

NORWIN SCHOOL DISTRICT

Regional Economic, Education, and Employment Information

William H. Kerr, Ed. D.

September, 2011

Norwin School District is preparing its graduates to meet the challenges of a highly competitive and global economy by offering planned courses of study which are rigorous and relevant to real-world connections. There is a continuous effort to improve and expand learning opportunities for all K-12 students so that each graduate can be a contributing member of a highly competent and quality workforce.

Having an in-depth understanding of the regional economic and employment demographics is an integral part of linking education and workforce development to prepare young people for the high-demand occupations in a knowledge and technology-based society both now and in the future.

Norwin School District, serving the communities of North Huntingdon, Irwin, and North Irwin in Westmoreland County, is located in an area of approximately 36 square miles with approximately 30,000 residents. More than 5200 students attend 4 elementary schools, an intermediate school, a middle school, and a high school. The School District is the 16th largest employer in Westmoreland County.

The communities served by the School District enjoy the benefit of the very proactive Norwin Chamber of Commerce, which assertively promotes community and economic development for the area. An active professional and retail environment thrives along the Route 30 corridor throughout the three communities. Among these are local and regional banks, automobile dealerships, attorneys, certified public accountants, medical practitioners, large and small retail establishments, and service providers. The growth of the business sector along Route 30, coupled with a number of new housing developments and proximity to major transportation arteries (Pennsylvania Turnpike, Toll Route 66, and Route 30) as well as the relatively close county seat of Greensburg, has led to continued growth in the immediate area.

In addition, the Westmoreland County Industrial Development Corporation is actively seeking to fill available properties in the area, including space in the Banco Business Park in North Huntingdon. The Westmoreland County Planning Department has developed a comprehensive plan for land use in the county to include the communities served by the School District.

According to seasonally adjusted figures from July 2011, Westmoreland County had an unemployment rate of 7.5%, slightly below the Pennsylvania rate of 7.8% and well below the national level of 9.1%. (Source: Center for Workforce Information & Analysis) Per capita income (\$25,344) and median family income (\$47,312) for Westmoreland County were slightly lower than respective Pennsylvania rates of \$26,678 and \$49,501 (Source: Bureau of Economic

Analysis and U.S. Bureau of Census information.) Westmoreland County is ranked No. 18 out of 67 Pennsylvania Counties, according to per capita income. Per the 2000 census data, of Westmoreland County residents age 25 and older, 41.7% were high school graduates and 27.51% earned an Associate's, Bachelor's or Doctoral degrees. (Source: censusscope.org)

Major employers in the county are diversified, including multiple sectors:

- **Public Administration** (State Government #1, Westmoreland County #5, Federal Government #12)
 - **Transportation and Warehousing** (United Parcel Service #2, Laidlaw Transit #20, US Food Services, Inc. #44)
 - **Health and Personal Care** (Westmoreland Regional Hospital #3, Latrobe Area Hospital #10, Frick Hospital #33, Redstone Highlands #36, Sundance Rehabilitation Services # 48)
 - **Retail Trade** (Wal-Mart Associates #4, Giant Eagle #6, Eat n' Park Restaurants #18, Supervalu Holdings #21, Dicks Sporting Goods #25, K-Mart #29, Lowe's Home Centers #34, Sheetz #42, Target #43)
 - **Manufacturing** (Respironics #7, Westinghouse Electric #8, Elliott Turbomachinery #14, Kennametal #15, Leedsworld #17, Latrobe Steel #24, GMRI, Inc. #41, Mine Safety Appliances #35, Siemens Building Technologies #38, Smail Company, Inc. #46, PACE Industries #47, ABB #49)
 - **Education** (Hempfield Area #13, Westmoreland County Community College #11, Norwin #16, Westmoreland Intermediate Unit #19, Penn-Trafford #22, Greater Latrobe #23, Franklin Regional #26, Kiski Area #27, Derry Area #28, Seton Hill University #45, St. Vincent College #32, Greensburg Salem #39, New Kensington-Arnold #40)
 - **Utilities** (Allegheny Energy Service #9)
 - **Other** (Carol Harris Staffing, LLC #30, Nutrition, Inc. #31, Trib Total Media #37, Executive Management Services, #50)
- (Source: 4th Quarter 2010 Initial Data, Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, PA Department of Labor & Industry)

According to the 2011 High-Priority Occupations data collected for the Westmoreland-Fayette Workforce Investment Area, the most in-demand occupations in the area include:

1. Customer Service Representatives – 136 annual openings
2. Office Clerks – 115 annual openings
3. Registered Nurses – 98 annual openings
4. Home Health Aides – 93 annual openings
5. Truck Drivers, Heavy & Tractor-Trailer – 77 annual openings
6. Sales Representatives – 63 annual openings
7. Nursing Aides, Orderlies & Attendants – 58 annual openings
8. Child Care Workers – 57 annual openings
9. Bookkeeping, Accounting & Auditing Clerks – 48 annual openings
10. Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurses – 44 annual openings
11. Hairdressers & Hairstylists – 41 annual openings
12. Pharmacy Technicians – 37 annual openings

13. Secretaries – 36 annual openings
14. Automotive Service Technicians & Mechanics – 34 annual openings
15. Accountants & Auditors – 29 annual openings
16. Machinists – 28 annual openings

(Source: Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, PA Department of Labor and Industry)

Projected industry employment in the Westmoreland-Fayette Workforce Investment Area through 2018 shows growth in the following industry sectors:

1. *Services – Providing*: expected growth of 856 annual change (5.83% increase)
2. *Health Care & Social Assistance*: expected growth of 373 annual change (13.57% increase)
3. *Transportation*: expected growth of 36 annual change (3.91% increase)
4. *Administrative & Waste Services*: expected growth of 109 annual change (13.63% increase)
5. *Accommodation & Food Services*: expected growth of 123 annual change (7.38% increase)
6. *Professional & Technical Services*: expected growth of 35 annual change (5.39% increase)
7. *Arts, Entertainment & Recreation*: expected growth of 39 annual change (13.54% increase)
8. *Management of Companies & Enterprises*: expected growth of 12 annual change (5.38% increase)
9. *Retail Trade*: expected growth of 15 annual change (0.60% increase)
10. *Other Services, Except Public Administration*: expected growth of 56 annual change (6.56% increase)

(Source: Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, PA Department of Labor and Industry)

Norwin School District is a participating school in the Central Westmoreland Career & Technology Center. With programs of study in Creative Studies, Construction, Transportation/Logistics, Computer/Technical, Health/Safety, and Manufacturing, students can prepare to bring the skills required by the high-demand occupations and growing sectors in the region. Central Westmoreland CTC offers twenty-three programs for sophomores, juniors and seniors in a half-day setting with an emphasis on applied academics and technical skills.

Norwin School District continues to enhance its educational programs and services with a high priority on STEM Education and expanded learning opportunities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. This K-12 initiative with successful programs such as the Elementary Camp Invention and Secondary Robotics Initiative will help prepare our students for the high-tech jobs of the future with an increased degree of competitiveness in an ever-growing international arena. The District plans to sponsor a March 2012 **NorwinSTEM Summit**, which

will bring business and education partners together to share ideas and identify new ways to create advanced STEM educational opportunities that will encourage our students to become an integral part of tomorrow's leading workforce.

School District administrators and teachers are also working on several other initiatives including, but not limited to, the following:

- **Business Education Roundtable.** This is an initiative, which brings education and business leaders together on a quarterly basis to create an open dialogue about the Norwin School District educational programs and services. The partnership is an opportunity for school and community stakeholders to learn more about the District's Strategic Plan and the goals and action plans for academic and financial success now and in the future.
- **College and Career Pathways.** A committee of secondary guidance counselors and school administrators is working on aligning current High School courses to the 16 Career Clusters and Pathways. When completed, this alignment will provide students information during the scheduling process to help ensure they choose courses and electives that match their intended plan of studies.
- **Junior Achievement.** The Middle School will incorporate the Junior Achievement Program into the curriculum this year. Junior Achievement helps bring local business owners and professionals into the school to provide students an authentic perspective of real-world topics. Global Marketplace will be incorporated in grade 7 through the global studies curriculum; Marcellus Shale/Energy will be incorporated in 8th grade science.
- **Twelfth-Grade Internships.** A committee of secondary guidance counselors and school administrators is working on the development of a 12th grade internship class that pairs Norwin students with local businesses to provide them authentic job experiences and mentorships. In 2011-12, the District is piloting the program through a partnership with such businesses as Albensi Dental Laboratories, Accounting Techs, and Metal Photo Service, Inc.
- **Work Study Program.** The Work Study Program allows students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) the opportunity to go into the community and learn job skills through local businesses or community organizations. Students obtain hands-on experience and gain insight into the working world.

- **Science Alumni Day.** Dozens of Norwin High School graduates who are studying science or employed in technical fields have come back to be part of Science Alumni Day, which has been held each December since 2008. Alumni representing fields including astrophysics, bioengineering, medicine, and more have presented seminars to students at both Norwin High School and Norwin Middle School for the daylong event. They have shared what courses they completed in High School, discussed the rigor of their undergraduate and graduate studies, and offered anecdotes about their contributions to the field of science through their careers. High school teacher Mr. Matt Anticole organized Science Alumni Day to help younger generations of students catch “science fever” and consider some of these high-demand careers of the 21st Century.
- **1st Annual Westmoreland Think Tank**
The Westmoreland Think Tank, sponsored by the Norwin School District, is a one-day event for teams of students from Westmoreland County school districts that will compete in five STEM related events. At the Westmoreland Think Tank competition, students will see that potential in pursuing STEM careers, develop communication, problem-solving, science and engineering skills, and have fun. The event will be held the morning of Saturday, November 5, 2011 at Norwin High School.
- **Robotics.** A \$22,000 grant from Alcoa in the 2010-11 school year and Federal Stimulus funds, the District was able to begin a robotics curriculum in the Middle School and expand the robotics curriculum at the High School. In addition, several extra-curricular robotics camps were added and the District plans to expand on these in the 2011-12 school year using more advanced Robotics systems.
- **Camp Invention.** In partnership with Invent Now Kids, the Soffers Camp Invention is a summer science enrichment program for students in grades 1-6. During the week-long camp, students participate in thematic inquiry-based science modules.

The relationship between Norwin School District and local colleges and universities (University of Pittsburgh, Seton Hill University, Penn State Greater Allegheny, and Westmoreland County Community College) in providing courses for students through programs such as dual enrollment and college in high school provides opportunities to give Norwin students a head start on building knowledge and skills required by employers.

The central location of the Norwin School District, its educational programs and services, and the thriving business and industry climate of the communities uniquely position the Norwin School District to enhance business education partnerships and to meet the current and future needs of the workforce for the local communities, the county, the region, and beyond.