AVELLA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
1000 AVELLA ROAD
AVELLA, PA 15312

BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

October 21, 2026

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, October 21, 2026. Mr. Emanuel Paris, Board President, called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. An Executive Session was held prior to the meeting to discuss personnel and projects. An Executive Session was held after the adjournment of the regular meeting to further discuss personnel. Dana Davis, Board Secretary, held roll call and the following board members were present:

BOARD MEMBERS: Elmo Cecchetti, Susanne Colilla, Jeffrey Devenney, Melissa Dryer, Beth Dunmore, James Gagich, Kimberly Mace, Emanuel Paris, and Tia Shore.

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

OTHERS: Rachel Lozosky, District Solicitor

A. GENERAL PROCEDURES

Roll Call

Pledge of Allegiance

Presentations/Recognitions

1. PSBA recognizes and presents a plaque to James Gagich, School Board Director, recognizing his 20 years of service on the school board.

2. The following students are recognized as the October Students of the Month:
Tristan Davis – Senior
Elena Elswick – 6th Grade Student

3. Congratulations to Senior Tristan Davis on an outstanding golf season. Tristan was the WPIAL 2A Section IV Medalist at Shannopin Country Club, finished 10th in the first round at South Hills Country Club, and placed 11th in the WPIAL Championship Finals at Oakmont Country Club. His performance earned him a spot in the 2026 PIAA State Golf Championships, held October 19-20, where he finished 26th out of 72 golfers statewide.

Request to Speak at the Board Meeting

Visitor's Request to Speak on Agenda Items

GENERAL PROCEDURE ITEMS

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

Board Members were furnished copies of the Board Minutes for the September 2026 Regular Board Meeting.

Moved by Mr. Gagich, seconded by Mr. Cecchetti, to approve the September 2026 Regular Board Meeting.

ROLL CALL: Mr. Cecchetti, Ms. Colilla, Mr. Devenney, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Ms. Mace, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore said "aye". Motion carried 9-0.

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

Board Members were furnished copies of the Accounts Payable for the September and October 2026 General Fund.

Moved by Mr. Gagich, seconded by Mr. Cecchetti, to approve the Accounts Payable for the September and October 2026 General Fund.

ROLL CALL: Mr. Cecchetti, Ms. Colilla, Mr. Devenney, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Ms. Mace, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore said "aye". Motion carried 9-0.

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

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

B. NEW BUSINESS

1. ATHLETIC & ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

a. Winter Sports Volunteer Coaches

Moved by Ms. Dryer, seconded by Mr. Devenney, to approve the following as Volunteer Junior High, Junior Varsity, and Varsity Coaches for the Winter Sports Season for the 2026-2027 school year, pending receipt of clearances.

BOYS JV/VARSITY BASKETBALL:
Brandon Miller
Ivan Ullom

GIRLS JV/VARSITY BASKETBALL:
Jack Conn

BOYS VARSITY WRESTLING:
Jared Magon
Jeromiah McClain
Raymond Phillips
Chas Rush

ROLL CALL: Mr. Cecchetti, Ms. Colilla, Mr. Devenney, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Ms. Mace, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore said "aye". Motion carried 9-0.

B. NEW BUSINESS

2. ATHLETIC COMMITTEE, continued

b. Discussion Item: Athletic Facility Improvements
Mr. Paris, Board President, and Mr. Walther, Superintendent, met with representatives from McKinley Sports Architecture and Engineering to explore potential improvements to the District's athletic fields and facilities. The discussion focused on preliminary ideas and long-term planning for future athletic facility enhancements. This is an early exploratory effort as the District begins considering potential improvements to its athletic facilities.

3. COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

3. CURRICULUM & TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

a. Western Area Career & Technology Center Update
Ms. Dryer reported that the WACTC Board Meeting fell on the evening of the Avella Homecoming Parade, therefore she was unable to attend.

b. Pathways of Southwestern Pennsylvania Agreement
Moved by Mr. Cecchetti, seconded by Mr. Devenney, to retroactively approve the Agreement between Avella Area School District and Pathways of Southwestern Pennsylvania, Inc for Community Participation Support Services for District Special Education students, per Attachment Curriculum & Technology "A".

ROLL CALL: Mr. Cecchetti, Ms. Colilla, Mr. Devenney, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Ms. Mace, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore said "aye". Motion carried 9-0.

c. Helping and Healing Paws – Children Reading to Dogs Program
Moved by Mr. Cecchetti, seconded by Mr. Devenney, to retroactively approve the Helping and Healing Paws – Children Reading to Dogs – Tail Waggin' Tutors Program, per Attachment Curriculum & Technology "B".

ROLL CALL: Mr. Cecchetti, Ms. Colilla, Mr. Devenney, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Ms. Mace, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore said "aye". Motion carried 9-0.

d. IU1 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Title 1 Agreement
Moved by Mr. Cecchetti, seconded by Mr. Devenney, to approve the Agreement between the Avella Area School District and IU1 to provide Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Title 1 supplemental education services for the 2026-2027 school year, per Attachment Curriculum & Technology "C".

ROLL CALL: Mr. Cecchetti, Ms. Colilla, Mr. Devenney, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Ms. Mace, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore said "aye". Motion carried 9-0.

e. Winter Concert Dates
Moved by Mr. Cecchetti, seconded by Mr. Devenney, by Mr. Cecchetti, seconded by Mr. Devenney, to approve the following Winter Concert dates for the 2026-2027 school year:

- **High School Concert**: December 8, 2026, at 7:00 pm.
- **Elementary Concert**: December 10, 2026, at 6:30 pm.

ROLL CALL: Mr. Cecchetti, Ms. Colilla, Mr. Devenney, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Ms. Mace, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore said "aye". Motion carried 9-0.

B. NEW BUSINESS

4. FACILITIES & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

a. GG&C Substitute Driver List

Moved by Mr. Cecchetti, seconded by Mr. Devenney, to approve the following to the GG&C Bus/Van Driver List:

- Robert Asman
- David Cronin
- Willie Dukes
- Russell Kerr
- Jamaica Papa
- Ashley Rodgers
- Amy Soukey
- Alicia Westbrook
- Brenda Whitlaw

ROLL CALL: Mr. Cecchetti, Ms. Colilla, Mr. Devenney, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Ms. Mace, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore said "aye". Motion carried 9-0.

b. Jake Schneider, Inc. Auxiliary Transportation Agreement

Moved by Mr. Cecchetti, seconded by Mr. Devenney, to approve the revised Contract for School Pupils between the Avella Area School District and Jake Schneider, Inc. for additional student transportation services for the 2026-2027 school year. The original agreement was approved at the August 5, 2026 meeting and was subsequently revised by the District's Solicitor at the request of the Board. Attachment Facilities & Transportation "A".

ROLL CALL: Mr. Cecchetti, Ms. Colilla, Mr. Devenney, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Ms. Mace, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore said "aye". Motion carried 9-0.

5. FINANCE COMMITTEE

6. NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE

7. PERSONNEL & POLICY COMMITTEE

a. Sarah Amsler - Full Time Secondary Special Education Teacher

Moved by Mr. Devenney, seconded by Ms. Dryer, to retroactively approve the employment of Sarah Amsler as a Full-Time Secondary Special Education Teacher, Temporary Professional Employee, Step 1, in accordance with the AEA Contract, effective October 5, 2026, to fill the vacancy resulting from Samantha Jacobs' transfer to the Elementary Center.

ROLL CALL: Mr. Cecchetti, Ms. Colilla, Mr. Devenney, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Ms. Mace, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore said "aye". Motion carried 9-0.

B. NEW BUSINESS

7. FACILITIES & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

b. Permanent Teacher Contracts

Moved by Mr. Devenney, seconded by Ms. Dryer, to approve the issuance of the following Professional Employee Contracts for eligible teachers who have completed three years of satisfactory service, in accordance with applicable requirements and effective dates as listed below.

- Brandon Miller – Effective September 26, 2025
- Emily Jezowicz – Effective August 21, 2026
- Lauren O'Brien – Effective August 21, 2026
- Kevin Painter – Effective August 24, 2026

ROLL CALL: Mr. Cecchetti, Ms. Colilla, Mr. Devenney, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Ms. Mace, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore said "aye". Motion carried 9-0.

c. Substitute Teacher List – Update

Moved by Mr. Devenney, seconded by Ms. Dryer, to retroactively add the following individual(s) to the Substitute Teacher List for the 2026-2027 school year. All required clearances and employment paperwork have been completed.

- Stacy Burk
- Annalisse Scammell
- Nicole Sefcik

ROLL CALL: Mr. Cecchetti, Ms. Colilla, Mr. Devenney, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Ms. Mace, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore said "aye". Motion carried 9-0.

d. Substitute Nurse List

Moved by Mr. Devenney, seconded by Ms. Dryer, to retroactively add the following individual(s) to the Substitute Nurse List for the 2026-2027 school year. All required clearances and employment paperwork have been completed.

- Caitlyn Munger

ROLL CALL: Mr. Cecchetti, Ms. Colilla, Mr. Devenney, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Ms. Mace, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore said "aye". Motion carried 9-0.

e. School Volunteer List

Moved by Mr. Devenney, seconded by Ms. Dryer, to approve the updated Avella Area School District Volunteer List for the 2026-2027 school year, per Attachment Personnel & Policy "A".

ROLL CALL: Mr. Cecchetti, Ms. Colilla, Mr. Devenney, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Ms. Mace, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore said "aye". Motion carried 9-0.

B. NEW BUSINESS

7. FACILITIES & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

f. PSBA Policies

Moved by Mr. Devenney, seconded by Ms. Dryer, to approve the adoption/revisions to the following policies and attachments as recommended by PSBA, per Attachment Personnel & Policy "B".

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102	Academic Standards
204.1	Virtual Attendance and Wellness Checks
209-AR-0	Mandated Health Services
246	School Wellness
246-AR-2	Physical Education
246-AR-7	Healthy School Environment
249	Bullying/Cyberbullying
800-AR-1	Records Retention Schedule

ROLL CALL: Mr. Cecchetti, Ms. Colilla, Mr. Devenney, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Ms. Mace, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore said "aye". Motion carried 9-0.

8. SAFETY COMMITTEE

a. A Safety Committee Meeting is scheduled for November 5, 2026 at 9:00 a.m.

C. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Board, moved by Ms. Dryer, seconded by Mr. Devenney, to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Mr. Cecchetti, Ms. Colilla, Mr. Devenney, Ms. Dryer, Ms. Dunmore, Mr. Gagich, Ms. Mace, Mr. Paris, Ms. Shore said "aye". Motion carried 9-0.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dana M. Davis
Board Secretary