

Summer 2005

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# ESL Newsletter

## Did you know...

Did you know that, according to the U.S. Census in 2000, approximately six million language minority students attend public school in the United States? Also, did you know that one out of every ten American citizens was born in another country? Another surprising fact is that over 460 different languages are spoken by the six million students in our public schools.

## PDE Planning to Assist Districts with Translations

Great news! The Pennsylvania Department of Education, in collaboration with the Chester County Intermediate Unit, is now going to provide school districts with translation assistance! All of us involved in ESL have known for a long time that districts are responsible for the translation and interpretation of common school communications to the non-English speaking/reading parents of ESL students. In fact, districts are *required* to offer this service directly to the parents. However, finding good and reliable sources for translation and interpretation that are reasonably priced has been a major concern for districts. Some languages, for example, such as Mandarin Chinese or the dialect of Chinese spoken by those from Taiwan, require expertise that is difficult and expensive to find.

I will be attending meetings this summer, at the invitation of PDE, of the newly formed PDE Translation Committee. This committee will provide a document translation service for school districts, offering 20 or more priority languages, and will include many common school forms. Districts will have access to these documents through a general website via a link from the PDE homepage. Within the document translation website, districts will have their own "sub-website." At this time there will be no charge for this service. PDE has informed me that as a member of the committee, they want to hear our

needs expressed so that the languages selected and the school forms are of the most value to us. If you have any suggestions, please let me know. I will definitely present your suggestions to the committee. Additionally, the forms will meet all federal requirements. The anticipated date of availability/access for this service is late summer 2005.



## What Common School Forms Will Be Translated?



PDE is examining the following common forms to be considered for possible translation:

- Health, medical and immunization
- School administration
- National school lunch
- Special services/special education
- Title I, III, X, and XI
- FERPA and student privacy
- NCLB national resources
- Pennsylvania-specific documents

If your district has a particular form in mind that you do not see listed here, please contact me and I will present it to the committee and PDE.

## Feature Teacher : Everett Area's Susan Snyder

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Our feature teacher for this newsletter is Susan Snyder. Susan has been teaching in the Everett Area School District for seven years. Currently she is a reading specialist and an ESL teacher at Breezewood Elementary.

Susan earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Early Childhood and Elementary Education, and then a Masters of Education in Reading from Frostburg State University. In the fall of 2003 Susan entered the ESL Program Specialist class offered by IU8. That May she successfully finished the 12-credit course and was then certified as an ESL Program Specialist by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Susan currently teaches the two ESL students in her district. She prefers a push-in program (where the teacher visits the student's regular classroom). Susan works closely with the classroom teachers to provide the ESL students with a quality education. She stresses that she concentrates on using multiple teaching strategies in order to create a risk-free environment for her ESL students.



**Susan Snyder**

Susan has very strong support for her ESL students and her ESL Program from the Everett Area School District, which she appreciates as she continues to enjoy her teaching time with her ESL students.

Susan is an enthusiastic teacher who works hard not only as an ESL teacher but also as a reading specialist.

Susan lives in Everett with her husband, Clyde, and their son, Corey. They also have a daughter, Tracey, and two grandchildren, Noelle and Elliott.

## IU8 to Host 2005-2006 ESL Videoconference Series

Everyone will be happy to know that for next school year, IU8 will be a host site for the 2005-2006 PDE ESL Videoconference Series.

The scheduled dates are as follows:

- September 13, 2005
- September 20, 2005
- November 8, 2005
- December 13, 2005
- January 10, 2006
- February 14, 2006
- March 14, 2006
- April 11, 2006

PDE has not yet released the topics that will be covered. To register, you must visit the

PaTTAN website ([www.pattan.k12.pa.us](http://www.pattan.k12.pa.us)) and register online. You cannot register through IU8.

ALL of the videoconferences are scheduled at our Johnstown site, located in the Greater Johnstown Career and Technology Center (formerly known as the Greater Johnstown Vo-Tech) in Richland. Directions are on IU8's website ([www.iu08.org](http://www.iu08.org)).

We are happy to be able to offer these conferences through our facility, as it will be less travel for our district teachers and administrators, who would otherwise have to drive to Harrisburg or Pittsburgh.