AVELLA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
1000 AVELLA ROAD
AVELLA, PA 15312

BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

February 19, 2025

The Regular Board Meeting of the Avella Area School District Board of Education was held in the Avella Jr. Sr. High School Library on Wednesday, February 19, 2025. Mr. Emanuel Paris, Board President, called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. An Executive Session was held prior to the meeting regarding students, personnel and contracts. Dana Davis, Board Secretary, held roll call and the following board members were present:

BOARD MEMBERS: Phoebe Armstrong, Suzanne Colilla, Beth Dunmore James Gagich, Terry Jacobs, Emanuel Paris, and Tia Shore.
Absent: Melissa Dryer and Scott Willyerd

ADMINISTRATION: Cyril Walther, Superintendent
John Galvin, Business Manager
Heather Zalar, JSHS Principal - Absent
Carrie Graff, Elementary Principal – Absent
Dana M. Davis, Board Secretary

OTHERS: Rachel Lozosky, District Solicitor
Christian Sesek, District Solicitor

A. GENERAL PROCEDURES

Roll Call

Pledge of Allegiance

Presentations/Recognitions

1. The following students are recognized as the February Students of the Month:
Jason Stough – Senior
Adalyn Debnar – 6th Grade Student

2. Ava Frank is recognized and congratulated for being only the fifth female in Avella's basketball history to reach the 1,000-point milestone.

3. Congratulations to the Varsity Boys Wrestling Team on making it to the second round of WPIAL 2A Team Playoffs.

4. Sophomore Abigail Dolanch makes history as Avella's first WPIAL Girls' Wrestling Champion, winning the 142 gold at the 2025 WPIAL Girls' Individual Championships and Sophomore Virginia Smith (170) finished 2nd in her weight class. Both girls advance to l compete at the PIAA West Regional at North Allegheny High School on March 1, 2025.

A. GENERAL PROCEDURES

Presentations/Recognitions, continued

5. Seven of the Varsity Boys' Wrestling Team placed in the top eight at the WPIAL Section Tournament. Freshman, Jace Lloyd (107) with a 3rd place finish; Senior, Drake Buzzard (121), Sophomore, Adam Ware (127), Sophomore, Chas Rush (160), and Sophomore, Brayden Bedillion (189) each with a 4th place finish; Freshman Dustin Mace (114), and Sophomore, Mark Adkins (145) with a 6th place finish. They will each compete at the WPIAL 2A Boys' Wrestling Individual Championships @ Chartiers Valley HS, February 21 & 22, 2025.

Request to Speak at the Board Meeting – None

Visitor's Request to Speak on Agenda Items - None

GENERAL PROCEDURE ITEMS

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES ***ATTACHMENT "A"***

Board Members were furnished copies of the January 2025 Regular Board Meeting Minutes.

Moved by Ms. Dunmore, seconded by Ms. Shore, to approve the January 2025 Regular Board Meeting Minutes.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Colilla, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, and Ms. Shore said "aye". Motion carried 7-0.

2. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS PAYABLE ***ATTACHMENT "B"***

Board Members were furnished copies of the Accounts Payable for the January 2025 and February 2025 General Fund.

Moved by Ms. Armstrong, seconded by Ms. Colilla, to approve the Accounts Payable for the January 2025 and February 2025 General Fund.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Colilla, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, and Ms. Shore said "aye". Motion carried 7-0.

3. FINANCIAL/BUDGET REPORTS ***ATTACHMENT "C"***

4. SOLICITOR'S REPORT ***ATTACHMENT "D"***

5. BOARD MEETING DATE CHANGE

The April Board Meeting will be on Wednesday, April 23, 2025 due to the 16th falling on a Built-In Snow/No School Day.

B. NEW BUSINESS

1. ATHLETIC & ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

a. Kara Ruffalo – Musical Producer/Play Producer
Moved by Ms. Dunmore, seconded by Ms. Armstrong to approve kara Ruffalo as the Musical Producer/Play Producer for the 2024-2025 school year.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Colilla, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, and Ms. Shore said “aye”. Motion carried 7-0.

2. COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE – No Report

3. CURRICULUM & TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

a. Western Area Career &Technology Center Update
Ms. Dryer was not present to report. Mr. Walther reported that the site survey and cost estimates have been completed on the new Diesel Mechanics building. Enrollment is at 675 students.

b. IU1 AEDY Educational Services Agreement
Moved by Mr. Gagich, seconded by Mr. Paris to approve the Alternative Education for Disruptive Youth (AEDY) Educational Services Agreement between the Avella Area School District and Intermediate Unit 1, for the remainder of the 2024-2025 school year, per Attachment Curriculum and Technology “A”.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Colilla, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, and Ms. Shore said “aye”. Motion carried 7-0.

c. School Calendar 2025-2026
Moved by Mr. Jacobs, seconded by Ms. Colilla, to approve the Avella Area School District Calendar for the 2025-2026 school year, per Attachment Curriculum & Technology “B”.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Colilla, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, and Ms. Shore said “aye”. Motion carried 7-0.

4. FACILITIES & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

a. Pennsylvania American Water Company Deed of Easement and Right of Way
Moved by Mr. Jacobs, seconded by Mr. Gagich, to ratify the Indenture between the Avella Area School District and Pennsylvania American Water Company, granting Deed of Easement and Right of Way, effective January 22, 2025, per Attachment Facilities & Transportation “A”.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Colilla, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, and Ms. Shore said “aye”. Motion carried 7-0.

b. Pennsylvania American Water Company Damage Agreement
Moved by Mr. Jacobs, seconded by Ms. Colilla, to ratify the Damage Agreement between Avella Area School District and Pennsylvania American Water Company, effective January 22, 2025, per Attachment Facilities & Transportation “B”.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Colilla, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, and Ms. Shore said “aye”. Ms. Dunmore said, “nay”. Motion carried 6-1.

B. NEW BUSINESS

4.. FACILITIES & TRANSPORTATION, continued

c. West Penn Power Easement

Moved by Mr. Jacobs, seconded by Mr. Paris, to ratify the easement between Avella Area School District and West Penn Power, effective January 22, 2025, per Attachment Facilities & Transportation "C".

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Colilla, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, and Ms. Shore said "aye". Motion carried 7-0.

d. Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Consent of Fee Driveway Permit

Moved by Mr. Jacobs, seconded by Mr. Paris, to ratify the consent of the application for highway occupancy permit to construct a driveway, per Attachment Facilities & Transportation "D".

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Colilla, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, and Ms. Shore said "aye". Motion carried 7-0.

5. FINANCE COMMITTEE

a. Finance Committee Meetings have been scheduled:

- March 19, 2025 at 5:30 p.m.
- April 23, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.
- May 21, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

b. Resolution – Intermediate Unit 1

Moved by Mr. Paris, seconded by Ms. Colilla, to approve the 2025-2026 Intermediate Unit 1 Operational Budget. Section 914-A(6)(1) Act 102 of 1970, requires that the Intermediate Unit Budget be approved by at least a majority of the school districts comprising of the Intermediate Unit. Attachment Finance "A".

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Colilla, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, and Ms. Shore said "aye". Motion carried 7-0.

c. Tax Assessment Appeal Settlement

Moved by Ms. Shore, seconded by Mr. Paris, to authorize Peacock Keller, LLP, to enter into a stipulation to settle the tax assessment appeal Osvaldo Alvarado and Connie Alvarado v. Washington County Board of Assessment Appeals, et al., at Washington County Court of Common Pleas No. 2022-8148, per Attachment Finance "B".

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Colilla, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, and Ms. Shore said "aye". Motion carried 7-0.

d. Substitute Support Personnel Rate

Moved by Mr. Jacobs, seconded by Ms. Armstrong, to increase the substitute support personnel rate from $12.50 to $13.75 per hour, effective February 20, 2025.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Colilla, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, and Ms. Shore said "aye". Motion carried 7-0.

B. NEW BUSINESS

6. NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE – No Report

7. PERSONNEL & POLICY COMMITTEE

a. Melody Paris, Human Resources Manager
Moved by Mr. Gagich, seconded by Mr. Jacobs, to approve the Contract of Employment of Melody Paris, Human Resources Manager, effective April 18, 2023, Per Attachment Personnel & Policy "A".

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Colilla, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, and Ms. Shore said "aye". Mr. Paris abstained. Motion carried 6-0-1.

b. Dana Davis, Central Office Manager/Board Secretary
Moved by Mr. Gagich, seconded by Mr. Jacobs, to approve the Contract of Employment of Dana Davis, Central Office Manager/Board Secretary, effective April 8, 2024, Per Attachment Personnel & Policy "B".

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Colilla, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, and Ms. Shore said "aye". Mr. Paris abstained. Motion carried 6-0-1.

c. Genia Mundorff, Substitute Support Staff - Cafeteria
Moved by Mr. Gagich, seconded by Mr. Jacobs, to ratify Genia Mundorff to be added to the Substitute Support Staff List – Cafeteria, effective February 3, 2025.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Colilla, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, and Ms. Shore said "aye". Motion carried 7-0.

d. Substitute Support Staff – Custodial
Moved by Mr. Gagich, seconded by Ms. Dunmore, to ratify the following to the Substitute Support Staff – Custodial List, for the 2024-2025 school year.

- Ashley Fedak (District Employee) – effective January 19, 2025
- Susan Kubacka (District Employee) – effective February 5, 2025
- Raymond Ruffalo – effective February 7, 2025
- Nicholas Brennan – effective February 19, 2025

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Colilla, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, and Ms. Shore said "aye". Motion carried 7-0.

e. Connor Ridge – Part Time Social Studies Teacher
Moved by Mr. Gagich, seconded by Ms. Dunmore, to accept the resignation of Connor Ridge, part-time Social Studies Teacher's, effective last day of employment, December 20, 2024.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Colilla, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, and Ms. Shore said "aye". Motion carried 7-0.

f. Taylor Boarts, Substitute Teacher List
Moved by Mr. Gagich, seconded by Mrs. Dunmore, to ratify Taylor Boarts, part-time Social Studies Teacher, to be added to the Substitute Teacher List, effective January 9, 2025.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Colilla, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, and Ms. Shore said "aye". Motion carried 7-0.

B. NEW BUSINESS

7. PERSONNEL & POLICIES, continued

g. School Volunteer List 2024-2025
Moved by Mr. Gagich, seconded by Ms. Dunmore, to approve the following to the School Volunteer List for the 2024-2025 school year:

- Corrie Warner

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Colilla, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, and Ms. Shore said “aye”. Motion carried 7-0.

8. SAFETY COMMITTEE

a. A Safety Committee meeting is scheduled March 6, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.

C. ADJOURNMENT
With no further business before the Board, moved by Mr. Jacobs, seconded by Ms. Armstrong, to adjourn the meeting at 7:46 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Colilla, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, and Ms. Shore said “aye”. Motion carried 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dana M. Davis
Board Secretary