AVELLA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
1000 AVELLA ROAD
AVELLA, PA 15312

BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

May 21, 2025

The Regular Board Meeting of the Avella Area School District Board of Education was held in the Western Area Career and Technology Center Multipurpose Room on Wednesday, May 21, 2025. Mr. Emanuel Paris, Board President, called the meeting to order at 7:29 p.m. An Executive Session was held prior to the meeting regarding personnel and policies. Dana Davis, Board Secretary, held roll call and the following board members were present:

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

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

OTHERS: Rachel Lozosky, District Solicitor
Robert Vernon, of Counsel

A. GENERAL PROCEDURES

Roll Call

Pledge of Allegiance

Presentations/Recognitions

1. The following students are recognized as the May Students of the Month:
   Taylor Shirley – Senior
   Colt Miller – 6th Grade Student

2. Circle of Excellence Awards are presented to:
   Sarah Maidment/Dennis O'Neil – Jr./Sr. High School
   Lauren O'Brien – Elementary School

3. Ireland Trip Video Presentation – Darren Shaffer and Kara Ruffalo

REQUEST TO SPEAK AT THE BOARD MEETING –
Parent requests to speak regarding the Life Skills Program:
Tammy McCrea, 496 Meadowcroft Road, Avella PA 15312
Tiffany Johnson, PO Box 31, West Middletown, PA 15379

VISITORS REQUEST TO SPEAK ON AGENDA ITEM – None

RECESS: The Board of Directors recessed the Regular Meeting of Wednesday, May 21, 2025 at 8:28 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: The Board of Directors entered into Executive Session at 8:28 p.m. to discuss student discipline issue, and contracts.

RECONVENED: The Board of Directors reconvened the Regular Board Meeting at 9:18 p.m. to vote on the following items:

GENERAL PROCEDURE ITEMS

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

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

Moved by Ms. Dunmore, seconded by Mr. Gagich, to approve the April 2025 Regular Board Meeting Minutes.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Motion carried 8-0.

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

Board Members were furnished copies of the Accounts Payable for the April and May 2025 General Fund.

Moved by Mr. Willyerd, seconded by Mr. Jacobs, to approve the Accounts Payable for the April and May 2025 General Fund.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Motion carried 8-0.

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

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

B. NEW BUSINESS

1. ATHLETIC & ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

~~**a. 2025-2026 School Year – Athletic Coaches/Athletic Director**~~

The following motion was **struck** from the agenda by Board President, Emanuel Paris as a result of discussion during the Executive Session of the Board prior to the regular meeting.

~~Motion to approve the following athletic director/athletic coaches for the 2025-2026 school year.~~

Athletic Director
~~*Jason Fogg*~~

FALL SPORTS

Cross Country
~~*Laura Lazzarotti – Head Coach*~~
~~*Zachery Franks – Assistant Coach*~~

B. NEW BUSINESS

1. ATHLETIC & ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

a. 2025-2026 School Year – Athletic Coaches/Athletic Director, *continued*

Football – 7th/8th Grade
~~*James Gatewood – Head Coach*~~
~~*Brad Rankin – Assistant Coach*~~

Football – Varsity
~~*Ryan Cecchini – Head Coach*~~
~~*Clinton Varner – Assistant Coach*~~
~~*JT Mylan – Assistant Coach*~~

Golf – Varsity
~~*Peter Dellovade – Head Coach*~~
~~*Larry Lis – Assistant Coach*~~

Softball – 7th/8th Grade Junior Varsity
~~*Dana Hammond – Head Coach*~~
~~*Ollie Hammond – Assistant Coach*~~

Tennis
~~*Dan Davidson – Head Coach*~~
~~*Jody Morgan – Head Coach*~~

Volleyball
~~*Matt Zalar – Head Coach*~~
~~*VACANT – Assistant Coach*~~

WINTER SPORTS

Basketball Boys' Varsity
~~*Michael Macik – Head Coach*~~
~~*Kevin Painter – Assistant Coach*~~

Basketball Girls' Varsity
~~*John Sargent – Head Coach*~~
~~*Dana Hammond – Assistant Coach*~~

Basketball – 7th/8th Grade Boys
~~*Brandon Miller – Head Coach*~~
~~*VACANT – Assistant Coach*~~

Rifle
~~*Nikki Knopp – Head Coach*~~
~~*Branden Kosey – Assistant Coach*~~

Volleyball – 7th/8th Grade Girls
~~*Dana Gatewood – Head Coach*~~
~~*Allie Brownlee – Assistant Coach*~~

Wrestling – Varsity Boys
~~*Aaron Margaria – Head Coach*~~
~~*Eric Smith – Assistant Coach*~~

B. NEW BUSINESS

1. ATHLETIC & ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

a. 2025-2026 School Year – Athletic Coaches/Athletic Director, *continued*

Wresting – Varsity Girls
~~*Myla Moore – Head Coach*~~
~~*Dan Moore – Assistant Coach*~~

Wrestling – Jr. High
~~*Travis Ware – Head Coach*~~
~~*VACANT – Assistant Coach*~~

SPRING SPORTS

Baseball – Varsity
~~*Jason Fogg – Head Coach*~~
~~*John T. Mylan – Assistant Coach*~~

Baseball – Jr Varsity
~~*Zachery Franks – Head Coach*~~

Basketball – 7th/8th Grade Girls
~~*Bernadette O'Brien – Head Coach*~~
~~*Renee Warholak – Assistant Coach*~~

Softball
~~*Laura Lazzarotti – Head Coach*~~
~~*Dana Hammond – Assistant Coach*~~

b. Zachery Franks, Stem Club Sponsor – Resignation
Moved by Mr. Willyerd, seconded by Ms. Dryer, to accept the resignation of Zachery Franks as Stem Club Sponsor, at the end of the 2024-2025 school year.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Motion carried 8-0.

c. Posting – Stem Club Sponsor
Moved by Mr. Willyerd, seconded by Ms. Dryer, to approve the posting for a Stem Club Class Sponsor for the 2025-2026 school year.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Motion carried 8-0.

d. Zachery Franks – Science Club Sponsor
Moved by Mr. Willyerd, seconded by Ms. Dryer, to approve Zachery Franks as the Science Club Sponsor for the 2025-2026 school year.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Motion carried 8-0.

B. NEW BUSINESS

1. ATHLETIC & ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE, *continued*

e. 2025-2026 Varsity Cheerleading Coaches
Moved by Mr. Willyerd, seconded by Ms. Dryer, to approve the following Varsity Cheerleading Coaches for the 2025-2026 season:

- Melody Paris – Head Coach
- Samantha Jacobs – Assistant Coach

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Mr. Jacobs and Mr. Paris abstained. Motion carried 6-0-2.

f. Jr. High Cheerleading Program
Moved by Mr. Willyerd, seconded by Ms. Dryer, to approve a Jr. High Cheerleading Program, grades 7-8 for the 2025-2026 school year. Jr. High Cheerleaders are to follow the guidelines set forth in the Varsity Cheerleading Handbook.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Motion carried 8-0.

g. Volunteer Cheerleading Coach
Moved by Mr. Willyerd, seconded by Ms. Dryer, to approve Sidney Zelenko as a volunteer Jr. High Cheerleading Coach for the 2025-2026 school year, pending receipt of required clearances.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Motion carried 8-0.

2. COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

3. CURRICULUM & TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

a. Western Area Career & Technology Center Update
Ms. Dryer reported that Avella student, Emma Johnson was the WACTC Student of the Month for May. Emma is a Senior in the Nursing/Healthcare Program.

b. AASD End of Year Calendar Dates:

5/15 @ 6:00 p.m.	WACTC Certificate Ceremony, Peters Township High School
5/18 @ 7:00 p.m.	Baccalaureate Cross Creek Presbyterian Church
5/30 @ 7:00 p.m.	Commencement
6/2	Last Day of School for Underclassman

c. IU1 Educational Services Agreement
Moved by Ms. Dunmore, seconded by Ms. Shore, to approve the IU 1 Educational Service Agreement between the Avella Area School District and Intermediate Unit 1, effective July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026, per Attachment Curriculum & Technology "A".

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Motion carried 8-0.

B. NEW BUSINESS

2. CURRICULUM & TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE, *continued*

d. AEDY Educational Services Agreement
Moved by Ms. Dunmore, seconded by Ms. Shore, to approve the Alternative Education for Disruptive Youth (AEDY) Educational Services Agreement between the Avella Area School District and Intermediate Unit 1, for the 2025-2026 school year, per Attachment Curriculum & Technology "B".

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Motion carried 8-0.

e. Inventory Control
Moved by Ms. Dunmore, seconded by Ms. Shore, to approve discarding the outdated textbooks and library books listed on Attachment Curriculum & Technology "C".

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Motion carried 8-0.

4. FACILITIES & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

a. Schedule Building & Grounds Walkthrough of Buildings

b. Equipment – Municibid
Moved by Mr. Willyerd, seconded by Ms. Dryer, to authorize the Administration to utilize Municibid auction for the following item:

- JSHS Cafeteria Oven, Serial Number 5915652006

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Motion carried 8-0.

5. FINANCE COMMITTEE

a. A Finance Committee Meetings is scheduled for May 21, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

b. 2025-2026 Proposed Budget
Motion to approve the proposed budget in the amount of $13,274,047.00, for the fiscal year 2025-2026 and set the millage at 14.313 mills, a 2 ½ mill increase, per Attachment Finance "A".

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Ms. Dunmore and Ms. Shore, said "nay". Motion carried 6-2.

c. Special Counsel – Ned Nakles
Moved by Mr. Willyerd, seconded by Ms. Dunmore, to retain Attorney Ned Nakles to serve as special counsel to the Avella Area School District, at an hourly rate of $135 for legal services and travel time.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Motion carried 8-0.

B. NEW BUSINESS

6. NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE – No Report

7. PERSONNEL & POLICY COMMITTEE

a. **John Galvin, Business Manager – Renewal Bond**
Moved by Mr. Willyerd, seconded by Ms. Shore, to approve the renewal bond of John Galvin, Business Manager, setting bond at $100,000, to begin July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026, according to PA School Code Section 404.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Motion carried 8-0.

b. Board Treasurer
Moved by Mr. Willyerd, seconded by Ms. Armstrong, to appoint Tia Shore as Board Treasurer for one year beginning July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2025, according to PA School Code Section 404, setting bond at $50,000.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Motion carried 8-0.

c. Dana Davis, Board Secretary – Renewal Bond
Moved by Ms. Dryer, seconded by Ms. Dunmore, to approve the renewal bond of Dana Davis, Board Secretary, setting bond at $50,000, to begin July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026 according to PA School Code Section 404.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Motion carried 8-0.

d. Rescind Motion – Life Skills Program
Moved by Ms. Dryer, seconded by Ms. Dunmore, to approve rescinding the following motion board approved April 23, 2025:

Moved by Mr. Willyerd, seconded by Mr. Paris to approve creating and implementing a grade 7-12 Life Skills Program beginning for the 2025-2026 school year.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Motion carried 8-0.

~~**e. Posting – Special Education Teacher – JSHS Life Skills Program**~~
The following motion was **struck** from the agenda by Board President, Emanuel Paris as a result of discussion during the Executive Session of the Board prior to the regular meeting.

~~Motion to ratify the posting (advertisement if necessary) for a full-time Special Education Teacher for the JSHS Life Skills Program for the 2025-2026 school year~~.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Motion carried 8-0.

B. NEW BUSINESS

7. PERSONNEL & POLICY COMMITTEE, *continued*

~~f.~~ ~~**Posting – Classroom Aide**~~
The following motion was **struck** from the agenda by Board President, Emanuel Paris as a result of discussion during the Executive Session of the Board prior to the regular meeting.

~~Motion to ratify the posting (advertisement if necessary) for a full-time Classroom Aide for the JSHS Life Skills Program for the 2025-2026 school year.~~

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Motion carried 8-0.

g. **SFA Facilitator Position**
Moved by Ms. Dunmore, seconded by Mr. Paris, to ratify creating a full time SFA (Success For All Curriculum) Facilitator position, effective the first day of the 2025-2026 school year.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Motion carried 8-0.

h. **Kindergarten Teacher Position**
Moved by Ms. Dunmore, seconded by Mr. Paris, to ratify eliminating a full-time Kindergarten Teacher position due to decreased enrollment, effective last day of the 2024- 2025 school year.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Mr. Gagich and Mr. Jacobs said "nay". Motion carried 6-2.

i. **SFA Facilitator Position Placement**
Moved by Scott Willyerd, seconded by Mr. Jacobs, to place Jody Morgan as a full-time SFA (Success for All Curriculum) Facilitator, effective the first day of the 2025-2026 school year.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Motion carried 8-0.

~~**j.**~~ ~~**Tiffany Mahland - Full-Time JSHS Secretary**~~
The following motion was **struck** from the agenda by Board President, Emanuel Paris as a result of discussion during the Executive Session of the Board prior to the regular meeting.

~~Motion to approve Tiffany Mahland as a full-time JSHS Secretary, 8 hours per day/260 days per year, per the Avella Area ESP CBA, effective _____.~~

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Motion carried 8-0.

k. Brittany Miller, Part-Time Cafeteria Position
Moved by Ms. Dunmore, seconded by Mr. Willyerd, to approve Brittany Miller, as a part-time cafeteria employee, 5 hours per day/180 days per year effective August 18, 2025.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "nay". Motion failed 0-8.

B. NEW BUSINESS

7. PERSONNEL & POLICY COMMITTEE, *continued*

l. LC – Family Medical Leave
Moved by Ms. Armstrong, seconded by Mr. Paris, to accept LC, Elementary Librarian's request for Family Medical Leave, effective April 27, 2025 until June 2, 2025.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Motion carried 8-0.

m. **Volunteer List 2024-2025**
Motion to ratify Nadia Bongiorni to the Volunteer List for the 2024-2025 school year, effective April 25, 2025.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Motion carried 8-0.

n. **GG&C Van Driver**
Moved by Ms. Armstrong, seconded by Mr. Paris, to add Charity Kraushaer to the GG&C Driver List as a van driver for the remainder of the 2024-2025 school year, effective April 29, 2025.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Motion carried 8-0.

o. PSBA Policy Maintenance Program Participation Agreement
Moved by Ms. Armstrong, seconded by Mr. Paris, to approve the PSBA Policy Maintenance Program Participation Agreement between the Pennsylvania School Boards Association and the Avella Area School District, effective July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026, per Attachment Personnel & Policy "A".

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Motion carried 8-0.

p. Renew Motion: Policy 329 Hiring for Professional Positions
Moved by Mr. Willyerd, seconded by Ms. Dryer, to renew the motion made at the November 13, 2014 regular meeting to approve the adoption of Policy 329 – Hiring for Professional Positions, *per the Attachment to the November Agenda identified as Personnel & Policy "B".*

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Ms. Shore said, "nay". Motion carried 7-1.

q. Policy 329 Hiring for Professional Positions
Moved by Ms. Dunmore, seconded by Ms. Dryer, to approve the adoption of Policy 329 – Hiring for Professional Positions, per Attachment Personnel & Policy "B".

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Ms. Shore, said "nay". Motion carried 7-1.

8. SAFETY COMMITTEE

c. A Safety Committee Meeting is scheduled for June 5, 2025.

B. NEW BUSINESS

8. SAFETY COMMITTEE, *continued*

d. Burgettstown Area School District – Emergency Operations Plan
Moved by Mr. Willyerd, seconded by Ms. Dryer, to approve the updated Interdistrict Emergency Support Agreement with Burgettstown Area School District, per Attachment Safety "A".

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Motion carried 8-0.

C. ADJOURNMENT
With no further business before the Board, moved by Ms. Armstrong, seconded by Ms. Shore, to adjourn the meeting 9:43 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Armstrong, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Mr. Jacobs, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore, Mr. Willyerd, said "aye". Motion carried 8-0.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dana M. Davis
Board Secretary