

**Norwin STEM Summit**  
**Monday, March 12, 2012**  
**Welcome and Introductions**  
**by William H. Kerr, Ed. D.**  
**Superintendent of Schools**

On behalf of the Norwin Board of Education and its administration and faculty, good morning! As Superintendent of Schools, it is my pleasure to introduce Danylko Hankewycz, a representative of the Norwin student ambassadors with us today, who will offer the official welcome.

(Danylko's comments)

Danylko, thank you very much! Danylko is among the best and brightest students who has distinguished himself in electronics and engineering at Norwin High School. His knowledge and skill levels are well beyond many students his age and he is simply a remarkable young man with a very exciting and promising future. Danylko is a shining example of what is good about the youth of our country and what is good about public education. On behalf of everyone here this morning, Danylko, we wish you the very best in all of your educational goals and endeavors now and in the future and I extend the same wishes to our Norwin student ambassadors assisting with the STEM Summit today. Let's show our appreciation to all of our students.

Once again, welcome to the Norwin STEM Summit. Before, I formally introduce our guest speakers, I'd like to provide you some historical perspectives.

For the past 18 months, Norwin has stepped up its emphasis on STEM Education by making investments in curriculum and instruction to provide expanded and advanced learning opportunities for students with hands-on experiences in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

The District has sponsored elementary Camp Invention during the summer, winter robotics for middle school students, hosted a robotics competition for middle school students, sponsored a Science Alumni Days program, and challenged high school students to advance STEM application skills.

A grant from Alcoa last year helped to fund various STEM initiatives and a recent grant from the Grable Foundation will provide elementary students, beginning at grade 3, the opportunity to design and build small LEGO robots with motors and sensors using LEGO Education “We Do” construction sets. Along with an emphasis on STEM application skills, literacy and language skills will be developed as part of this elementary initiative.

To support the Norwin School District’s effort to forge ahead to make STEM Education a high priority, we created the position of STEM Education Coordinator, placed emphasis on integrating K-12 STEM curriculum, encouraged more business-education partnerships and senior internships with local businesses, and enhanced our new School Wires website to have its own STEM Education page as a resource for parents and students.

If our students are going to be productive, responsible, and contributing members in a knowledge-based and technological-based global economy, we believe there isn’t anything more important than to expand K-12 learning opportunities for all students and to create a greater awareness of STEM Education as part of our own professional learning community and others. Also, sharing best practices relative to STEM is a great way to learn what others are doing throughout the region.

Therefore, the administration decided to sponsor a STEM Summit for our school community and what was once a merely concept has developed into a rather large undertaking which took on a life of its own. I can’t thank enough Dr. Tracy McNelly, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education, and the Steering Committee for their extraordinary hard work, leadership, and unremitting efforts.

Today, we have over 350 participants representing school districts, businesses, and industries across the Pittsburgh region; Excelsa Health as a Gold Sponsor; and other District and business sponsors who have made monetary contributions and/or provided in-kind services to make today a reality.

Our keynote speakers, panelists, and workshop presenters promise to energize you and invigorate us to respond further to the national call of action to advance the cause of STEM Education and increase America's chances to gain a strong, competitive edge on the international stage.

Some of you may be aware that I serve on the Executive Committee of the Western Pennsylvania Forum for School Superintendents, which is under the sponsorship of the University of Pittsburgh. Our recent planning for professional development activities has focused on transforming public education with an emphasis on high school reform so that graduates are uniquely prepared for the high-demand occupations of the future in all STEM fields.

During the November conference, there were presentations and several workshops which offered a clear focus on the state of America and what we need to do as a country to remain competitive in the global economy. A general assembly presentation and a workshop about a non-traditional high school with flexible scheduling, high-tech curriculum and pathways to STEM fields drew my interest immediately. The school offers a project-based learning environment where students are exposed to the kinds of designs and implementation practices that engineers and scientists use regularly.

**The school of which I speak is the Downingtown STEM Academy.** It is a story of success. As I listened to Dr. Larry Mussoline, superintendent, and Mr. George Fiore, headmaster, I knew that the Norwin Summit would be enhanced with their participation as keynote speakers.

Dr. Larry Mussoline was superintendent of the Wilson School district from 2005-2009. Prior to that, he served as superintendent of Pine Grove Area School District for seven years and was principal of Central Dauphin High School in Harrisburg for nine years. Following his graduation from Bloomsburg University in 1979, Dr. Mussoline taught social studies in Bishop Hafey High School, Hazelton, PA, and Middletown High School in Middletown, PA.

Dr. Mussoline received his Ph. D. from Penn State University in 1998. He serves as facilitator with the Pennsylvania Department of Education Inspired Leadership Program for superintendent leadership development.

Mr. George Fiore is the Headmaster of the Downingtown STEM Academy, which is one of three high schools in the Downingtown Area School District. The STEM Academy, recently opened in the Fall of 2011, offers a pathways curriculum in specific STEM fields. Mr. Fiore likes to emphasize that his students are engaged in rigorous, challenging academic work that requires the mindset of growth and effort.

Mr. Fiore has served various positions including high school advanced placement social studies teacher, high school dean of students, director of instructional technology, assistant high school principal, and junior high school principal. Mr. Fiore is a graduate of Kutztown University, holds a Master's of Science degree in Classroom Instructional Technology from Wilkes University, and he is currently working towards his doctorate in Educational Leadership from Immaculata University.

Colleagues and friends: Let us give Dr. Mussoline and Mr. Fiore a warm welcome to western Pennsylvania and the Pittsburgh region!