Manager, to discuss the Champions Half-Day Kindergarten Enrichment Program.

Currently, Champions runs three half-day Kindergarten Enrichment Programs for Council Rock PM kindergarten students, daily from 8:45 am to 1:00 pm. The morning programs are held at Holland Elementary, Maureen Welch Elementary and Newtown Elementary, and are open to all Council Rock families. The program filled a need many working Council Rock parents faced: Where to send their PM kindergartners in the morning?

It seems there are ample PM enrichment programs in the area for AM kindergartners, but only limited AM programs for the PM students. Champions stepped in to fill the void. For \$99/week, Council Rock parents can have their PM kindergartners attend a morning enrichment program within the district. Class size is capped at 24 students per class and registration is on a first-come, first-served basis, completed online only. This eliminates the need for parents to camp out hours before registration. Parents are responsible for transporting their child to the program in the morning. The district then transports the children to their respective home schools for their afternoon kindergarten class.

In the past, there has consistently been a discrepancy in the AM and PM kindergarten enrollment numbers. Many working parents, who needed their children in

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speed of the response. [Note: Home Access Center (HAC) is handled by a separate group reporting to Barry Desko, Director of Secondary Education].

Mr. Frederickson's computer and management savvy go way back – he built his first computer at age 11, later completing a Psychology degree from Shippensburg University, an MBA from LaSalle University, and an MS in Learning Technologies from Drexel University. Prior to his work at CR, he managed IT departments at several companies.

What's New or On the Horizon?

Moodle. One newly implemented IT resource is Moodle, a tool that allows teachers and students to work collaboratively online.

Used on many college campuses, Moodle is an open-access, web-based learning management system that can be used at all age levels to submit homework, conduct and grade quizzes, and engage students in a discussion forum. While it could be used to offer courses online, its primary purpose is to augment classroom instruction and introduce students to the concepts of online learning.

Ericom. Currently each student is assigned a personal file storage location, referred to as their "H" drive, where they can place Microsoft documents that are generated at school or at home and access them from either site. Remote access (from home) has been traditionally through Citrix. Because support of this program has been problematic and expensive, CR is trying a new system which promises more flexibility at a lower price. Ericom, the replacement, has a browser-based front end for easier access, HTML5 compatibility, and operates on PCs, Macs, and Google Chromebooks. By the end of the 2013-14 school year, Citrix will be phased out completely; full implementation of Ericom will be less costly than the annual support cost for Citrix.

BYOD. One of the biggest issues in the district is the need for more laptop computers in the classrooms. In an ideal world, according to Mr. Frederickson, six laptops per classroom would enhance collaboration, allowing 4-5 students to share each laptop. In lean fiscal times, however, funding this many computers every four years can be cost prohibitive. Instead, the district favors a concept called Bring Your Own

Device (BYOD), in which each student brings the portable computing device of his/her choice to school to enhance classroom learning. Current CR policy prohibits students from bringing their own computer devices to the classroom, but this can be overruled by administration on a case-by-case basis.

The district has long-range plans to install wireless access points in every other district classroom to facilitate BYOD implementation. In spring 2014, Mr. Frederickson hopes the district will pilot a BYOD program; there is a committee that is meeting semi-regularly to work toward this goal. In order to enhance access for all students, Mr. Frederickson envisions an annual August technology fair where computer hardware companies would come to

Council Rock to promote and lease their devices to students and their parents. Periodic on-site vendor support to address technical issues would be included, and at the end of their high school career students would be able to purchase their current device or trade it in to

purchase a newer device for their higher education.

Fully implementing a BYOD strategy is not without its challenges, however, some of which are listed as follows:

- All devices would need to be able to run on the same system and access the district interface.
- Wireless access would likely be needed in every classroom at a cost of approximately \$800 per additional classroom.
- The servers would need to be able to handle the traffic, and battery charging kiosks would need to be available during the school day.
- Students need to be kept safe when using this technology by blocking inappropriate content while using the district's internet access and by monitoring or restricting data that students already have on their devices while at school.

Traffic Speed. The speed at which digital data moves between buildings is currently 1 Gigabit per second (Gb/s). The district goal is to improve this speed to 10 Gb/s within the next three years. Upgrading to 10 Gb/s between buildings is part of the natural progression of technology; as more data/voice/video are used in the classroom, the demand for better bandwidth increases. Implementing this will require upgrades of

Citizens For Education is collecting examples of teacher-driven use of innovative technology in CR classrooms to feature on our website. Please submit names of teachers and a short paragraph about how they are using technology to Citizens4Ed@yahoo.com by 12/23/13. Self-reporting is welcome!

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various pieces of equipment throughout the district, and will be phased in over the next few years as part of the normal operational budget.

Barcode Scanning. One idea that has streamlined an existing process involves how students select their specific gym class, i.e., volleyball, weight room, tennis, etc. Both high schools are currently using a system developed by the IT staff that allows the teachers to scan barcodes to populate a database. This database is then used to produce attendance sheets, allowing staff to know specifically where students are during gym while substantially reducing the quantity of paper reports utilized in the past.

eRate. eRate is a federal program whereby funds collected for telephony services (home phones, cell phones, etc.) are redistributed to public schools and libraries based on a funding formula similar to the one used to determine free and reduced lunches. Every year the FCC allocates a percentage of those funds to schools in Pennsylvania. CR receives, on average, approximately \$75,000 annually. One of the new requirements this year for funding eligibility was the inclusion of Internet safety instruction at all grade levels in the district.

Staff Technology Support. Some district teachers are much more versed in new technology than others. Currently, CR implements a technology mentor program in which each school identifies two teachers who are or want to be technology 'evangelists' by spreading technical expertise to others in the building. Due to budget constraints, however, a separate position of technology integration specialist, i.e., a full time, former classroom teacher who assists other teachers in using technology in the classroom, was eliminated approximately four years ago. With more technology being used every year, it would be advantageous to both students and teachers to reinstate one or more technology integration specialists that could serve teachers across the district. Working out of the main administration building, the former positions (there were two) served one at the elementary level and one at the secondary level.

Mr. Frederickson has been thoroughly researching many IT possibilities and carefully noting trends. While some districts around the country have already purchased iPads or laptops for every student, Mr. Frederickson stated that there are advantages to the 'wait and see' approach. By carefully monitoring what other educational establishments are doing, CR can

learn from their successes and failures and avoid costly pitfalls. In the meantime, giving CR students the benefit of working with new technology so they can be prepared to compete for college acceptance and employment possibilities remains a key goal for Mr. Frederickson and his IT team. Citizens For Education thanks Mr. Frederickson for the time and information he gave in support of this article.

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school all day, requested AM kindergarten and then had their child bused to a PM kindergarten enrichment program nearby. As a result the morning kindergarten class sizes were always much higher than the afternoon class sizes. With the Champions Program in place, the AM and PM class sizes are now more evenly balanced.

The Enrichment Program curriculum consists of opportunities to explore art, dramatic play, math, science, Spanish, problem solving, and language and motor skills, in both large group and small group settings. The children rotate through nine centers in small groups that help them build skills for success in school. The curriculum is not designed to duplicate what is taught in Council Rock kindergarten classrooms; it is aligned with and meant to enrich the district's curriculum. A certified teacher and an assistant staff each class. Champions employs the teachers and assistants and equips the classrooms with all needed supplies and materials.

A typical morning in the Champions Program begins with "Morning Meeting," where the children discuss a theme and the weather and have share time. Next, they rotate through the small group centers. After a break for snack time, the children participate in a large group activity. Recess is next and the students will head outside if the weather cooperates. After recess it's time for lunch inside the classroom. When lunch is finished there's time to go back to the activity centers before dismissal. As you can see, there is constant activity going on each morning!

The Champions staff and Council Rock kindergarten teachers communicate to find out what is working and what is not. Changes are made to the program if needed. Parent feedback is also encouraged and appreciated.

It appears as though the Council Rock families have embraced this enrichment program as 69 of this year's 72 spots are filled. At this time the district does not have plans to expand the program beyond the 3 elementary schools.

A New Chapter at Wrightstown Elementary Begins with Beth Fox

"Successful leadership is not about being tough or soft, sensitive or assertive, but about a set of attributes. First and foremost is character." - Author Warren Bennis. This is how the new principal at Wrightstown Elementary, Beth Fox, describes herself.

Citizens For Education recently met with Beth Fox in order to learn more about her and her transition to Council Rock. Growing up in the area, she attended Neshaminy schools, graduating in 1996. Mrs. Fox obtained her undergraduate degree from Penn State University, majoring in Elementary Education, with a minor in Social Sciences. She then went on to receive her Master's Degree in Special Education from Holy Family University. Mrs. Fox also obtained a second Master's Degree in Educational Leadership from Wilkes University.

Putting her degrees to use began with her alma mater, Neshaminy High School, where she was a learning support teacher for seven years. It was there that she met her husband, who presently is the Department Chair for Special Education. Direct involvement with students is her nature and she was a class advisor while at the High School. From there, Mrs. Fox became Assistant Principal at Neshaminy Maple Point Middle School under Mark Collins and Rick Rosenblatt, two people that she exclaims were great role models. In her role as Assistant Principal, her area of attention was as the disciplinarian. Understandably, this role can be challenging, dealing with the heavy issues facing the sixth to eight grade population. After realizing that she no longer felt rewarded in this role, she decided it was time for a change. "Change is healthy" and to her good fortune, just when she needed a change, the principal position opened up at Lower Southampton Elementary School where she went back to the students for which she received her original certification.

After two years at "Lower South" she took advantage of an opportunity to "balance life out". The position opened up at Wrightstown Elementary when Principal Sue Gormley moved to an Assistant Principal position at Council Rock South. Living in Furlong, the Council Rock position is closer to home. She has less travel time and more time to work in her yard and prepare for the birth of her first child, a boy, in January.

Since arriving at Wrightstown, her standout impression is that everyone takes care of one another, both in school and out, whether it be students, staff or parents. She is also impressed that the conversations are always about the kids. Mrs. Fox began her transition to Wrightstown in May with Nicole Crawford, a former principal at Wrightstown and now at Goodhoe Elementary, being her mentor. Her style consists of being visible, sometimes even joining students at lunch in the cafeteria, which is one of her favorite activities. Coming from larger schools, her method is to "work smarter, not harder" and she hopes to set that example.

Mrs. Fox is very technology oriented and hopes to bring more to the school, relaying how surprised she was at the amount of technology not available in the school. One of her goals is to implement an even greater focus on reading, as evidenced by her desk being covered with materials and data about new initiatives. Several committees are in the works to develop school wide initiatives and foster teamwork amongst students and staff to further improve morale.

Wrightstown is one of the oldest schools in the district and it will benefit from Beth Fox's energy and passion. She promotes curb appeal and a welcoming environment to compensate for any aches and bruises the school may feel due to its age and size. She wishes to create a reading nook for students in the lobby amongst other exciting plans. Look for great things at Wrightstown with Beth Fox, someone who claims that the fun part is that everyday is unpredictable. We predict a bright future.

Did you know that the Bucks County Intermediate Unit reviewed and made recommendations about Council Rock's Humanities program?

The IU report can be found here:

<http://crsd.org/Page/37344>

CR Middle School Enrichment Activities Include More Than Just Athletics

Citizens for Education recently surveyed middle school principals and PTO presidents to determine the range of enrichment activities, trips, and clubs offered at each school. A table with these activities identified can be found on our website: www.citizensforeducation.com. Click on Supporting Data for 2013 Fall Newsletter => Middle School Activities Chart.

Seventh and eighth grade students have a wide variety of enrichment and club offerings, which are available at all three middle schools. Some of these include back to school nights, boy's and girl's nights out, choral and instrumental groups, ecology clubs, a school newspaper or other literary magazine, science fairs, school plays/musicals and yearbook. After-school sports are also offered at all three middle schools and include baseball, basketball, cheerleading, field hockey, football, intramurals, soccer, softball, tennis, track, volleyball and wrestling.

In addition, all three middle schools participate in American Education Week, Coalition for Healthy Youth programs, CR Cares, MathCounts, Reading Olympics and SADD, in addition to offering opportunities for students to serve on Student Council and earn volunteer hours in community service through LINCS.

Some enrichment activities are grade and school specific. Seventh grade students at Newtown Middle School will participate in Spirit Week and Crossroads, a team building exercise, and 8th grade students will participate in Field Day, Spirit Week and a trip to Great Adventure. Eighth grade students at Richboro Middle School will participate in a volunteer project during the holidays by collecting goods for the local food pantry.

Other enrichment activities are held at one or two schools and may include Apple Crunch, Art Club, Ice Cream Social, Buddy Club, Council Rock Run for Babies/March of Dimes, Go for the Greens, Golf Club, Hawk Club, Hawk Day, Hoops for Heart, Greek Day, Kids in Community Service, Knitting Club, Neighborhood Outreach, Operation Helping Hand, Parent-Child Book Club, Pep Rallies (Fall, Winter and Spring), L-Tag, Book Fair, S.A.G.E. Holiday Feast, Spring Carnival, Camp America, Challenge for a Cause, school dances, Drumline, Back-to-School Picnic/BBQ, Sewing Club, Turkey Bowling, Tech Club, Video Information Center and Winter Classic Hockey Tournament.

CFE commends the middle school staffs, the PTO leadership, and the many PTO volunteers for their efforts in providing a wide variety of fun and enriching activities for students. Sharing of successful programs between schools is recommended as a great way to spread the fun while not having to "reinvent the wheel." Updates to the table can be forwarded to Citizens4Ed@yahoo.com.

Capital Planning Process Has Begun

In an effort to eliminate modular classrooms, provide a realistic view of the space needed in our schools to support projected future enrollment, and prioritize future building renovations, Council Rock hired Schrader Architecture Group to conduct a Capacity Study of all schools. The final study was presented to the School Board and public in September, 2013. The results of the study will be the starting point for a capital planning process. The study can be accessed here: <http://www.crsd.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=37143>.

A committee has been formed to develop a capital plan utilizing the Capacity Study and an Enrollment Projection Study that is underway. Citizens For Education will continue to monitor progress on this process and report on the committee's recommendations in a future newsletter.

Online Learning in Council Rock

Online learning has become a staple in colleges, graduate schools, careers, and now in high schools across the country. Council Rock joined those ranks, offering online courses starting in the 2012-13 school year. A committee consisting of administrators, teachers and curriculum coordinators was formed to develop the courses. The School Board approved piloting this program based on the assurance that it would not result in additional staffing costs.

The first year, Council Rock joined a consortium called "Bridges Virtual" that included the Pennridge and Quakertown school districts in Bucks County. Students were able to take Council Rock courses as well as other district's courses. Analyzing how this program ran, CR found that other district's students were taking Council Rock courses but no CR students were interested in other district's courses. This, among other factors, led to the district decision to create its own independent online classes.

CR investigated many platforms offering online education, and found a PA based provider called "Blended Schools." This option is based on the PA state standards and also allows CR to personalize each course by uploading their own curricular material. Through "Blended Schools" the district purchases one seat license for each student taking an online course, even if the student is in more than one course. The district bought 100 seat licenses for less than \$10,000.

Council Rock is moving slowly with this initiative to ensure there is no compromise to the quality of education the students receive. To start, the high schools had to find a teacher who was willing to run an online section of a class. This option was open to any secondary teacher in the district. This year, there are five courses being offered in the high schools: Spanish 2 (9th grade), Algebra 2B (11th/12th grade), Accelerated Composition (alternate day – 10th-12th grade), Accelerated Psychology (10th-12th grade) and Honors Anatomy and Physiology (12th grade). There are also two students taking Honors Spanish 2 in the middle school. Everyone is a high school teacher except Jeremy Potoka, a teacher at Holland Middle

School, who teaches the Spanish classes.

All courses began with an orientation module to educate students on how the process works. In some courses, students at North and South are in the same class. At the high schools, the population of students in the classes range from 6 (Spanish 2) to 16 (Accelerated Composition). At both high schools, regular classroom teachers are supporting the students, especially when the online teacher is based at the other high school.

The Honors Anatomy course also has a lab component and because it is an honors level course needs additional resources to meet CR standards. To that end, a supplement, primalonlinelearning.com was purchased. This resource was developed by a London based company and is used by over 700 colleges including the University of Pennsylvania, Drexel and Penn State. Council Rock is the first high school internationally to use it. The total cost for this added resource was \$900, but it's important to note that the license is being shared by both online and regular classroom students, giving access to this enriching tool to all students enrolled in the class, virtual or otherwise.

All of the online classes also have sections in a physical classroom, but the structure of the course is what provides flexibility in a students' schedule or learning style. Teachers are designated a block of time which counts as a regular class, but students take the class whenever it fits into their schedule, instead of facing conflicts with other courses. Some students who take the class first or last period are able to come to school late or leave early. This is especially advantageous for student athletes, who may have to miss a portion of their last class on a regular basis. Others who take the class during the school day sign in at the library during the period assigned to them. They can work on their online course, or, if they have other studying to do, can elect to concentrate on a different subject and do their online work at home.

Students meet in person with their teacher as necessary, either individually or as a group. They have some flexibility to schedule when they will take tests, alleviating the problem of having many tests on the same day. Currently, all Honors Anatomy and Physiology students take their tests in person.

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Students in other disciplines will be required to complete their district assessments in person, while teacher specific tests/quizzes could be taken on-line. It varies with the course, teacher and material. Students communicate with the teacher and each other through email and through "Blackboard Collaborate," an online program that allows for clinic time, posting of assignments, asking questions and videoconferencing.

Students who participate in online learning are chosen based on a number of factors, especially their desire to take this type of course, being good communicators, being self-motivated and having the ability to work independently. These courses are not listed in the program planning book, but are recommended to students by their counselors. If the student realizes early in the process that they will not learn effectively through the online class, they have the option to go back into a regular classroom setting.

There are pros, cons and some interesting potential to these types of courses.

- Pros include flexibility, scheduling of tests to allow for self-pacing, preparing students for college by learning time management skills, yet still having oversight of a teacher. There is also potential for offering these classes to other students who may not fit into the traditional school environment.
- There are concerns, however, that if the numbers grow it will be necessary to find another space for students, as the libraries are active places during the school day. Also, there is a challenge in letting students know these courses exist. At this time, it remains necessary to have some sort of gate keeper to be sure students signing up can be successful in this type of class structure.
- There are conversations about whether it would make sense, in the future, to require each student to take at least one online class, as it prepares students for college work where occasionally classes are conducted online. This concept is not an issue at this time, as the online program is in its infancy.

To assess the effectiveness of the online courses, the district will be looking at the performance of students in the online class vs. those in a physical classroom and making adjustments as needed.

Citizens For Education thanks Barry Desko (Director of Secondary Education), Jason Traczykiewicz (Asst. Principal and class scheduler at North) and Renee Devlin (Science Curriculum Coordinator, and online teacher) for educating us on this program and process. CFE is very interested in how this program evolves and will keep our membership informed of changes as they occur.

Did You Know that two non-profits within the borders of the Council Rock School District provide funding for programs in our schools?



The Council Rock Education Foundation (CREF) is a non-profit organization, independent of the Council Rock School District that is dedicated to securing funds to provide innovative educational experiences that enrich the excellent quality of education and bring the community together in support of our school district. Funds are distributed through an annual competitive Teacher Grant program. Their website can be found at: www.creducationfoundation.org.



The Council Rock Coalition for Healthy Youth (CRCHY) is a coalition of community members, businesses, law enforcement, government, schools, youth groups, and others who work together to reduce at-risk behaviors and substance abuse in our youth. Their website can be found at: <http://crsd.org/domain/68>.

Jason Traczykiewicz **New CR North Assistant Principal Jumps in with Both Feet**

Council Rock North and South each have four Assistant (grade level) Principals. These principals are not only responsible for the 400+ students assigned to them for four years, but also have responsibilities for curricular areas, along with other duties.

When Ellie Short retired from CR North in June 2013, many wondered who could fill her shoes as the Assistant Principal who created the school's entire schedule. Jason Traczykiewicz was hired in May and jumped in with both feet.

Mr. Traczykiewicz graduated from Kings College in Wilkes-Barre. He began his studies in a pre-med program, but soon realized that he wanted to teach; he wanted to have a positive impact on adolescents. He received a BS in General Science, with a minor in Psychology in 2000 and completed his Secondary Certification in 2001. He chose Kings College because it was a small, intimate school where professors and even the President of the university knew each student; so intimate that when he married his wife, the college president performed the ceremony! His Educational Leadership Certificate is from Del Val College, where the instructors are all local administrators, including some from Council Rock.

Early on, he worked as a per-diem substitute in a number of districts, finally landing a long term substitute position at Pennwood East Junior High in Yeadon. He recalls that the classroom didn't even have the basic supplies needed for student learning. He received his first paycheck and bought supplies for his students. He started in February and only after being hired learned that the class had been through 4 teachers in one month. It was a tough class, but he finished out the year.

"Mr. T" as he is known at North, began in Council Rock in 2003. He was hired as a building substitute at CR North, but the following year a long term sub position became available at Bensalem High School in General Science. This was his chance to have his own classroom and he took it. The next year, Mr. Funk (then Asst. Principal at North) and Mr. Gamble (Asst. Principal at North) approached "Mr. T" when they learned that Mike Fiore, the Accelerated Physical Science teacher was retiring from CR North. He interviewed and was hired for the job.

Through the years "Mr. T" has been the assistant coach for 9th grade baseball at North and served as class advisor in 2008 and 2012. He interned with Ms. Short at North from July through April of the 2012-13 school year and became adept at creating the school schedule. He was required to do 360 hours as an administrative intern and he accumulated 700 hours. In May he was hired to replace Ms. Short upon her retirement.

In addition to being the 9th grade principal and master scheduler, "Mr. T"'s position also includes being the liaison to the World Language, Counseling, Art, ELL and Library Media departments. He feels very strongly that the benefits of public education include the need for a variety of classes in music, art and business, not just core subject areas. He also oversees graduation projects for grades 10-12. He participates in new teacher induction meetings, on Mondays, believing that new teachers and their mentors should have the opportunity to get together often. "Mr. T" is also overseeing the online courses at North that Council Rock is piloting this year (See Online Learning article on page 6).

Mr. Traczykiewicz feels that there is a high level of respect and trust in Council Rock. He believes that "what we have [in Council Rock] is solid, but there is always potential for improvement."

In the short term, "Mr. T"'s goal is to assist his 9th graders in their transition to high school. He wants them to feel like they are an active part of the school program from the start. The slogan he has chosen for this class

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Naviance 101: An Online Tool for Investigating College and Career Interests

Selecting a college and/or career can be one of the most important decisions made during the high school years. Council Rock students and their parents have many resources, such as Naviance, available to them through the Counseling tabs on the North and South high school websites.

What is Naviance? Naviance is an online college and career tool available to Council Rock High School students through their counselor. It includes a Myers-Briggs based personality inventory, a skills inventory, a list of colleges making fall visits to the home high school, a college acceptance history for the home high school covering the previous five years, scholarship opportunities, and a series of scattergram plots that depict the GPAs and SAT/ACT scores of admitted/waitlisted/denied students from the home high school.

Note that 'home' high school refers to either North or South, i.e., if the CR North Naviance site is viewed, only North student information is included in the scattergrams and acceptance history; conversely, if the CR South Naviance site is viewed, only South student information is included in the scattergrams and acceptance history. The Naviance site also allows students to compare their GPA and their SAT/ACT scores (all input by the counseling staff 2-3 months after receipt) to see if these match up to the averages from the colleges they are interested in. Once college acceptances are received, students, in consult with their counselors, self-report their status as admitted, waitlisted, or denied. General notices are sent to the student email address contained in Naviance. The parent will also receive Counseling Department emails, only if the student includes his/her parent's email address in the student account information.

How can I get access to Naviance? A student login ID and password provided by the counselor are needed to create an account for full utilization of the site; parents can request their own login credentials by directing an email or phone call to their child's counselor. This allows parents to view their student's information but changes to that information can only be made through the student's

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is "We are CR" and it is repeated as often as possible! He wants to be as visible as he can to students and the teaching staff. He is still doing hall duty and is trying to visit as many classrooms as possible to observe and assist in improving teaching strategies, especially the 9th grade teachers.

To round out his busy day, he is married to a 1st grade teacher in the Hatboro/Horsham school district and has two children ages 4 and 5.

Mr. Traczykiewicz remembers that as a kid growing up in Southampton and attending Archbishop Wood, he felt like there was "an aura around Council

Rock." When he decided to be a teacher, he made a list of the top five districts where he would like to teach. He recently found that list and Council Rock was at the top. In a sense, he is now living his dream!

Citizens For Education thanks "Mr. T" for taking the time to talk about his background and share his passion for public education with us. We wish him all the best as he embarks on this new, exciting phase of his career.

Visit our new website at:

www.citizensforeducation.com

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account. Anyone visiting the site can have guest access, which does not require login credentials, by simply going to the North or South high school home page, clicking on the Counseling tab, selecting Naviance from the menu options, and following the guest prompt. Guest access for each high school's Naviance site currently includes access to scattergrams, college compare and profiles, and acceptance history from the home school; for full site capability, however, a student login ID and password are required.

What changes to Naviance have occurred for the 2013-14 school year? High school transcripts will now be sent to colleges electronically, and there will be a notification on Naviance identifying the date each transcript was transmitted so students can easily keep track of their paperwork. There is no longer a \$2 fee for each requested transcript as in previous years. The student must still download and print the transcript request form, fill it out, and bring it to his/her counselor at least 10 school days prior to the college's due date. The counseling staff will be reviewing the guest access features in the next few months to decide if more or less capability is warranted, and Citizens For Education will report on any modifications.

When and how is Naviance introduced and used by students? South students are introduced to the features of Naviance in their 10th grade English classes as part of their sophomore year research paper. North students are first introduced to Naviance in their 9th grade English classes; however, they also receive Naviance training in 10th grade via group instruction in the latter part of the year. Students can complete the personality and skills inventories to assist them with career and college major selections. Students in 11th and 12th grades continue to use Naviance to research colleges and report their college acceptance status.

Recommendations. Citizens For Education recommends that students and parents review the high school Counseling webpages as early in the high school timeline as possible to take full advantage of the information offered there. In addition, parents of high school students must contact their child's counselor to receive a login code that allows expanded Naviance site usage, and the student must include the parent email in the student account for the parent to receive counseling notices directly.

To ensure equivalent Naviance site offerings between the North and South high school sites, Citizens For Education recommends that an annual counselor in-service be conducted to share best practices used on each site regardless of whether guest access or password authorized login is used. Lastly, following North's lead in introducing Naviance to students in 9th grade would likely benefit South students by enhancing earlier awareness of resources for use in college and career planning.

Citizens For Education thanks Barry Desko, Director of Secondary Education, and counselors Nicole Ventresca, Monica Smith, Cristina Rabayda, and Debra Maccarella for meeting with us to discuss the Naviance online tool.

Did you know that Pennsylvania received a waiver from NCLB requirements? AYP has been replaced by a School Performance Profile (SPP) which provides a comprehensive overview of multiple measures of student achievement.

More information can be found here:

http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/pennsylvania_department_of_education/7237/p/618476

In the Numbers

Bucks County Educational Cost Comparison			
HOW DOES COUNCIL ROCK COMPARE TO OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN BUCKS COUNTY?			
REAL ESTATE MILS FOR 2013-14 BUDGET (1)		INCREASED REAL ESTATE MILS 2008-09 to 2013-14 (1)	
Bristol Township SD	196.4992	Bristol Borough SD	34.00
Morrisville Borough SD	180.3140	Centennial SD	21.59
Bristol Borough SD	154.0000	Bristol Township SD	20.05
Neshaminy SD	152.0000	Quakertown Community SD	18.42
Pennsbury SD	150.3000	Bensalem Township SD	13.95
Bensalem Township SD	144.3500	Central Bucks SD	12.30
Quakertown Community SD	143.9200	Palisades SD	10.34
Pennridge SD	125.1081	New Hope-Solebury SD	9.46
Central Bucks SD	122.8000	Council Rock SD	8.61
Centennial SD	118.0400	Pennridge SD	8.51
Council Rock SD	114.0200	Pennsbury SD	5.30
Palisades SD	110.3400	Neshaminy SD	3.40
New Hope-Solebury SD	86.1552	Morrisville Borough SD	-6.99
PER PUPIL COST 2011-12 (1)		RELATIVE TAX BURDEN (Measured By Equalized Mil) 2011-12 (1) (2)	
New Hope-Solebury SD	\$ 20,216.32	Bristol Twp SD	23.3
Palisades SD	\$ 19,838.90	Morrisville Borough SD	20.6
Morrisville Borough SD	\$ 18,498.51	Quakertown Comm SD	19.6
Neshaminy SD	\$ 17,230.05	Bristol Borough SD	19.5
Bristol Twp SD	\$ 16,975.77	Neshaminy SD	18.7
Bensalem Twp SD	\$ 16,975.77	Bensalem Twp SD	18.4
Council Rock SD	\$ 16,562.69	Pennsbury SD	17.4
Centennial SD	\$ 16,026.96	Pennridge SD	17.2
Quakertown Comm SD	\$ 15,308.74	Central Bucks SD	15.7
Pennsbury SD	\$ 15,016.63	Council Rock SD	15.0
Bristol Borough SD	\$ 14,853.09	Centennial SD	14.8
Pennridge SD	\$ 14,066.92	Palisades SD	12.6
Central Bucks SD	\$ 14,001.67	New Hope-Solebury SD	10.7
<i>(1) The most current information available on the Pennsylvania Department of Education website.</i>			
<i>(2) An equalized mil is a standardized millage calculated by dividing a school district's total taxes collected and remitted by its total market value as certified by the Pennsylvania State Tax Equalization Board. The lower the millage value the less tax burden on the taxing community.</i>			

The chart above speaks to Council Rock's real estate mills, increase in mills over the last 5 years, per pupil cost and relative tax burden. Relative tax burden uses the "equalized mil" as defined above to compare all school districts on an equal footing.

Citizens For Education provided similar information in 2002-03. At that time, Council Rock's Per Pupil cost was 4th in the county, now it is 7th. In 2002-03, Council Rock's Relative Tax Burden was 6th and now it is 10th.



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Citizens For Education

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www.citizensforeducation.com

Membership Form

Become a member of Citizens For Education and help to shape the discussions and changes in the Council Rock School District. Join today in helping us to be a voice for the children of Council Rock.

Membership entitles you to receive our newsletter published semi-annually and voting privileges at our general membership yearly planning meeting, held in the fall.

Name: _____

Address: _____

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Please send a check, made payable to "Citizens For Education" for the total amount chosen to:

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Citizens For Education is a not-for-profit, non-partisan community group whose objectives are to ensure a quality education for all students of the Council Rock School District, to better inform the Council Rock community of educational issues, and to increase the involvement of the community in the decision making processes affecting the quality of education in Council Rock.