

2021-2022 ANNUAL REPORT

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



@iu5edinboro



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mission, Vision, & Shared Values	1
Board of Directors / Administrative Staff	2
Executive Director's Message	3
Annie Sullivan Award	5
Leadership	7
Fiscal Data	8
Human Resources	9
Safe2Say Something	11
School Improvement Services Data	13
Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment	17
Special Education	18
Innovative Technology Solutions	22

"Education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today." -Malcolm X

OUR MISSION, VISION, & SHARED VALUES

MISSION: IU5 provides excellence, equity, and opportunities.

VISION: Creating future-ready, self-empowered individuals and families for lifelong learning.

SHARED VALUES: Learning is a partnership among schools, families, and communities. All students can learn. Diversity must be recognized and valued. Our school districts' needs and PDE directives shape our IU and its work. Change is inevitable. Transparency in operations is paramount. Learning is a life-long process. We value: Equity, Opportunity, and Self-empowerment.

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

Dr. Doris Gernovich	CORRY AREA
Mrs. Dorothy Luckock	CONNEAUT
Ms. Paula Jo Lynch	CRAWFORD CENTRAL
Ms. Gwendolyn Cooley	ERIE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Mrs. Fran New	FAIRVIEW
Mr. Jeremy Markham	FORT LEBOEUF
Mr. Brad Patullo	GENERAL MCLANE
Mr. Joseph Meka	GIRARD
Mr. Dave Vrenna	HARBOR CREEK
Mrs. Rita Nicolussi	IROQUOIS
Mr. Gary Winschel	MILLCREEK TOWNSHIP
Dr. Jane Blystone	NORTH EAST
Mrs. Leslie Soltis	NORTHWESTERN
Mr. Jeffrey Brooks	PENNCREST
Mr. George Trauner	UNION CITY AREA
Mr. Paul Mangione, V.P.	WARREN COUNTY
Dr. Andrew Pushchak, President	WATTSBURG AREA

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Bradley E. Whitman	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Raina E. George	BOARD SECRETARY / EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT
Vince C. Humes	DIRECTOR, INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS
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

Bradley E. 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. IU5 primarily serves the 17 public school districts, charter and non-public programs 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, charter schools, nonpublic schools, and county agencies, other intermediate units, institutions of higher education, PDE, other educational organizations, business and industry, as well as many parent groups throughout the region.

Included in this annual report are highlights of the 2021-2022 school year. As we did our best to continue to operate more than 130 programs designed to assist the 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 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 our schools as they work to best meet the needs of student learners and provide timely professional development as top priorities in all of our work. We are always using data to improve our effectiveness and the efficiency of our efforts. The areas of focus for the 2022-23 year include:

- Model and lead a customer-centered approach to IU5 services, responding to vested partners and client needs.
- Promote self-care strategies to improve and encourage a healthy work-life balance.
- Lead change efforts for continuous improvement.
- Adequately and equitably align funds for IU5 services in order to maintain the integrity of IU5 educational programs for all learner's birth through adulthood.
- Ensure every IU5 employee embraces and consistently promotes the IU5 brand, mission, and can articulate its relevance to each person he or she encounters.
- Communicate both internally and externally the value and quality of IU5 programs and services.
- Foster a culture of excellence, innovation, and creativity through engagement, teamwork, and collaboration.
- Encourage a workplace culture of support that promotes employee excellence through overall wellbeing.
- Actively engage in recruiting and retention efforts to ensure delivery of services to our students and schools.
- Promote a culture of cyber security and data privacy in our use of technology.

Please visit our Facebook page and our website for further information about IU5 www.iu5.org or the state website at www.paiu.org for information about the 29 intermediate units in PA.

Bradley E. Whitman, Ed.D.
Executive Director

ANNIE SULLIVAN AWARD

**Congratulations Tracey Moore!
(Special Education Teacher)**



IU5 Executive Director, Mr. Bradley Whitman, presented the annual Annie Sullivan Award to Special Education Teacher Tracey Moore at the monthly board meeting on Wednesday, August 25, 2021.

It is with great pleasure that I nominate Mrs. Tracey Moore for consideration of the 2021 Annie Sullivan Award. Tracey has been a Special Education Teacher with the Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit for 24 years. She currently teaches in a Multiple Disabilities Class at Saegertown Elementary. Whenever you walk into Tracey's room she will greet you with a smile, a joke and piece of chocolate. She is genuinely happy to see all of the students and staff that she shares her room with. If you ask her how she is doing she will almost always say "If I was any better I would be twins...I have the best job in the world...I really do...I just love these kids and the people I work with". In addition to performing her job here at the Intermediate Unit at an exemplary level, Tracey demonstrates an extraordinary commitment to her professional community; fellow staff, students and their families and her own family.

-Meghan Stefanucci, IU5 Assistant Director of Special Education

Teaching this unique and special population of students presents challenges on a daily basis but when you throw COVID into the mix this nominee like all teachers, had to rethink her way of reaching out as well as teaching this amazing yet complex group of students. This nominee has gone above and beyond to create an environment that is fun, engaging, accepting, encouraging and loving in the classroom while using a daily google meet and fun surprise porch drop offs such as birthday balloons or small “just because” or “thinking of you” gifts/materials. This nominee takes time out of her personal life to reach out to parents and will even make phone calls to students if they are not feeling well or when the parent/caregiver reports that they are missing their teacher.

Educationally, every day this nominee uses the technology in her classroom to teach homebound students as well as the students from two other special education classrooms virtually. This session is attended by not only our complex needs children but their parents, nurses, other teachers, and therapists. Every session is recorded so if the student isn't able to attend or possibly hospitalized, they can still see this teacher's lesson on the replay as many times as they like! The collaboration and willingness to knock down the obstacles to get to this point of instruction has been amazing. The students look forward to seeing this nominee's face and the faces or voices of their peers. Most of these students are unable to return to school because of their medically fragile state. The daily google meet is essentially their only connection to the friends they have made in school. By being able to reconnect these special students and their peers through their daily google meet classroom sessions they have been able to see or hear a best friends voice they have not heard in a very long time and respond back with a wave, smile, gesture, sign or a vocalization.

Most recently because of the reconnections made during these sessions, a few students met for their own outing and it was a huge success. Without the daily virtual contact of the peers initiated by this nominee, this would not have happened.

LEADERSHIP

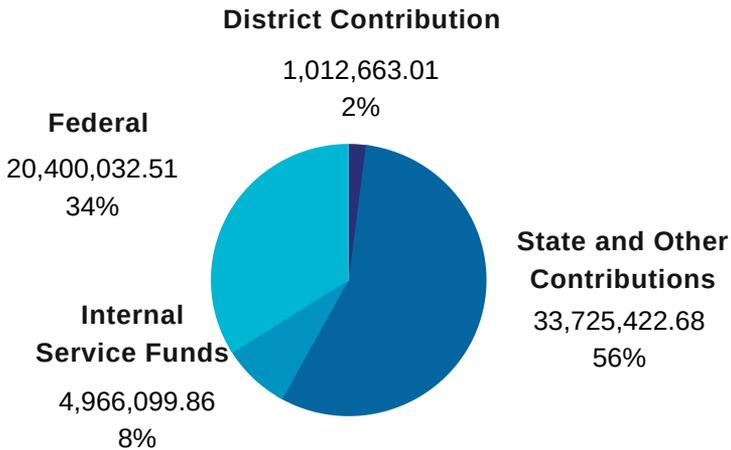


"Leaders become great not because of their power, but because of their ability to empower others." -John Maxwell

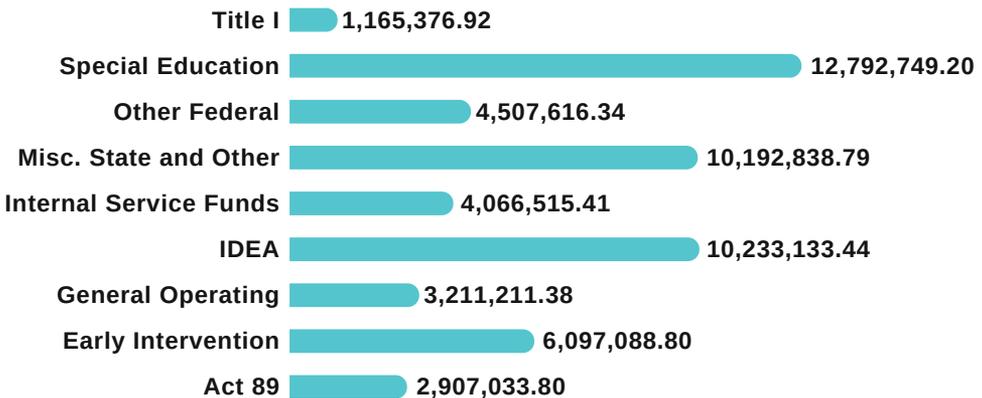
FISCAL DATA

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

REVENUES



EXPENDITURES



HUMAN RESOURCES

The 2021-2022 school year was another challenging year for the Human Resources department in the second year of the pandemic.

HR continued to utilize Microsoft Teams to conduct virtual interviews. This process allowed applicants and interviewers alike to minimize the time needed to conduct interviews, helping hiring managers to better use their time in a year fraught with being pulled in many directions. Although we are moving back to in-person for many things, we will continue to use this successful method of interviewing when conducting first round interviews.

HR implemented Frontline Central during the year as well. Frontline Central is a great tool to use as a Human Resources Information System. This tool is enabling the HR department to be super-efficient with onboarding documents for new hires, provide readily accessible information on staff to supervisors, track renewals of important credentials and use electronic systems for communicating and storing personnel information. There is much more to come with this new software as we continue to develop the system.

COVID continued to present the department with difficulties. Substitute recruiting, despite continuous efforts, was still difficult. Finding candidates for all positions, professional and non-professional, continued to show shortages of available workers across the region. Many positions were offered and many were declined. The volume of COVID communications to and from staff 24/7 was overwhelming and the COVID cases had a significant trickle-down effect across the organization. There were 486 employee-related COVID reports resulting in quarantine, isolation and/or contact tracing in the 2021-2022 school year which is 265 more than were handled in the 2020-2021 school—this more than doubled year two of the pandemic.

During the school year, the department hired 148 employees across all departments including regular staff, contracted payroll and substitutes. Following is the breakdown by month for the school year.

HUMAN RESOURCES

APPLICANTS

- Total Applications Received: 2,218
- Total Qualified Applications Received: 1,821
- Total Number of Offers Made and Declined: 60
- Total Number of Interview Requests Declined: 112
- Total Number of Non-responsive Applicants: 123
- Total Number of No-Shows for Scheduled Interviews: 65

RECRUITMENT

HIRE MONTH	REGULAR STAFF	CONTRACTED PAYROLL	SUBSTITUTES
July 2021	3	1	0
August 2021	13	2	4
September 2021	6	3	13
October 2021	1	2	12
November 2021	5	3	5
December 2021	3	0	4
January 2022	6	2	10
February 2022	4	1	4
March 2022	2	2	2
April 2022	5	2	2
May 2022	1	1	1
June 2022	0	23	0



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 82,995 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.



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 INTERMEDIATE UNIT 5

EVENT TYPES

TOTALS

Bullying/Cyber Bullying	85
Suicide/Suicide Ideation	44
Cutting/Self-Harm	39
Smoking (Tobacco, E-Cig, Vape) in School	35
Drug Distribution/Possession	33
Threat Against School	25
Harassment/Intimidation	20
Inappropriate Language/Behavior/Gesture	17
Depression/Anxiety	15
Planned Attack/Fight/Assault	9

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT SERVICES

- Title I Public Consortium consisted of one school district and one charter school serving more than 1,000 students.
- The Title I Nonpublic Consortium consists of 13 school districts and serves approx. 156 students.
- Title I Neglected and Delinquent Consortium served four local institutions with approximately 110 students.
- The Upward Bound Math and Science Program served 52 students from Corry, Erie and Union City high schools. Students participated in math and science activities to help encourage them to pursue post-secondary degrees in these fields. 25 students participated in the six-week residential STEM Academic Summer Institute at Penn State Behrend. 81% of the graduating seniors are moving on to post-secondary 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 827 students, enrichment services to 81 students, guidance counseling services to more than 880 students, and speech services to over 350 students.



SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT SERVICES

- The IU5 English Language Development Program employed 8 ESL teachers who assisted 110 English learners across 13 school districts 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 65,000 breakfasts, lunches, and snacks in Crawford, Erie County.
- The Talent Search program served 487 students in grades 6-12 from the Charter School of Excellence, Erie and Union City Area School Districts. Students received STEM, college and career readiness activities and participated in numerous field trips. High School students participated in a one-week residential summer program in collaboration with Penn State Behrend, where students participated in Math, Science, English and STEM classes, as well as cultural activities and field trips. Middle school students participated in a three-day summer program conducted by TS staff where students participated in campus visits, STEM activities and team building events. Rising ninth graders participated in a two-day summer camp where they participated in cultural activities, financial literacy and team building activities.



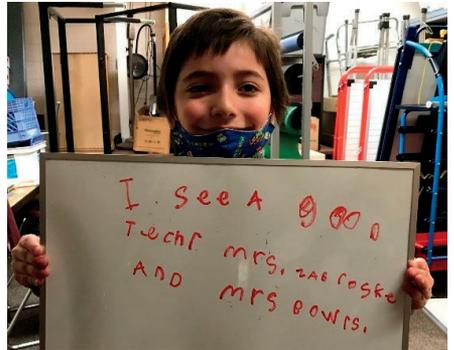
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT SERVICES

- Migrant Program – 550 migrant students were in Region 4 (30 counties) as of 7.20.22 and numbers are expected to exceed 600 during apple harvest. The Lake Erie Summer Program served 26 migrant students and 71 Erie City SD EL/Refugee children, all new arrivals from Afghanistan. Adams County Summer School of Excellence will serve approximately 170 students through a partnership between the Migrant Education Program, VIDA Charter School, Cumberland Valley SD, and the Harrisburg area Migrant Education Program. The Franklin County Summer School of Excellence served 22 migratory children at Chambersburg Area Middle School South. 12 York County students were served by the York County Summer Mini-Campus Program which took place at Leg Up Farm, Keystone Kids Space, and the Baltimore Aquarium. Students who were not able to attend a campus program or reside in an area where campus programs were not possible received in-home instruction by PA-certified in-home teachers.
- 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 292 students residing in Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest, Venango, and Warren Counties. Of these students, 125 individuals achieved employment outcomes, 39 students entered post secondary education or training and 16 earned a GED. More than half of all students made educational skills gains.



SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT SERVICES

- IU5 Adult Education met the community's need to increase English as a Second Language (ESL) classes which provide basic language skill development and supports students as they transition into postsecondary education or the workforce. Community partnerships expanded to include Fairview Evergreen Nursery, JTM Foods, and the International Institute of Erie. IU5 continued to provide services at the Career Readiness Center and Quality of Life Learning Center as well. The program enrolled 76 ESL students, of which 100% of the students that entered at the lowest level of literacy evidenced a gain in their educational functioning level. Over half of the beginning/intermediate English speakers evidenced 1 or more gains. Several students gained U.S. citizenship while enrolled in IU5's Adult Education Program.



CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, & ASSESSMENT

- o More than 2,100 of the region's teachers from 14 school districts and charter schools responded to the spring 2022 Web-based staff development needs assessment
- o 347 educators representing 17 local school districts and charter schools attended Regional Common In-service Day on October 11, 2021
- o 211 IU staff development programs provided more than 3,000 Act 48 hours to more than 750 different educators
- o 13 IU staff development programs provided more than 394 paraeducator hours to 34 different educators
- o The IU uploaded more than 5,000 Act 48 hours to 662 individuals across the state for conferences and trainings.
- o The IU uploaded 381 PIL credits (each worth 30 hours) to 207 individuals across the state for the PA Inspired Leadership Program for Region 8.
- o Almost than 1,500 students participated in 30 different student programs and/or competitions.
- o School Improvement Services staff provided 316 trainings, meeting, and consultations with 180 (57%) being customized for a district or charter school.
- o Training and Consultation staff provided 418 days of trainings, meeting, and consultations with 323 (77%) being customized for a district or charter school.

SPECIAL EDUCATION



The School-Age special education program is our largest program which includes services that support eligible students from kindergarten through the age of 21.

There are over 130 IU5 employees who work in the School-Age special education program area, and they travel to over 56 different locations.

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 700 evaluations on students and 1,226 students were supported with Early Intervention services from July 2021 through June 2022. We provided support to families and LEAs to over 350 students transitioning to kindergarten for the 22-23 school year. This growth has allowed the program to expand our staffing as well.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

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

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.

In year two of the PCCD Grant the Mental Health Preventionists participated in crisis response in six area school districts. They collaborated with the Erie County Department of Human Service on a Mental Health Services Mapping Project within all Erie County Schools to assist in planning for future mental health service needs. Preventionists met with individual school districts and discussed current services/ supports as well as ideas for growth for future services within the districts. Another area of work under the PCCD grant was professional development for area school districts. A six-part trauma training series was created and implemented was Question, Persuade, Refer training was offered, Youth Mental Health First Aid was also delivered, and a secondary trauma training was provided. The Bits and Bites training series was also continued with IU5 staff as a lunch and learn services. Recordings of the training series are on the IU5 web site. Preventionist also started a Universal Mental Health screening workgroup with several Erie County School Districts and helped to connect districts to grant opportunities for universal mental health screening. 2021 Pennsylvania Youth Survey data was reviewed for Erie County and presented to Special Education Council, CCBH mental health workgroup, and Outpatient Providers. Work was also done to assist communication between school districts and Millcreek Community Hospital LECOM Health in the IU5 service area. Mental Health Preventionists also supported the Edinboro Therapeutic Classroom with Social Emotional Learning and case management for students.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

IU5 also is contracted by Erie County Department of Human Services to oversee SAP Grant funded Mental Health Liaison services. Within the IU5/ Erie County grant contact the IU5 oversees 20+ Mental Health Liaisons in the 12 county school districts and nonpublic high schools. During the 2021-2022 school year the Mental Health Liaisons screened 2,075 students in Erie County. IU5 also has two SAP Lead trainers approved through the Pennsylvania Network for Student Assistance. Virtual SAP new team member training was held with a total of 106 participants.

The School Based Access Program (SBAP) processed logs that equated to over 9,175 hours of the IU5's itinerant staff's direct services to students! In total, our itinerant staff supports around 1,200 students annually.

During the 2020-2021 school year, IU5 staff submitted claims accruing \$2,410,420.70 reimbursement through the school-based access program. These funds support districts to help defray the cost of these services.



INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS

During the 21-22 school year, ITS successfully bid a new Internet services contract for 17 participating districts. The new Internet contract, combined with four districts current building-to-building networks, will save our local schools \$311,426.00 per year through the E-Rate program. Additionally, ITS has filled Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) requests for the Intermediate Unit and several districts. The IU has received over \$70,000 in ECF funding.

ITS completed upgrades to the IU's core data networking that included redundant components to eliminate one of our key areas of potential network failure. ITS also started to deploy our new wireless infrastructure in the Edinboro office and at over 50 remote locations.

Cybersecurity was a key area of focus and we made exceptional strides in implementing multi-factor authentication (MFA) across the Intermediate Unit. Other cybersecurity initiatives included off-site, cold-storage backups, testing of the Disaster Recovery Plan, and application vetting for data privacy. All these activities are contributing to the Comprehensive Plan goal of obtaining the CoSN Trusted Learning Environment seal.

Our developers and data analytics staff worked on the Summer Foods, Neglected and Delinquent (N&D), and the Student Assistance Program (SAP) applications to help our programs, and programs across the Commonwealth, gather and utilize data.

ITS designed a virtual conference system configuration to make the Pennsylvania Department of Education's SAS Institute a hybrid learning opportunity. Over the three-day event, over 80 sessions were delivered live at the Hershey Lodge as well through the virtual event platform using the IU designed room conferencing system. The virtual option allowed the 100 virtual attendees to participate in the keynote and breakout sessions.

INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS

Five meeting rooms have been updated to support remote instruction from TAC staff to districts. Two mobile carts with virtual presentation capabilities were also created to allow TAC staff flexibility in choosing a delivery location within the Edinboro office.

ITS continues to support technology in our entire IU community. Over 3,700 help tickets were addressed during the 21-22 school year. These tickets cover a wide variety of support such as laptops, phones, printers, network connectivity, file access, email, ipads, and a multitude of applications.

A new five-year copier contract was obtained that replaced all the copiers in the Edinboro, Warren EI, and Meadville EI offices. The new contract significantly reduces the IU monthly printing costs, while at the same time, providing new equipment to better meet the needs of the IU and our member districts.

We continued to take advantage of our social media and web presence through ongoing efforts to share the IU's story. Using Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, we were able to keep our customers and the community informed about the IU. We also updated our web site to have a more modern look and feel that makes it easier for visitors to find information.



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.