

# The BSE Communicator

Summer 2017

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## BSE Welcomes New Director



The PDE, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, is pleased to announce that **Ann Hinkson-Herrmann** was named director of the BSE in April. With over 30 years of experience in the field of special education, Ann brings to this position comprehensive leadership experience and thorough knowledge of procedural safeguards. Previously, Ann was the director of the PaTTAN East office. Prior to her directorship, she was an educational consultant with the PaTTAN Pittsburgh office, an assistant superintendent, a director of special education, and a special education teacher.

10th Anniversary!

## PA's Schoolwide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports System (PBIS) Recognition in May

The annual PAPBS Network's Implementers' Forum took place May 16 and 17 at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center. With a total of **1701** participants registered, the Network celebrated its 10th anniversary and recognized:

- **241** different schools and program-wide sites for fidelity of implementation of PBIS during the 2016-17 school year.
- **123** PBIS facilitators from cross-section agencies including: PaTTAN, intermediate units, behavioral and mental health provider agencies, and institutes of higher education.

Within the commonwealth, 1030 sites are implementing PBIS, with 161 provider agencies partnering with those sites to deliver mental and behavioral health services at the advanced tiers. All sites implementing PBIS via the PAPBS network were asked to submit an application in the fall that codified the following criteria: in good standing with the PAPBS Network, supported by a PAPBS Facilitator, and, submission of the 2015-16 annual

data as required by the PAPBS Network program evaluators.



*In the photo:  
The Youngsville Elementary/  
Middle School PBIS Team*

## PA Met IDEA Part B Determinations 10 of 11 Years!

The US Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) delivered the good news in June that PA has met the IDEA determinations for the 2017 year. This is exciting news and reinforces the good work that everyone is doing – from the LEA level, to our IU partners, to the PaTTAN system, to the BSE, and the system-at-large.

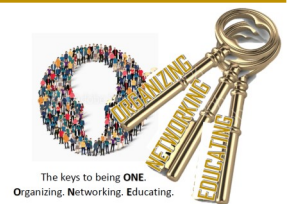
## SSIP Highlighted at National Conferences

The National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT) highlighted the Pennsylvania State Systemic Improvement Plan at their Annual Building Capacity Institute in Kansas City, MO. The center asked the federal government for a recommendation of a state doing a great job improving graduation rates for students with disabilities and they recommended PA. PDE selected two Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN) employees to do the presentation, Dr. Victor Rodriguez-Diaz and Dr. Laura Moran.

Dr. Victor Rodriguez-Diaz also presented on behalf of PDE at the National Center on Systemic Improvement meeting in Denver, CO.

## BSE/PaTTAN Retreat

The BSE held a retreat with their staff and educational consultants from all three PaTTAN locations. Based on working as ONE (Organizing. Networking. Educating.), the staff members were able to establish goals, and hold project-related conversations as they participated in engagement activities with a focus on future collaborative efforts. Several programs/projects were highlighted by speakers PDE Deputy Secretary Matt Stem, and BSE Director Ann Hinkson-Herrmann, as well as BSE and PaTTAN administrators and educational consultants.



## TVI-COMS Summer Academy: AT, Adaptive Daily Living Skills, and STEM

The TVI-COMS Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments (TVI) and Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists (COMS) Junior Summer Academy program was held in June. This was the inaugural program, held at Kutztown University, for middle schoolers who are blind/visually impaired. The Junior Academy promotes access and utilization of assistive technology as it relate to daily living activities, travel, school and future education and employment, while building friendships in an educational environment.

A WFMZ-TV story on the Junior Summer Academy featured a quote from Lynn Fox, educational consultant: <http://www.wfmz.com/news/berks/students-attend-special-summer-camp-at-kutztown-u-1/557577415>

Three PaTTAN educational consultants, Jennifer Edgar, Lynn Fox, and Doug Williams, were part of the planning team and provided set up and instruction or facilitation in: assistive technology (AT), orientation and mobility (O&M), recreation/team building, low vision, and vocational exploration. The Office for Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)/Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services, primarily staffed the program in the areas of assistive technology, social workers, vocational rehabilitation counselors, and COMS. They were joined by colleagues from Kutztown University, Slippery Rock University, and Salus University's Low Vision Rehabilitation Program and optometrist interns.

In July, the TVI-COMS Summer Academy was held for teachers and administrators. This training was an exciting opportunity to learn about the valuable experience the Summer Academy (SA) and the STEM Extension program provides to high school students who are blind or visual impaired.

During the week, TVIs and COMS observed various content areas, learned new adaptive strategies, and assisted with group instruction. In addition, TVIs and COMS joined other educational professionals to expand their knowledge in AT, daily living skills, and STEM during specific targeted, hands-on trainings.

There will also be TVIs at the Summer Academy during the Science-U Extension week which takes place the first week in August. Science-U, an additional partner that week, is a program of Penn State Science Outreach in the Eberly College of Science and WPSU (the PBS station in State College).

Science-U is dedicated to advancing science literacy in youth through the sharing and discovery of scientific knowledge within the intellectual foundations at Penn State.

The chief goals are to educate and inspire students, encourage critical thinking, and prepare them to become responsible, skilled and caring citizens, as well as capable scientists and teachers when faced with tomorrow's challenges. <http://www.sciencecamps.psu.edu/>

**Right:** Students downloaded a navigational app to get to a local ice cream shop.



**Above:** As part of the biology lesson students dissected a cow's eye. The purpose of the activity was to learn about the parts of one's eye and the students' own visual impairment.



## PaTTAN Holds Web Accessibility Training

PaTTAN and the Office for Dispute Resolution (ODR) hosted WebAIM's Jon Whiting on June 1. Based at Utah State University, WebAIM works with organizations on website accessibility review, how to check formats, and how to resolve issues like alternate tags, photo accessibility, and more, based on the regulations of Section 508 which, requires government agencies to be in compliance with accessibility for their websites.

There were over 40 participants in attendance, representing ODR, PaTTAN, IU13, the BSE, the PDE, the Center for Schools and Communities, Early Intervention Technical Assistance, Tuscarora IU11, and, Central Susquehanna IU16.

## Upcoming Conferences!

<b>July 31–August 3</b>	<b>National Autism Conference 2017</b> State College
<b>August 9-11</b>	<b>2017 PA Community on Transition Conference</b> State College
<b>October 17-19</b>	<b>2017 MTSS Academic Implementers' Forum</b> Gettysburg
<b>November 13-15</b>	<b>HELIX: High Expectations for Low Incidence Disabilities</b> State College

Check out these conferences and registration info at:  
[www.pattan.net](http://www.pattan.net)