

Minutes of the Argos Community Schools
Regular School Board Meeting
Held on April 20, 2026

The Board of School Trustees held a regular school board meeting on April 20, 2026. The following individuals were present for all or a part of the meeting.

A. Pat Rensberger, Karra Duff, Jennifer Hurford, Chris O'Dell and Monty, Board Members

B. Kerry Johnson, Superintendent

C. Ned Speicher, Mentor to the Superintendent

D. Kelli VanDerWeele, Business Manager

E. Amy Miller, Administrative Assistant

F. Greg Drennen and Kevin McCurdy, LWC Architects

G. Jay Smith, Jon VanDerWeele and Ray Bouchard, patrons

Pat Rensberger called the meeting to order at 7:09 P.M. and led the Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence.

There was no communication from patrons.

Karra Duff moved to approve the minutes from the March 16, 2026 regular meeting and executive session. Jennifer Hurford seconded the motion and it was approved 5-0.

Chris O'Dell made a motion to approve all personnel changes per the attached listing. Monty Peden seconded the motion and it passed 5-0.

Monty Peden, along with Jon VanDerWeele, Jay Smith and Ray Bouchard updated the Board on the Sleep in Heavenly Peace bed build that will take place on Saturday, May 16th at the Argos Education Center. Sleep in Heavenly Peace has over 400 chapters nationwide and distributes over 300,000 beds annually. It's estimated that nationally 3% of kids are sleeping without beds. In Argos alone, there are an estimated 50 kids that do not have their own bed. Beds are available for kids ages 3-17 and are constructed to grow with the child as they age. A mattress, pillow and bedding set is also provided for the child. The inaugural bed build for

Argos currently has 14 registered volunteers but is asking for those interested to sign up and come help build. The plan is to build 30 beds that day. Those interested in participating can register at SHPbeds.org.

Greg Drennen and Kevin McCurdy presented the Board with an update on the construction projects set to begin at the end of the school year. The tunnel piping project is being headed up by Core Mechanical. The roofing project will be completed by SPG Roofing. Ziolkowski Construction will do the masonry work and Brown and Brown Contractors will oversee the elementary patio work. Mr. Drennen hopes to set a meeting the first week of May with all 4 contractors to go over timing and setup during construction. Mr. Drennen discussed possible sites for staging of materials for each of the projects but that will also be determined at the construction meeting.

Monty Peden moved to approve the recommendation to accept the Bid from Brown and Brown General Contractors for the elementary patio work in the amount of \$85,652.00. Jennifer Hurford seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Karra Duff moved to approve the NIESC Media Specialist contract for the 2026-2027 school year. Chris O'Dell seconded the motion and it was approved 5-0.

Jennifer Hurford moved to approve a quote from V&M Construction for a new roof on the daycare building and some roof repair on the block building on the varsity soccer field in the amount of \$14,364.94. Monty Peden seconded the motion and it was approved 5-0.

Jennifer Hurford moved to approve several invoices from LWC. Those invoices include 19518 for the roofing and coping replacements in the amount of \$12,000; Invoice 19519 for tunnel piping replacement in the amount of \$11,262.95 and invoice 19520 for exterior masonry repairs in the amount of \$4499.99. Chris O'Dell seconded the motion and all members were in favor of approval.

Kerry Johnson asked the Board for approval of a Non-Standard Course Waiver to incorporate speech into the 10th Grade English/Language Arts classes to meet the new Indiana Pathways requirements for credits. Doing so doesn't take away a student's ability to take advanced speech but guarantees that they will meet all requirements from the state for graduation. Chris O'Dell made the formal motion, with Monty Peden seconding and it passed 5-0 as well.

Jenny Hurford made a motion to approve a 2.5% wage increase effective July 1, 2026 for all classified employees. Karra Duff seconded the motion and it was approved 5-0.

Monty Peden moved to the same 2.5% salary increase to all administrator contracts. Doing so keeps these contracts in line with the new teacher's contracts. Chris O'Dell seconded the motion and it was approved 5-0.

Karra Duff moved to approve the purchase of gift cards for employees being honored at this year's "Years of Service" celebration scheduled for May 14th at 3:15 in the Media Center. The total cost of the gift cards is 650.00. This year we have 14 individuals celebrating milestone anniversaries and 3 retirements. Chris O'Dell seconded the motion and it was approved 5-0, as well.

Kerry Johnson updated the Board on the TAG grant. The money allocated for our school has been received and is ready to be paid out. To review, the State has redone the TAG grant application and payout process this year and Argos received funding to award 6 stipends at the lowest award level of \$3,500. We had 10 applicants this year for the TAG grant. 2 of those applicants didn't meet eligibility requirements, so 8 applicants were eligible for the award. Each of the 8 applicants made a strong case as to why they should receive the stipend. In the end, because we were only able to award 6 of the applicants with the \$3,500 stipend by random drawing, Mrs. Johnson asked the Board if they would consider awarding the 2 applicants who were not chosen with a smaller stipend. It was decided this first year only that we would award a smaller stipend of \$1,000 to those 2 applicants with the understanding that we would continue to work on creating a process that allows us to work within the new confines of the Indiana Department of Education guidelines for choosing TAG grant recipients. Chris O'Dell made a motion to award the additional 2 stipends, Monty Peden seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

Jennifer Hurford made a motion to approve the purchase of 62 new MacBooks for staff for the 26-27 school year. Karra Duff seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously. The current MacBooks are nearing the end of their lives and need to be replaced with new technology. Our technology department hopes to receive the new computers in time to get them set up over the summer and ready for distribution in late July/early August.

Mrs. Johnson gave her Superintendent's report to the Board. She updated them on the new cell phone policy/law that will play a big part in our school this Fall. In the past, students have been allowed to check in cell phones at the beginning of each class period and then retrieve them at the end of the class. Phones were able to be used throughout the day during passing periods, free times and the lunch period. New legislation calls for cell phones to be put away from bell to bell, meaning they are to be powered off and left in a student locker during the day. This also includes laptops, Ipads, smartwatches and AI glasses. This will definitively impact mostly the high school but we will work to make a smooth transition and adhere to this new legislation. Next item was to review the new accountability model designed by the IDOE. Starting this fall, all Indiana school districts will receive a letter grade. The new grading system

will show the value that every student brings to our school through grades, attendance, academic progress and growth. Administrators will continue to meet to work through the new model. Mrs. Johnson reported the kindergarten roundup resulted in lower numbers than in the past, but reminded the Board that numbers always change over the summer as families move in and parents get geared up for the new school year. Mrs. Johnson also reported back on the musical, “Oklahoma”, which happened the weekend of April 10-12. The shows were a resounding success and she complimented the kids and Mr. Mills on all of their hard work to bring a great performance to Argos Community Schools. There were a total of 46 students involved in the production both in front of the curtain and behind the scenes.

Kelli VanDerWeele asked the Board to approve claims. There were a total of 7 pages of accounts payable claims in the amount of \$115,839.37 and 3 pages of payroll claims in the amount of \$305,064.61. Total claims for the month were \$420,903.98. Monty Peden moved to approve the claims. Karra Duff seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Mrs Johnson presented the Board with the financial reports for the month. The financial year has continued to be very strong. We are currently under budget for both the operations and education funds and will work to maintain that.

With there being no other business to discuss, Chris O’Dell moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:38 P.M. Jennifer Hurford seconded the motion and it was approved 5-0.

ARGOS COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES

Pat Rensberger, President

Karra Duff, Vice President

Jennifer Hurford, Secretary

Chris O’Dell, Member

Monty Peden , Member

Board Approved Personnel Changes April 20, 2026

A. Employment

1. Emily LaFree-Summer tech help
2. Dustin Shidler-F/T custodian-beginning April 27, 2026
3. Morgan Reed-Speech Language Pathologist Aide

B. Resignation

1. Aaron Dowdle-HS Science-effective end of school year
2. Ashley Bellm-F/T custodian

C. ECA sponsors

1. Elizabeth Kastner-Stanton-Sunshine Society

D. Transfer

1. Kevin Croninger-F/T Maintenance/Grounds to Assistant Maintenance Manager/Head of Grounds