APPALACHIA INTERMEDIATE UNIT 8

COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE OF IU8 PROGRAMS, SERVICES, & PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

2025 EDITION

LEADING · LEARNING · TEACHING

Student served by IU8

IU8 regularly updates its programs, services, and professional learning opportunities.
For the most up to date version of this guide, visit the IU8 website at www.iu08.org.

SERVING:

Blair County · Bedford County · Cambria County · Somerset County

About Appalachia Intermediate Unit 8

Appalachia Intermediate Unit 8 (IU8) proudly serves 35 school districts, 5 CTCs, and 29 nonpublic schools across Blair, Bedford, Cambria, and Somerset counties in south-central Pennsylvania. As a regional educational service agency, IU8 is committed to providing high-quality programs, services, and professional learning experiences that empower educators, support students, and strengthen school communities.

This Comprehensive Guide has been developed to help school leaders understand the full range of support available through IU8. Whether you are looking for professional learning, special education services, instructional coaching, online learning options, or operational support, IU8 is here to partner with you.

> *"Every program and service in this guide reflects IU8's unwavering commitment to the students, educators, and leaders of our region." - Dr. Thomas Butler, IU8 Executive Director*

Services are organized alphabetically by IU8 program area and by name within each area. Each service card includes a title, funding model, short service narrative, and contact information for the service. Some cards proudly feature testimonials from people who have experienced our services firsthand.

Student Learning

Professional Learning

Regional leadership

BRAND

Customizing Learning Solutions

MISSION

Fostering Innovation in Learning

VISION

"We envision IU8 as a catalyst for mutually beneficial collaboration between schools and communities, driving innovation and strengthening regional well-being."

CORE VALUES

- Quality
- Professionalism
- Character
- Innovation

CORE BELIEFS

- Service
- Learning
- Customization
- Innovation

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Understanding Service Level Labels

Each service card in this guide is labeled to indicate how it is funded or accessed. This will help you quickly identify what is complementary versus what might require a conversation that leads to a service agreement.

Complementary	Services are provided at no cost to member districts and schools. Funded through IU8 state allocations, federal or state grants, or shared regional resources.
Fee-for-Service	Services with associated costs are billed to the member district or school. Funded through service agreements, contracts, or consortium fees.
Hybrid	Services that are a blend of both models. Some components are complementary while others carry a fee, depending on the level of support requested.

Business Programs & Services

Consortium purchasing, ERATE coordination, and cost-saving operational services that leverage collective regional strength.

3 Programs & Services

Image by AS Photography from Pixabay

Consortium- Paper Bid

COMPLEMENTARY

IU8 provides consortium pricing for white and colored paper via a bidding process.

Contact: Jason McMillen, Brenda Shaffer | jmcmillen@iu08.org, bshaffer@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1310; (814) 940-0223 ext. 1366

Conssortium- ERATE

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

IU8 leads all consortium coordination, filings, bidding, compliance, and management responsibilities.

Contact: Jason McMillen, Karlie Travis, David Hann | jmcmillen@iu08.org, ktravis@iu08.org, dhann@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1310; (814) 940-0223 ext. 1381; (814) 940-0223 ext. 1308

Transportation of Exceptional Children & Eligible Young Children

HYBRID

IU8 provides transportation for Early Intervention/Preschool learners and school-age students receiving special education services.

Contact: Karen Kensinger | transportation@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1374

Early Intervention Services

Specialized support for children from birth through age five, building the foundation for lifelong learning and success.

1 Programs & Services

Students in the IU8 EI/Preschool Program with Mary Beth Westin, IU8 Occupational Therapist

Embedded Instruction

COMPLEMENTARY

Embedded Instruction is an evidence-based teaching approach used primarily in early childhood and inclusive settings. It involves intentionally teaching skills within everyday routines, activities, and play, rather than through isolated drills or separate lessons. The goal is to help children learn skills in natural, meaningful contexts where they are most likely to use them.

Contact: Julie Della | Jdella@iu08.org | (814) 341-4615

Educational Programs and Services

Special education support, therapy services, data reporting, and direct student services across all four counties.

19 Programs & Services

IU8 Educational Programs and Services Supervisor team

Act 89

COMPLEMENTARY

The Act 89 program provides State funded services to non-public schools. Any student, who is a resident of the State (PA), and whose tuition is not paid by the State, is eligible to receive services if enrolled in grades K-12 within a non-public school. AIU8 Act 89 staff provide remedial reading and math support through reading and math specialists, along with certified guidance counselors who use developmentally appropriate school counseling instruction and individual referral support.

Contact: Jason Wasovich | jwasovich@iu08.org | (814) 695-5643 ext. 1360

Autism Support Classroom

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Autism Support classes are grounded in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and verbal behavior strategies. Instruction emphasizes the development of reciprocal communication skills while strengthening students' English Language Arts (ELA) and math abilities. As students progress into the upper grades, programming increasingly highlights career exploration and the development of individual strengths and interests. Fostering independence is a priority at all levels. Technology is thoughtfully integrated into instruction to ensure learning is accessible and responsive to diverse learning needs.

Contact: Dr. Sonia Schilling-Mansour | sschillingmansour@iu08.org | (814) 262-7392

Blind/Vision Support Program

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

The AUI8 Vision Support Team partners with local districts to provide specialized services for students whose visual impairments negatively affect their educational performance. Specially designed instruction may include, but is not limited to, braille and tactile materials, enlarged print, magnification tools, audiobooks, and Assistive Technology (AT). In addition to direct services delivered by a Teacher of the Visually Impaired (TVI), the team provides classroom assistant support for preparing student materials. TVIs deliver individualized instruction aligned with the Expanded Core Curriculum and support students in accessing their district's general education curriculum.

Contact: Dr. Sonia Schilling-Mansour | sschillingmansour@iu08.org | (814) 269-7392

BRIDGE

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

The AIU8 BRIDGE program offers Life Skills classrooms based in the community. This PA Department of Education/Bureau of Special Education approved instructional setting affords learners with disabilities, ages 18-22, a genuinely community-based, transitional experience. PA certified Special Education Teachers lead all BRIDGE classrooms and highly qualified Paraprofessionals support the learners. The goal of all BRIDGE programs is to offer the learner authentic instructional experiences as closely aligned to the environments of typical 18–22-year-old peers. Community partners support our learners' instructional time in community-based settings. This partnership offers valuable and authentic learning experiences that contribute to the learners' post-school success.

Contact: Jason Wasovich | jwasovich@iu08.org | (814) 695-5643 ext. 1360

County Prison Education

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

IU8 provides educational services to both regular and special education students within the Blair, Bedford, Cambria, and Somerset County correctional facilities. All instruction aligns with Pennsylvania laws, regulations, and academic standards. Eligible students are provided access to appropriate educational programming and have the opportunity to continue working toward the requirements for earning their high school diploma.

Contact: Brad Theys | btheys@iu08.org | (814) 472-7690 ext. 2304

Data Collection/Review/Verification and Reporting System for PDE/PennData Special Education Submissions

COMPLEMENTARY

Collect/review/verify special education data from all IU8 LEAs to assist with the timely and accurate submission of state and federal reporting requirements. Liaison between LEAs and PDE/PSU on errors and special situations. Train/assist LEA staff with all aspects of Special Education submissions.

Contact: Marie Link | malink@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1345

Data Governance/Quality - Training and Technical Assistance

COMPLEMENTARY

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) requests the expertise of the Commonwealth's Intermediate Units (IUs) in the design and development of plans and training for initiatives of statewide significance. Intermediate Unit Points of Contact will deliver training and provide technical assistance through the Data Quality Network and direct LEA support.

Contact: Marie Link | malink@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1345

Day and Residential Treatment Programs

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

AIU8 collaborates with Appalachian Youth Services (AYS), Extended Family Programs (EFP), and Adelphoi Enhanced Supervision to deliver educational services within day and residential treatment programs throughout the region. At these sites, IU8 teaching staff provide both regular education and special education instruction, ensuring that all students have access to appropriate, educational programming while enrolled in these programs.

Contact: Brad Theys | btheys@iu08.org | (814) 472-7690 ext. 2304

Deaf/Hard of Hearing (DHOH)

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

The AIU8 Deaf/Hard of Hearing (DHOH) serves students ages 3–21 and offers guidance and support to school personnel and families. Teachers of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing collaborate with member school districts and educational programs across the county to implement effective learning strategies for students identified with hearing loss. The program team includes certified Teachers of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing. DHOH professionals are committed to ensuring that all team members understand the educational and functional impact of hearing loss, as well as the technology necessary to support each learner's access to communication and instruction.

Contact: Dr. Sonia Schilling-Mansour | sschillingmansour@iu08.org | (814) 262-7392

Educational Audiology

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

IU8's Doctor of Audiology specializes in providing a full spectrum of audiological services within school settings. She provides screening, assessment, identification, amplification and hearing assistive technology, and management of auditory needs for eligible students ages 3-21. An Educational Audiologist is an integral part of the multidisciplinary team for students who are suspected or identified as having a hearing impairment.

Contact: Dr. Amy Woomer | awoomer@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1372

Educational Interpreting

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Educational Interpreting is a related service provided by an interpreter who has met a rigorous academic standard of knowledge and skill to be a registered interpreter in Pennsylvania. IU8's Educational Interpreters support a student who is deaf in accessing the school and classroom environment by facilitating communication access, instructional support, and environmental awareness for the student.

Contact: Dr. Amy Woomer | awoomer@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1372

Itinerant Autistic Support

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Appalachia Intermediate Unit 8 (AIU8) Itinerant Autistic Support provides specially designed instruction for students identified with autism through the MDT process. Services are delivered within the student's regular school environment to promote meaningful inclusion and success. Support focuses on training and collaborating with school staff and families to help students build skills, increase independence, and achieve academic and social success. The program facilitates team meetings to review progress, share feedback, and develop effective problem-solving strategies. Emphasis is placed on fostering successful participation in school and community activities with the least amount of adult support necessary. Instruction also targets the development of effective communication, adaptive behaviors, and increased readiness for learning to ensure students can participate as independently as possible across settings.

Contact: Dr. Sonia Schilling-Mansour | sschillingmansour@iu08.org | (814) 262-7392

IU8 Feeding Team

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

The Appalachia Intermediate Unit 8 Feeding Team exists to provide the opportunity for all students to participate in a mealtime experience across a variety of educational and natural settings. Following medical evaluation and recommendations, the Feeding Team aims to provide education, training and consultation to IEP team members. The Feeding Team's vision is to educate, consult, and train as early as possible all members of the IEP team/LEA to ensure a student is being provided the necessary supports to have a safe mealtime experience.

Contact: Dr. Kara Madara; Andrea Zern | kmadara@iu08.org; azern@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1348; (814) 262-7392 ext. 4302

Multiple Disabilities Support Classroom

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

In Multiple Disabilities Support (MDS) classrooms, fostering independence is a central focus for every student. Learners engage in hands-on activities that promote active participation and skill development through meaningful practice. Assistive Technology (AT) plays a critical role for many students with multiple disabilities. Examples include computers, augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) systems, Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) boards, head pointers, and adaptive switches. Related services are often embedded into the daily classroom routine and may include speech-language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and orientation and mobility services.

Contact: Dr. Sonia Schilling-Mansour | sschillingmansour@iu08.org | (814) 262-7392

Physical and Occupational Therapy

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

IU8 is committed to providing educationally relevant, evidence-based Physical and Occupational Therapy services. Our providers focus on identifying school-based needs focusing on participation and functional skill development. IU8 related service providers bill the school-based ACCESS program to support reimbursement and supplemental funding for our district's special education programs.

“School District: 'We have been very pleased with the OT and PT services with IU8. Dr. Madara and the service providers are beyond professional and we appreciate all that you do for our students to address their OT and PT needs.'”

Contact: Dr. Kara A. Madara, PT, DPT, CBIST | kmadara@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1348

School Based ACCESS program

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Pennsylvania’s School Based ACCESS Program (SBAP) allows the Intermediate Unit and member school districts to receive federal reimbursement for costs of IEP health-related services to medical assistance (MA) eligible special education students. Funds are used to supplement the district’s special education programs. IU8 supports local programs with on-site technical assistance and training. Twenty-three(23) school districts utilize IU8’s Access Coordinator and program support personnel to administer their local school-based ACCESS programs.

Contact: Lisa Williams | lwilliams@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1332

School Social Work Services

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

School Social Workers are master's level, Pennsylvania-licensed clinicians who are certified Home and School Visitors through the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Dedicated to removing emotional and environmental barriers to learning, they provide services in both home and school settings for students in preschool through grade 12. School Social Workers conduct psychosocial and intake assessments, provide case management and consultation, and offer individual and group counseling to students and families. They assist families in accessing community resources such as mental health services, medical assistance, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), behavioral health supports, and other human service agencies. Working collaboratively with educators, administrators, and community partners, Social Workers participate in team meetings (IEP, ISPT, CASSP), serve as liaisons between home and school, and support the development of effective interventions. AIU8 provides these services at no cost to parents across Bedford, Blair, Cambria, and Somerset counties, ensuring students and families receive comprehensive, coordinated support.

Contact: Dr. Sonia Schilling-Mansour | sschillingmansour@iu08.org | (814) 262-7392

Secondary Transition Coordinator

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

The IU8 Secondary Transition Coordinator provides comprehensive services to support students through the transition planning process. The coordinator meets individually with students to conduct interviews, administer surveys and assessments, and collaborate with agencies, employers, and community partners to develop a customized transition plan for each student. In addition, the coordinator organizes college and career fairs, coordinates college visits, facilitates job-shadowing opportunities, and conducts mock interviews. The coordinator also assists students with completing applications for postsecondary education, training programs, and employment.

Contact: Brad Theys | btheys@iu08.org | (814) 472-7690 ext. 2304

Speech and Language Pathology Services

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

IU8 is committed to providing educationally relevant, evidence-based Speech and Language Pathology services. Our providers focus on identifying school-based needs focusing on participation and functional skill development. IU8 related service providers bill the school-based ACCESS program to support reimbursement and supplemental funding for our district's special education programs.

Contact: Andrea Zern, Mary Ann Pleva | azern@iu08.org; mpleva@iu08.org | (814) 262-7392 ext. 4302; (814) 695-5643 ext. 1363

Executive Office/ Leadership Services

Leadership development, organizational learning, and strategic programs offered directly through IU8 executive leadership.

2 Programs & Services

Leadership Under Fire: Lesson's From Flight 93

Accelerated Special Education Teacher Certification Program

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Appalachia Intermediate Unit 8 (IU8), in partnership with Luzerne Intermediate Unit 18 (LIU 18), offers an accelerated Special Education Teacher Certification Program designed for individuals who hold a bachelor's degree in any field from an accredited institution. This program provides a supportive pathway for career changers and paraprofessionals seeking a Pennsylvania teaching certification in Special Education (Grades PK–12).

Contact: Dr. Jennifer Anderson | janderson@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1320

Fierce Conversations: The Workhorses of Schools and Organizations

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Fierce Conversations is a research-based professional development program grounded in the belief that organizations succeed or fail one conversation at a time. Based on the work of Susan Scott, Founder of Fierce Conversations, Inc., this program equips school and organizational leaders with the skills to engage in honest, productive dialogue that drives accountability, enriches relationships, and transforms culture. Facilitated by Dr. Anderson, a Certified Fierce Conversations Facilitator, this customizable training can be tailored to meet the specific challenges and goals of your school district or organization — from a targeted single session to a comprehensive multi-module initiative.

Contact: Dr. Jennifer Anderson | janderson@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1320

Human Resources

HR expertise, certification, mandatory training, and workforce solutions supporting IU8 staff and member districts.

5 Programs & Services

Claudia Bozek, IU8 Human Resources Manager onboarding IU8 Team Members

Administrative Salary Survey

COMPLEMENTARY

The Administrative Salary Survey is a compilation of salary data gathered from member school districts. The information is compiled in the fall and released annually to Superintendents.

Contact: Karen Makin | kmakin@iu08.org | (814) 472-7690 ext. 1316

Certification Services

COMPLEMENTARY

Assistance with certification, related requirements, applications and navigating all the pieces of certification including but not limited to Level I to Level II, emergency certification, validity, Act 48.

Contact: Karen Makin | kmakin@iu08.org | (814) 472-7690 ext. 1316

Guest Teacher Program

HYBRID

The Guest Teacher Program provides assistance to school districts with shortage of substitute teachers by training Bachelor Degree holders to be Guest Substitutes in participating districts working under emergency certification obtained by IU 8.

Contact: Karen Makin | kmakin@iu08.org | (814) 472-7690 ext. 1316

Human Resources

COMPLEMENTARY

The Human Resources Department provides services to Intermediate Unit employees and member school districts, ensuring compliance with Pennsylvania Department of Education as well as federal and state mandates.

Contact: Claudia Bozek | cbozek@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1326

Mandated Reporting

COMPLEMENTARY

Training provides information related to the requirements of mandated reporting of child abuse and neglect as defined by the Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law. Participants learn how to properly report suspected abuse along with signs and indicators of child abuse and neglect. Training is approved for Act 31 CEUs and Act 48.

Contact: Karen Makin | kmakin@iu08.org | (814) 472-7690 ext. 1316

The Division of School Excellence

The IU8 Division of School Excellence (DoSE) team offers a wide complement of professional learning experiences, coaching, and consultative services.

141 Programs & Services

The IU8 DoSE Team of Consultants

1:1 Coaching & Embedded Support for Emerging Technology Implementation

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Transform theory into practice through individual coaching cycles that include classroom modeling, co-teaching, and personalized feedback. This service provides the high-impact intervention necessary to challenge existing mindsets and support teachers directly within their unique classroom contexts. We work alongside educators to create custom resources that meet the specific needs of their diverse learners.

Contact: Matt Karabinos | mkarabinos@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1388

Acadience Math Mentor

HYBRID

The IU8 has credentialed mentors to support your school's Acadience Math needs, including teacher training using official Acadience tools and analyzing and interpreting student data.

Contact: Amanda Williamson | awilliamson@iu08.org | (814) 262-7392 ext. 4305

ACT 45 Course: Strengthening Your School's Instructional Foundation: A Leader's Guide to Success for All Students

HYBRID

This 50-hour course is designed for school and district administrators to implement and sustain high-quality, evidence-based Tier 1 instruction within an MTSS framework. Through a blend of prework, in-person sessions, and job-embedded practice, participants will develop an Action Plan that guides staff training and schoolwide implementation, ensuring successful outcomes for all students.

Contact: Dr. Megan Horsh, Amanda Williamson, Elizabeth Caton | mhorsh@iu08.org, awilliamson@iu08.org, ecaton@iu08.org | (814) 695-5643 ext. 3327; (814) 262-7392 ext. 4305; (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320

ACT 45 Course: Structured Literacy Leadership: What Administrators Need to Know!

COMPLEMENTARY

The purpose of this course, "Structured Literacy Leadership: What Administrators Need to Know!," is to ensure that leaders deepen their understanding of the Act 55, Chapter 49 legislative requirements regarding the Science of Reading and Structured Literacy and that they are better prepared to lead and support their staff in increasing reading achievement for all students, particularly diverse learners. This training will outline and review leading research in literacy, identify big ideas in reading instruction, and assist education leaders to analyze their core reading program and make determinations about instructional gaps in their current literacy program. In addition, leaders will be able to understand the importance and be able to evaluate how teachers and systems leverage efficient instructional practices including explicit instruction to improve outcomes for students within a Structured Literacy Framework. Finally, the training will help school leaders understand Structured Literacy within an MTSS framework, through assessment and instruction, in response to students' needs and increasing support for students with below grade level skills.

Contact: Dr. Megan Horsh, Amanda Williamson, Elizabeth Caton | mhorsh@iu08.org, awilliamson@iu08.org, ecaton@iu08.org | (814) 695-5643 ext. 3327; (814) 262-7392 ext. 4305; (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320

Act 91 Paraprofessionals as Classroom Monitors Training

COMPLEMENTARY

IU8 offers in-person and virtual training opportunities designed to equip paraeducators with the skills, confidence, and knowledge necessary to safely and effectively serve as substitutes when needed. These trainings focus on strengthening paraeducators' understanding of instructional practices, classroom management, student support strategies, and school procedures, ensuring they are fully prepared to step into a substitute role with competence and professionalism.

Contact: Donald Arotin | darotin@iu08.org | (814) 479-7690 ext. 4306

AI + AR/VR Fusion Projects

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Position your district as a regional leader by exploring the intersection of AI-powered content generation and immersive VR environments. These projects challenge students to use emerging tech for design-thinking tasks, such as creating AI-generated 3D models for virtual field trips. This cross-technology approach fosters the high-level critical thinking and creativity required for future-ready learners.

Contact: Matt Karabinos | mkarabinos@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1388

AI Policy & Guidance Development

HYBRID

Navigate the complex legal and ethical landscape of AI with customized acceptable use policies and academic integrity guidelines. We prioritize data privacy, security protocols, and equity to ensure your district remains compliant while fostering an environment of innovation. These resources provide the essential guardrails needed for safe and responsible implementation by both staff and students.

Contact: Matt Karabinos | mkarabinos@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1388

AI Readiness Assessment & Strategic Planning

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

We conduct a comprehensive audit of your district's current landscape using the CURVE framework to identify specific growth opportunities. This process involves deep stakeholder engagement to ensure a shared vision across administration, staff, and the community. The final deliverable is a customized three-year roadmap that aligns technological adoption with your district's long-term goals.

Contact: Matt Karabinos | mkarabinos@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1388

AI Tool Evaluation & Procurement Consulting

HYBRID

Districts are often overwhelmed by the rapid proliferation of new tools, and we provide the expert vetting necessary to make informed decisions. We perform security reviews, cost-benefit analyses, and pilot program evaluations to ensure your tech stack remains effective and streamlined. This service connects your district's specific instructional needs with the most reliable and secure emerging technologies available.

Contact: Matt Karabinos | mkarabinos@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1388

AR/VR Pedagogical Integration

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Move beyond novelty by integrating Augmented and Virtual Reality into your core curriculum through intentional mapping and lesson design. We provide comprehensive hardware consultation and teacher training to ensure these immersive tools are used to enhance student engagement and understanding. Our support extends from initial deployment to facilitating complex student-led virtual projects.

Contact: Matt Karabinos | mkarabinos@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1388

Art Network

COMPLEMENTARY

The Art Network, an ACT 48 opportunity, provides regional art teachers with ongoing professional growth and networking opportunities, including but not limited to discussing instructional strategies, resources, and practical applications; examining project-based learning and art courses; highlighting career pathways in art; brainstorming art enrichment opportunities; engaging in art and community connections; and staying informed with PDE updates.

Contact: Lydia Dobrowolsky-Casale, Tracy Rains | ldobrocasale@iu08.org, trains@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1380; ext. 1322

Assistive Technology

COMPLEMENTARY

Assistive Technology consultation services will be provided in the form of individual, staff, and/or parent training and technical assistance concerning the recommendation and implementation of research-based instructional strategies that have proven successful for students who can benefit from the use of assitive technology. These services can include: assessment of a child's needs for assistive technology; providing the appropriate framework and guidance while recommending possible strategies/devices for a trial and/or implementation; providing assistance in securing devices to be used on a trial basis as well as providing training and guidance for operation and implementation of devices and strategies; providing ongoing support for the students, teachers, parents, paraeducators, and administrators while using these devices on loan; providing information to assist the team in developing goals and SDIs for the student in reference to AT, information may be provided for families, students, paraeducators, day care providers and therapists to ensure appropriate implementation and generalization of AT utilization; connection with device representatives to provide further training and support; training for assistance for those working with the student on troubleshooting and upgrading of AT devices through specific companies; strategies to include students using AT devices in daily classroom activities and community based instruction.

Contact: Mandy Livai | mlivai@iu08.org | (814) 695-5643 ext. 3306

Autism Training & Consultation

COMPLEMENTARY

Autism consultation service will be provided in the form of individual, staff, and/or parent training and consultation concerning the recommendation and implementation of research-based instructional strategies that have proven successful for students with Autism. Consultative services can include: ABA Support in conjuction with PaTTAN; assistance with the creation and implementation of behavior plans for students with Autism; goal setting; record keeping and maintenance; communication consultation and support for non-verbal students; teaching social skills; integration of related services such as OT, PT, and Speech; training for general education teachers; creating visual schedules and routines; sensory activities/breaks; planning for transitions and schedule changes; community based instruction; daily living skills; as well as best practices to incorporate students into the general education curriculum as much as possible.

Contact: Mandy Livai | mlivai@iu08.org | (814) 695-5643 ext. 3306

Behavioral Focused Consultation

COMPLEMENTARY

Behavioral Focused Consultation is a short-term, IDEA-funded service that is student-centered and staff-focused, designed to enhance staff capacity in addressing challenging behavior. Consultation includes classroom observation, interviews, information gathering, and analysis of environmental and instructional factors influencing student behavior. Service delivery includes contextual analysis of behavior, actionable feedback, and intervention recommendations to help staff better understand behavioral mechanisms and implement effective, efficient support strategies.

Contact: Mark DeRubeis | mderubeis@iu08.org | (814) 932-6903

Behavioral Training & Consultation

COMPLEMENTARY

IU8 offers comprehensive training, coaching, and consultation services designed to strengthen effective behavior support systems across educational settings. Our services focus on equipping educators, support staff, and administrators with practical, evidence-based strategies that promote positive student behavior and foster supportive learning environments. Key areas of support include, but are not limited to: Classroom Management: Guidance on establishing clear expectations, creating structured routines, and implementing proactive strategies that minimize disruptions and maximize instructional time; Verbal De-escalation: Training on calm, effective communication techniques that help staff safely and confidently respond to escalating behaviors while preserving student dignity and maintaining safety; Restorative Practices: Coaching on relationship-centered approaches that emphasize accountability, community building, and conflict resolution, helping schools move from punitive models to restorative, student-centered solutions. Our behavior support offerings can be tailored to meet the unique needs of individual educators, teams, or entire school systems, ensuring sustainable skill development and improved student outcomes.

Contact: Donald Arotin, Brad Theys | darotin@iu08.org , btheys@iu08.org | (814) 472-7690; (814) 472-7690

Book Study for Administrators

COMPLEMENTARY

IU8 provides administrators with book studies consisting of multiple one-hour after-school Zoom sessions focused on establishing structured literacy systems within their schools. These sessions offered meaningful opportunities for administrators to collaborate, share ideas, and learn together.

Contact: Jennifer Herncane | jherncane@iu08.org | (814) 935-4427

Book Study for Teachers

COMPLEMENTARY

IU8 provides teachers with a book study consisting of multiple one-hour after-school Zoom sessions focused on a specific text centered on literacy strategies, best practices, and explicit instruction. The sessions offered meaningful opportunities for teachers to collaborate, share ideas, and learn together.

Contact: Jennifer Hernane | jherncane@iu08.org | (814) 935-4427

BrainSTEPS

COMPLEMENTARY

The BrainSTEPS program was created in 2007 and is jointly funded by the PA Department of Health and the PA Department of Education/Bureau of Special Education and is implemented by the Brain Injury Association of PA through the PaTTAN network. The IU8 BrainSTEPS team has worked directly with over 230 students from over 30 school districts and cyber programs since implementation of the program. The team provides 'Return to Learn' support for students who have sustained acquired brain injuries, consultation for school re-entry planning, and training on acquired brain injuries.

“From BrainSTEPS Regional Team Liaison: As I go through the annual update calls, I’m reminded of the gratitude from the families you've supported over the years. Parents who were once scared and confused have shared heartfelt thanks for your help in navigating the educational process. Your work truly makes a difference, and I hope you all know how much parents appreciate your support, guidance, and compassion. Many have told me, “I don’t know what we would have done without BrainSTEPS.””

Contact: Dr. Kara A. Madara, PT, DPT, CBIST | kmadara@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1348

C-R-A Math Instruction Workshops

COMPLEMENTARY

The CRA (Concrete-Representational-Abstract) instructional approach is a three-stage teaching method for mathematics. It helps students build meaningful connections by progressing through concrete, representational, and abstract levels of understanding. IU8 can provide hands-on training for teachers on the CRA approach for whole-number operations, fractions, and pre-algebra.

Contact: Amanda Williamson | awilliamson@iu08.org | (814) 262-7392 ext. 4305

Check and Connect

HYBRID

IU8 provides comprehensive training, ongoing support, and consultation to school buildings that are planning to implement or are currently implementing the Check & Connect Mentor Framework. Services are designed to build staff capacity, ensure fidelity of implementation, and support long-term sustainability of the framework within the school community. Check & Connect is a research□based dropout prevention and student engagement intervention. The framework focuses on increasing students' engagement with school through consistent mentoring, systematic monitoring of indicators related to attendance, behavior, and academic performance, and timely, individualized intervention.

Contact: Brad Theys | btheys@iu08.org | (814) 472-7690 ext. 2304

Chief Science Officers (CSO)

COMPLEMENTARY

The Chief Science Officers (CSO) Program is a student-led initiative empowering middle and high schoolers to be STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) leaders and ambassadors in their schools and communities, focusing on advocacy, hands-on experience, building leadership skills, and creating STEM opportunities through peer-driven projects and an action plan model, fostering a global network of diverse young STEM innovators.

Contact: Sarah Brambley | sbrambley@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1364

Coaching for Principals and Curriculum Leaders

HYBRID

Engage in individualized coaching to strengthen leadership practices that support effective curriculum, instruction, and assessment and beyond. This service focuses on reflective dialogue, goal setting, and problem-solving connected to instructional leadership priorities, building goals, and district initiatives. The outcome is increased leadership capacity, clearer next moves, and sustained improvement in teaching and learning.

Contact: Lydia Dobrowolsky-Casale | ldobrocasale@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1380

Comprehensive School Climate Improvement Process Framework & Consultation

COMPLEMENTARY

IU8 provides full implementation support for the complete 5-Stage School Climate Improvement Process developed by the National School Climate Center (NSCC) and adopted and adapted by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. This comprehensive service includes IU8 consultation and support throughout each stage of the process, giving school entities the tools and guidance needed to drive meaningful, lasting change.

Contact: Sara Quay & Dr. Jennifer Anderson | squay@iu08.org & janderson@iu08.org | (814) 502-5134; (814) 940-0223 ext. 1320

Comprehensive School Climate Improvement Process Framework & Consultation (Per Stage)

COMPLEMENTARY

For school entities that do not require the full 5-Stage implementation, IU8 offers targeted support for individual stages of the NSCC School Climate Improvement Process. Districts and schools may select one or more stages based on their current needs and point of entry in the improvement cycle. Stages: Preparation, Evaluation, Action Planning, Implementation, and Re-Evaluation.

Contact: Sara Quay | squay@iu08.org | (814) 502-5134

Comprehensive School Climate Improvement: Program & Data Audit with Data Interpretation & Facilitated Discussion

COMPLEMENTARY

IU8 conducts a comprehensive, systemic review of the school entity's existing programs and data to provide a rich, grounded understanding of current school climate. This audit-based service illuminates both universal and targeted factors shaping the school environment.

Contact: Sara Quay | squay@iu08.org | (814) 502-5134

Content Literacy Series

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

IU8 offers a three-day Content Literacy Series for teachers across all content areas. The purpose of this series is to strengthen reading, writing, and speaking in all content classrooms, and teachers will leave with practical strategies to actively engage learners. Schools are encouraged to send teams of teachers to support collaboration and consistency across classrooms.

Contact: Jennifer Herncane | jherncane@iu08.org | (814) 935-4427

Counselor Network

COMPLEMENTARY

The counselor network supports district school counselors with shared resources, collaboration, and professional learning. The network includes recent PDE updates from the PDE counselor advisor. The network stays aligned with PDE to help counselors implement effective student support.

Contact: Tracy Rains | trains@iu08.org | (814) 243-4845

Curriculum Alignment

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Ensure curriculum is vertically and horizontally aligned across grade levels, courses, and content areas. This service examines standards alignment, coherence of learning progressions, and consistency of instructional expectations and assessments. The result is a clearly aligned curriculum that reduces gaps, redundancies, and variability in student learning experiences. When to choose this service: When there are suspected gaps, overlaps, or inconsistencies across grades, courses, or schools.

Contact: Lydia Dobrowolsky-Casale | ldobrocasale@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1380

Curriculum Audit

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Gain a comprehensive, system-level review of curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices across schools or programs. This service examines alignment to standards, consistency of implementation, equity of access, and overall system coherence. The audit provides a clear picture of current reality and serves as a guide for strategic planning and next moves. When to choose this service: When needing a big-picture understanding of curriculum systems to inform long-term planning or improvement efforts.

Contact: Lydia Dobrowolsky-Casale | ldobrocasale@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1380

Curriculum Development and Research

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Leverage research-informed support to design or refine curriculum grounded in standards, evidence-based practices, and local priorities. This service includes reviewing current research, analyzing district data, and translating findings into clear curriculum frameworks and design principles. The result is a research-backed foundation that informs curriculum decisions and guides high-quality instructional practice. When to choose this service: When building new curriculum, updating outdated practices, or wanting to research to drive instructional decisions.

Contact: Lydia Dobrowolsky-Casale | ldobrocasale@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1380

Curriculum Evaluation

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Examine curriculum quality, coherence, and effectiveness using established criteria and evidence. This service includes reviewing curriculum documents, instructional materials, assessments, and available student data. The outcome is clear feedback and recommendations that guide improvement and inform future curriculum decisions. When to choose this service: When seeking objective feedback on curriculum quality before revising, adopting, or scaling.

Contact: Lydia Dobrowolsky-Casale | ldobrocasale@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1380

Curriculum Implementation

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Operationalize curriculum from written documents into effective classroom practice. This service includes implementation planning, professional learning, instructional guidance, and monitoring tools to support fidelity and adaptability. The result is increased consistency, confidence, and impact in curriculum use across classrooms and schools. When to choose this service: When curriculum exists but is not implemented consistently or effectively.

Contact: Lydia Dobrowolsky-Casale | ldobrocasale@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1380

Curriculum Network

COMPLEMENTARY

Curriculum Network meetings keep districts synchronized with Pennsylvania Department of Education mandates and IU8 Curriculum Team initiatives. These collaborative sessions provide essential updates, guidance, and resources on current curriculum and assessment topics. Participants stay informed about state requirements and emerging best practices to support their district's instructional programs.

Contact: Janel Vancas | jvancas@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1389

Curriculum Writing and/or Revisions

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Develop or refine targeted support to write new curriculum or revise existing curriculum to ensure clarity, coherence, and usability for educators. This service includes developing or refining scope and sequence documents, units, assessments, and instructional expectations aligned to district priorities. The result is a high-quality, ready-to-implement curriculum that supports consistent instruction and continuous improvement. When to choose this service: When curriculum needs to be written, updated, clarified, or made more usable for teachers.

Contact: Lydia Dobrowolsky-Casale | ldobrocasale@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1380

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Book Studies for Leaders

COMPLEMENTARY

The book studies provide district and building leaders with facilitated learning focused on strengthening curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices. This service includes structured discussion, guided reflection, and intentional application of key ideas to local contexts and current initiatives. The result is shared understanding, aligned leadership practices, and clear next moves that translate learning into action.

Contact: Lydia Dobrowolsky-Casale | ldobrocasale@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1380

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Consultation

HYBRID

Receive personalized guidance to strengthen curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The consultation clarifies strengths and gaps and serves as a clear guide for next moves, providing actionable recommendations and an implementation plan that builds internal capacity and supports continuous improvement. When to choose this service: When clarity on current practices and strategic guidance is needed to determine priorities and next steps.

Contact: Lydia Dobrowolsky-Casale | ldobrocasale@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1380

CURVE-Based Professional Learning Network (PLN)

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Join a regional community of practice through a membership model that offers monthly virtual sessions and quarterly in-person conferences. Members gain exclusive access to a curated AI resource library and a private online community for real-time collaboration and knowledge sharing. This network serves as a sustainable feedback loop, keeping your district at the forefront of emerging educational trends.

Contact: Matt Karabinos | mkarabinos@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1388

Customized AI Literacy and Emerging Technology PD

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

We offer four distinct tracks tailored for all stakeholders, from foundational literacy for staff to leadership academies for administrators. These sessions focus on practical applications like lesson redesign, assessment strategies, and student-led AI ambassador programs. By making PD job-embedded and content-specific, we ensure that new skills are immediately applicable in the classroom.

Contact: Matt Karabinos | mkarabinos@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1388

Digging Deeper into Text Dependent Analysis 3 Day Series (In house)

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

This three-day professional learning session examines the mini-lessons that should be incorporated into Grades 3–8 ELA classrooms to support students in successful Text Dependent Analysis (TDA) writing. Participants will explore key instructional strategies, including deconstructing the prompt, understanding ELA standards and eligible content, locating and using evidence, making inferences, analyzing text through close reading, and developing strong written responses. This session is designed to provide practical tools and strategies that teachers can immediately implement to strengthen student writing and comprehension skills.

Contact: Jennifer Herncane | jherncane@iu08.org | (814) 935-4427

Discovery Learning Consortium

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Districts purchase Discover Learning at a discount through IU 8.

Contact: Brenda Calhoun | bcalhoun@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1357

District and Building Curriculum Cycles

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Create or refine district and building curriculum cycles that establish clear timelines, roles, and processes for curriculum review, revision, and implementation. This service clarifies decision-making structures, stakeholder involvement, and expectations across multi-year cycles. The result is a sustainable, transparent system that supports consistency, accountability, and continuous improvement. When to choose this service: When curriculum work feels reactive, inconsistent, or lacks a clear long-term plan.

Contact: Lydia Dobrowolsky-Casale | ldobrocasale@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1380

District and Building Curriculum Guides

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Create or refine district and building curriculum guides that clearly communicate expectations for curriculum, instruction, and assessment. This service includes defining required components, levels of flexibility, timelines, and alignment to district priorities and standards. The result is a clear, usable guide that supports coherence, shared understanding, and consistent implementation across schools. When to choose this service: When districts or buildings need clearer guidance on curriculum expectations, processes, and responsibilities.

Contact: Lydia Dobrowolsky-Casale | ldobrocasale@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1380

Educational Technology Law Pool Consortium

COMPLEMENTARY

Serve as host organization for the Sweet, Stevens, Katz and Williams Technology Law Pool. Districts opt in to receive legal guidance regarding technology and technology education.

Contact: Brenda Calhoun | bcalhoun@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1364

English as a Second Language Consortium of Schools

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Pennsylvania school districts and charter schools must provide English as a Second Language or bilingual-bicultural programs for students with limited English proficiency to meet state and federal standards for identified English Learner(s). Instruction in ESL/ELD must be delivered by PDE ESL certified teachers using the PA ESL Standards and the WIDA ELD Standards Framework. Appalachia IU8 provides schools with the knowledge, guidance, and ability to meet those requirements.

“Since 2002, Appalachia IU8 has annually served the ESL/ELD requirements of 35-40 public, charter, centers for technology, and private schools in seven Pennsylvania counties, including the training of ESL Program Specialists through our PDE accredited, graduate level ESL Program. Hundreds of our graduates from our ESL Program serve as certified ESL/ELD instructors across Pennsylvania and the United States, including South Carolina, Virginia, Alaska, Florida, and New Mexico. Indeed, graduates have found work with the federal government in the U.S. State Department, foreign services, and international businesses. - Erin Cornelius, Graduate of the ESL Program”

Contact: Leonard J. Shurin | lshurin@iu08.org | (814) 695-5643 ext. 3332

ESL Consultative Services

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

This customized service is for districts, charter schools, distance learning schools, and private schools that do not desire at the moment to be in the ESL Consortium, but prefer to have a consultation on an ESL issue in the form of a meeting, workshop, presentation to staff/and or parents, help with ESL documents, etc. Usually, services are for a half-day or a full day. A fee is agreed upon priority to training.

“Evaluations from this type of service typically are identified as "very satisfied" through telephone calls, texts, or emails.”

Contact: Leonard J. Shurin, Curriculum and Staff Developer, ESL Program Specialist. | lshurin@iu08.org | (814) 695-5643 ext. 3332

ESL Network: "Leading Language Learning: English as a Second Language Essentials for School Leaders and Administrators". No cost for members of the ESL Consortium; small fee for those not in the ESL Consortium.

HYBRID

Many School supervisors and administrators want to increase their knowledge and viability in providing the highest quality education and the best ESL Program for English Learners in their school or district. This series of trainings are intended to help school supervisors and administrators reach those objectives quickly.

“Ms. Dawn Dunbar, ESL Instructor, Greater Johnstown School District: "I learned so much! Very well presented with valuable information and applicable immediately to our ESL Program.""

Contact: Leonard J. Shurin, Curriculum and Staff Developer, ESL Program Specialist. | lshurin@iu08.org | (814) 695-5643 ext. 3332

Esports

COMPLEMENTARY

The Pennsylvania Scholastic Esports League (PSEL) is an organization led by the Chester County Intermediate Unit (CCIU). PSEL plays a vital role in the growth of educational esports within the state. PSEL facilitates two seasons of competitive play.

Contact: Tracy Rains | trains@iu08.org | (814) 243-4845

Family Engagement

COMPLEMENTARY

Services focus on building staff capacity through practical professional learning, family-friendly tools, and communication strategies that improve collaboration, reduce conflict, and increase family participation in special education processes. This service also helps districts assess current practices, address gaps, and develop sustainable approaches to family partnership that improve trust, compliance, and student outcomes.

Contact: Elizabeth Caton | ecaton@iu08.org | (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320

Family Engagement–Partnership Quick Tips

COMPLEMENTARY

The IU8 consultant will provide our Partnership Quick Tips Newsletter each month, focusing on key problem-solving strategies related to family engagement in today's world. Each issue will spotlight a specific area, offering actionable tips that can be implemented easily. This information is designed to be practical but also customizable to your specific district needs.

Contact: Elizabeth Caton | ecaton@iu08.org | (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320

FIRST LEGO League Challenge

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

This is an affiliate partnership program for students in grades 4-8 that combines robotics, programming, and real-world problem solving. Teams must register through FIRST, sign up for the Central PA Championship event, and register through Appalachia IU8. The PA Central Championship sponsored by the IU8 is held in January or February each year.

Contact: Matt Karabinos | mkarabinos@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1388

FIRST LEGO League Explore

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Designed for younger students in grades 2-4 (ages 6-10), this program builds early interest in STEM through hands-on learning. Students build models using LEGO Education SPIKE Essentials and create Show Me posters to present their learning, guided by FIRST Core Values of discovery, innovation, impact, inclusion, teamwork, and fun. The season-ending showcase is typically held in March at Saint Francis University. There is a $35 fee for teams to register for the event through the IU8.

Contact: Matt Karabinos | mkarabinos@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1388

Gifted Boot Camp

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Gifted Boot Camp is a two-day training crafted by the state gifted leads to equip educators with the information in Chapter 16 and information on writing Gifted Individual Education Plans.

Contact: Sarah Brambley | sbrambley@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1364

Gifted Network

COMPLEMENTARY

The Gifted Network is an innovative initiative created to meet the unique needs of gifted students and teachers within IU8 districts, and helping teachers fulfill the requirements set forth through Chapter 16. Here Educators learn from one another, fostering a collaborative environment and sharing best practices. This network convenes biannually, fostering in-person collaborations that are both enriching and empowering.

Contact: Sarah Brambley | sbrambley@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1364

Implementation Supports for UFLI (University of Florida Literacy Institute) [MTSS]

COMPLEMENTARY

IU8 Staff provides professional development, customized consultation, and/or technical assistance for districts implementing UFLI as an evidence-based reading program focused on structured, explicit phonics instruction. IU8 staff can provide support during initial implementation of UFLI, support data analysis, provide coaching for implementers on the instructional routines, differentiation, scaffolded supports, and help review lesson mastery data to support fidelity of the program.

"We greatly appreciate the support that you and the team are providing to our teachers. -Elissa Boyd, Forest Hills Elementary Assistant Principal"

Contact: Elizabeth Caton, Dr. Megan Horsh | ecaton@iu08.org; mhorsh@iu08.org | (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320; (814) 695-5643 ext. 3327

Inclusive Practices/LRE

COMPLEMENTARY

The IU8 Consultant supports school districts by strengthening educators' ability to design and deliver instruction that meets the needs of all learners in inclusive settings. Services focus on scaffolded supports such as direct and explicit instruction, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), differentiation, co-teaching, and high-leverage practices, paired with coaching, collaborative planning, and targeted resource support. This work helps districts build consistent, long-lasting instructional practices that increase access to grade-level content, improve outcomes for students with disabilities, and support inclusive systems aligned to IDEA expectations. The Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) is identified in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) as one of the principles governing students with disabilities and other special needs. By law, schools provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment relevant to individual students' needs.

Contact: Elizabeth Caton | ecaton@iu08.org | (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320

Inclusive Practices/LRE

COMPLEMENTARY

The IU8 Consultant helps school districts strengthen inclusive instructional practices so all learners can access grade-level content and succeed. Support includes explicit instruction, UDL, differentiation, co-teaching, high-leverage practices, coaching, collaborative planning, and targeted resources. This work improves outcomes for students with disabilities and supports district systems aligned to IDEA, FAPE, and LRE expectations.

"At IU8, our work not only with districts, but within our own programs, is grounded in a shared commitment to inclusive education and the belief that all students can succeed when instruction is intentionally designed to address learner variability. Our education system is experiencing an increase in students with complex support needs, including students with autism, so it is imperative that programs strengthen systems that support educators in delivering high-quality instruction within the general education classroom and in the Least Restrictive Environment. Through collaborative consultation, observation, and customized professional learning, the IU has diligently worked to support districts in building educator capacity around Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Differentiated Instruction, and inclusive MTSS practices. The IU consultants and staff recognize that effective implementation requires more than training alone. Consultants work alongside district leaders and teachers to establish a strong foundation in understanding learner variability, fostering reflective practice, and building positive, inclusive mindsets. Professional learning is intentionally designed to be responsive to each district's context, balancing on-site coaching with asynchronous supports while acknowledging challenges such as limited collaboration time and varying levels of prior experience. -Andrea Zern, IU8 Supervisor."

Contact: Elizabeth Caton | ecaton@iu08.org | (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320

Inclusive Practices–Co-Teaching Quick Tips

COMPLEMENTARY

Each month you'll receive our Co-Teaching Quick Tips Newsletter, focused on key strategies for successful co-teaching. Each issue will spotlight a specific area, offering bite-sized, actionable tips you can use right away. These strategies are designed to be easy to implement and help clear up common misconceptions about co-teaching.

Contact: Elizabeth Caton | ecaton@iu08.org | (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320

Inclusive Practices–Co-Teaching Support and Coaching

COMPLEMENTARY

The IU8 consultant can train and coach educators on the implementation of co-teaching best practices which could include: the various types of co-teaching models, explicit instruction, Instructional Hierarchy to ensure effective differentiation, and the usage of formative assessments. Training on implementing evidence-based strategies can be provided on-site followed by in-class coaching and support.

Contact: Elizabeth Caton; Mandy Livai | ecaton@iu08.org; mlivai@iu08.org | (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320; (814) 940-0223 ext. 3306

Inclusive Practices–Complex Learner Network

COMPLEMENTARY

This professional development focuses on high-leverage practices, instructional strategies, and networking for those who work with complex learners. Learn about research, resources, and strategies for complex learners that will diversify your teaching tool belt to ensure achievement for all learners.

Contact: Elizabeth Caton | ecaton@iu08.org | (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320

Inclusive Practices–Differentiation Support and Coaching

COMPLEMENTARY

The IU8 consultant can train and coach educators on differentiation supports and evidence based practices which could include: the various ways of differentiating instruction based on the Instructional Hierarchy, utilizing formative assessments to inform instruction, departmental structure and planning, and provide resources. Training on implementing evidence-based strategies can be provided on-site followed by in-class coaching and support.

Contact: Elizabeth Caton; Mandy Livai | ecaton@iu08.org; mlivai@iu08.org | (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320; (814) 940-0223 ext. 3306

Inclusive Practices–Direct and Explicit Instruction

COMPLEMENTARY

The IU8 consultant can train and coach classrooms to focus on clear, structured, and targeted teaching methods that make learning accessible to all students by breaking down complex skills into manageable steps, modeling behaviors, and providing immediate, scaffolded feedback. Training on implementing direct and explicit instruction can be provided on-site followed by in-class coaching and support.

Contact: Elizabeth Caton | ecaton@iu08.org | (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320

Inclusive Practices–High Leverage Practices

COMPLEMENTARY

The IU8 consultant supports school districts in implementing High Leverage Practices by facilitating targeted professional development, providing collaborative co-planning, coaching, and analyzing student data to refine teaching strategies. The ultimate goal is to build capacity within teams to ensure these essential practices become a sustainable part of the district's pedagogical culture.

Contact: Elizabeth Caton | ecaton@iu08.org | (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320

Inclusive Practices–IEP/504 Collaboration

COMPLEMENTARY

The IU8 consultant can provide support and discussion around IEP and 504 compliance and implementation. The goal is to support teachers by translating accommodation plans into practical, daily classroom strategies.

Contact: Elizabeth Caton | ecaton@iu08.org | (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320

Inclusive Practices–Program Audit for Inclusion

COMPLEMENTARY

The IU8 consultant can support districts by assisting with the review of current classroom materials to identify barriers and recommend adjustments to increase accessibility for all students. The consultant can work with you to examine your programming through a lens of equity and accessibility, ensuring it meets the diverse needs of all students.

Contact: Elizabeth Caton | ecaton@iu08.org | (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320

Inclusive Practices–Scaffolded Supports

COMPLEMENTARY

The IU8 consultant helps school districts move beyond theoretical knowledge to actionable implementation of scaffolding techniques in daily lessons. The consultant provides targeted coaching to help teachers identify specific learning barriers and apply precise supports that foster student independence. Together, we ensure scaffolding is a proactive, systemic component of your district's inclusive practices.

Contact: Elizabeth Caton | ecaton@iu08.org | (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320

Inclusive Practices–Strength Based IEPs: Unlocking Student Potential

COMPLEMENTARY

This professional development will reshape how we approach Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). Rather than focusing on deficits, participants will learn strategies to construct strengths-based IEPs that provide a holistic view of students as unique learners and incorporate supports that make their strengths productive. The goal is to increase student engagement, confidence, and self-advocacy as well as facilitating better communication and collaboration with families.

Contact: Elizabeth Caton | ecaton@iu08.org | (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320

Inclusive Practices–Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Framework

COMPLEMENTARY

The IU8 consultant can train and coach classrooms on the implementation of the UDL framework which can include: collaborating to address barriers to learning, conducting observations with specific UDL focused lenses, integrating appropriate technology tools, supporting the design of alternative assessment methods to demonstrate mastery in diverse ways. Training on UDL can be provided on-site followed by in-class coaching and support.

Contact: Elizabeth Caton | ecaton@iu08.org | (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320

Interagency Coordination

COMPLEMENTARY

Interagency Coordination at Appalachia Intermediate Unit 8 is designed to support school teams and families when a student's needs extend beyond a single system and require coordinated planning across education, behavioral health, and community or county-based services. This service is particularly helpful in complex cases involving program, placement, or access-to-services challenges. The Interagency Coordinator facilitates collaborative problem-solving meetings, helps clarify roles and responsibilities among involved parties, identifies service gaps, and assists teams in navigating available resources so students can access appropriate supports and educational programming.

Contact: Mark DeRubeis | mderubeis@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1386

Interscholastic Reading Competition

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

This competition has been running since 1990 and provides over 1,600 students in grades 4-12 the opportunity to test their knowledge about books they've read. The competition is held in fall and spring with separate dates for elementary and middle/high school divisions. Teams cost $125 each and must bring 2 volunteers to serve as moderators/scorekeepers.

Contact: Matt Karabinos | mkarabinos@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1388

IU8 Canvas

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Serving as the host and administrator of the IU8 Canvas account involves overseeing platform management, user access, and course organization to ensure a smooth experience for educators and learners. The role includes providing training, troubleshooting support, and guidance on effective instructional use of Canvas tools. It also requires maintaining system integrity, communicating updates, and aligning the platform with instructional and organizational goals.

Contact: Tracy Rains | trains@iu08.org | (814) 243-4845

IU8 Instructional Coaching Network

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

The IU8 Instructional Coaching Network is a monthly meeting designed to support instructional coaches and provide professional learning on best practices and support for working with adult learners. Coaches engage in collaborative discussions, share strategies, and build their coaching skills through targeted professional development. Participation in the network also includes a mentor who provides individualized support to coaches within their school setting.

Contact: Jennifer Herncane | jherncane@iu08.org | (814) 935-4427

IU8 Math Teacher Network

COMPLEMENTARY

The IU8 Math Network is an opportunity to learn and collaborate with fellow math instructors. Utilizing the science of learning and following recommendations by the experts driving the science of math movement, these networking sessions provide our IU8 area teachers and administrators the opportunity to strengthen their instruction and improve student achievement!

Contact: Amanda Williamson | awilliamson@iu08.org | (814) 262-7392 ext. 4305

IU8 School Psychologist and Social Worker Consortium

COMPLEMENTARY

The IU8 School Psychologists' and Social Workers' Consortium provides professional development for this group of educational specialists whose role is to support students, families, and school personnel. Professional learning opportunities will focus on current trends in student social, health, behavioral, and academic issues and strategies to assist with overcoming barriers to learning. Additionally, School Psychologists and Social Workers will be able to network with other professionals in these highly specialized areas.

Contact: Dr. Megan Horsh | mhorsh@iu08.org | (814) 695-5643 ext. 3327

Learning Environment and Engagement Initiative-- New Teacher Supports

COMPLEMENTARY

The consultant provides targeted support for new teachers as they establish effective, inclusive classrooms. This work centers on practical strategies such as building positive classroom culture, increasing student engagement, and using evidence-based routines that support behavior, belonging, and access to learning for students with disabilities. Through mentoring, guided practice, and shared resources, new teachers gain confidence and consistency while accelerating their ability to implement inclusive practices in their classrooms.

Contact: Elizabeth Caton | ecaton@iu08.org | (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320

Library Network

COMPLEMENTARY

The IU8 Library Network serves as a collaborative platform, uniting school librarians to exchange resources, innovative ideas, and best practices. These meetings provide a vital space for knowledge sharing and growth. By fostering this collaborative spirit, the IU8 Library Network ensures that our school libraries continue to be vibrant, inclusive spaces where every individual's educational needs are not just met but exceeded.

Contact: Sarah Brambley | sbrambley@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1364

Maintenance of Learning: Retention Strategies for Classroom Instruction

COMPLEMENTARY

This workshop unlocks the secrets of long-term retention by transforming how students maintain and master essential skills. Grounded in the Instructional Hierarchy and Cognitive Load Theory, this workshop equips educators with high-impact, evidence-based strategies to bridge the gap between initial learning and lifelong fluency. Teachers will walk away with the "why" and the "how" to seamlessly embed purposeful practice into their daily routines, ensuring students don't just learn—they remember.

Contact: Amanda Williamson | awilliamson@iu08.org | (814) 262-7392 ext. 4305

Matching Instructional Strategies to Students' Stages of Learning

COMPLEMENTARY

This professional learning opportunity provides participants with practical strategies for aligning their instructional methods with the specific learning stages of their students. This session will help identify the most appropriate teaching approaches to maximize student engagement and success at each stage of their educational journey.

Contact: Amanda Williamson | awilliamson@iu08.org | (814) 262-7392 ext. 4305

Math 24 Challenge

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

The 24 Challenge is a unique mathematics game that allows students to practice their problem solving and math fact fluency to get 24. Students compete in separate divisions (4-5, 6, 7-8) in multiple rounds featuring single digits, double digits, and variables. The competition is held annually in May with a cost of $25 per student.

Contact: Matt Karabinos | mkarabinos@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1388

Mindfulness: Customized Professional Development & Learning

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

IU8 designs and delivers evidence-based, customized professional development and learning experiences tailored to the school entity's specific school climate improvement goals. Opportunities are available for staff, families, and community members. Sample topics include: Emotional Regulation Through Mindful Awareness, Mindfulness: Everyday Practice at School, and Mindfulness: A Trauma-Informed Approach in the Classroom.

Contact: Sara Quay | squay@iu08.org | (814) 502-5134

MTSS - Aligning, Interpreting and Using Data to Make Instructional and Systems Level Changes

COMPLEMENTARY

IU8 MTSS consultants empower districts to turn data into action by helping teams align, interpret, and leverage multiple data sources to drive stronger instructional and system-level decisions. We work with schools to streamline data protocols, support facilitation of high impact problem-solving meetings, and assist with the translation of screening, diagnostic, progress monitoring, and outcome data into clearly formed tiered supports that boost student success. Through dynamic coaching, trend analysis, and actionable professional learning, IU8 equips districts to build confident, data literate teams and sustainable MTSS systems that deliver results.

Contact: Dr. Megan Horsh, Amanda Williamson, Elizabeth Caton | mhorsh@iu08.org, awilliamson@iu08.org, ecaton@iu08.org | (814) 695-5643 ext. 3327; (814) 262-7392 ext. 4305; (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320

MTSS - Analyzing Response to Intervention

COMPLEMENTARY

IU8 staff supports districts in analyzing Response to Intervention by transforming student data into precise, high impact action that accelerates learning across every tier. We support district- and building-level MTSS teams in determining decision rules, analyzing progress monitoring trends, and pinpointing whether challenges stem from instruction, fidelity, or learner needs—ensuring every support is targeted, responsive, and effective. Through proactive coaching, data review, and results driven professional learning, IU8 supports districts in building RTI systems that drive stronger outcomes for all learners.

Contact: Dr. Megan Horsh, Amanda Williamson, Elizabeth Caton | mhorsh@iu08.org, awilliamson@iu08.org, ecaton@iu08.org | (814) 695-5643 ext. 3327; (814) 262-7392 ext. 4305; (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320

MTSS - Book Study

COMPLEMENTARY

IU8 offers facilitated book studies focused on literacy and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) to deepen educators' understanding of evidence-based instructional and intervention practices. These book studies provide structured opportunities for educators to engage in professional dialogue, reflect on current practices, and connect research to classroom and systems-level implementation. Book studies are designed to build collective capacity, strengthen alignment across tiers, and support sustainable literacy improvement.

Contact: Dr. Megan Horsh | mhorsh@iu08.org | (814) 695-5643 ext. 3327

MTSS - Classwide Reading Intervention: Partner Reading and Paragraph Shrinking

COMPLEMENTARY

IU8 provides professional learning and implementation support for the classwide reading intervention of Partner Reading and Paragraph Shrinking to improve reading fluency and comprehension. This training helps educators understand when classwide interventions are appropriate within an MTSS framework, particularly when data show that multiple students need additional support beyond core instruction. Participants learn how to implement classwide interventions to strengthen Tier 1 instruction and provide efficient, preventative support.

Contact: Dr. Megan Horsh | mhorsh@iu08.org | (814) 695-5643 ext. 3327

MTSS - Customized MTSS System Review and Action Planning Consultation

COMPLEMENTARY

The IU8 provides consultation services to support districts and schools in evaluating and strengthening the implementation of their Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) with a focus on system-level change. This process includes working closely with school administration and leadership teams to examine current practices, identify strengths and gaps, and prioritize areas for improvement. Through a collaborative review and planning process, teams develop actionable, customized plans to build a more effective and sustainable MTSS framework. This service is tailored to each district's unique needs to strengthen leadership capacity and improve outcomes for all students.

Contact: Dr. Megan Horsh | mhorsh@iu08.org | (814) 695-5643 ext. 3327

MTSS - Effective Implementation and Use of Universal Screening Tools

COMPLEMENTARY

IU8 Staff can help districts make universal screening a powerful driver of early identification and equitable student support by turning high quality data into clear, actionable next steps. We partner with schools to select the right tools, streamline screening practices, and build staff confidence in administering, interpreting, and communicating results. Through ongoing coaching and practical professional learning, IU8 supports districts in utilizing efficient, high-fidelity screening systems that seamlessly connect to instruction and tiered intervention, while ensuring every student gets the instruction they need.

Contact: Dr. Megan Horsh, Amanda Williamson, Elizabeth Caton | mhorsh@iu08.org, awilliamson@iu08.org, ecaton@iu08.org | (814) 695-5643 ext. 3327; (814) 262-7392 ext. 4305; (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320

MTSS - Enhanced Core Reading Instruction (ECRI) Implementation Support

COMPLEMENTARY

IU8 Staff are certified trainers of the ECRI Foundational Skills, Vocabulary & Comprehension, Tier 2 Intervention Protocols, Intensive Intervention for Tier 3, and Leadership Workshops. In addition to providing implementation training workshops, IU8 consultants can provide on-site modeling and coaching for implementers on the instructional routines, differentiation, scaffolded supports, and collecting lesson mastery data to get the most out of the program. IU consultants guide school systems in leveraging ECRI within their MTSS framework across all tiers to effectively meet the diverse needs of their students.

Contact: Dr. Megan Horsh, Amanda Williamson, Elizabeth Caton | mhorsh@iu08.org, awilliamson@iu08.org, ecaton@iu08.org | (814) 695-5643 ext. 3327; (814) 262-7392 ext. 4305; (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320

MTSS - Establishing and Sustaining a Cohesive, Multi-tiered Approach to Support Student Success

COMPLEMENTARY

IU8 MTSS Consultants support districts in building and sustaining a cohesive MTSS framework that strengthens instruction, intervention, and progress monitoring across all tiers. Our team partners with schools to streamline systems, align practices, and enhance collaboration between general education, special education, and student services. Consultants support districts to analyze instruction provided across tiers, inventory practices and programs, and strengthen evidence-based instruction and intervention. Through expert coaching, data-informed planning, and targeted professional learning, we help districts create long-term, sustainable MTSS structures that drive improved student outcomes.

Contact: Dr. Megan Horsh, Amanda Williamson, Elizabeth Caton | mhorsh@iu08.org, awilliamson@iu08.org, ecaton@iu08.org | (814) 695-5643 ext. 3327; (814) 262-7392 ext. 4305; (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320

MTSS - Establishing Shared Ownership to Align and Strengthen Your System

COMPLEMENTARY

IU8 Staff empowers districts to build true shared ownership by uniting stakeholders around a clear vision, aligned systems, and a collective commitment to student success. We ignite collaboration across teams, while clarifying roles, streamlining communication, and connecting general education, special education, and support services into one cohesive MTSS ecosystem. Through supportive coaching, cross team facilitation, and actionable professional learning, IU8 helps districts break down silos, boost systemwide coherence, and drive continuous, sustainable improvement within the school district.

Contact: Dr. Megan Horsh, Amanda Williamson, Elizabeth Caton | mhorsh@iu08.org, awilliamson@iu08.org, ecaton@iu08.org | (814) 695-5643 ext. 3327; (814) 262-7392 ext. 4305; (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320

MTSS - Integration of Academic, Behavior & Social-Emotional MTSS

COMPLEMENTARY

IU8 MTSS Consultants help districts seamlessly integrate academic, behavioral, and social-emotional supports within an MTSS framework to create a cohesive, whole child approach. Our team partners with schools to streamline systems, align data and decision-making, and strengthen Tier 1–3 supports through specialized coaching and cross-disciplinary collaboration. We provide actionable planning and high impact professional learning that empowers districts to build sustainable, unified MTSS practices. After action plans are developed, the IU8 supports districts implementing the action plan and determining next steps.

Contact: Dr. Megan Horsh, Amanda Williamson, Elizabeth Caton | mhorsh@iu08.org, awilliamson@iu08.org, ecaton@iu08.org | (814) 695-5643 ext. 3327; (814) 262-7392 ext. 4305; (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320

MTSS - Literacy Instruction and Intervention Professional Learning Support

COMPLEMENTARY

IU8 MTSS Consultants can offer a variety of literacy-focused professional learning opportunities aligned to a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework to strengthen core instruction and intervention practices. These trainings focus on high-impact strategies such as explicit vocabulary instruction, effective small group instruction, before, during, and after reading comprehension strategies, and matching instruction and interventions to student needs based on data. Sessions are designed to help educators proactively plan, differentiate instruction, and ensure students receive the appropriate level of support across tiers. The goal of this program is to build educator capacity and improve literacy outcomes through practical, evidence-based instructional practices.

Contact: Dr. Megan Horsh | mhorsh@iu08.org | (814) 695-5643 ext. 3327

MTSS - Strengthening Family Engagement in the Instructional Process

COMPLEMENTARY

IU8 Staff partners with districts to strengthen family engagement within MTSS by building clear, consistent, and inclusive communication systems that support shared responsibility for student success. We help schools align practices across departments, develop family-friendly protocols for communicating data and instructional decisions, and equip educators with tools for culturally responsive, two-way collaboration. Districts also receive targeted coaching and professional learning to create sustainable, family-centered MTSS practices.

Contact: Dr. Megan Horsh, Amanda Williamson, Elizabeth Caton | mhorsh@iu08.org, awilliamson@iu08.org, ecaton@iu08.org | (814) 695-5643 ext. 3327; (814) 262-7392 ext. 4305; (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320

MTSS - Supporting High-Quality, Standards Aligned Core Instruction for ALL Students

COMPLEMENTARY

The IU8 MTSS team can provide comprehensive support to schools to help strengthen their Tier 1 instruction by guiding teams in aligning core materials with state standards and embedding evidence-based strategies into daily routines. Our services include analyzing the health of your core instruction to develop grade-level action plans, optimizing master schedules for tiered support, and coaching educators on evidence-based strategies to ensure effective differentiation.

Contact: Dr. Megan Horsh, Amanda Williamson, Elizabeth Caton | mhorsh@iu08.org, awilliamson@iu08.org, ecaton@iu08.org | (814) 695-5643 ext. 3327; (814) 262-7392 ext. 4305; (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320

MTSS Explicit Instruction & High-Leverage Coaching

COMPLEMENTARY

The IU8 consultants provide hands-on coaching to help educators master the "I Do, We Do, You Do" framework through the lens of cognitive science. Our support focuses on the systematic delivery of instruction—emphasizing clear modeling, guided practice, and immediate corrective feedback—to ensure that core instruction is robust enough to reduce the need for intensive intervention.

Contact: Dr. Megan Horsh, Amanda Williamson, Elizabeth Caton | mhorsh@iu08.org, awilliamson@iu08.org, ecaton@iu08.org | (814) 695-5643 ext. 3327; (814) 262-7392 ext. 4305; (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320

Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (NCI) Training

HYBRID

IU8 consultants provide comprehensive Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (NCI) training to support school personnel in safely and effectively responding to challenging student behaviors. Initial Certification is offered as a 10 hour, in-person training or as a Blended/Hybrid option (10 hours total), along with Refresher sessions available at designated IU8 office locations or onsite within school districts. Our NCI training equips staff with the knowledge and skills needed to prevent, de-escalate, and respond to situations involving intense risk behaviors or verbal acting out, while maintaining the safety, dignity, and well-being of all students and staff. Participants learn evidence-based strategies grounded in trauma-informed practices and focused on early intervention to reduce the need for physical responses. In addition to formal training, IU8's certified NCI Instructors provide ongoing coaching and consultation to help districts implement and sustain safe, consistent crisis-response frameworks. This includes support with fidelity of implementation, staff confidence-building, and integration of NCI principles into broader behavioral systems

Contact: Donald Arotin | darotin@iu08.org | (814) 472-7690 ext. 4306

PA Academic Competition (Blair/Bedford Scholastic Quiz)

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

A competitive academic quiz bowl series for middle and high school students across Bedford and Blair counties. Teams compete in Jeopardy-style matches testing knowledge across multiple academic disciplines. The season runs throughout the school year with championship rounds in spring.

“From a participating team coach: "I have coached the Hollidaysburg Area School District Quiz Teams for the last ten years. Spending time working with my students in an event outside of the classroom is one of the most rewarding parts of my job. Spending time at the quiz team is easily one of the most enjoyable parts of my job. Quiz team competitions at the IU8 offer students a unique educational experience and a friendly competitive atmosphere that, at the same time, isn't overwhelming or intimidating. Sometimes even the teacher coaches learn something while they're there :)"”

Contact: Matthew Karabinos | mkarabinos@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1388

PA Student- Centered Learning (PASCL)

COMPLEMENTARY

The PA Student-Centered Learning has been developed to improve educational outcomes for all students by creating a more cohesive and coordinated approach to student-centered learning in Pennsylvania. Our Mission is to empower a Pennsylvania where all learners thrive in student-centered environments. Our Vision is to create ubiquitous learning opportunities where the student is at the center of all learning.

Contact: Tracy Rains | Trains@iu08.org | (814) 243-4845

PDE Assessment Suite: CDT, Firefly, PSSA and Keystone

COMPLEMENTARY

Build understanding and effective use of Pennsylvania's assessment system, including the CDT, Firefly, PSSA, and Keystone Exams, to guide district and building goals, inform instruction, and improve student learning. This service strengthens assessment literacy by clarifying assessment purpose, design, and reporting across formative, benchmark, and summative measures. The outcome is coherent assessment use, stronger instructional alignment, and informed next moves within classrooms and schools.

Contact: Lydia Dobrowolsky-Casale, Janel Vancas | ldobrocasale@iu08.org, jvancas@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1380; ext. 1389

Powering Pittsburgh

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Teams of 4 high school students (grades 9-12) create a presentation and scale model demonstrating their solution to powering Acrisure Stadium and/or the city of Pittsburgh. Teams have a $40 budget for materials and are encouraged to use recycled, recyclable, or refurbished materials. The winning team advances to the finals at Acrisure Stadium in Pittsburgh.

Contact: Matt Karabinos | mkarabinos@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1388

Professional Learning Communities at Work (PLCs)

COMPLEMENTARY

Join us for an overview to gain an understanding of how PLCs will help build, strengthen, and sustain your Core Tier 1 instruction. Administrative representation is crucial during this training while all educators are welcome. Solution Tree will review how PLCs will help you create and maintain a healthy collaborative culture that focuses on the Four Critical Questions every PLC must address.

Contact: Dr. Megan Horsh, Amanda Williamson, Elizabeth Caton | mhorsh@iu08.org, awilliamson@iu08.org, ecaton@iu08.org | (814) 695-5643 ext. 3327; (814) 262-7392 ext. 4305; (814) 445-9734 ext. 5320

PVAAS Data Analysis & Root Cause Support

COMPLEMENTARY

PVAAS Data Analysis Support provides guidance to help districts and schools use growth and achievement data to strengthen instructional practices and improve student outcomes. Through collaborative data analysis sessions and access to comprehensive Digging Deeper Guides, educators identify root causes within curriculum, instruction, assessment, and organizational systems that impact student performance. This service supports evidence-based decision-making by helping teams move beyond symptoms to actionable solutions that drive meaningful, sustainable improvement.

Contact: Janel Vancas | jvancas@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1389

PVAAS Training, Literacy, and Analysis

COMPLEMENTARY

Develop the capacity to use PVAAS to analyze student growth, achievement, and program impact over time. This service strengthens PVAAS literacy by supporting educators and leaders in interpreting growth measures and understanding what results indicate about instructional and program effectiveness. The outcome is evidence-based decision-making and targeted improvement efforts grounded in growth data.

Contact: Janel Vancas, Lydia Dobrowolsky-Casale | jvancas@iu08.org, ldobrocasale@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1380; ext. 1389

Readiness Institute Summer Discovery

COMPLEMENTARY

The Readiness Institute Summer Discovery is a transformative experience that equips rising high school seniors in Bedford, Blair, Cambria, and Somerset counties with vital skills and knowledge to thrive in a rapidly evolving world. Over several weeks, students engage with industry professionals, community organizations, Penn State leaders, and their peers through interactive skills workshops, field trips, group projects, and real-world learning opportunities to create personalized road maps for future success.

Contact: Tracy Rains, Janel Vancas | trains@iu08.org, jvancas@iu08.org | (814) 243-4845; (814) 312-1565

Remake Learning Days

COMPLEMENTARY

Remake Learning Days are hands on, community based learning events that celebrate creativity, innovation, and exploration. Designed for learners of all ages, these experiences connect schools, families, and community partners through engaging activities that highlight science, technology, the arts, and problem solving. Remake Learning Days provide opportunities for participants to learn together, try new ideas, and see how learning happens beyond the classroom.

Contact: Sarah Brambley & Brenda Calhoun | sbrambley@iu08.org bcalhoun@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1364 | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1335

Restorative Practices for Educators

COMPLEMENTARY

IU8 provides comprehensive training, ongoing support, and consultation in Restorative Practices for educators. These services are designed to help school personnel build positive relationships, strengthen classroom and school culture, and implement restorative approaches that promote accountability, conflict resolution, and student well being. Through training, coaching, and collaborative problem solving, IU8 assists educators in developing the knowledge and skills necessary to integrate restorative methods effectively across various educational environments.

Contact: Brad Theys, Megan Horsh | btheys@iu08.org, mhorsh@iu08.org | (814) 472-7690; (814) 695-5643

Safe and Secure Schools Network

HYBRID

IU8 provides trainings and networking opportunities to support school entities in meeting Pennsylvania school safety mandates and strengthening local safety practices. Through professional learning, technical assistance, and regional collaboration, IU8 convenes school leaders and staff around key safety initiatives, emerging requirements, and shared challenges. These opportunities help districts build capacity, stay informed of state expectations, and strengthen coordinated approaches to creating safe, supportive learning environments for students and staff.

Contact: Dr. Jennifer Anderson | janderson@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1320

School Climate Improvement Readiness Assessment & Consultation

COMPLEMENTARY

IU8 offers a complimentary school climate readiness assessment and support consultation to help school entities understand where they stand before embarking on the school climate improvement process. This initial service draws on six key categories identified by the National School Climate Center (NSCC) to evaluate readiness and guide next steps.

Contact: Sara Quay | squay@iu08.org | (814) 502-5134

School Improvement Network

COMPLEMENTARY

The School Improvement Network, an ACT 45 opportunity, is open to any and all educational leaders who strive to improve their systems. Each network offers: a leadership strategy & reference to research, successes and barriers of improving systems, resources for all schools, PDE information and reminders for designated schools, and networking opportunities for leaders.

Contact: Lydia Dobrowolsky-Casale | ldobrocasale@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1380

School Improvement Planning and Monitoring for Designated Schools

COMPLEMENTARY

Receive targeted support for developing, implementing, and monitoring school improvement plans aligned to PDE's Cycle of Improvement and requirements for designated schools. This service includes guidance on plan development, evidence-based strategies, progress monitoring, and documentation aligned to state expectations. The outcome is a compliant, actionable improvement plan that supports continuous monitoring and sustained progress.

Contact: Lydia Dobrowolsky-Casale | ldobrocasale@iu08.org | (914) 940-0223 ext. 1380

School Improvement Planning and Monitoring for Non-designated Schools

HYBRID

Guide and empower schools seeking excellence through continuous improvement by strengthening planning and monitoring processes aligned to local priorities. This service focuses on setting clear goals, selecting evidence-based strategies, and using data to monitor progress and refine supports over time. The outcome is a proactive, sustainable improvement process that builds internal capacity and promotes ongoing growth. When to choose this service: When schools want to pursue excellence, strengthen systems, and sustain continuous improvement outside of formal designation requirements.

Contact: Lydia Dobrowolsky-Casale | ldobrocasale@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1380

Schoolwide Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (SWPBIS)

COMPLEMENTARY

School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS) is a proactive, multi-tiered framework designed to help schools create positive, predictable learning environments and improve behavioral, academic, and social–emotional outcomes for all students. The framework emphasizes the explicit teaching, modeling, and reinforcement of expected behaviors, while also providing targeted and intensive supports for students who need additional assistance. IU8 offers training and coaching for schools interested in adopting the SWPBS framework, those currently implementing it, and those developing advanced-tier systems. Schools receive support through the facilitation of fidelity measures, which are used to evaluate existing practices and guide the development of action plans for continuous improvement.

Contact: Brad Theys | btheys@iu08.org | (814) 472-7690 ext. 2304

Secondary Transition Training & Consultation

COMPLEMENTARY

IU8 Transition Consultants provide training, individualized coaching, and technical assistance to local school districts participating in Indicator 13 compliance monitoring. Consultants support districts in ensuring that IEPs meet federal and state requirements for secondary transition and reflect high-quality, student-centered planning. In addition, IU8 Transition Consultants offer professional learning opportunities for districts seeking to develop, strengthen, or expand best practices in secondary transition services. This includes guidance on assessments and assessment matrix development, transition-driven IEP development, agency collaboration, and effective implementation of transition activities across grade levels. Technical assistance is also available for districts participating in Indicator 14, My Plan for Success, including support with both the pre-survey and post-survey processes. Consultants can help districts understand data, identify areas for improvement, and use results to enhance post-school outcome planning and supports.

Contact: Brad Theys | btheys@iu08.org | (814) 472-7690 ext. 2304

Smarter Leader Series

COMPLEMENTARY

Leaders know many, many things, but leaders also "don't know what we don't know". The "Smarter Leader Series”, an ACT 45 opportunity, provides relevant and applicable learning to combat that, enriching dialogue and decisions with leadership teams, teachers, and stakeholders.

Contact: Lydia Dobrowolsky-Casale | ldobrocasale@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1380

Social Emotional Learning Professional Development

COMPLEMENTARY

The IU8 offers professional learning focused on Social Emotional Learning (SEL) using the CASEL model to strengthen student and adult competencies in self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. These trainings support educators in intentionally teaching, modeling, and reinforcing SEL skills within daily instruction and schoolwide practices. Sessions include practical strategies for embedding SEL into classroom environments, improving student engagement, and supporting positive behavior. The goal of this program is to build staff capacity to create supportive learning environments that promote student well-being and academic success.

Contact: Dr. Megan Horsh | mhorsh@iu08.org | (814) 695-5643 ext. 3327

Spring Math Implementation Support

COMPLEMENTARY

IU8 Staff provides professional development and coaching around the implementation of Spring Math and its alignment to your district priorities and MTSS framework. In addition to initial teacher training to implement Spring Math, we also provide PD and technical assistance in establishing consistent protocols, analyzing data, and building internal capacity for Spring Math coaching.

Contact: Amanda Williamson | awilliamson@iu08.org | (814) 262-7392 ext. 4305

Standards Literacy

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Build educator and leader understanding of standards to support accurate interpretation and effective instructional planning. This service focuses on unpacking standards, understanding rigor and progression, and clarifying what mastery looks like in practice. The result is increased confidence and consistency in how standards guide curriculum, instruction, and assessment. When to choose this service: When leaders and educators need deeper understanding of standards to improve instructional decisions and alignment.

Contact: Lydia Dobrowolsky-Casale | ldobrocasale@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1380

Standards Prioritization and Implementation

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Clarify and categorize standards for student learning through intentional prioritization and implementation. This service includes analyzing standards for leverage, endurance, and readiness, and translating priorities into curriculum, instruction, and assessment decisions. The outcome is a manageable, coherent implementation that supports depth of learning and instructional alignment. When to choose this service: When there are too many standards competing for instructional time and focus is needed.

Contact: Lydia Dobrowolsky-Casale | ldobrocasale@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1380

STEELS Professional Learning

HYBRID

There is a suite of STEELS professional learning experiences designed to support educators in implementing Science, Technology, Engineering, Environmental Literacy, and Sustainability through high-quality, standards-aligned instruction. Sessions include a STEELS overview, the Everest Experience grounded in an NGSS-aligned lesson or unit, focused learning on Environmental Literacy and Sustainability, and guidance on designing rigorous 3-dimensional assessments. Each experience emphasizes practical strategies, classroom-ready tools, and alignment to Pennsylvania's STEELS standards to support coherent, effective implementation.

Contact: Sarah Brambley | sbrambley@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1364

STEM Design Challenge featuring K'NEX

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Teams compete in two divisions (grades 4-5 and grades 6-8) to complete the annual STEM Design Challenge using K'NEX STEM Design Challenge sets. Challenge kits are available for competing teams at a cost of $100 per team. First place teams in each division are eligible to compete at the state competition.

Contact: Matt Karabinos | mkarabinos@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1388

STEM Lending Center

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

At the center of the STEM Outreach Center is the Lending Center, which allows districts and public libraries to access over $500,000 of STEM tools. Before borrowing some of the equipment, educators and librarians receive training, either virtually or in-person, equipping them with effective strategies for integrating these resources into their classrooms and libraries. IU8 Maintenance department delivers and picks up the equipment.

Contact: Sarah Brambley | sbrambley@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1364

STEM Network (Safari)

COMPLEMENTARY

The IU8 STEM Connection is for superintendents, curriculum directors, principals, teacher leaders, and public librarians. In addition to fostering collaboration among educators, this network also helps school districts and public libraries connect with local businesses within their footprint. Meetings are held at various business and district locations throughout IU8, offering participants the opportunity to explore innovative practices and build meaningful partnerships that enhance STEM learning and community engagement.

Contact: Sarah Brambley | sbrambley@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1364

STEM Online Professional Learning

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

IU8 offers online STEM professional learning through the Jolt Platform that provides flexible, self-paced training for educators. These courses certify participants to safely and effectively use robotics equipment available through the IU8 Lending Center. Each training requires approximately 3–5 hours to complete and prepares educators to implement hands-on STEM learning with confidence.

Contact: Sarah Brambley | sbrambley@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1364

Strengthening Growth Mindset: The Power of Yet

COMPLEMENTARY

This workshop empowers educators to foster resilience and persistence by integrating "The Power of Yet" into daily classroom culture. Participants will learn practical strategies to shift student perspectives from frustration to growth, transforming challenges into essential milestones in the learning process. This session provides the tools needed to build a sustainable environment where every student feels capable of achieving mastery through effort and effective feedback.

Contact: Amanda WIlliamson | awilliamson@iu08.org | (814) 262-7392 ext. 4305

Structured Literacy Grades 3-8

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

This professional learning session supports Grades 3–8 educators in implementing evidence-based structured literacy practices with a strong emphasis on reading comprehension and vocabulary development. Participants will explore explicit instructional strategies for building background knowledge, close reading, text analysis, academic vocabulary, and meaningful discussion through modeling and hands-on practice. By the end, teachers will be equipped with classroom-ready tools to strengthen comprehension skills and support diverse learners across content areas.

Contact: Jennifer Herncane | jherncane@iu08.org | (814) 935-4427

Structured Literacy Grades Prek-2

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

This professional learning session supports PreK–Grade 2 educators in implementing evidence-based structured literacy practices aligned with the science of reading and Pennsylvania Core Standards. Participants will explore explicit instruction in phonological awareness, phonics, decoding, encoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension through modeling and hands-on practice. By the end, educators will be

Contact: Jennifer Herncane | jherncane@iu08.org | (814) 935-4427

Student Event - Invention Convention

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Event for students who invent a product that solves a real world problem. Held in December for grades 4-12. Day of activities planned.

""Our students love showing off their ideas and seeing what their peers in other schools are doing""

Contact: Brenda Calhoun | bcalhoun@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1335

Superintendent Retreat

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

This conference consists of 3 days of educational sessions and discussions about cutting edge issues related to education. This includes IU8, IU10 and IU11.

Contact: Kristen Gabrielson | kgabrielson@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1357

Supporting Older Struggling Readers

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Supporting Older Struggling Readers is a professional learning session that equips teachers with effective strategies for intervening and providing explicit instruction for older students who struggle with reading. The session focuses on evidence-based approaches to strengthen comprehension and vocabulary. Participants leave with practical tools they can immediately apply in their classrooms.

Contact: Jennifer Herncane | jherncane@iu08.org | (814) 935-4427

Systems' Needs Assessment

HYBRID

Conduct a comprehensive systems-level needs assessment to understand how structures, processes, and practices support school improvement. This service examines data, policies, routines, and stakeholder perspectives to identify strengths and gaps impacting student outcomes and organizational effectiveness. The outcome is a clear picture of current reality that informs improvement priorities and next moves. When to choose this service: When schools or districts need clarity on system strengths, gaps, and readiness for improvement.

Contact: Lydia Dobrowolsky-Casale | ldobrocasale@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1380

Systems' Root Cause Analysis

HYBRID

Engage in a structured analysis to identify the underlying causes of persistent challenges within school or district systems. This service moves beyond surface-level symptoms by examining contributing factors across leadership, instruction, supports, and organizational structures. The outcome is a shared understanding of root causes that allows improvement efforts to be focused, strategic, and effective. When to choose this service: When issues persist despite prior efforts and deeper analysis is needed to guide meaningful change.

Contact: Lydia Dobrowolsky-Casale | ldobrocasale@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1380

Technology Directors Network

COMPLEMENTARY

Colleagues from across the region connect or a dynamic network focused on technology, innovation, and policy. We explore emerging technologies, discuss new laws and regulations impacting technology use, access, and data security, and share best practices and strategies for adapting to rapid changes in the tech landscape. Networking with peers to exchange ideas and resources that support effective technology integration.

Contact: Tracy Rains, Brenda Calhoun | trains@iu08.org, bcalhoun@iu08.org | (814) 243-4845; (814) 421-6831

The Principal Collaborative

COMPLEMENTARY

The Principal Collaborative offers a comprehensive suite of professional learning opportunities designed to support building leaders throughout the school year. Participants earn up to 25 hours of Act 45 credit through various formats including virtual network meetings, in-person Principal's Choice sessions, School Improvement Networks, and specialized series focused on leadership development. This collaborative approach connects principals across the region to share best practices, address current challenges, and stay informed on educational trends and requirements.

Contact: Janel Vancas | jvancas@iu08.org | (814) 940-0223 ext. 1389

Trauma-Informed Practices Training

COMPLEMENTARY

The IU8 offers professional learning on trauma-informed practices designed to build the capacity of educators, school staff, district leaders, and school board members to support the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs of all students. These trainings focus on understanding the impact of trauma on learning and behavior, creating safe and supportive environments, and implementing proactive strategies that promote regulation, connection, and engagement. Sessions address classroom practices, schoolwide systems, and district-level policies to ensure alignment and sustainability. Participants leave with practical tools and action steps to foster resilient, supportive learning environments that improve outcomes for students and staff.

Contact: Dr. Megan Horsh | mhorsh@iu08.org | (814) 695-5643 ext. 3327

Understanding the Stages of Learning and the Instructional Hierarchy

COMPLEMENTARY

This professional learning opportunity provides instruction on the stages of learning and the instructional hierarchy that supports effective education. This session will provide insights into how students progress through different learning stages and how to tailor your instruction to meet their evolving needs.

Contact: Amanda Williamson | awilliamson@iu08.org | (814) 262-7392 ext. 4305

Unpacking the Science of Reading: Building Comprehension

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Unpacking the Science of Reading: Comprehension and Close Reading examines instructional strategies to strengthen students' understanding of complex texts. Participants will explore engaging activities and structured close reading lesson plans that guide learners toward deeper comprehension and textual analysis. This session equips educators with practical tools to support critical thinking and meaningful discussion around text.

Contact: Jennifer Herncane | jherncane@iu08.org | (814) 935-4427

Unpacking the Science of Reading: Phonological and Phonemic Awareness

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Unpacking the Science of Reading: Phonology and Phonemic Awareness is a professional learning session focused on explicit, systematic instruction to strengthen students' sound awareness skills. Participants will explore engaging lesson strategies for developing phonological and phonemic awareness, including effective ways to introduce letters and letter–sound relationships. The session also highlights practical use of the sound wall to support early reading and spelling development.

Contact: Jennifer Herncane | jherncane@iu08.org | (814) 935-4427

Unpacking the Science of Reading: The Reading Brain

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Unpacking the Science of Reading: The Reading Brain is a professional learning session that explores how the brain learns to read through the four-part processing system. Participants will examine the cognitive processes involved in reading, how these systems work together, and why some students experience reading difficulties. The training emphasizes explicit, systematic instructional strategies aligned to each processing component to support remediation and strengthen reading outcomes for all learners.

Contact: Jennifer Herncane | jherncane@iu08.org | (814) 935-4427

Unpacking the Science of Reading: Early Literacy for Preschool and Kindergarten

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Unpacking the Science of Reading: Early Literacy focuses on the pre-reading skills that form the foundation for strong readers. Participants will explore engaging activities to develop phonological and phonemic awareness, along with explicit strategies for teaching letter recognition and letter–sound relationships. The session also addresses early writing instruction to support students' overall literacy development.

Contact: Jennifer Herncane | jherncane@iu08.org | (814) 935-4427

Unpacking the Science of Reading: Explicit Phonics Instruction

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Unpacking the Science of Reading: Explicit Phonics Instruction examines effective strategies for teaching systematic phonics to support accurate decoding and encoding. Participants will explore how to use decodable texts and introduce sight words in ways that align with structured literacy practices. This session provides practical tools to strengthen foundational reading skills and improve student outcomes.

Contact: Jennifer Herncane | jherncane@iu08.org | (814) 935-4427

Unpacking the Science of Reading: Vocabulary and Oral Language

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Unpacking the Science of Reading: Vocabulary and Oral Language is a professional learning session focused on explicit vocabulary instruction and the critical role of oral language and background knowledge in comprehension. Participants will explore how vocabulary development directly influences students' ability to understand text. The session provides engaging, research-based strategies teachers can use to effectively teach and reinforce vocabulary.

Contact: Jennifer Herncane | jherncane@iu08.org | (814) 935-4427

Using Mathematical Schemas for Addressing Word Problems

COMPLEMENTARY

Break free from the "keyword" trap and empower your students with a far more effective, research-backed strategy for conquering word problems. This hands-on workshop introduces educators to the six mathematical schemas, providing a deep dive into the underlying structures that drive true problem-solving proficiency. Beyond the initial training, we offer embedded coaching to ensure these evidence-based routines become a permanent and successful staple in your mathematical instruction.

Contact: Amanda Williamson | awilliamson@iu08.org | (814) 262-7392 ext. 4305

Youth Mental Health First Aid Course

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

IU8 offers the nationally recognized Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) course, developed by the National Council for Mental Wellbeing (NCMW). This blended-delivery course equips adults with practical knowledge and skills to identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges in young people ages 12–18.

Contact: Sara Quay | squay@iu08.org | (814) 502-5134

World of Learning

Flexible K–12 online and virtual learning programs that expand course offerings for students across the region.

3 Programs & Services

Image of students in ASL Class

Extended Campus Online District Program

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Extended Campus is a flexible K–12 online learning program that allows students to remain enrolled in their home district while taking high-quality virtual courses with certified teachers. Students receive live instruction and ongoing support, helping districts expand offerings, support credit recovery, and meet diverse student needs.

"We respect family choice and believe Extended Campus is the best online program for families who are looking for this educational option. At significantly less cost to taxpayers than other Cyber Schools, EC provides accountability and sustainability by allowing students to remain in their home district and receive all the opportunities and benefits that are provided to all our students and families. EC works with home districts to create a positive home to school partnership that establishes a working relationship that is student centered, school focused, and success driven. - Joe Renzi, Salisbury-Elk Lick School District Superintendent"

Contact: Lauren McMinn | lmcminn@iu08.org | (814) 421-6834

Extended Campus Vendor Solutions

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

Extended Campus can also serve as a vendor solution, acting as a pass-through to approved online course providers while maintaining a single point of coordination for districts. This option allows districts to quickly expand course access with vetted partners, while reducing administrative burden and preserving local oversight.

Contact: Lauren McMinn | lmcminn@iu08.org | (814) 421-6834

World of Learning Schedule-Aligned Online Instruction

FEE-FOR-SERVICE

World of Learning offers a blended instructional model combining live, teacher-led instruction with flexible asynchronous learning, fully aligned to the district bell schedule. Districts may choose year-long or long-term substitute programming, as well as accelerated semester options, to meet staffing needs and student timelines. This well-established model is especially recognized for its high-quality world language instruction in Spanish, French, German, Latin, American Sign Language, Arabic, Japanese, Mandarin Chinese, along with other hard-to-staff subjects like Chemistry, Physics, and Calculus.

“The communication with the World of Learning staff throughout the process was outstanding!! They were super responsive, listened to our feedback, and coordinated with us to make adjustments based on our building's schedule. The live sessions were instrumental in providing a cohesive, engaging learning environment for our students that directly involved the students in interacting and communicating with the instructor. - District Principal”

Contact: Olivia Grugan | ogrugan@iu08.org | (814) 369-2522

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CUSTOMIZING LEARNING SOLUTIONS

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Appalachia Intermediate Unit 8

4500 6th Avenue · Altoona, PA 16602

Phone: (814) 940-0223

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