

2020-2021 ANNUAL REPORT

Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit 5
Integrity • Service • Accountability



@iu5edinboro



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Make learning and teaching fun by creating authentic and engaging environments that establish real purpose and meaning for learning.

OUR MISSION & VISION

MISSION: The Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit 5, an educational service agency, enriches the community by creating and implementing quality services to meet the current and emerging needs of all learners through safe and innovative environments.

VISION: Through collaborative leadership, the IU5 engages active learning guided by excellence in service.

WHAT IS AN INTERMEDIATE UNIT?

Intermediate units are entrepreneurial, highly skilled, technology-rich, and agile providers of cost-effective, instructional, and operational services to school districts, charter schools, and over 2,400 non-public and private schools. Additionally, intermediate units are direct providers of quality instruction to over 50,000 Pennsylvania students.

Over the years, intermediate units have responded to a wide array of needs as they developed in schools and communities throughout the state. Today, intermediate units continue to fulfill their mission of service by addressing traditional and emerging needs, serving as essential links for learning in Pennsylvania, and as a liaison between local schools and the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Pennsylvania's 29 intermediate units were established in 1971 by the Pennsylvania General Assembly to operate as regional educational service agencies to provide cost-effective, management-efficient programs to Pennsylvania school districts.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Mary J. Eckart	DIRECTOR, FINANCIAL SERVICES
Christine A. Carucci	DIRECTOR, SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES
Kirk W. Shimshock	DIRECTOR, STATE & FEDERAL PROGRAMS
Lori I. Patton	DIRECTOR, SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT SERVICES
Sally A. Daehnke	DIRECTOR, HUMAN RESOURCES

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Brad Whitman



In 1971, Act 102 was signed into law by the Pennsylvania legislature, creating 29 intermediate units in the Commonwealth. From day one, intermediate units have been assigned to provide the support services necessary to improve the state system of education for children in both public and nonpublic schools. Since this date, school districts in the tri-county region of NWPA have reached out to the Northwestern Tri-County Intermediate Unit to assist them with

their growing responsibilities in providing a quality education for all children.

IU5 primarily serves the 17 public school districts in Crawford, Erie, and Warren Counties. Since 2017, we have been expanding our services outside of the tri-county region as we have several programs that serve 6 and 7 counties each, and one program based here in Edinboro that services students and families in 30 counties across Pennsylvania.

IU5 is proud of the many partnerships we have developed over time with public and nonpublic schools, county agencies, other intermediate units, institutions of higher education, the Pennsylvania Department of Education, other educational organizations, business and industry, as well as many parent groups throughout the region.

Included in this annual report are highlights of the 2020-2021 school year. As we did our best to continue to operate more than 130 programs designed to assist learners of all ages in the tri-county region, our work pivoted to the new look. We served as the middleman for the Department of Education and

the Pennsylvania Department of Health as we worked with the tri-county region to develop continuity of education plans. Since we are funded by federal, state, and local funds through grants, state initiatives, and fees for services, things are always changing here at the IU but COVID-19 certainly introduced flexibility on steroids!

Since March of 2019, one thing has remained the same. We continue to prioritize the needs of our schools as they work to best meet the needs of student learners and provide timely professional development as top priorities in all our work. We are always using data to improve our effectiveness and the efficiency of our efforts. The areas of focus for the 2021-2022 year include:

- Improve and expand the quality of our outreach services to better share and connect resources.
- Positive customer service and timely delivery of quality information.
- Foster relationships with internal and external customers to promote excellence, equity, and opportunities for everyone.
- Cultivate and foster activities to support mental health and wellness awareness while demonstrating visible and proactive actions with internal and external partners.
- Enhance our culture of high expectations within a supportive environment that empowers all learners to take risks and grow in their learning.
- Leverage our many communication pathways to grow the IU culture of trust, respect, and transparency throughout the organization and our service models.
- Utilize our technology resources to support learning, innovation, and creativity to effectively and efficiently grow the IU.
- Develop and implement streamlined processes and procedures to improve effectiveness.
- Serve as a liaison for IU stakeholders between local, state, and federal agencies.
- Encourage the well-being and success of every employee through effective teamwork and communication.



Please visit our Facebook page and our website for further information about IU5 or the state website for information about the 29 intermediate units in PA.

Brad Whitman

Brad Whitman, IU5 Executive Director

Facebook: www.facebook.com/iu5edinboro

IU5 Website: www.iu5.org

PA State Website: www.paiu.org

"Don't limit a child to your own learning, for he was born in another time."

- Rabindranath Tagore

ANNIE SULLIVAN AWARD

Congratulations Shelly Wilmoth!
(Special Education Teacher)



Former IU5 Executive Director, Dr. Dean Maynard, presented the annual Annie Sullivan Award to Autistic Support - Special Education teacher Shelly Wilmoth at the monthly board meeting on Wednesday, August 26, 2020.

"Shelly Wilmoth teaches IU5's Edinboro Community Based Transition Program for students on the Autism spectrum ages 16-21. Her students come from all of our surrounding districts. She has provided them with many valuable opportunities and has gone above and beyond all realistic expectations of a teacher in her position.

Mrs. Wilmoth talked with me about the possibility of her students being hired by Edinboro University's Van Houten Dining Hall and my response to her was, 'Absolutely! Let me know how that goes!' Shortly thereafter, she sent me a text with pictures and the message that several of her students were being hired by the university!

She worked with the students to create video resumes, worked with parents to help their children apply for the positions online, then took students to the university for interviews after practicing with them on their responses. This year she had two students earning weekly paychecks from their daily work in the dining hall and routinely sent photos of new friendships they made with university students. Those friendships led to many other opportunities for those kids outside of the school day.

Over Christmas break this year, Shelly got the heartbreaking news that one of her students, who was not only on the spectrum but also blind, passed away one day before what would have been her 18th birthday. Shelly, though grieving herself, was an absolute rock for her staff, students and families. She provided the picture displays used at the funeral that showed the student enjoying the world around her, making friends, and discovering her love of swimming all through her experiences in Shelly's program. She went out of her way to give another student's family a ride to the funeral (in a blizzard, a considerable distance from the venue, and she drives a Mini Cooper!). When school came back into session, Shelly arranged for The Caring Place to come to her classroom on several occasions to work with students on the grieving process. She said, 'I think it helped staff more than the students.'

When the COVID-19 Pandemic forced everyone to stay home, Shelly became a guru in virtual instruction. She arranged to have her Morning Meeting whole-group lesson continue with all support staff invited as they were able to attend. She also met with each student individually for 30 minutes every day and planned individual lessons that were of interest to each. I can only imagine the time she must have spent planning such individualized lessons while still maintaining special education timelines for all of the paperwork required, but I know it was well beyond her traditional daily and weekly hours.

Shelly is so deserving of the Annie Sullivan Award as she is an amazing advocate and teacher for her students."

- IU5 Supervisor



UNITED WAY

Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit 5 is proud to run a local United Way annual campaign in support of crushing poverty in our community. Last year, because of the caring spirit of our employees, we raised \$525 to help children and families most in need in our community.

We are excited about the opportunity we have in front of us to do even more for the community in which we live and work this year.

When you #LIVEUNITED, you join thousands of others who want to help students succeed and families thrive. United Way believes that everyone deserves a good education that leads to a stable job, financial stability, and healthy life. It is the key to ending poverty.

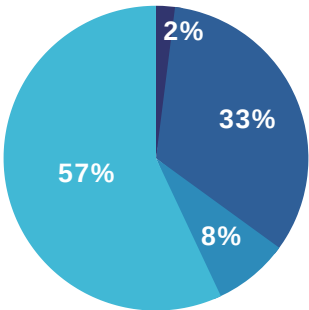
It takes an entire community to make a difference and we need you – can we count on you to LIVE UNITED?

FISCAL DATA

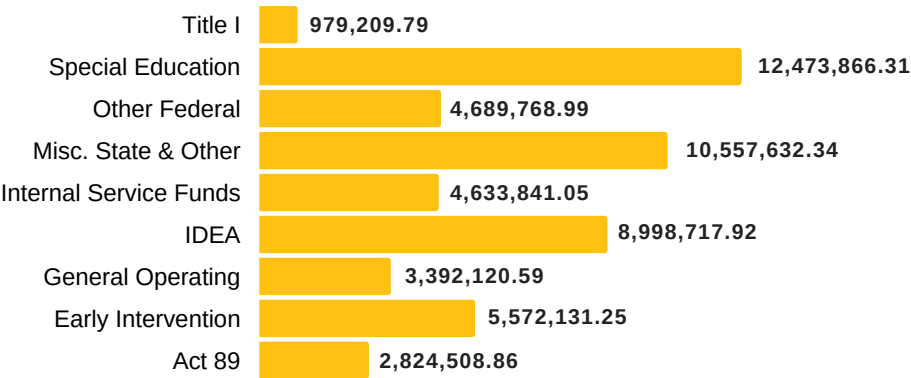
IU5 revenue is generated from contracts for services, state and federal grants, subsidies, and contracts from the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

REVENUES

- District Contributions: (2%) \$1,012,662.97
- Federal: (33%) \$19,555,182.27
- Internal Service Funds: (8%) \$4,859,772.84
- State & Other Contributions: (57%) \$33,083,734.31



EXPENDITURES



HUMAN RESOURCES

The 2020-2021 school year proved to be quite the challenge for all, including the HR department. Fortunately, the team was able to leverage new technologies and teamwork in order to provide quality and timely service to our employees and the districts we serve.

Through the use of Microsoft Teams, interviews were able to be conducted virtually. This new virtual interview process proved to be much smoother—applicants only needed to commit a small amount of time as travel wasn't required and multiple staff conducting interviews could conduct them from anywhere. This meant that coordination of when staff would be in the office wasn't needed. This new method proved to be an excellent use of everyone's time and helped to streamline the process. This is a method that we will continue to use ongoing.

The HR department lost a team member to one of our districts early in the school year. The team took some time to evaluate the department needs to determine if another staff member was needed and, if so, what that position looked like. A current member of the team was promoted to the vacated role and after about 6 months of evaluating the workload, it was determined to hire a replacement in an administrative capacity. The department welcomed a transfer from another department into the team in March and things aligned nicely, easing up the workload from the existing staff.

The ever-changing world of COVID introduced a lot of added challenges. There were some unfortunate furloughs that occurred due to classroom closures. All furloughed staff were able to be recalled mid-January at the latest as classrooms were able to reopen. In addition to the furloughs, there were many absences due to quarantine and isolation requirements and recruiting for substitutes was crucial. With a regional sub shortage as well as a lack of individuals looking for work, it was a struggle to find and keep people interested in providing substitute services.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Hire Month	Number of Hires
July 2020	0
Aug 2020	10
Sept 2020	6
Oct 2020	3
Nov 2020	2
Dec 2020	0
Jan 2021	3
Feb 2021	2
Mar 2021	6
April 2021	5
May 2021	1
June 2021	0

COVID also added a new role for the department of providing education and guidance to employees on the pandemic as well as quarantining and/or isolating staff when needed to comply with department of health guidelines.

During the school year, the department hired thirty-eight (38) regular employees, across all departments. Shown to the left is the breakdown by month for the regular employee hires for the school year.

Additionally, the department hired 21 new substitute teachers/aides, 36 new contracted staff members, received 1,465 resumes, handled 51 employee leave requests, 16 employee retirements, 21 work injuries, 32 student placements, and 221 reported COVID-related illnesses of employees or their family members.



SAFE2SAY SOMETHING

In 2018, the General Assembly passed Act 44, which mandated the Office of Attorney General to establish the "Safe2Say Something" (S2SS) anonymous reporting system and required every Pennsylvania school entity to participate in the program by January 14, 2019.

S2SS is a life-saving and life-changing school safety program that teaches students, educators, and administrators how:

- to recognize the signs and signals of individuals who may be at risk of hurting themselves or others, and
- to anonymously report this information through the S2SS app, website, or 24/7 Crisis Center Hotline.


Since the launch of the program, the tip line has received 23,494 tips. This number excludes any false reports received.

The majority of tips received by Safe2Say have not been about students making violent threats to their school or to their classmates—instead, they have been focused on students struggling with mental health issues.

SUBMIT YOUR TIP ANONYMOUSLY


 MOBILE APP


1-844-5-SAYNOW


SAYSOMETHING.NET

SAFE2SAY SOMETHING

The chart below represents a breakdown of reports by type, received by IU5, and includes the top 10 categories of tips received by the Safe2Say Something Program since the launch.

Northwest Tri-County IU5

EVENT TYPES	TOTAL
Suicide/Suicide Ideation	27
Bullying/Cyber Bullying	25
Smoking (Tobacco, E-Cig, Vape) in School	22
Drug Distribution/Possession	19
Cutting/Self-Harm	16
Depression/Anxiety	13
General Student Concern	10
Harassment/Intimidation	8
Inappropriate Language/Behavior/Gesture	8
Sexual Assault/Rape	7

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT SERVICES

Federal & State Programs

- Title I Public Consortium consisted of one school district and one charter school serving more than 1,300 students.
- The Title I Nonpublic Consortium consists of seven school districts and serving approximately 145 students.
- Title I Neglected and Delinquent Consortium served four local institutions with approximately 117 students.
- The Upward Bound Math and Science Program served 45 students from Corry, Erie, and Union City high schools. Students participated in a hybrid program this year for STEM career and college awareness activities. Fifteen students participated in a six-week hybrid Academic Institute at Penn State Behrend. One student received a full academic scholarship to Penn State Behrend where he will major in computer engineering. Of the graduating seniors, 82% are moving on to postsecondary education.



- The IU's Act 89 program provided the following services to children in nonpublic schools in our local area: remedial reading and mathematics to more than 840 students, enrichment services to over 120 students, guidance counseling services to more than 700 students, and speech services to over 1,700 students.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT SERVICES

Federal & State Programs

- The IU5 English Language Development Program employed 8 ESL teachers who assisted 88 English learners across 12 local school districts and one residential site with virtual and face-to-face instruction. As a regional point of contact, IU5 also hosted a quarterly virtual forum for all district coordinators, disseminating essential information and facilitating networks to build capacity with student services.
- The Summer Foods program served a total of 109,009 breakfasts, lunches, and snacks in Crawford and Erie Counties.
- Migrant Program: 580 migrant students were in Region 4 (30 counties) as of July 26, 2021. The Lake Erie Summer Program served 29 migrant students and 22 Erie City SD EL/Refugee children. Adams County Summer School of Excellence will serve approximately 170 students. Students outside Erie and Adams counties received remote programming by PA-certified teachers and in-home instruction by MEP staff.



SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT SERVICES

Federal & State Programs

- The Talent Search program served 454 students in grades 6-12 from the Erie and Union City Area School Districts and the Charter School of Excellence. Students received STEM college and career readiness activities in a hybrid program. High School students participated in a one-week summer program in collaboration with Penn State Behrend, where students participated in Math, Science, English, and STEM classes. Middle school students participated in a 3-day summer program conducted by TS staff where students participated in campus visits, STEM activities, and team-building events.
- Regional Homeless Initiative – Assisted approximately 3,000 students in region 5.
- The IU5 Adult Education and Career Readiness Program provided training in basic skills such as reading, math, social studies, and science, as well as workforce readiness skills, to 287 students residing in Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest, Venango, and Warren Counties. Among those were 28 new Americans working on basic language skills in order to transition into postsecondary education or the workforce. Twenty-three students earned their Commonwealth Secondary School Diploma. More than half of all students made educational skills gains, had employment outcomes, and/or entered postsecondary education or training.



SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT SERVICES

Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment



- More than 1,800 of the region's teachers from 15 school districts and charter schools responded to the spring 2021 Web-based staff development needs assessment.
- IU5 offered 17 sessions to more than 200 educators representing 19 local school districts and charter schools who attended Regional Common In-service Day on October 12, 2020.
- 321 IU staff development programs provided more than 5,800 Act 48 hours to more than 1,000 different educators.
- 5 IU staff development programs provided more than 200 paraeducator hours to 39 different educators.
- The IU uploaded more than 5,000 Act 48 hours to more than 400 individuals across the state for conferences and trainings.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT SERVICES

Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment

- The IU uploaded 345 PIL credits (each worth 30 hours) to 185 individuals across the state for the PA Inspired Leadership Program for Region 8.
- SIS-CIA staff provided 263 trainings, meetings, and consultations with 152 (58%) being customized for a district or charter school.
- SIS-CIA staff provided 1,374.5 hours of Continuity of Education Services to our LEAs.
- SIS-CIA staff tailored Social Emotional Learning (SEL) support to our LEAs to meet the needs of the schools during the Pandemic this year, by creating a six-part series for school administrators and staff.
- Training and Consultation staff provided 358 trainings, meetings, and consultations with 180 (50%) being customized for a district or charter school.
- In partnership with Union City Area School District, Girard School District, and Fairview School District, IU5's eMentoring pilot virtually connected seven students with professionals in a career field of interest. The connections consisted of three, one-hour synchronous sessions during which they discussed career options, employability skills, and job expectations while documenting reflections in their digital portfolio. This has led to a Girard School District student being accepted into the Electrician Union—the only student selected right out of high school.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

School Based Access Program (SBAP)

The School Based Access Program (SBAP) processed logs that equated to over 1,200 hours of the IU5's itinerant staff's direct services to students, just for the first half of the year!

In total, our itinerant staff supports close to 2,000 students annually. During the 2019-2020 school year, IU5 staff submitted claims accruing \$1,535,012 reimbursement through the school-based access program. These funds support districts to help defray the cost of these services.



SPECIAL EDUCATION

Early Intervention (EI)



The Early Intervention (EI) department provides services to students ages three to the age of beginners that have developmental delays or disabilities. There are over 70 IU5 employees who work in the EI program, and they travel to over 200 sites across the region. EI staff completed close to 600 evaluations on students and 1,176 students were supported with Early Intervention services from July 2020 through June 2021.

Although other EI programs across our state saw a decrease during the year due to complexities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the data from the IU5 EI program maintained the student aggregate.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Various Support Services

IU5 also provides Hearing and Vision support to children from birth to the age of 3 (B-3) via contracts with Crawford, Erie, and Warren counties. There are four IU5 staff that provide B-3 services to children in various settings.

There are 18 different areas IU5 special education staff support throughout Northwestern PA.

These include:

1. Assistive Technology
2. Autistic Support
3. Behavior Intervention
4. Blind/Vision Support
5. Deaf/Hard of Hearing Support
6. Education Interpreter Support
7. Emotional Support
8. Equitable Participation
9. Life Skills Support
10. Multiple Disability Support
11. Occupational Therapy
12. Orientation and Mobility Support
13. Personal Care Assistance
14. Physical Therapy
15. Psychological Support
16. Special Education services
17. Speech and Language Support
18. Transportation coordination



SPECIAL EDUCATION

Various Support Services

The Education Leading to Employment and Career Training (ELECT)—a Pennsylvania Department of Education initiative funded by the Department of Human Services—enables school districts and intermediate units to help pregnant and parenting teens earn a diploma or high school equivalency (HSE) certificate, become better parents, and make the transition to employment, career training or higher education. The IU5 ELECT Program supports students in Crawford, Erie, Warren, Forest, Clarion, and Venango counties and served over 70 students throughout the last program year.

Providing Mental Health Supports is the newest and fastest-growing area in the Special Education Department. Through a long-standing contract with the Erie County DOH, IU5 provides supports to the 20+ school district liaisons who work in the Student Assistance Program (SAP) and conducts SAP new team member training to school district staff annually. In the past three years, over 260 participants have attended and completed SAP trainings.

This past year, two new employees were hired because of the acquisition of a PCCD (PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency) grant. This two-year grant funds all services to our member school districts and funds two full-time licensed social workers whose focus is on efforts to prevent mental health needs from impeding student learning. Supports offered through the program include professional development for all levels of school employees, consultation on topics of student trends, assistance with connecting families to supportive services. We reference best practice models in the areas of crisis response, data analysis, and collection to address student social-emotional needs.

INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS

Innovative Technology Solutions (ITS) experienced an unprecedented year with the sudden shift to virtual learning. ITS worked closely with all IU staff, districts, and parents to ensure learning could continue during the pandemic. The need to provide access to and support of Zoom, Teams, and Google Meet was challenge enough. The greater obstacle was utilizing these tools for instruction. The collaboration across the IU and districts made it possible for instruction and learning to continue.

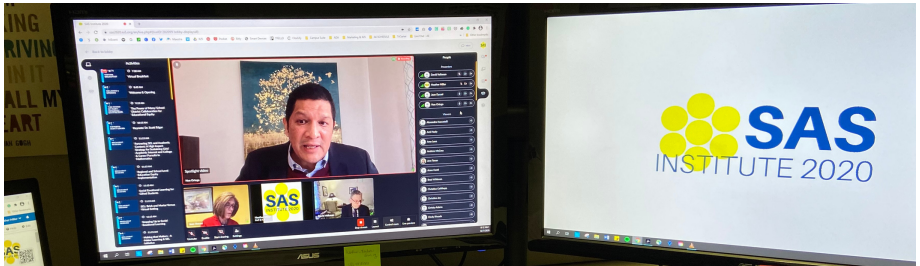
The pandemic identified that communications between IU staff and the customers we serve are critical. Prior to the pandemic, not all IU staff had voice services. As a result of the pandemic, ITS and the IU evaluated the best way to provide voice services across the IU. In the end, Microsoft Teams voice was implemented and continues to be deployed to all IU employees.

The Print Shop services were extensively utilized to provide packets and other learning materials to students. The Print Shop functioned every day to meet the needs of the IU and districts

ITS manages and maintains the social media and web presence of the Intermediate Unit. Our many communication platforms were used to share information and keep our customers informed.

ITS application developers were busy addressing systems like transportation, summer foods, Elect, and our electronic forms system. Their work addresses the unique requirements the IU encounters that cannot be solved with commercial software.

INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS



The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) SAS Institute switched to a fully virtual event. ITS played a critical role in establishing and managing the virtual event platform. ITS and other IU staff, PDE, and others worked with presenters and attendees to deliver a successful event. We continue to work with PDE to deliver the next SAS Institute in the new normal.

ITS staff worked diligently to support the technology needs of IU staff through their daily efforts to fix equipment, monitor cyber security, manage devices and applications, and administer on-premise and cloud-based solutions.



Follow Us
@iu5edinboro





NORTHWEST TRI-COUNTY IU5

252 Waterford St. Edinboro, PA 16412

It is the policy of the Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit not to discriminate on the basis of age, religion, sex, race, color, national origin, ancestry, disability, or non-job related disability (including sexual harassment, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression), in the admission or access to, or in the provision of services, programs, or employment in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 1604 of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 11246 and 11375, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the Civil Rights Act of 1991, and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act.

For information relevant to this policy statement, contact Christine Carucci, 504 Coordinator and ADA Coordinator, or Sally Daehnke, Title IX Coordinator.