

Inside Story

Common Grounds



Enroll in Health Benefits

Open enrollment for your 2019-20 employee benefits occurs May 1-24. This is your opportunity to enroll or make changes to benefits afforded to you as an eligible E1B employee including: health, dental, and flexible spending accounts. The open enrollment sessions are *Thursday, May 2* from noon to 5 p.m. and on *Tuesday, May 21* from 2 to 5 p.m. Both sessions are in B1. There will be representatives present from E1B's Human Resources office, Independent Health, Dental Pay Plus, Benefit Resource, Aflac and various financial services institutions. Registration is not required, just show up. For all other enrollment assistance, please contact Sharon Brzoskowski at sbrzoskowski@e1b.org or 821-7078.



Survey Results Posted

Thank you to all who answered the annual employee survey, which was distributed three months ago. Like last year, [the 2018-19 employee survey results](#) have been posted on MyErie1 for all to review. As with 2017-18, the same three topics stood out as areas you feel are important to focus on, they are: training, proficiency standards and transparency. Your input was, and will continue to be, used by various planning committees to benefit all employees at Erie 1 BOCES (attention 12-month employees: also see "Be a name changer" article below).



NY44 Health Trust Updates, Effective July 1, 2019

Several changes will go into effect July 1, 2019. The NY44 website features a [full explanation of the changes](#).

- For members and their providers who elect to receive a non-preferred brand medication rather than a generic equivalent, the member will pay the difference in cost between the non-preferred brand and the generic equivalent, plus the tier copayment. If there is a medically necessary reason for a member to receive the non-preferred brand, the provider can submit a Prior Authorization form to Pharmacy Benefit Dimensions, and if approved, the member will not have to pay the difference between the non-preferred

brand and generic equivalent.

- Emergency room copayments will increase to \$300; copayment is waived if you are admitted to the hospital from the emergency room.
- Both the [Activity Reimbursement and Annual Physical Rewards](#) programs will terminate effective July 1, 2019. Enrollees have until July 15, 2019 to submit claims and required documentation for the 2018/2019 plan year.
- New Independent Health rates have been established for the 2019-20 fiscal year. Refer to your collective bargaining agreements to determine your employee contribution toward the cost of the monthly premium.
 - Single: \$700 (2018-19); \$746 (2019-20)
 - Employee Child: \$1,412 (2018-19); \$1,504 (2019-20)
 - Employee Spouse: \$1,731 (2018-19); \$1,844.50 (2019-20)
 - Family: \$1,931 (2018-19); \$2,057 (2019-20)

Changes to Note



Retirements

On April 10, the Board of Education approved six retirements. Congratulations to all!

- Susan Elsaesser, Special Education, June 28 with 33 years of service.
- Janice Gangloff, Career and Technical Education, June 26 with 20 years of service.
- Diana Roll, Career and Technical Education, May 29 with 39 years of service.
- Donna Mann, Career and Technical Education, August 2, with 30 years of service.
- Barbara Mocariski, Educational Support and WNYRIC, Technology Services/Central Office, July 5 with 16 years of service.
- Paul Wekarski, School Support Services, June 28 with 16 years of service.



Board Briefs

Following each Board of Education meeting, Communication Services posts a brief description of HR's personnel actions. While not the official minutes, which are approved at the following month's meeting, this brief provides employees advance notice of the approved changes. All [Board Briefs](#) are accessible on the home page of MyErie1. Read [April's Board Brief](#).

News Zone

Career & Technical Education



Students Build Up an Appetite with Culinary Events

Students from Tonawanda and Hamburg middle school put on their aprons and went to work cooking delectable meals as part of two separate events with the Culinary Arts program. For Hamburg's [Pizza Palooza](#) event, Family and Consumer Science (FACS) students created custom-made breakfast pizzas at the Potter Career & Technical Center. This included making the dough and adding toppings. For Tonawanda's Chef for a Day event, FACS students had a craving for chicken tender hoagies and French fries at the Kenton Career & Technical Center. The culinary lessons are part of the Middle School Modules umbrella, which pair an E1B Career and Technical Education instructor with a teacher from an E1B component district to put a hands-on twist to lessons.



Register your Child for Summer at the Center

Parents and guardians can now register their middle school child for [Summer at the Center](#), slated for July 22-26. Campers spend a week at the Harkness Career and Technical Center and participate in a series of four camps of their choosing. From Destination Animation and Camp Culinary to the 7-Hour Movie Challenge, camps are designed to engage students in exciting and interactive activities that make learning fun! Be sure to sign up early, as classes are beginning to fill up! For more information, please visit the website or contact Nancy Potter at 821-7031.



FUSION Fashion Show Slated for May 15

Students in the Fashion Design Technology program will have their handmade outfits grace the runway during the 2019 [FUSION Fashion Show](#): Mosaic of Art on May 15. The show will be at 7 p.m. at the Harkness Career & Technical Center. Seniors will exhibit their personally designed and sewn collections, while juniors will show pieces that they sewed. In addition, Cosmetology program students will join in with a "hair show," which will showcase hair and makeup. The event is free and open to family and community members with a high interest in the fashion industry, though all guests will need a ticket. Seating is limited. To reserve tickets, email [Darlene Borchert](#) by May 5.



Refreshment Hut Sells at Auction

High school seniors enrolled in Erie 1 BOCES' Building Trades program at the Kenton Career & Technical Center created an outdoor refreshment hut for a patio display at the Buffalo Home Show. This structure was sold to the highest bidder during a public auction at Cash Realty & Auctions on April 13 at 10 a.m. Mr. And Mrs. Brady, parents of a student in the program, were the successful bidders at \$8,000.



Sweet Home Makes it Two in a Row at Minecraft Competition

Team "Emerald Order" from Sweet Home Middle School took first place for the second year in a row at the annual [Minecraft Madness](#) middle school team competition. A total of 36 middle school students participated at the Potter Career & Technical Center. Nine teams of four students and one teacher competed from the Maryvale, Cleveland Hill, Franklin (Kenmore-Town of Tonawanda), Lake Shore and Sweet Home middle schools. Mr. Schleicher, technology teacher, led Sweet Home's first place team, which consisted of eighth-graders Michael Falzone, Robert Heim, Brennan McCarthy and Adam Korte. The team consisted of three students from last year's winning team. The competition is held by the Web Technologies & Game Programming instructors.

Education Campus & WNYRIC Offices



Be A Name Changer

We're listening. Following your survey and focus group feedback, an employee committee was formed to harness Opening Day's professional development (PD) potential. Our PD committee now needs your help re-naming Opening Day to better reflect its new format. We'd also love your ideas for breakout sessions. Use the button within the ["Be a name changer" flyer](#) by May 1. Spoiler alert: by opening the flyer, you'll also get a sneak peek of what's in store on August 13.

Thank you to our committee (Alicia Thompson, Sally King, Kate Huber, Steve Schottman, Sue Locke-Scott, Elizabeth Freas, Jim Fregelette, Karen DePalma, Rob Gottschall, Jessie Karches, Lori Sosenko and Jill Schottman) for their efforts.



Mentoring Day

Thirty-five students from school districts in Niagara and Genesee counties participated in a Mentoring Day event at Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center on March 28. Ken Jones, former Buffalo Bills player, presented to students about the importance of learning work skills and utilizing them within all job/career opportunities. Students had an opportunity to explore various career fields within the hospital and participate in hands-on activities with staff from 13 different departments. This event was made possible by the collaborations of agencies including the Erie 1 BOCES Community



Picnic: Save the Date

The 12-Month Employee Picnic will occur on the afternoon of July 23, 2019. Please save the date. More details will be announced within the coming month. Thank you!



Building Reminders from the Safety Team

The Education Campus Safety Committee would like to remind employees of the following:

- **Be a safe walker** - There is more traffic at the Education Campus, especially in the back of the campus. For your safety, please consider modifying your walking pattern to stay close to the building thus avoiding roads and the loading docks behind the building. Also, as a reminder, please sign out of the building each time you leave campus grounds.
- **Fire drills** - In the coming weeks, fire drills will continue with more frequency. Please keep the following in mind: the exit nearest to your work area; your designated meeting place; check-in with the appropriate person to ensure you are accounted for. If you are unsure of standard procedure, or have forgotten, check with your direct supervisor.
- **Visitors** – Anyone not assigned to, or based at, the Education Campus is considered a visitor. All visitors must always sign-in at one of the two front desks. In addition, non-employees must be escorted within the building's office space.

Flickr photo by Flood G.

Exceptional Education



Chinese New Year

The Middle School and Center-Based students at Northtowns Academy celebrated the Chinese New Year with activities and food. The students made paper lanterns, learned to write their birth year in calligraphy and strung them together to decorate the school lobby. As part of the celebration, the students also enjoyed a lunch of vegetable lo mein, sweet and sour chicken and egg rolls.



STARS Awards

On April 17, students and their families gathered at Maryvale High School for an uplifting ceremony that entailed certificates, balloons, refreshments and smiles. A total of 23 students were honored during Erie 1 BOCES' annual Steps to Achieving Real Success (STARS) recognition ceremony. STARS is an annual awards program for students within the Special Education division in which teachers, classroom staff and therapists nominate one student from their classroom to receive this honor.



Spring Teamwork

Before the break, students in the RISE program practiced teamwork with an egg 'n spoon relay race. Reaching Individual Student Excellence (RISE) combines 6:1:2 classes with behavioral supports to meet the needs of students in grades K-8.



Daily Mile

Walking outdoors for 15 minutes each day helps our students improve physical, mental, emotional and social health. The Daily Mile at West Elementary and E1B Learning Center focuses on the whole child and their ability to learn. More than 3,600 schools across the world participate in the Daily Mile, whatever the weather – sun, clouds, rain, snow. Rose Wright, physical therapist, says, "International studies show this activity promotes improved sleeping, eating, fitness and memory patterns. In addition, students often report feeling happier."

Special Features



Honestly Communicating with your Supervisor

From the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

This month, EAP sat down with Karen Eichner, human resource director at National Air Cargo, Inc. and an EAP communications trainer, to discuss how to have a direct and respectful conversation with your supervisor. "No one can fix something if they don't know it is broken," Eichner said. "When you see something that you feel is important, or when you have a valuable idea, it's up to you to let your supervisor know. Change starts with you." [More of Eichner's tips...](#)



Laughter is the Best Medicine

Q: Does February like March?

A: No, but April May

Q: What's Irish and comes out in Spring?

A: Paddy O'Furniture



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