

ATHENS COUNTY BOARD OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, August 25, 2026 – 6:00 P.M.
Beacon School – 801 W. Union Street

**The Mission of the Athens County Board of Developmental Disabilities is to serve our
community with compassion, innovation, and transparency**

1. Dr. Jason Jolley, Board President, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
2. Arian Smedley did roll call.

CONNER	Present
GÜT-ZIPPERT	Present
JOLLEY	Present
LEWIS	Absent – virtual (arrived by 6:07 p.m.)
OCHES	Present – virtual
SABAIDUC	Present

Staff / Others in Attendance:

Dr. Kevin Davis	Superintendent
Arian Smedley	Assistant Superintendent
Scott Zielinski	Director of Finance
Tristin Lawrence	Director of Human Resources
Stephanie Kendrick	Director of Services & Support
Jamie Bartee	Director of Education / School Principal
Chris Linscott	Director of Transportation / Facilities
Audra Harrison	SSA Manager
Amy Goldsberry	SSA Manager
Brie Stammier	Instructor / ABEA
Doug Mitchell	Transition Coordinator / ABEA
Clayton Ray	SSA / PGO
Jason Bourne	SSA / PGO

3. Dr. Jolley read the Mission Statement.
4. Sabaiduc motioned to approve the agenda.

MOTION#: 8-25-26-1
MOTION: SABAIDUC
SECOND: GÜT-ZIPPERT
AYES: CONNER, GÜT-ZIPPERT, JOLLEY, OCHES, SABAIDUC
CARRIES: YES

5. New Business:

Items for review and discussion:

- a. Dr. Davis reviewed the exhibit on the Board Member Recognition Wall (Exhibit 1, Pages 1-2). Dr. Davis invited the board members and those in attendance to walk out to the newly renovated Carol's Corner for this piece of the agenda.

Dr. Davis shared Carol's Corner now has a wall dedicated to board member appreciation. This wall recognizes members who have served twelve years or more, starting in 2026 and beyond. These twelve years would not need to be consecutive. Margaret Demko, who recently stepped down from her role as Board Vice President, is the first board member to meet these criteria.

Demko shared a few remarks regarding her time as a board member, most of which she served as Board President. Demko has served 17 years, over multiple terms. She mentioned this role had become part of her identity and that she felt honored to serve in this way.

She added the main reason for her resignation (as of August 2026) from the board stemmed from her interest in exploring a new role. She wishes to explore providing a congregate setting for living for individuals with developmental disabilities. She is also exploring the development of an adult day program that focuses on homesteading. She added she would not be able to do these things while also serving as a board member.

- b. Dr. Davis reviewed the exhibit, which outlined the summertime facilities projects (Exhibit 2, Page 3-5). In particular, he highlighted the new sun shades on the playgrounds and the work done on the pool. He added this summer was one of the busiest for the Facilities team, and they all did a great job completing these projects. A board member also complimented the grounds.
- c. Dr. Davis reviewed the Self-Audit summary (Exhibit 3, Pages 6-10). This self-audit was an opportunity to examine the agency's practices primarily around its connection to the school's nonprofit PTO. Other areas reviewed included the Breakfast with Santa event and how the school manages the Brew Café and other initiatives. The changes ensure the agency is in line with legal parameters. A recommendation specific to the Breakfast with Santa event is later on the agenda.
- d. Dr. Davis reviewed the exhibit on the Final update on Rays Days! Summer Camp 2026 (Exhibit 4, Page 11). Camp provided four weeks of summer camp experience for 48 campers, which included two meals and a snack. The camp once again incorporated a number of community partners and community fieldtrips.
- e. Dr. Davis reviewed the Healthy Futures update (Exhibit 5, Page 12-14). He reviewed the history of the workgroup, the various ideas reviewed, the latest proposals that were discussed, and lastly, the remaining proposals yet to be assessed.

- f. Dr. Davis reviewed the Employee Engagement priority areas (Exhibit 6, Pages 15-16). The committee identified three priority areas, including some examples. Next steps will be to make sure this is something we do and accurately track it.
- g. Dr. Davis reviewed the Strategic Plan Progress Report – Q2 Update (Exhibit 7, Pages 17-21). He reminded the board the Progress Report tracking tool matches the agency’s three-year Strategic Plan. This report provides an update on the progress made during the second quarter of the year.
- h. Dr. Davis reviewed the 2025 ATCO Legacy Fund Outcome Report (Exhibit 8, Pages 22-33). He shared the first two pages is a high-level summary, with the following pages providing a more in-depth report from each recipient. It was noted one recipient did not provide an outcome report timely. There was a question about the accountability of the program. Dr. Davis explained the selection process and the end-of-year reporting process.
- i. Dr. Güt-Zippert motioned to approve updated policies for approval (Exhibit 9, Pages 34-48).

Discussion: Dr. Davis provided an overview of the updated policies.

MOTION#: 8-25-26-2
 MOTION: GÜT-ZIPPERT
 SECOND: SABAIUDC
 AYES: CONNER, GÜT-ZIPPERT, JOLLEY, LEWIS, OCHES, SABAIUDC
 CARRIES: YES

- j. Dr. Davis reviewed the 2026 Annual Board Survey Results (Exhibit 10, Pages 49-52). He shared we received responses from 5 of the 6 members. All five rated the overall structure at 5 out of 5, and members noted they receive the board packets with plenty of time to review them. In addition, some written feedback was also provided.
- k. Dr. Davis reviewed the sustainability / standardization project with MEORC and DODD (Exhibit 11, Pages 53-65). Dr. Davis stressed the ideas and proposals presented in these documents remain in draft form and are subject to further review and revision. They are being shared for informational purposes and discussion only; no action or formal vote is requested at this time. Two areas of primary concern include a lack of “statewideness” and fiscal sustainability for the county board system.

DODD would like to develop a strategy of regionalization to address these issues of fiscal sustainability and “statewideness.” It is expected that DODD would provide some level of coverage of a county’s waiver match. This would potentially free up some resources for our local agency. Another option would be that we decide not to renew our term levy when the time comes, and instead give something back to the taxpayers. These are all options to explore as details are finalized.

Dr. Davis added we are excited to be on the forefront of helping develop this strategy, through the work of MEORC. The included write-up from MEORC outlines some high-level aspects of their proposal.

Also included in the packet is a letter of support from MEORC to DODD. Dr. Davis stressed the following section:

“Formal participation by each county remains subject to consideration and approval by each individual county board, consistent with local governance responsibilities. In addition, the funding approach has not yet been determined and will need to be developed in partnership with DODD and participating county boards before any final implementation commitment is made.”

Dr. Davis added nothing is set in stone at this time and things could change at any point.

Dr. Jolley expressed some concern about MEROC from his personal experiences. He also expressed concern about the potential of losing the voice of individuals and families served when shifting to regionalization with the help of COGs. He was pleased to see MEORC’s plan to develop a family advisory council, and he thanked Dr. Davis for advocating that be added. But his concern remains, putting additional power in the hands of professionals who do not have a close connection to the local CB or families served.

Dr. Davis added that DODD met with ODM recently, and ODM did indicate support for the regionalization model. This particular situation is unique to Ohio.

There was a question about the timeline for financial commitments. Dr. Davis said there are no dates set, but that we know DODD intends to have a plan in place soon, with the hope that it will be accepted by the new administration.

- I. Board members discussed future meetings/trainings:
 - i. Board training: Tuesday, September 22, 2026, 5 p.m. – Topic is MUI / UI
 - ii. Regular meeting: Tuesday, September 22, 2026, 6 p.m.

Motions for vote:

- a. Dr. Lewis motioned to approve June Board Meeting Minutes (Exhibit 12, Page 66-71), with the correction of who called the meeting to order (Demko instead of Dr. Jolley).

MOTION#: 8-25-26-3
MOTION: LEWIS
SECOND: SABAIUDC
AYES: CONNER, GÜT-ZIPPERT, JOLLEY, LEWIS, SABAIUDC
CARRIES: YES

- b. Dr. Güt-Zippert motioned to approve the ACBDD's contribution of \$10,000 for the Fall 2026 ATCO Legacy Fund grant cycle and the 2026 RFP, with the priority area of supporting inclusion of individuals with I/DD (Exhibit 13, Pages 72-76).

Discussion: Dr. Davis mentioned the Fund has approximately \$35,000 remaining. Given this, we are proposing this year's fund be allocated \$10,000, instead of \$20,000. This will extend the life of the program a few more years.

MOTION#: 8-25-26-4
MOTION: GÜT-ZIPPERT
SECOND: SABAIUDUC
AYES: CONNER, GÜT-ZIPPERT, JOLLEY, LEWIS, SABAIUDUC
CARRIES: YES

- c. Sabaiduc motioned to approve limited employee assistance in planning and coordinating the annual Breakfast with Santa event. Employee involvement shall be de minimis, as determined by administration. (Exhibit 14, Page 77).

Discussion: Dr. Davis shared this motion is a product of the self-audit reviewed earlier in the meeting. This motion came at the recommendation of the county's prosecutor's office.

Dr. Güt-Zippert asked about the recommended motion for the Polar Bear Plunge. Dr. Davis explained there are no current plans to have another plunge next year. And so, the board will not be asked to consider that motion. When and if the plunge resumes in the future, the board will be asked to consider that motion.

MOTION#: 8-25-26-5
MOTION: SABAIUDUC
SECOND: LEWIS
AYES: CONNER, GÜT-ZIPPERT, JOLLEY, LEWIS, SABAIUDUC
CARRIES: YES

- d. Dr. Güt-Zippert motioned to approve agreement with Nisonger Center for a specialized assessment, pending prosecuting attorney's approval (Exhibit 15, Pages 78-87).

Discussion: Dr. Davis explained this is a specialized assessment for an individual served and is not covered by Medicaid or the waiver.

MOTION#: 8-25-26-6
MOTION: GÜT-ZIPPERT
SECOND: SABAIUDUC
AYES: CONNER, GÜT-ZIPPERT, JOLLEY, LEWIS, SABAIUDUC
CARRIES: YES

6. Board Reports:

- a. Superintendent, Dr. Kevin Davis (Exhibit 16, Pages 88-98).
Report stands. Dr. Davis shared the recently published agency newsletter – Catch up with the ACBDD. It covers the Spring and Summer of this year. He highlighted the pages that showcase recent hires, which the board may find helpful. He also highlighted the need to elect a new Vice President, now that Demko has resigned. This will be on the agenda for next meeting.
- b. Director of Finance, Scott Zielinski (Exhibit 17, Pages 99-117).
Report stands. He offered a shoutout to Amy Sheridan, who took over for Carol Janes-Tinkham. Sheridan has completed the beginning, intermediate and advanced training of the Government Finance Association of Ohio. He noted this is a feather in her cap for completing all three levels.
- c. Director of Human Resources, Tristin Lawrence (Exhibit 18, Pages 118-125).
Report stands.
- d. Director of Service and Support, Stephanie Kendrick (Exhibit 19, Pages 126-128).
Report stands. She also introduced a new staff member – Jason Bourne. He attended the board meeting as part of his onboarding.
- e. Director of Education, Jamie Bartee (Exhibit 20, Page 129-130).
Report stands. She took an opportunity to thank everyone for their support as she transitioned into her new role with the school.
- f. Director of Facilities and Transportation, Chris Linscott (Exhibit 21, Page 131-132).
Report stands. He highlighted the most recently hired driver – Amanda Michael – is driving independently now. He also highlighted Joe Rosler, who has been a driver, now also serves as a paraprofessional. This will be a unique opportunity to a transportation team member to see “both sides” of the student experience. It was asked if the transportation team is fully staffed, and Linscott indicated it is. He added Michael Clark is still deployed as well, but his return is expected later this year.
- g. MUI Coordinator, Angela Patrick (Exhibit 22, Page 133).
Report stands.
- h. Director of Integrate Athens, Autumn Brown (Exhibit 23, Pages 134-137).
Report stands.
- i. Assistant Superintendent, Arian Smedley (Exhibit 24, Pages 138-141).
Report stands. She highlighted the My Life My Story workshop coming up on Sept. 1. This will be co-facilitated by Transition Coordinator and an SSA, which is an opportunity for cross-department collaboration. The event will focus on helping individuals served develop self-advocacy skills through storytelling.

7. No comments from Visitors relative to the agenda.

8. No comments from Unions relative to the agenda.

9. No comments from the Board.

10. Conner motioned to adjourn at 7:24 p.m.

MOTION#: 8-25-26-7

MOTION: CONNER

SECOND: GÜT-ZIPPERT

AYES: CONNER, GÜT-ZIPPERT, JOLLEY, LEWIS, SABIDUC

CARRIES: YES