Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit Board Meeting
Wednesday, September 23, 2026
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.

B. Roll Call:

Present were: Amanda Cox (CR); Randy Styborski (PC); Paul Mangione (WC); Joseph Meka (GR); Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB); George Roberts (GM); Tammy Silvis (CC); Scott Taylor (FLB); Ed Williamson (CN)

Absent were: Dr. Jane Blystone (NE); Kristy Bolte (NW); Leah Merski (EC); Fran New (FV); Jennifer Sheldon (IR); Gary Winschel (MC); Kimberle Thomas (UC); David Vrenna (HC)

Present from the Intermediate Unit Leadership Team: Brad Whitman, Executive Director; Sally Daehnke; Becca Kelley; Kirk Shimshock; Brandie Stevens; JT Stewart; Nick Paolini; Amanda Porter

Also present: Solicitor Pat Kennedy; Wendy Carson; Leah Stazer

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.

G. Welcome New Board Member - Ms. Leah Merski: Dr. Pushchak welcomed Ms. Merski to the IU5 Board of Directors.

H. 2027 PSBA Officer Elections (Vice President) - Mrs. Kristy Bolte: Dr. Pushchak recognized Mrs. Bolte as she is running for the 2027 PSBA Vice President.

2. Reports:

A. Executive Director (Mr. Brad Whitman):

Early Intervention

- The information below reflects the children within the Tri-County area already receiving Early Intervention services within the infant toddler program. These children are anticipated to transition to us upon turning three years old. This reflects a minimum total of "toddler transition cases" of 436 for the 26-27 year.

26-27 SY Toddler Transitions by 3rd Birthdate and School District

	2026						2027						
School District	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Grand Total
CONNEAUT SD		2	1	1	1	2	1	2			1		11
CORRY AREA SD	1	1	1	2				1	1			3	10
CRAWFORD CENTRAL SD	4	3	6	3	3	3	5	4	4	1			36
ERIE CITY SD	22	18	13	8	10	15	16	13	19	14	12	10	170
FAIRVIEW SD	4		2		1		1		2		2		12
FORT LEBOEUF SD			2	1	1	1	1	2		2			10
GENERAL MCLANE SD	3			1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1		12
GIRARD SD	2	1	1	2		1	2			1			10
HARBOR CREEK SD	2	1		1	2	1			1			1	9
IROQUOIS SD	1		2				3	1	4	2	1	1	15
MILLCREEK TOWNSHIP SD	8	7	4	4	6	1	4	2	5	2	5	3	51
NORTH EAST SD	1	1	1	1	1		1	2	1	3	1	3	16
NORTHWESTERN SD			3				2			1		1	7
PENNCREST SD	3			1	3	4	3		2		2	1	19
UNION CITY AREA SD	1	2			1	2						1	7
WARREN COUNTY SD	2	2	5	5		2	4	6	1	2	5	1	35
WATTSBURG AREA SD	1			2		2	1						6
Grand Total	55	38	41	32	31	35	45	34	41	29	30	25	436

Federal and State Programs

- The IU5 Migrant Education Program was the only agency in the state to report positive data within summer student enrollment. Because summer enrollment data is a primary factor in determining future funding levels, this growth will have a positive impact on next year's allocation.
- The Homeless Program is preparing for its annual Angel Tree initiative by identifying sponsors who will provide holiday support to students and families in need.
- The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) is conducting Fall Regional Workshops across the state throughout October. IU5 has been selected to host one of only ten Federal Programs workshop sessions and will welcome participants from across the region on October 14.

School Improvement Services

- Warren SD was selected to present their work from Success for PA Early Learners (SPEL) and Enhanced Core Reading Instruction (ECRI) at the upcoming PA Positive Behavior Support & Multi-tiered Systems of Support. Staff have dedicated countless hours to supporting Warren's efforts in the science of reading.
- With the collaborative efforts of staff from the SIS department, the 2026 SAS Institute Registration was opened on schedule on 9/16/26 with 209 currently registered as of 9/22/26. 2025 SAS had 1,047 registrations. Expectations are set to exceed this mark for 2026!
- 577 participants from our LEAs have been registered to participate in the 2026 regional common in-service on 10/12/26.

Special Education

- Carol Clancy, Bureau Director for Special Education at PDE, joined our Local Task Force meeting here at IU 5 on Thursday, September 10th.
- Our Data Specialist, in conjunction with the Assistant Executive Director and Supervisor of Student Data Services, created a data visualization tool to analyze our MA submissions. Next steps will include determining why logs are not approved and whether or not they are due to errors.
- Our IU and Erie Elect staff met for their first combined staff meeting on August 26th at the Erie office in Emerson Gridley. Their second meeting will be here at the IU.
- Elect Child Count is at 89 total students served for August.
- We will have our SAP training on October 5th and 6th. We now have 4 certified SAP train the trainers. We were very fortunate to get a grant from the Erie County D&A office for $13,000, allowing us to provide 40 free training seats to school districts.

State

PA Secretary Of Education Addresses Measles, Career Path Programs Typically, Philadelphia teachers and principals use state test scores from the prior school year to assess student learning, roster kids into the proper classes, and prepare for the year to come. Not this year. Several teachers told Chalkbeat this week they haven't seen results from the 2025-26 PSSA or Keystone exams and aren't sure why. In the past, these scores have been shared with educators and school leaders around June. Teachers returned to classrooms this week for professional development, and students will return on Aug. 24.

Read the rest of the story: "PA Secretary Of Education Addresses Measles, Career Path Programs" (WHTM Harrisburg, 8-24-26)
Pennsylvania Gov. Shapiro Signs Legislation Guaranteeing 30 Minutes Of Recess To Elementary Students Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro signed a bill Wednesday making recess mandatory for students in kindergarten through fifth grade. In a statement, Shapiro said the recess time will allow elementary school students to "take a break from learning, get outside, and just be kids."
Read the rest of the story: "Pennsylvania Gov. Shapiro Signs Legislation Guaranteeing 30 Minutes Of Recess To Elementary Students" (NPR Pittsburgh, 9-11-26)
Pennsylvania Updates Education Standards Pennsylvania education officials are working to update how students are taught and assessed as they prepare for a rapidly changing world, including one increasingly shaped by artificial intelligence. The Pennsylvania State Board of Education held multiple meetings Thursday to discuss the academic school year and efforts to prepare students for success in school, the workforce and their communities.
Read the rest of the story: "Pennsylvania Updates Education Standards" (Fox 43, 9-10-26)
Federal

Administration Announces New Initiative to Support School Meals This week, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced the Harvest to Hallways Initiative to provide new investments and technical assistance for school meal programs. The announcement is the latest step in a broader federal effort to change federal nutrition programs. USDA is also expected to release new school meal regulations in the coming months. More information on The Leading Edge blog.

USED Releases Guidance on Ed Tech in Schools and Annual Update on FERPA and PPRA Last week, the Department of Education released two resources: 1) non-binding guidance on Responsible Use of Education Technology and 2) the annual notice of obligations under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA). More information on The Leading Edge blog.

Meta Reaches $17B Settlement with States Over Teen Social Media Addiction Meta has agreed to pay $17 billion and add child-safety measures to its Facebook and Instagram platforms to end a landmark trial over teen social media addiction and settle claims filed by 47 states, state attorneys general announced Wednesday. California, Colorado, Kentucky and New Jersey were among 29 states that sued the tech giant in 2023, but the deal cuts short the trial, which was expected to see CEO Mark Zuckerberg take the stand before a jury in federal court in California.
Read the rest of the story: "Meta Reaches $17B Settlement With States Over Teen Social Media Addiction" (Education Week, 8-26-26)

Fewer Teachers, Even Fewer Students: See What's Happening In 9,500 Districts Earlier this month, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that public education lost 50,000 jobs between June and July. The numbers are preliminary and don't show which types of jobs were lost. They are also small in percentage terms (a decline of 0.6%). Still, they potentially mark the end of the post-pandemic surge in school staffing, which had been hitting new all-time staffing highs year after year. The gains over the last few years have been quite large. In the 2024-25 academic year, for example, schools added the equivalent of 118,000 new full-time employees in various roles, even as they served 135,000 fewer students. That followed the pattern in 2023-24, when they added 121,000 employees as they lost 110,000 students.
Read the rest of the story: "Fewer Teachers, Even Fewer Students: See What's Happening In 9,500 Districts" (The74, 8-26-26)

Report: How Gen-Z Views School And What A Sense Of Belonging Means To Them When a 20-year-old New Yorker recently reflected on her high school experience, she said the things she learned weren't "very helpful to where I am now." I don't really think most of my classes that I took in high school I have in my brain anymore," she told researchers who authored the Voices of Gen Z Study, an annual report conducted by Gallup and the Walton Family Foundation about Gen-Z's attitude toward school and life after high school. What stuck with her, however, were the teachers that "made an impact," and who she maintains relationships with years later.
Read the rest of the story: "Report: How Gen-Z Views School And What A Sense Of Belonging Means To Them" (Education Week, 9-11-26)

Quote:

"The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step." – Lao Tzu

B. Solicitor (Ms. Patricia Kennedy): Ms. Kennedy had no report.

C. Executive Committee (Dr. Andrew Pushchak): Dr. Pushchak reported that the Executive Committee met on September 16, 2026, at 10:00 am to review the board agenda. 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 September 23, 2026 at 5:35 pm. Mr. Mangione reported that the Committee received an update on trimming the line trees along the building.

E. Personnel Committee (Dr. Jane Blystone): Dr. Pushchak and Mrs. Daehnke reported that the Personnel Committee met on September 23, 2026 at 5:35 pm. Mrs. Daehnke reported that the agenda included five items for approval.

F. Policy Committee (Mrs. Fran New): Dr. Pushchak reported that the Policy Committee met on September 23, 2026, 2026 at 5:35 pm. The agenda included 5 policies for second reading.

3. Minutes:

It was moved by Mr. Taylor and seconded by Mr. Roberts to approve the Minutes from the August 26, 2026 IU Board of Directors Meeting as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

4. Financial Items (Mr. Paul Mangione):

It was moved by Mr. Mangione and seconded by Mr. Williamson to approve Financial Items 4A-4H as presented.

A. Approval of Bills

B. Treasurer's Report for August 31, 2026

C. Investment Report for August 31, 2026

D. PNC Easy Procure Payments as of August 27, 2026

E. August 2026 Monthly Revenue Board Report

F. August 2026 Monthly Expense Board Report

G. 2025-2026 Budget Revisions & Budgetary Transfers

H. Skywalker Tree Service - Tree Trimming

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) absent; Kristy Bolte (NW) absent; Amanda Cox (CR) yes; Leah Merski (EC) absent; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) yes; Fran New (FV) absent; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; George Roberts (GM) yes; Jennifer Sheldon (IR) absent; Tammy Silvis (CC) yes; Randy Styborski (PC) yes; Scott Taylor (FL) yes; Kimberlee Thomas UC) absent; David Vrenna (HC) absent; Ed Williamson (CN) yes; Gary Winschel (MC) absent

5. Personnel Items (Dr. Jane Blystone):

It was moved by Mr. Taylor and seconded by Mr. Williamson to approve Personnel Items 5A-5E as presented.

A. Resignations

B. Retirement

C. Employment of Personnel

D. Position Additions and Changes

E. Separation Agreement

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) absent; Kristy Bolte (NW) absent; Amanda Cox (CR) yes; Leah Merski (EC) absent; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) yes; Fran New (FV) absent; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; George Roberts (GM) yes; Jennifer Sheldon (IR) absent; Tammy Silvis (CC) yes; Randy Styborski (PC) yes; Scott Taylor (FL) yes; Kimberlee Thomas UC) absent; David Vrenna (HC) absent; Ed Williamson (CN) yes; Gary Winschel (MC) absent

6. Transportation Items:

It was moved by Mr. Taylor and seconded by Mr. Styborski to approve Transportation Items 6A-6B as presented.

A. 2026-27 Special Needs Drivers

B. 2026-27 Transportation Contracts

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) absent; Kristy Bolte (NW) absent; Amanda Cox (CR) yes; Leah Merski (EC) absent; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) yes; Fran New (FV) absent; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; George Roberts (GM) yes; Jennifer Sheldon (IR) absent; Tammy Silvis (CC) yes; Randy Styborski (PC) yes; Scott Taylor (FL) yes; Kimberlee Thomas UC) absent; David Vrenna (HC) absent; Ed Williamson (CN) yes; Gary Winschel (MC) absent

7. Contracted Payroll:

It was moved by Mr. Mangione and seconded by Mr. Williamson to approve Contracted Payroll 7A - 7F as presented.

A. Ilona Burd

B. Sandra Fogle

C. Alejandra Garibay

D. Minerva Medina

E. Amahirani Zavala Polina

F. Maria Delgado-Santana

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) absent; Kristy Bolte (NW) absent; Amanda Cox (CR) yes; Leah Merski (EC) absent; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) yes; Fran New (FV) absent; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; George Roberts (GM) yes; Jennifer Sheldon (IR) absent; Tammy Silvis (CC) yes; Randy Styborski (PC) yes; Scott Taylor (FL) yes; Kimberlee Thomas UC) absent; David Vrenna (HC) absent; Ed Williamson (CN) yes; Gary Winschel (MC) absent

8. Agreements and Contracts:

It was moved by Mr. Mangione and seconded by Mr. Taylor to approve Agreements and Contracts 8A-8L as presented.

A. Business Associate Agreement with Medical Decision Logic, Inc

B. CAOLA Services Agreement

C. Fort Leboeuf School District Professional Services Contract

D. Harbor Creek School District - Special Education Contract

E. Iroquois School District Services Agreement (ELD)

F. Dr. Maggie Jarmolowicz, D.O.

G. Millcreek Township School District - Special Education Contract

H. Presence Learning

I. Red Rover Confidentiality Agreement

J. Robert Benjamin Wiley Charter School - Special Education Contract

K. Symetra Group Benefits Proposals

L. Wayfinder Master Services Agreement

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) absent; Kristy Bolte (NW) absent; Amanda Cox (CR) yes; Leah Merski (EC) absent; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) yes; Fran New (FV) absent; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; George Roberts (GM) yes; Jennifer Sheldon (IR) absent; Tammy Silvis (CC) yes; Randy Styborski (PC) yes; Scott Taylor (FL) yes; Kimberlee Thomas UC) absent; David Vrenna (HC) absent; Ed Williamson (CN) yes; Gary Winschel (MC) absent

9. Service Purchase Contracts:

It was moved by Mr. Mangione and seconded by Mr. Styborski to approve Contracted Payroll 9A - 9G as presented.

A. Bethesda Lutheran Services SPC 71408

B. Bethesda Lutheran Services SPC 71409

C. Bethesda Lutheran Services SPC 71410

D. Bethesda Lutheran Services SPC 71412

E. The Achievement Center SPC 71411

F. The Achievement Center SPC 71413

G. Sarah A. Reed Children's Center SPC 71407

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) absent; Kristy Bolte (NW) absent; Amanda Cox (CR) yes; Leah Merski (EC) absent; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) yes; Fran New (FV) absent; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; George Roberts (GM) yes; Jennifer Sheldon (IR) absent; Tammy Silvis (CC) yes; Randy Styborski (PC) yes; Scott Taylor (FL) yes; Kimberlee Thomas UC) absent; David Vrenna (HC) absent; Ed Williamson (CN) yes; Gary Winschel (MC) absent

10. Policies (Mrs. Fran New):

It was moved by Mr. Mangione and seconded by Mr. Taylor to approve Policies 10A - 10E as presented.

A. Second Reading - Policy 221: Dress and Grooming

B. Second Reading - Policy 236.1: Threat Assessment

C. Second Reading - Policy 325: Dress and Grooming

D. Second Reading - Policy 332: Working Periods

E. Second Reading - Policy 619: Intermediate Unit Audit

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) absent; Kristy Bolte (NW) absent; Amanda Cox (CR) yes; Leah Merski (EC) absent; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) yes; Fran New (FV) absent; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; George Roberts (GM) yes; Jennifer Sheldon (IR) absent; Tammy Silvis (CC) yes; Randy Styborski (PC) yes; Scott Taylor (FL) yes; Kimberlee Thomas UC) absent; David Vrenna (HC) absent; Ed Williamson (CN) yes; Gary Winschel (MC) absent

11. Request to Travel:

It was moved by Mr. Mangione and seconded by Mr. Styborski to approve Request to Travel 11A as presented.

A. Indianapolis, IN - Christy Adams

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) absent; Kristy Bolte (NW) absent; Amanda Cox (CR) yes; Leah Merski (EC) absent; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) yes; Fran New (FV) absent; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; George Roberts (GM) yes; Jennifer Sheldon (IR) absent; Tammy Silvis (CC) yes; Randy Styborski (PC) yes; Scott Taylor (FL) yes; Kimberlee Thomas UC) absent; David Vrenna (HC) absent; Ed Williamson (CN) yes; Gary Winschel (MC) absent

12. Other Business:

Dr. Pushchak informed everyone the next Board meeting will be held on October 28, 2026.

13. Adjournment:

It was moved by Mr. Roberts and seconded by Mr. Styborski to adjorn the Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit Board of Directors at 5:57 p.m.

Raina George

Raina George, Board Secretary