

Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit 5 Board Meeting
Wednesday, October 23, 2024
Generated by Raina George

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 the Board of Directors met in Executive Session prior to the meeting to discuss filling an Administrative position.

B. Roll Call:

Present were: Dr. Jane Blystone (NE); Kristy Bolte (NW); Robert Johnston (PC); Kellie Lichtinger (FLB); Dorothy Luckock (CN); Paul Mangione (WC); Fran New (FV); Rita Nicolussi (IR); Brad Pattullo (GM); Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB); Tammy Silvis (CC); David Vrenna (HC); Gary Winschel (MC)

Absent were: Gwendolyn Cooley (EC); Amanda Cox (CR); Joseph Meka (GR); George Trauner (UC)

Present from the Intermediate Unit Leadership Team: Brad Whitman, Executive Director; Sally Daehnke; Mary Eckart; Amanda Porter; Kirk Shimshock; Brandie Stevens; Yvonne Teed

Also present: Solicitor Timothy Wachter; Andrew Baker; Judy Baker; Joe Drumm; Shawn Ford; Jill Lewis; Donette Porter; Michelle Teft

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

Early Intervention

- El Data
 - Year to Date Referrals as of 10/14/24= 289

Federal and State Programs

- Angel Tree will be offered for all employees to support students in need over the holidays.
- The Title I, Part D Neglected and Delinquent Symposium took place Oct. 9-11. The symposium had their largest participation with over 250 attendees.
- Registration is now open for the Improving Schools Performance Conference in Pittsburgh which runs through January 27-29, 2025. Registration is found at the PAFPC.org website.

Financial Services

- Finance is working on the Annual Financial Report, 23-24 Audit and the 25-26 Budget Book.

Human Resources

- HR has been working hard to help transition substitutes to ESS who will start doing assignments as of 10/28.

Innovative Technology Solutions

- Communications installed a new front door safety release override button and external badge readers, enhancing physical security and access control.
- Prepared iPads for digital testing at Bethesda Lutheran Services to support upcoming PSSA, CDT, Keystone, and Firefly assessments.
- Two new employees joined the ITS team, ensuring we maintain operational efficiency.
- Marketing launched a successful social media campaign for the IU5 PoweredOn LMS, with 75 out of 106 visitors signing up, further expanding our reach in educational technology solutions.

- The PrintShop created custom problem-solving books for AT students, demonstrating a commitment to student-centered learning materials.

School Improvement Services

- This fall's Regional Common In-Service took place on October 14th, featuring 14 distinct learning opportunities for educators in various fields, including Health and Physical Education, School Nursing, English Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, World Languages, Art, Music, Special Education, Science, School Counseling, Librarianship, and Gifted Education. This event attracted an impressive total of 771 educators from the region, making it our highest-attended regional in-service to date. A special thank you goes to the staff in the CIA department for facilitating many of the sessions, and we extend our gratitude to our partner schools—General McLane, Ft. LeBoeuf, Crawford Central, and Penn West—as well as to outside organizations like the Erie Art Museum, the Warner Theater, and the Hagen History Center for serving as host sites.
- At the beginning of the month, we conducted our new Principal Networking meeting, which welcomed 32 administrators from across the region. This marks the first gathering of its kind in several years. Recognizing the challenges principals face in leaving their schools, we made a concerted effort to provide content that was both meaningful and relevant. To enhance this kickoff meeting, we featured a special guest speaker, Amy Lena, Advisor to the Deputy Secretary of Education, who presented and facilitated an engaging discussion on Act 45 and strategies for ensuring principals meet ongoing professional development requirements.
- The 2024 Neglected & Delinquent Symposium welcomed 251 attendees representing 61 N and D facilities and LEAs from across the state. The conference was held at Kalahari Resorts and Conventions from October 9 - 11, 2024. Twelve individuals from the IU5 region were in attendance and represented five institutions and the IU. Bethesda Children's Home was announced as a Distinguished Institution for the 2023-2024 school year and will receive an additional \$5,000 in their Title I allocation during the 2024-2025 school year. Students from Perseus House residential facilities submitted artwork for the art cover contest and won all three places. The winning entry was used as the cover for the conference book and all three winners received free art supplies for their facilities. Individuals from Bethesda Children's Home, Perseus House, Sarah Reed Children's Center, and the IU presented breakout sessions at the conference.

State

- **74% Of Schools had trouble filling teacher vacancies this school year** - Nearly three-quarters of public schools said they had a difficult time filling one or more vacant teaching positions before kicking off the 2024-25 school year, according to the results of a nationally representative survey of 1,392 schools released by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics on Thursday. [Read More](#)
- **A spike in school threats in Western PA mirrors national trends** -Pennsylvania State Police Lt. Adam Reed said 87 school threats were reported to the agency in 2023, not including cases handled by a city or local police department that didn't involve the agency. [Read More](#)
- **PA Teachers Who Retired Before Pension Plans Were Boosted Seek Cost of Living Increase** - Robert McVay became a teacher in Franklin primarily because he loved the work. He remembers a third grade teacher who repeatedly told him he was smart, and what that meant to him as a poor kid with eight siblings. He hoped to make the same difference for someone else. But he also believed that being a public school teacher meant a guarantee of certain securities. Read the rest of the story: ["PA Teachers Who Retired Before Pension Plans Were Boosted Seek Cost of Living Increase" \(from Penn Capital-Star, 10/2/24\)](#)
- **New PA Law Allows Older Adults to Volunteer as Mentors in Schools**— Pennsylvania has a new law that eases the way for older adults to serve as mentors to school students of all ages. The [legislation](#) signed by Gov. Josh Shapiro on Wednesday is intended to break down barriers that sometimes prevent older adults from sharing their knowledge, interests or hobbies with students in a school setting, according to the bill's sponsor Rep. Jared Solomon, D-Philadelphia. [Read the rest of the story: "New PA Law Allows Older Adults to Volunteer as Mentors in Schools" \(from Lehigh Valley News, 10/17/24\)](#)
- **More Money, Real Action Needed: House Education Hearing on PA School Safety, Student Mental Health** — A state House education committee hearing on Oct. 10 revealed more work needs to be done, and money put toward, adequately protecting Pennsylvania's public school students, teachers, and staff amid a growing mental health crisis and a flood of school shootings. [Read the rest of the story: "More Money, Real Action Needed: House Education Hearing on PA School Safety, Student Mental Health" \(from NorthCentral PA, 10/16/24\)](#)

Federal

- **How well do dual-credit students do in college?** A look in charts - More than 40% of high school students who earned college credit as part of dual-enrollment programs went on to earn a degree or certificate within four years of graduation, according to new national data. [Read More](#)
- **The Jed Foundation and AASA Comprehensive Student Mental Health Pilot Program Featured on ABC News** - In a recent ABC News feature, the Jed Foundation and AASA, The School Superintendents Association, were spotlighted for their District Comprehensive Approach (DCA) pilot program. [Read More](#)
- **CISA Announces New K-12 School Security Guide for School Business Officials** - Last week, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) released a new resource to help school business officials support physical security planning and implementation initiatives in K-12 schools and school districts.

- **[4-day school district gains momentum](#)** - Several districts, including Brighton's 27J in Colorado, have adopted four-day school weeks to address teacher shortages and budget issues. While the policy has proven popular and helped some districts retain staff, studies reveal mixed effects on student achievement, and some say that better teacher pay would be a more effective solution than shortening the school week. [Read More](#)
- **New OCR Resources for Districts to Support Students with Mental Health Disabilities** - This week, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) [released 4 new resources](#) for districts to support students with mental health disabilities such as anxiety, depression, eating disorders and bipolar disorder. You can read these resources on the blog. The fact sheets remind schools of the obligation to treat a student with a mental health disability as they must treat any other student with a disability: free from discrimination, and the obligation to provide students with mental health disabilities with the modifications, supports, and services the students need to have equal access to their education.
- **Special Education Funding** - This new report [Who Pays for Special Education? An Analysis of Federal, State, and Local Spending by States and Districts](#) sheds light on the proportional roles of federal, state, and local funds in paying for special education services within and across states.
- **Key facts about public school teachers in the U.S.** - The Pew Research Center highlights [ten key facts](#) about the nation's 3.8 million public school teachers, drawing data from a fall 2023 Pew Research Center survey and from federal data.
- **EPA Lead Testing Rule for Schools Finalized** - The EPA [finalized a rule](#) creating the first-ever national requirement to test for lead in schools that rely on water from public utilities. The rule also mandates that water systems screen all elementary and child-care facilities and offer testing for middle and high schools. More information is available on [The Leading Edge blog](#)

B. Solicitor (Mr. Timothy Wachter): Mr. Wachter reported that it was standard representation period for the IU.

C. Executive Committee (Dr. Andrew Pushchak): Dr. Pushchak reported that the Executive Committee met on October 16, 2024, at 11:00 am to review the Board Agenda. Dr. Jane Blystone, Mr. Paul Mangione, and Dr. Andrew Pushchak were present.

D. Budget & Audit Committee (Mr. Paul Mangione): Mr. Paul Mangione, Chairperson, reported that the Budget & Audit Committee met on October 23, 2024, at 5:30 pm. Mr. Mangione reported that there was no report this month.

E. Personnel Committee (Dr. Jane Blystone): Dr. Blystone, Chairperson, reported that the Personnel Committee met on October 23, 2024, at 5:30 pm. Dr. Blystone reported that all items on the agenda are recommended for approval. Dr. Blystone thanked Mary Eckart for her service to the IU.

F. Policy Committee (Mrs. Fran New): Mrs. Fran New, Chairperson, reported that the Policy Development Committee met on October 23, 2024, at 5:30 pm. There are 2 policies on the agenda for approval, Policies 005 and 006 for second reading.

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 Mrs. Luckock and seconded by Dr. Blystone to approve the General Resolution as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

4. Minutes:

It was moved by Mrs. Luckock and seconded by Mrs. Bolte to approve Minutes from the September 25, 2024 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. Vrenna to approve Financial Items 5A-5H as presented.

- 2023-2024 Budget Revisions & Budgetary Transfers
- September 2024 Monthly Revenue Board Report
- September 2024 Monthly Expense Board Report
- PNC Easy Procure Payments as of September 25, 2024
- 2024-2025 Budget Revisions & Budgetary Transfers

F. Treasurer's Report for September 30, 2024

G. Investment Report for September 30, 2024

H. Approval of Bills

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) yes; Kristy Bolte (NW) yes; Gwendolyn Cooley (EC) absent; Mrs. Amanda Cox (CR) absent; Robert Johnston (PC) yes; Dorothy Luckock (CN) yes; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Kellie Lichtinger (FL) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) absent; Tammy Silvis (CC) yes; Fran New (FV) yes; Rita Nicolussi (IR) yes; Brad Pattullo (GM) yes; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; George Trauner (UC) absent; David Vrenna (HC) yes; Gary Winschel (MC) yes

6. Personnel Items (Dr. Jane Blystone):

It was moved by Dr. Blystone and seconded by Mrs. Lichtinger to approve Personnel Items 6A-6E as presented.

A. Resignations

B. Retirements

C. Job Descriptions

D. Employment of Personnel

E. Position Additions and Changes

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) yes; Kristy Bolte (NW) yes; Gwendolyn Cooley (EC) absent; Mrs. Amanda Cox (CR) absent; Robert Johnston (PC) yes; Dorothy Luckock (CN) yes; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Kellie Lichtinger (FL) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) absent; Tammy Silvis (CC) yes; Fran New (FV) yes; Rita Nicolussi (IR) yes; Brad Pattullo (GM) yes; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; George Trauner (UC) absent; David Vrenna (HC) yes; Gary Winschel (MC) yes

7. Transportation Items:

It was moved by Mrs. Bolte and seconded by Mrs. New to approve Transportation Items 7A - 7B as presented.

A. 2024-2025 Special Needs Drivers

B. 2024-2025 Transportation Contracts

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) yes; Kristy Bolte (NW) yes; Gwendolyn Cooley (EC) absent; Mrs. Amanda Cox (CR) absent; Robert Johnston (PC) yes; Dorothy Luckock (CN) yes; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Kellie Lichtinger (FL) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) absent; Tammy Silvis (CC) yes; Fran New (FV) yes; Rita Nicolussi (IR) yes; Brad Pattullo (GM) yes; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; George Trauner (UC) absent; David Vrenna (HC) yes; Gary Winschel (MC) yes

8. Agreements:

It was moved by Mr. Vrenna and seconded by Mr. Pattullo to approve Agreements 8A-8E as presented.

A. Crawford County Human Services Agreement

B. ESS Northeast, LLC Addendum

C. Meritain Health, Inc - Pharmacy Benefits Management Administrative Services Agreement

D. STEM in PA Agreement

E. STEM in PA Initiative (ELIT Hub)

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) yes; Kristy Bolte (NW) yes; Gwendolyn Cooley (EC) absent; Mrs. Amanda Cox (CR) absent; Robert Johnston (PC) yes; Dorothy Luckock (CN) yes; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Kellie Lichtinger (FL) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) absent; Tammy Silvis (CC) yes; Fran New (FV) yes; Rita Nicolussi (IR) yes; Brad Pattullo (GM) yes; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; George Trauner (UC) absent; David Vrenna (HC) yes; Gary Winschel (MC) yes

9. Contracted Payroll:

It was moved by Mrs. Bolte and seconded by Mrs. Lichtinger to approve Contracted Payroll 9A as presented.

A. Minerva Medina

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) yes; Kristy Bolte (NW) yes; Gwendolyn Cooley (EC) absent; Mrs. Amanda Cox (CR) absent; Robert Johnston (PC) yes; Dorothy Luckock (CN) yes; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Kellie Lichtinger (FL) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) absent; Tammy Silvis (CC) yes; Fran New (FV) yes; Rita Nicolussi (IR) yes; Brad Pattullo (GM) yes; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; George Trauner (UC) absent; David Vrenna (HC) yes; Gary Winschel (MC) yes

10. Service Purchase Contracts:

It was moved by Mrs. New and seconded by Mr. Pattullo to approve Service Purchase Contracts 10A-10D as presented.

A. Bethesda Lutheran Services SPC 71206

B. Bethesda Lutheran Services SPC 71216

C. Leader Services SPC 71210

D. St Benedict Center SPC 71212

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) yes; Kristy Bolte (NW) yes; Gwendolyn Cooley (EC) absent; Mrs. Amanda Cox (CR) absent; Robert Johnston (PC) yes; Dorothy Luckock (CN) yes; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Kellie Lichtinger (FL) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) absent; Tammy Silvis (CC) yes; Fran New (FV) yes; Rita Nicolussi (IR) yes; Brad Pattullo (GM) yes; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; George Trauner (UC) absent; David Vrenna (HC) yes; Gary Winschel (MC) yes

11. Policies:

It was moved by Mrs. New and seconded by Dr. Blystone to approve Policies 11A-11B as presented.

A. Second Reading - Policy 005: Organization

B. Second Reading - Policy 006: Meetings

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) yes; Kristy Bolte (NW) yes; Gwendolyn Cooley (EC) absent; Mrs. Amanda Cox (CR) absent; Robert Johnston (PC) yes; Dorothy Luckock (CN) yes; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Kellie Lichtinger (FL) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) absent; Tammy Silvis (CC) yes; Fran New (FV) yes; Rita Nicolussi (IR) yes; Brad Pattullo (GM) yes; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; George Trauner (UC) absent; David Vrenna (HC) yes; Gary Winschel (MC) yes

12. Other Business:

Dr. Pushchak informed everyone that there will be no Board meeting in November and the next Board meeting will be held on December 18, 2024.

13. Adjournment:

It was moved by Mr. Pattullo and seconded by Mrs. New to adjourn the Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit Board of Directors at 5:57 p.m.

Raina George, Board Secretary