

# Pennsylvania Early Intervention

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## From the Chair

On Thursday, August 27, 2009, my six-year-old daughter Chloe started first grade at her neighborhood school with typical peers. A few decades ago this magical moment would not be possible. Chloe has Down syndrome, and if she had been born in 1963 (my birth year) she would have been labeled uneducable, have received no advanced health care, and she would have probably been shipped off to an institution – complete exclusion.



Thanks to the tireless efforts of families, advocates, and dedicated professionals, people with disabilities are now embraced as valuable members of their schools, communities, and work-places.

The foundation for Chloe's successful inclusion was the support and services she received through Early Intervention and Early Childhood Education. This investment yields a positive return for generations to come, and it has allowed Chloe and countless other children to flourish and excel in neighborhood schools across the state. The savings from being included in a neighborhood school as opposed to being sent to a "special school" add up to an immediate savings of tens of thousands of dollars over the course of a child's education. The effects on children with disabilities, families, other students, teachers, and society as a whole are priceless!

When I see Chloe interacting in the community I often think of the movie "Horton Hears a Who," where one of the smallest children in the society included his voice to make the biggest impact and save the world. Through inclusion Chloe has taught our family and community more at age six than many do in a lifetime, and these lessons of serving and helping others as opposed to serving self are exactly what we all need.

This newsletter speaks to the importance of inclusion and the successes we have experienced across Pennsylvania in recent years. Enjoy and take a moment to reflect on your own contributions to furthering communities where *all* children belong.

Kurt A. Kondrich, M.Ed.  
Parent Chairperson  
State Interagency Coordinating Council



The PRESIDENT. Would the Senate join in welcoming Senator O'Pake's guests.

(Applause.)

### **SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS SENATE RESOLUTION ADOPTED**

Senators FONTANA, ALLOWAY, ARGALL, BAKER, BOSCOLA, BRUBAKER, COSTA, DINNIMAN, EARLL, ERICKSON, HUGHES, KASUNIC, KITCHEN, LEACH, LOGAN, MELLOW, O'PAKE, ORIE, PILEGGI, PIPPY, RAFFERTY, STACK, TARTAGLIONE, WASHINGTON and WAUGH, by unanimous consent, offered **Senate Resolution No. 276**, entitled:

A Resolution recognizing March 21, 2010, as "World Down Syndrome Day" in Pennsylvania.

On the question,

Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Allegheny, Senator Fontana.

Senator FONTANA. Mr. President, the resolution that I offer today recognizes March 21, 2010, as "World Down Syndrome Day" in Pennsylvania. This is the fourth year of this international celebration organized by Down Syndrome International.

Mr. President, the number 21, ironically, of course, has a special significance for those with Down syndrome because it is the 21st chromosome that a person with Down syndrome has three of, and it is that 21st chromosome that makes those individuals so unique. The annual observance of World Down Syndrome Day aims to promote awareness and understanding of Down syndrome and related issues, and to mobilize support and recognition of the dignity, rights, and well-being of persons with Down syndrome.

### **GUESTS OF SENATOR WAYNE D. FONTANA PRESENTED TO THE SENATE**

Senator FONTANA. Mr. President, I am proud to know a young lady who does that each and every day of the year, not just on World Down Syndrome Day. Her name is **Chloe Kondrich**, and she has joined us here today with her family in recognition of this resolution. Chloe is 6 years old and is a first-grade student at Eisenhower Elementary School in Allegheny County. She is a celebrity in her own right. She plays for the Angels, a team in the Miracle League of southwestern Pennsylvania. She hangs out with the Pittsburgh Pirates and has made a special friend in Andy LaRoche. He has even taught her how to bat and to hit the ball. Her photo has been shown on Panasonic's Astrovision screen in New York's Times Square. She is on the cover of a book. She even got married in December to one of her young friends. She met her U.S. Congressman and got a personal tour of the Capitol. She met U.S. Senator John McCain and former Alaska Governor Sarah Palin when the two were campaigning. And today, she is here to visit all of us.

Chloe is a testimony to the importance of early intervention services in the lives of children such as her. She reminds us to focus on the possibilities and capabilities of individuals with Down syndrome and other special needs rather than their disabili-

ties. Many of us know people with Down syndrome. They could be our children, our brothers, our sisters, our classmates, our teammates, and our friends. We can learn a lesson from each one of them. I am proud to ask the Senate to recognize March 21, 2010, as "World Down Syndrome Day" in Pennsylvania, and I commend individuals with Down syndrome, their friends, and their families for celebrating the uniqueness of Down syndrome through daily actions and interactions. I thank Chloe, Mr. President, and her family for reminding us of our blessings in allowing us to see that there are angels among us.

Mr. President, I would like to recognize the guests with Chloe: Todd Klunk, the deputy secretary of the Office of Child Development and Early Learning; Chloe's parents, Kurt and Margie; Chloe's brother, Nolan; and, of course, Chloe. They are all in the gallery today, and I would like the Senate to give them a warm welcome.

The PRESIDENT. Would the guests of Senator Fontana please rise to be welcomed by the Senate.

(Applause.)

And the question recurring,

Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

A voice vote having been taken, the question was determined in the affirmative.

### **SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS GUESTS OF SENATOR DONALD C. WHITE PRESENTED TO THE SENATE**

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana, Senator Don White.

Senator D. WHITE. Mr. President, I am pleased to have a distinguished guest from my district visiting us here today in Harrisburg. Serving as our guest Page is Chris Alman. Chris is an eighth-grade student at Saint Edmund's Academy. He was a Lead Student at Saint Edmund's in 2008 and attended a Junior National Young Leaders Conference in Washington, D.C., in the summer of 2008. He plays basketball and soccer and performed in the seventh-grade musical. Having a very keen interest in politics, Chris contacted my office for opportunities to volunteer, and that is why he joins us here today, to serve. Joining Chris on his tour of our Capitol is his mother, Dr. Sue Alman, seated in the gallery. Dr. Alman is director of online education for the School of Information Sciences at the University of Pittsburgh. Please join me in extending our usual warm welcome to my guests.

The PRESIDENT. Would the guests of Senator Don White please rise to be welcomed by the Senate.

(Applause.)

### **GUESTS OF SENATOR JANE C. ORIE PRESENTED TO THE SENATE**

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Allegheny, Senator Orie.

Senator ORIE. Mr. President, I rise to welcome the Pine-Richland Middle School Orchestra, which is performing right now in the Rotunda. I would like to acknowledge the Pine-Richland Middle School Orchestra from Gibsonia, Allegheny County, as March has been designated as Music In Our Schools Month by the National Association for Music Education.

The Pine-Richland Middle School String Orchestra was se-



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