

Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit Board Agenda
Wednesday, March 23, 2022
Generated by Raina George

1. Meeting Opening:

A. Call Board Meeting to Order:

The Board meeting of the Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit Board was called to order by Dr. Andrew Pushchak, President, at 5:45 p.m.

Dr. Pushchak reported that the board met in Executive Session prior to the board meeting to discuss a future Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and a Memorandum of Understanding with the PSEA Aides Education Support Professionals which is on the agenda for board approval.

B Roll Call:

Present were: Dr. Jane Blystone (NE); Jeff Brooks (PC); Dr. Doris Gernovich (CR); Dorothy Luckock (CN); Paul Mangione (WC); Jeremy Markham (FLB); Joseph Meka (GR); Bryan Miller (CC); Fran New (FV); Rita Nicolussi (IR); Brad Pattullo (GM); Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB); Leslie Soltis (NW); George Trauner (UC) Gary Winschel (MC); David Vrenna (HC)

Absent were Gwendolyn Cooley (EC)

Present from the Intermediate Unit Leadership Team: Brad Whitman, Executive Director; Christy Carucci, Sally Daehnke, Mary Eckart, Vince Humes, Lori Patton, Kirk Shimshock

Also present: Jill Lewis; Tracey Moore; Karen Renick; Meghan Stefanucci; Brandie Stevens; Yvonne Teed; William Wiedenheft

C. Moment of Silence: Dr. Pushchak asked those in attendance to stand for a moment of silence.

D. Pledge to the Flag: Dr. Pushchak led everyone present in the Pledge to the Flag.

E. Recognition of PSEA: Dr. Pushchak recognized all PSEA Representatives.

F. Recognition of Visitors: Dr. Pushchak welcomed all visitors in attendance.

2. Reports:

A. Executive Director (Mr. Brad Whitman):

IU5

Here is the link for the March Board Presentation video:

<https://vimeo.com/688119953/665ab8ae41>

ITS

The IU E-Rate consortium had 16 participants this year (1 institution, 2 CTC, 11 school districts, 1 private school and the Intermediate Unit).

The total for all services requested was \$427,310.00. Savings to districts as a result of E-Rate: \$311,426.00 (72.88%).

HR

Started recruiting for the various summer programs so across the board we have 35-posted positions consisting of 68 openings to fill currently

Special Education

From beginning of September to mid-March:

- There have been 1240 instances of absences for the special education teacher, aide, and interpreter groups.
- 129 instances were covered internally.
- 104 instances were covered by supervisors. About 9% of all absences were covered by an administrator.

Federal and State Programs

Migrant afterschool program in Erie visited the Sugar Shack to see how maple syrup is made. 25 middle and elementary school students attend each Wednesday.

Migrant formed a new partnership with Westminster College in New Wilmington, PA. Four Migrant Ed students from Lawrence County go each Thursday to campus for homework help and fun activities in Reading, Math, and Science.

35 Migrant students from Franklin, Adams, and York Counties went to Messiah University's ESTEAM day on March 19th.

School Improvement Services (SIS)

15 administrators from across the State will be receiving 25 Act 45 hours this week for the completion of assignments for the SAS Institute Act 45 Program led by IU5's SIS/CIA Department & PDE. All administrators presented their culminating projects to IU5 & PDE as their final assignment for the program this past week.

State

HB2022

A bill amending the Public School Code to allow a public school to place a behavioral health representative in a school who may communicate and interact with students to provide social and mental health support assistance.

Specially, my bill will allow a behavioral health representative, stationed in a school under the supervision of a superintendent or other chief administrative officer or their designee, to use evidence-based programs for students that provide:

- crisis management;
- suicide prevention strategies; or
- skills to communicate with peers and adult, manage emotions, setting goals, establishing and maintaining positive relationships, making responsible decisions that support success in school and life;
- a positive school climate.
-

HB2023

Legislation that will require the PA Department of Education (PDE) to develop a model curriculum to assist school entities in providing behavioral health education.

As we are all well aware, the lack of awareness and identification of behavioral health issues in our schools is not good for Pennsylvania students. Further, many of our students battle mental or behavioral health issues yet lack an environment in which to cope or know who or where to turn to when in need. Due to lack of understanding, much of our society continues to stigmatize behavioral health issues, mainly due to the shortage of educational materials on the topic.

For these reasons, I plan to introduce legislation to address these persistent problems. As the General Assembly has done with other urgent subjects—such as child exploitation awareness—this legislation requires the PA Department of Education, in consultation with at least one organization addressing behavioral health, to develop model behavioral health curriculum to be made available for use by school entities.

Additionally, each school entity may provide four hours of training on behavioral health awareness to professional educators. The four hours of training may be applied to a professional educator's continuing professional education requirements.

HB2024

As we continue assessing the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on our students, the adverse impacts on student mental health has taken an untold toll on all students across the Commonwealth. Providing for student mental health was important pre-pandemic and is paramount as our students navigate school, post-pandemic. To address this critical aspect of education, we need to assure our schools are equipped to handle the mental health needs of our students.

This bill will commission a Mental Health Instruction Study to determine the extent to which schools are currently providing mental health instruction in their curriculum. Data collected from this study will serve as the basis for recommendations for the improvement of mental health instruction in our Commonwealth's schools, including recommending future legislation.

Ed Budget Hearings

- Two budget hearings were held last week
- House Ed Appropriations Budget Hearing
 - March 7 was PDE - 2 parts: <http://www.pahousegop.com/budgethearings>
 - Key takeaways: <http://www.pahousegop.com/News/26440/Latest-News/Key-Takeaways-from-House-Appropriations-Hearings>
- Senate Ed Appropriations Budget Hearing: (info and recordings)
- <https://www.pasenategop.com/blog/key-points-from-senate-budget-hearings-thursday-march-10/>

Public hearing on teacher shortage within the Commonwealth

- <https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/CMS/ArchiveDetails.cfm?SessYear=2021&MeetingId=2153&Code=-1&Chamber=H>

Staffing shortage, COVID-19, politics take toll on Pennsylvania teachers

- Although buildings are currently open, a national staffing crisis has presented new challenges. For years, Pennsylvania has seen a decline in graduates entering the education field. Now, some teachers are considering leaving the profession sooner than they initially planned. [*Pennsylvania Capital-Star*](#), March 21, 2022

Pennsylvania approves stronger charter school regulations

- The state's Independent Regulatory Review Commission on Monday voted 3-2 along party lines to support regulations proposed by the Democratic Wolf administration meant to stop charter schools from making discriminatory admissions decisions. [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette/Associated Press](#), March 21, 2022

Federal

TNTP Releases Resource for Districts on Addressing Teacher Shortages

The guide "[Addressing Teacher Shortages: Practical Ideas for the Pandemic and Beyond](#)" was designed to help district leaders understand and respond to the specific staffing challenges they're facing, based on best practices gathered from working with hundreds of school systems over almost 25 years. It's focused on time-tested strategies that will make an immediate impact: ideas for covering absences, filling existing vacancies, and addressing chronic shortages exacerbated by the pandemic in key subject areas and in schools serving historically marginalized communities.

Appropriations (Finally)

This week, Congress passed a FY22 spending package totaling \$1.5 trillion. Notably absent in the bill is an extension for the school nutrition waivers, meaning the current waivers will expire on June 30. Additionally, the IDEA funding level is a cut in comparison to current ARP levels (\$2 b below current ARP levels). Title I is funded at \$17.5 b (\$1 b increase over FY21, but below the \$20 b increase proposed by the President and the House, and the \$16.5 b increase in the Senate). Read our full breakdown of the bill [here](#) and see AASA's statement [here](#).

The FY 22 appropriations omnibus bill is set. Recall that an omnibus appropriations bill combines all 12 individual appropriations bills into one giant behemoth, clocking in at just over \$1.5 trillion to fund the entire federal government. The House passed the omnibus Wednesday night. The Senate passed the omnibus Thursday night. The only real controversy in the bill was about including roughly \$15B for the federal government to continue its vaccination and other efforts to combat COVID. Democratic infighting eventually killed this provision. The omnibus also includes nearly \$14B to respond to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Overall, Democrats will tout some increases to domestic spending/ Republicans will highlight the \$782 billion for defense spending, a 6% increase over current spending levels. But what about education funding? We detail it below, but the high-level summary is that there are modest to incremental increases in various programs, but none of the big plus ups that President Biden called for in his budget request like an additional \$20 billion for Title I and \$2.5 billion for IDEA. Here are some specifics:

- \$17.5 billion for Title I, an increase of \$1 billion above FY21; the largest increase in more than a decade.
- \$14.5 billion for IDEA, an increase of \$448 million above FY21, which includes \$13.3 billion for Part B Grants to States;
- \$831 million for Title III, an increase of \$34 million;
- \$2.2 billion for Title II-A, an increase of \$27 million;
- \$1.3 billion for Title IV-A, an increase of \$60 million;
- Funding for SEL and "whole child" initiatives, including:
- \$11 billion for Head Start, an increase of \$288.7 million.

For more details on education and the omnibus, you can read the House Appropriations summary [here](#).

National News: Understaffing leaves after-school programs with unmet demand

The return to classrooms for the nation's schoolchildren has not meant a return to work for many of their parents who, with workdays that outlast school days, are finding crucial after-school programs in short supply. School-based providers list difficulties hiring and retaining staff as the biggest reasons they have not fully rebounded from pandemic shutdowns and they say they are as frustrated as the parents they are turning away. [Associated Press](#), March 21, 2022

National News: Fewer people are getting teacher degrees. Prep programs sound the alarm

As teacher dissatisfaction rates rise and concerns about teacher shortages intensify, colleges of education are sounding the alarm: Enrollment has been steadily declining for the past decade, and the pandemic has likely made things worse. The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education will release its second comprehensive report of the state of teacher preparation on Tuesday afternoon. [Education Week](#), March 22, 2022 (Subscription may be required.)

Statistics

61% - The percentage of public schools that reported having at least one vacancy, which specifically identified the COVID-19 pandemic as a cause of increased teaching and nonteaching staff vacancies.

Mental Health – Pennsylvania has 422-child psychiatrists for 2.7 million kids

B. Solicitor (Mr. George Joseph): Attorney Joseph reported he reviewed 9A-C on the agenda for approval, Provider Resource Lease is the substitute office location due to repairs, reviewed a Mercyhurst University agreement and an Internship Agreement with Edinboro University and Northwestern School District that both needed revisions and will be on the agenda at a future meeting, and working on an English Language Development (ELD) agreement with Erie RISE Charter School. Reviewed Policy 249: Bullying/Cyberbullying that needs reviewed every 3 years and reviewed Policies 248 and 348 that are no longer needed and can be retired.

C. Executive Committee (Dr. Andrew Pushchak): Dr. Pushchak reported that the Executive Committee met on March 16, 2022, at 11:00 a.m. via zoom to review the Board Agenda. Present were Dr. Doris Gernovich, Mr. Paul Mangione, and Dr. Andrew Pushchak.

D. Budget & Audit Committee (Mr. Paul Mangione): Mr. Paul Mangione, Chairperson, reported that the Budget & Audit Committee met on March 23, 2022, at 5:15 p.m. Mr. Mangione reported that the committee reviewed the Ford Office Technologies agreement and commended the administration for saving money with this agreement, and nothing will be coming out of committee.

E. Personnel Committee (Dr. Doris Gernovich): Dr. Doris Gernovich, reported that the Personnel Committee met on March 23, 2022, at 5:15 p.m. Dr. Gernovich reported that there are several items on the agenda for approval, and nothing coming out of committee.

F. Policy Development Committee (Mrs. Leslie Soltis): Mrs. Soltis, reported that the Policy Development Committee met on March 23, 2022 at 5:15 p.m. A discussion by the Policy Development Committee endorsed Policy 249 First Reading and Policies 248 and 348 for repeal as presented.

3. General Resolution:

Be it resolved, that the Northwest Tri-County Board of Directors approves and adopts the following items that are included in the agenda of this meeting and incorporated herein by reference thereto with the same force and as though separate resolutions on each item were considered and adopted. Items on the Agenda have been reviewed by the solicitor and are recommended by the administration.

It was moved by Mr. Trauner and seconded by Mr. Miller to approve the General Resolution as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

4. Minutes:

It was moved by Mrs. Luckock and seconded by Mrs. New to approve the Minutes from February 23, 2022, IU Board of Directors Meeting as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

5. Financial Items (Mr. Paul Mangione):

It was moved by Mr. Mangione and seconded by Mr. Brooks to approve the Financial Items 5A-5G as presented.

- A. Investment Report for February 28, 2022
- B. Treasurer's Report for February 28, 2022
- C. February 2022 Monthly Revenue Board Report
- D. February 2022 Monthly Expense Board Report
- E. 2021-2022 Budget Revisions & Budgetary Transfers
- F. Approval of Bills
- G. PNC Easy Procure Payments as of February 25, 2022

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) yes; Jeff Brooks (PC) yes; Jeremy Markham (FL) yes; Gwendolyn Cooley (EC) absent; Dr. Doris Gernovich (CR) yes; Dorothy Luckock (CN) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) yes; Bryan Miller (CC) yes; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Fran New (FV) yes; Rita Nicolussi (IR) yes; Brad Pattullo (GM) yes; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; Leslie Soltis (NW) yes; George Trauner (UC) abstain Voucher #1005329; David Vrenna (HC) yes; Gary Winschel (MC) yes

6. Personnel Items (Dr. Doris Gernovich):

It was moved by Dr. Gernovich and seconded by Dr. Blystone to approve the Personnel Items 6A-6I as presented.

- A. ****Resignations
- B. Retirements
- C. Leaves
- D. Job Descriptions
- E. ****Substitute List
- F. ****Employment of Personnel
- G. Furlough
- H. Recall from Furlough

I. Contracted Rates

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) yes; Jeff Brooks (PC) yes; Jeremy Markham (FL) yes; Gwendolyn Cooley (EC) absent; Dr. Doris Gernovich (CR) yes; Dorothy Luckock (CN) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) yes; Bryan Miller (CC) yes; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Fran New (FV) yes; Rita Nicolussi (IR) yes; Brad Pattullo (GM) yes; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; Leslie Soltis (NW) yes; George Trauner (UC) yes; David Vrenna (HC) yes; Gary Winschel (MC) yes

7. Contracted Payroll:

It was moved by Mr. Trauner and seconded by Dr. Gernovich to approve Contracted Payroll 7A-7C as presented.

A. Ann Metzger

B. Leyre Salaza

C. Denise Weigert

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) yes; Jeff Brooks (PC) yes; Jeremy Markham (FL) yes; Gwendolyn Cooley (EC) absent; Dr. Doris Gernovich (CR) yes; Dorothy Luckock (CN) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) yes; Bryan Miller (CC) yes; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Fran New (FV) yes; Rita Nicolussi (IR) yes; Brad Pattullo (GM) yes; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; Leslie Soltis (NW) yes; George Trauner (UC) yes; David Vrenna (HC) yes; Gary Winschel (MC) yes

8. Transportation Items:

It was moved by Mr. Pattullo and seconded by Mr. Brooks to approve Transportation Item 8A as presented.

A. 2021-22 Special Needs Drivers

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) yes; Jeff Brooks (PC) yes; Jeremy Markham (FL) yes; Gwendolyn Cooley (EC) absent; Dr. Doris Gernovich (CR) yes; Dorothy Luckock (CN) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) yes; Bryan Miller (CC) yes; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Fran New (FV) yes; Rita Nicolussi (IR) yes; Brad Pattullo (GM) yes; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; Leslie Soltis (NW) yes; George Trauner (UC) yes; David Vrenna (HC) yes; Gary Winschel (MC) yes

9. Agreements/Memorandum of Understanding:

Mr. George Trauner asked that agenda item 9D be voted as a separate item.

It was moved by Dr. Gernovich and seconded by Mr. Brooks to approve the Agreements/Memorandum of Understanding 9A-C and 9E as presented.

A. Check & Connect Train the Trainer Agreement

B. Ford Office Technologies

C. Provider Resources, Inc Lease Agreement

E. Summer Food Agreement

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) yes; Jeff Brooks (PC) yes; Jeremy Markham (FL) yes; Gwendolyn Cooley (EC) absent; Dr. Doris Gernovich (CR) yes; Dorothy Luckock (CN) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) yes; Bryan Miller (CC) yes; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Fran New (FV) yes; Rita Nicolussi (IR) yes; Brad Pattullo (GM) yes; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; Leslie Soltis (NW) yes; George Trauner (UC) yes; David Vrenna (HC) yes; Gary Winschel (MC) yes

It was moved by Mr. Brooks and seconded by Mrs. New to approve the Agreements/Memorandum of Understanding 9D as presented.

D. PSEA Aides Education Support Professionals MOU

Motion carried 13-3 by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) no; Jeff Brooks (PC) yes; Jeremy Markham (FL) yes; Gwendolyn Cooley (EC) absent; Dr. Doris Gernovich (CR) yes; Dorothy Luckock (CN) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) yes; Bryan Miller (CC) yes; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Fran New (FV) yes; Rita Nicolussi (IR) yes; Brad Pattullo (GM) yes; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; Leslie Soltis (NW) no; George Trauner (UC) no; David Vrenna (HC) yes; Gary Winschel (MC) yes

10. Policies - First Reading and Repeal (Mrs. Leslie Soltis):

It was moved by Mrs. Soltis and seconded by Mrs. New to approve the First Reading and Repeal 10A-B as presented.

A. First Reading - Section 200 Pupils - Policy 249: Bullying/Cyberbullying

B. Repeal Policies 248: Unlawful Harassment and 348: Unlawful Harassment and Workplace Violence

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) yes; Jeff Brooks (PC) yes; Jeremy Markham (FL) yes; Gwendolyn Cooley (EC) absent; Dr. Doris Gernovich (CR) yes; Dorothy Luckock (CN) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) yes; Bryan Miller

(CC) yes; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Fran New (FV) yes; Rita Nicolussi (IR) yes; Brad Pattullo (GM) yes; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; Leslie Soltis (NW) yes; George Trauner (UC) yes; David Vrenna (HC) yes; Gary Winschel (MC) yes

11. Request to Travel:

It was moved by Mr. Trauner and seconded by Mr. Brooks to approve the Request to Travel 11A-B as presented.

A. 2022 At Risk Youth National Forum - Jessica Glenn, Patty Peterson, Jennifer Humes

B. Learning Impact Conference - Jessica Polivka

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) yes; Jeff Brooks (PC) yes; Jeremy Markham (FL) yes; Gwendolyn Cooley (EC) absent; Dr. Doris Gernovich (CR) yes; Dorothy Luckock (CN) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) yes; Bryan Miller (CC) yes; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Fran New (FV) yes; Rita Nicolussi (IR) yes; Brad Pattullo (GM) yes; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; Leslie Soltis (NW) yes; George Trauner (UC) yes; David Vrenna (HC) yes; Gary Winschel (MC) yes

12. Other Business:

Dr. Pushchak informed everyone the next Board meeting will be held on April 27, 2022.

13. Adjournment:

It was moved by Dr. Blystone and seconded by Mr. Brooks to adjourn the Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit Board of Directors at 6:05 p.m.

Raina George, Board Secretary