

BLaST Intermediate Unit #17
33 Springbrook Drive
Canton, PA 17724
(570) 673-6001

The BLaST Intermediate Unit #17 Board of Directors held their regularly scheduled meeting on August 20, 2025 in the BLaST Administration Office, 33 Springbrook Drive, Canton, Pennsylvania. This meeting was conducted via video-conferencing between the I.U. #17 Office, Canton, Pennsylvania and Sullivan Room, I.U. #17 Office, Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

1. Call to Order.

A. The meeting was called to order by Lori Baer, President, at 7:01 p.m.

2. Roll Call.

Lori Baer, President (W)	Present
Arica Jennings, Vice President (C)	Present
Debra Agnew, Treasurer (C)	Present
Cathy Bachman	Absent
Jerry Curreri	Absent
Jessie Edwards (W)	Present
Brady Finogle (Virtual)	Present
Sullivan	Vacant
Peggy Hughes (C)	Present
Muncy	Vacant
Craig Dudek (W)	Present
Sharon Meyer	Absent
Duane Naugle	Absent
Julie Preston	Absent
Chad Riley (W)	Present
Abramo Caprece (C)	Present
Michael Zicolello (W)	Present
Paula Yeckley (W)	Present
Athens	Vacant - Board Approved 10/20/21

Others present were: Tim Confer, Jennifer Dean, Erica Hoyt, Nicole Klees, Mike Levin, Sara McNett, Jon Paulhamus, Aimee Pepper, Erin Powell, April Seeley, Elizabeth Segraves, Mikaela Spalding, Cheryl Starr, Christina Steinbacher-Reed, Rebecca Swinehart, Michelle Williamson, and Dana Vermilya.

3A. Introductions were presented by Dr. Christina Steinbacher-Reed.

- 1. Michele Williamson - Supervisor**
- 2. Troy Eason – Supervisor**

A copy of the Agenda is attached as Pages 2893-1 through 2893-13.

3B. Public Comments.

None.

Mr. Caprece moved and Ms. Agnew seconded to accept an omnibus motion for the remaining agenda items.

4. Minutes.

A. Board Meeting – June 18, 2025

Minutes of the meeting held June 18, 2025 are presented. The administration recommends that these minutes be approved as presented or as amended by the Board.

5. Finance.

A. Approval of Bills

Bills from June 12, 2025 through August 13, 2025, for General Operations, Special Education, and Capital Project Fund totaling \$4,817,259.67 are attached as pages 2893-14 – 2893-27.

B. 2024-2025 Budget Revision

The 2024-2025 budgets can be viewed online at www.iu17.org, click on About BLaST, then click on the Board of Directors link and the new budgets are listed under Board Documents.

The administration recommends that the Board approve the revision to STEM in PA 2024-2025 budget. These pages are attached as pages 2893-28.

5. Finance. (continued)

C. Investment of Funds

A memorandum from the Department of Education dated February 9, 1983, stated:

It is both permissible and desirable for the school board to adopt a resolution extending blanket authority to the treasurer or other designated and qualified official to invest, redeem and reinvest funds of the district. Such investments are subject to those limitations and restrictions set forth in the School Code and other law, including provisions for assignment of Federal securities adequate to protect the investment. Requiring specific action on each transaction results in costly delays and resultant loss of income.

The State auditors have recommended that the Board adopt the following resolution each year:

The First Citizens Community Bank, Canton Branch, as depository for IU 17, is authorized, after consultation with the IU 17 administrative staff, to invest, redeem and reinvest funds, subject to those limitations and restrictions set forth in the School Code, for the 2025-2026 fiscal year.

The administration recommends that the Board adopt this resolution.

6A. Personnel, Resignations.

1. **Rhonda Bieber**, Special Education Teacher, resignation effective June 19, 2025.
2. **Jennifer Hipps**, Preschool Family Engagement Coordinator, resignation effective July 18, 2025.
3. **Mackenzie Brooks**, Administrative Assistant, resignation effective August 1, 2025.
4. **Crystal Yoder**, Special Education Teacher, resignation effective July 30, 2025.

6B. Personnel, Requests for Leave.

None.

7A. Personnel, Establishment of New Positions, New Programs, and/or Program Revisions.

1. Establishment of Position – Human Services Intern

The administration recommends that the Board authorize the establishment of two (2) Human Services Intern positions. Job description attached as pages 2895-1 – 2895-3.

2. Establishment of Position – Lead Network Engineer

The administration recommends that the Board authorize the establishment of a Lead Network Engineer position. Job description attached as pages 2895-4 – 2895-6.

3. Establishment of Position – IT Network Specialist – Level III

The administration recommends that the Board authorize the establishment of a IT Network Specialist – Level III position. Job description attached as pages 2895-7 – 2895-10.

4. Establishment of Position – IT Systems Specialist – Level III

The administration recommends that the Board authorize the establishment of a IT Systems Specialist – Level III position. Job description attached as pages 2895-11 – 2895-14.

5. Revision of Position – Assistant Executive Director

The administration recommends that the Board authorize the revision of the Assistant Executive Director position. Job description attached as pages 2895-15 – 2895-27.

6. Revision of Position – Early Intervention Family Engagement Coordinator Director

The administration recommends that the Board authorize the revision of the Early Intervention Family Engagement Coordinator position Job description attached as pages 2895-28 – 2895-34.

7B. Personnel, Employments.

1. The administration recommends Board approval of the following temporary professional and/or professional employee appointments:
 - A. **Tori Smith**, Speech/Language Therapist, effective August 1, 2025. Salary Master's Step 4 is \$64,805; 190 days prorated to actual number of days worked. Temporary professional contact. To fill position vacancy due to the resignation of Sarah Anderson. This employment is contingent upon receipt of current clearances.
 - B. **Jakob Bower**, Special Education Teacher, effective August 1, 2025. Salary Bachelor's Step 2 is \$60,675; 190 days prorated to actual number of days worked. Temporary professional contact. To fill position vacancy due to the resignation of Rhonda Bieber. This employment is contingent upon receipt of current clearances.
 - C. **Nisa Kshir**, Training and Consulting – Literacy Focused, effective August 1, 2025. Salary Doctorate Step 12 is \$80,139; 190 days prorated to actual number of days worked. To fill position vacancy due to the internal transfer of Ashley Muchler. This employment is contingent upon receipt of current clearances.
 - D. **Ashley Thomas**, Special Education Teacher, effective August 1, 2025. Salary Bachelor's Step 1 is \$59,175; 190 days prorated to actual number of days worked. Temporary professional contact. To fill position vacancy due to the resignation of Crystal Yoder. This employment is contingent upon receipt of current clearances.
 - E. **Jill Flook**, Training and Consulting – Inclusive Practice, effective August 1, 2025. Salary Master's Step 15 is \$81,305; 190 days prorated to actual number of days worked. To fill position vacancy due to the internal transfer of Kelly Sponhouse. This employment is contingent upon receipt of current clearances.
 - F. **Meaghan Mowery**, Special Education Teacher, effective August 11, 2025. Salary Bachelor's Step 1 is \$59,175; 190 days prorated to actual number of days worked. Temporary professional contact. To fill position vacancy due to the internal transfer of Jason Pipher. This employment is contingent upon receipt of current clearances.
 - G. **James Joy**, Special Education Teacher, effective August 1, 2025. Salary Bachelor's Step 1 is \$59,175; 190 days prorated to actual number of days worked. Temporary professional contact. To fill position vacancy due to the internal transfer of Christopher Carithers. This employment is contingent upon receipt of current clearances.

7B. Personnel, Employments. (continued)

- H. **Jamie Luna**, Special Education Teacher, effective August 18, 2025. Salary Master's Step 6 is \$67,805; 190 days prorated to actual number of days worked. Temporary professional contact. To fill position vacancy due to the resignation of Bailee Connors. This employment is contingent upon receipt of current clearances.
- I. **Robin Evans**, Special Education Teacher, effective August 29, 2025. Salary Bachelor's Step 1 is \$59,175; 190 days prorated to actual number of days worked. Temporary professional contact. To fill position vacancy due to the resignation of Molly Shoudt. This employment is contingent upon receipt of current clearances.

2. The administration recommends the employment of the following personnel:

- A. **Tina Randall**, Administrative Assistant to the Director of Management Services/Board Secretary, Canton office, effective July 28, 2025. Salary - \$53,000; 261 days prorated to the actual number of days worked; General Operations and Special Education Transportation Budgets. To fill vacancy created by the resignation of Teaka Wilcox. Employment in accord with Board policy on office support. This employment is contingent upon receipt of current clearances.

7C. Personnel, Abolishment of Positions.

- 1. Due to a department restructuring, the Administration recommends that the Board abolish the position of Regional Wide Area Network Director effective August 21, 2025.

7D. Personnel, Change of Work Assignment.

1. **Rachel Hunter – School Nurse**

The Administration recommends the Board approve a change in assignment for Rachel Hunter 210 days to 190 days prorated to the actual number of days worked.

2. **Jessica Schwenk – Lead Autistic Support Teacher**

Due to additional responsibilities the administration recommends that the Board approve a \$2,000 stipend for Jessica Schwenk, Lead Autistic Support Teacher, for the 2025-2026 school year.

7D. Personnel, Change of Work Assignment. (Continued)

3. Jonathan Paulhamus – Lead Network Engineer

The administration recommends that the Board authorize an internal transfer for Jonathan Paulhamus to the position of Lead Network Engineer, effective August 21, 2025, with a change in salary to \$125,000, prorated to actual number of days worked.

4. Melissa Smith – Early Intervention Family Engagement Coordinator

The administration recommends that the Board authorize an internal transfer for Melissa Smith to the position of Early Intervention Family Engagement Coordinator, effective September 3, 2025, with a change in salary to \$35,000, and a change in salary to \$36,500 upon completion of Associates degree prorated to actual number of days worked.

7E. Personnel, Extension of Work Year.

None.

7F. Personnel, Substitute Teachers and Substitute Teacher Aides.

1. The administration recommends approval of the list of substitute teachers and substitute teacher aides for the 2025-2026 school term, attached as page 2898-1.
2. The administration recommends approval of the list of Mission One employees for the 2025-2026 school term, attached as page 2898-2 – 2898-4.

7G. Personnel, Request for Internship, Observations or Student Teaching.

1. The administration requests that the Board approve Emily Horn, a student at Lebanon Valley College in the SLP graduate program, to complete their internship from Tuesday, August 25, 2025 through Friday, December 5, 2025. They will be under the total direction of one of the IU's fully certified professionals. This is contingent upon receipt of current clearances.
2. The administration requests that the Board approve Lydia Farber, a student at Lycoming College in the psychology program, to complete their internship from Tuesday, August 25, 2025 through Friday, December 5, 2025. They will be under the total direction of one of the IU's fully certified professionals. This is contingent upon receipt of current clearances.

7H. Personnel, Mentor Teachers/Supervisors.

1. The administration recommends that the Board approve the following as mentors for the 2025-2026 school year in accordance with the PDE-approved Induction Plan.

First Year Inductees' Mentors

Chris Bear	Tamara Tressler-Blewitt
Emily Bixler	Nichole Derrick
Kara Druckenmiller	Katie Goodwin
Amber Hilderbrand	Tanya Kuhl
Megan Millard	Danielle Pardoe
Jessica Schwenk	Mikaela Spalding
Kelly Sponhouse	Heather Stanton
Candida Williams	

Second Year Inductees' Mentors

Tamara Tressler-Blewitt	Heather Carlin
Kara Druckenmiller	Ashley Hess
Amber Hildebrand	Erica Hoyt
Tanya Kuhl	Danielle Pardoe
Whitney Robinson	Jeremy Sennett
Lauren Smith	

7I. Personnel, Salary Adjustments.

None.

8. Items Requiring Routine Formal Action by the Board.

A. Transportation Drivers

The administration recommends that the Board approve the list of 2025-2026 drivers to transport eligible preschool children to specialized programs, This list is attached as page 2899-1.

B. First and Second Reading of Policies

Policies for first and second reading are attached as pages 2899-2 – 2899-14.

Policy 626 VOL III	Federal Fiscal Compliance
Policy 626.1 VOL III	Travel Reimbursement – Federal Programs
Policy 827 VOL III	Conflict of Interest

8. Items Requiring Routine Formal Action by the Board. (Continued)

C. Book Study Agreement – When You Wonder, You’re Learning

The administration recommends that the Board authorize a book study agreement with Ryan Rydzewski and Gregg Behr to provide learning opportunities to our students. Total cost not to exceed \$5,000.00.

D. Building Use Agreement - Community Action Realty, Inc.

The administration recommends that the Board authorize a building use agreement with Community Action Realty, for the rental of Early Intervention classroom space at 136 Grimesville Road, Williamsport, effective August 1, 2025 through July 31, 2028; at a rate of \$700 per month, total cost of services not to exceed \$25,200.

E. Contract for Services – Adam Bastian Construction

The administration recommends that the Board approve a contract with Adam Bastian Construction for building maintenance as needed at the Canton Office at a rate of \$70 per hour with a minimum of one hour, effective July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026.

F. Contract for Services – UPMC Williamsport

The administration recommends that the Board approve a contract with UPMC Williamsport to provide physical therapy services to eligible early intervention students in Lycoming County, effective July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026. \$105 per hour for physical therapy, \$95 per hour for PTA, \$165 per evaluation and \$55 per hour for travel. Total cost not to exceed \$145,000.

G. Contract for Services – CDC’s Teen Link House – 2025-2026 School Year

The administration recommends that the Board authorize a contract with Hope Enterprises, Inc’s Children’s Development Center for the use of the Teen Link Facility for 40 days, at a rate of \$125 per day, effective October 7, 2025 through May 30, 2026. Total cost of services not to exceed \$5,375.00.

H. Contract for Services – Plan Forward

The administration recommends that the Board authorize a contract for services with Plan Forward to provide surveys, analysis, and feedback. The contract includes a partnership agreement which provides BLaST a discount as districts utilize Plan Forward and are supported by BLaST effective June 25, 2025 total cost not to exceed \$5,999.00.

8. Items Requiring Routine Formal Action by the Board. (Continued)

I. IDEA-B LEA Policies and Procedures – Department of Education

At the October 10, 2001 Board meeting, the Board approved the adoption of revised IDEA-B LEA Policies and Procedures. To ensure continued funding under IDEA-B, each LEA must again submit to the Department of Education by September 2025, policies, procedures, and programs that are consistent with State policies and procedures.

Therefore, the administration recommends that the Board authorize the adoption of the IDEA-B LEA Policies and Procedures for submission to the Department of Education to ensure continued approval and eligibility for funding under IDEA-B.

J. Increment - Master's, Master's +15 and Master's +30

Ms. Julia Kepler, Special Education Teacher, has submitted evidence that she has completed the necessary requirements for a Master's degree; **Ms. Tiffany Reynolds**, Special Education Teacher, has submitted evidence that she has completed 30 credits beyond their Master's degree.

The administration recommends that the Board approve placing Ms. Julia Kepler, and Ms. Tiffany Reynolds, on the appropriate columns for the 2025-2026 school year.

K. Engagement Letter for Services – Myers, Patsy & Associates, LLC

The administration recommends that the Board accept the Engagement Letter from Myers, Patsy & Associates, LLC for services related to the annual BLAST IU 17 audit for year ending June 30, 2025 at a cost of \$38,000.

L. Contract for Services – Enrichment Therapy Services, LLC

The administration recommends the Board approve a contract with Enrichment Therapy Services, LLC to provide speech-language/communication services for school-age and Early Intervention students in Bradford County at a rate of \$125 per hour, effective July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026.

M. Contract for Services – Dr. Matthew Reitz

The administration recommends that the Board approve a contract with Dr. Matthew Reitz for collaboration, consulting and coaching for administrators to BLAST IU17 effective October 2025 through May 2026 at a rate of \$400 per day, up to 3 days, total contract not to exceed \$1,200.

8. Items Requiring Routine Formal Action by the Board. (Continued)

N. Affiliation Agreement – Pennsylvania College of Technology

The administration recommends that the Board authorize an affiliation agreement with Pennsylvania College of Technology to utilize BLaST IU 17 facilities as a clinical experience site, effective July 1, 2025 through July 1, 2027.

O. Contract for Services – Soliant Health, LLC

The administration recommends the Board approve a contract with Soliant Health, LLC to provide telepractice services for school-age students in Sullivan and Tioga County at a rate of \$82 per hour, effective August 21, 2025 through June 4, 2026.

P. Contract for Services – Education Insights, LLC

The administration recommends the Board approve a contract with Education Insights, LLC to provide Superintendent Mentor Services at a rate of \$300 per hour for annual coaching package, and \$625 daily for Consultation and Technical Assistance, effective July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026.

Q. Personnel Handbooks

The administration recommends the Board approve the handbooks for office support personnel.

R. Contract for Services – Marcia Joyce Davis, Barton & Associates, Inc.

The administration recommends that the Board approve a contract with Barton Associates, Inc. for Marcia Joyce Davis to provide onsite and tele-psychiatry services for the North Academy for Integrated Services at a rate of \$235 per hour inclusive; effective August 22, 2025 through September 26, 2025.

S. Lease – Hope Enterprises, Inc. – Partial Hospitalization and ELECT

The administration recommends that the Board approve a lease agreement with HOPE Enterprises, Inc. to provide tenant space and cleaning services for the Partial Hospitalization Program and the ELECT Parent Resource Center, effective August 1, 2025 to July 31, 2026 at a cost not to exceed \$116,976.00

T. Lease – Hope Enterprises, Inc. - Early Intervention

The administration recommends that the Board approve a lease agreement with Hope Enterprises, Inc. to provide tenant space and cleaning services for the Early Intervention, effective August 1, 2025 through July 31, 2026, total cost of services per year not to exceed \$103,908.00.

8. Items Requiring Routine Formal Action by the Board. (Continued)

U. Memorandum of Understanding – Wilkes University

The administration recommends that the Board approve a memorandum of understanding with Wilkes University, to collaborate and support the improvement of curriculum, instruction and student achievement in our regional schools, effective August 13, 2025 through June 30, 2030.

V. Affiliation Agreement – Nazareth University

The administration recommends that the Board authorize an affiliation agreement with Nazareth University to utilize BLaST IU 17 facilities as a clinical experience site, effective August 19, 2025 for a term of 3 years.

All were in favor with the exception of Mr. Dudek, who opposed items 7A 2,3, 4 and item 8P.

9. Administrative Reports.

A. Report of Investments

The record of investments dated July 31, 2025 is presented as follows:

Year-to-Date Earnings on Investments is \$35,790.63 (4.35% Cash Management Account), First Citizens Community Bank, Canton.

Year-to-Date Earnings on Project Fund is \$7,700.89 (4.35% Capital Fund Account), First Citizens Community Bank, Canton.

B. Student Services – Ms. Swinehart

- New school year update

C. Technology Update – Mr. Confer

None.

D. Educational Planning Update – Dr. Segraves

- Inservice
- Paraeducator Conference

E. Executive Director Update – Dr. Steinbacher-Reed

- Opening Inservice
- Challenger Game

10. Other Items Raised by the Board and/or Staff.

None.

11. Adjournment.

At 7:35 p.m. Mr. Riley moved and Mr. Caprece seconded to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor.

The Board met in Executive Session for personnel, safety, and attorney advisement from 7:35 p.m. until 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sara McNett
Board Secretary