



Avon Public Schools



Board Update

A Summary of the March 16, 2010 Avon Board of Education Meeting

The Avon Public Schools ▫ 34 Simsbury Road ▫ Avon, CT 06001 ▫ 860.404.4700

Avon Achievers ▫ The Board of Education acknowledged the following students, staff and parents in the areas noted:

Roaring Brook School: **Chloe Miller**, student, for taking the initiative on non-school time to create a poster on “Fire Prevention by Everyone Every Day” for which she was the contest winner among all grade 4 participants district-wide; **Wendy Zacchera**, staff, for her exemplary leadership of the school community in the celebration and appreciation of veterans. **Heather Maguire**, parent, for her outstanding leadership skills as the 2009-10 PTO president and extraordinary commitment to ensuring the successful achievement of the PTO’s mission and purposes.

Pine Grove School: **Jacob Benedict** and **Harry Ashford**, students, for their role in planning and carrying out the school-wide fashionable belt project which raised funds for *Wings of Hope* in memory of Margaret Ashford; **Margaret Ashford (in memoriam)**, student, who despite the challenges of her illness, bravely came to Kindergarten; **Kayla Poff** and **Luke Kimball**, students, for being active volunteers in making bracelets during recess to benefit “Hearts for Haiti”; a fundraising project of Miss Colbert’s 4th grade class.

Thompson Brook School: **Samantha Aube**, student, for demonstrating tremendous character, caring and empathic actions and always giving 110% to all that she does; **Kathy Dully**, staff member, for her great efforts, sense of humor and organizational skills in arranging Thompson Brook School’s transition program for incoming 5th grade students and their parents each year; **Adrienne Hoekman**, staff member, for her dedication, patience and expertise, and always going above and beyond the call in her role as paraprofessional.

District: **David Paul**, staff, for his outstanding dedication and commitment to the Avon Public Schools as the Director of Buildings and Grounds.

Presentation – Responsive Classroom ▫ Abby Warren, grade 5 teacher at Thompson Brook School, presented a PowerPoint overview of the Responsive Classroom approach including the seven guiding principles and ten classroom practices and feedback on implementation of the model at Thompson Brook School. Principal Anne Watson spoke about Responsive Classroom being a proactive way to address character education and the plan to increase implementation school-wide.

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Student Representative Reports ▫ Student Representative Lindsey Racz reported that she, Mr. Erwin and Mrs. Roell were interviewed by Sean Scanlon, aid to Congressman Christopher Murphy, about the role of student representatives on the Board of Education. Further, Ms. Racz reported that CAPT went smoothly; that a student-run benefit concert, “Rock Haiti” will take place on the weekend; and that she was excited about the trip to Greece coming up during April Break. Representative Ben Bergman reported that juniors took SATs during the past weekend and were awaiting results; and that all schools were participating in “green” competitions aimed at saving money on energy consumption. Further, Mr. Bergman reported that he had attended student meetings at the various schools and that each was well-organized and participating in various fundraising activities.

Monthly Reports ▫ Mr. Goeler thanked the principals for their monthly reports commenting that reading the reports provides the opportunity to gain a true sense of what is going on at each school.

Financial Report ▫ Mr. Franzi provided detailed reports on the current status of the Board of Education operating budget from July 1, 2009 through March 16, 2010, highlighted by a reforecast that reflects an operating shortfall of \$90,481. Mr. Franzi stated the projected unplanned expenditure total is \$1,263,084., driven largely by unplanned expenditures in the teacher substitute account, unemployment compensation and special education out placement costs. Further, Mr. Franzi noted that the unplanned balance is offset by lower than anticipated spending in various accounts; \$116,651 surplus in the maintenance account; and a projected Excess Cost reimbursement from the State of \$740,157. Mr. Franzi also reported to the Board on the 2009-2010 State grant revenues and the audit management recommendations made by Blum, Shapiro & Company regarding the year-end closing process.

Avon Middle School Roof Replacement Project Completion ▫ The Board approved as complete and accepted the Avon Middle School Roof Replacement Project effective March 16, 2010.

Appointment of Interim Superintendent ▫ The Board appointed Jody Goeler acting superintendent through June 30, 2010.

Non-renewal of Teacher Contracts ▫ The Board voted not to renew the contracts of six teachers for the following school year upon the expiration of their contracts at the end of the 2009-2010 school year; three that were covering for teachers on leaves of absence for the 2009-2010 school year and three that were filling positions that had been funded through ARRA grants which expire at the conclusion of this school year.

Communication From Board Members ▫ Communications Committee chairperson Kenneth Notestine reported that the committee had formulated a communication strategy with the overall theme, “What kind of school system does the town of Avon want?” Further, Mr. Notestine spoke in detail about the four key messages that the committee will disseminate to the public: that the 6.91% increases maintains the current school system; that the Avon school system is at a crossroads; that substantial cuts to the Board of Education budget will have severe consequences; and the question of who should decide the school systems fate.

Mrs. Roell thanked the PTO officers for organizing the district-wide PTO meeting held last week to discuss the budget and further stated that Mr. Goeler would be working to arrange participation of administrators in small group neighborhood and civic group meetings which will be held beginning next week.

Mr. Stokesbury stated that he had attended the quarterly meeting of the Town Administrative Services Study Committee and that the Town, along with the Board, is undertaking a full year analysis of exterior maintenance work to determine if there is a way to economize the services provided.

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Mr. Notestine congratulated the Avon High School robotics team, the ÜberBots, for winning the first WPI Regional Chairman's Award at the FIRST Robotics WPI Regional held in Worcester, Massachusetts.

Superintendent's Update □ Mr. Goeler stated that the district in the process of drafting a three year plan for the new TEAM initiative. Further, Mr. Goeler reported that Mr. Erwin had attended a Booster Club meeting last week and that members were interested in working with the Board during the budget process. Mr. Erwin had also met with representatives from ACORN about the proto type mailing the group would like to use in its upcoming promotion. Mr. Goeler stated that district administrators would be meeting on Thursday, March 18th to assemble a recommendation of potential cuts. The Board further decided that it would hold a Special Meeting on Monday, March 22, 2010 for the purpose of discussing potential budget cuts. Ms. Zuras stated that it would be helpful to the Board to hear the administration's strategies and reasons for recommended areas of potential cuts and that it was important that teachers had input in the process. Administrators in the audience stated that they are engaging in conversations with their staff regarding areas of potential budget cuts and that teachers were communicating their input to them. Mr. Eagen stated that in order to be meaningful, the pertinent information regarding potential budget cuts needs to be disseminated to the public in a timely matter.

The next regular meeting of the Avon Board of Education will be held on Tuesday, April 13th at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room at Avon High School.

The Board Update offers a summary of Board of Education Meetings.
Official minutes are available on the Avon Public Schools website at www.avon.k12.ct.us