



Monthly Meeting
Avon Board of Education
34 Simsbury Road, Avon, Connecticut

Mission Statement

Our mission is to inspire in each student a joy and passion for learning and a commitment to excellence, personal integrity, and social responsibility.

Tuesday, February 28, 2023, 7:00 pm

Virtual

Avon High School
510 West Avon Road
Avon, CT 06001

<https://avonk12ctus.zoom.us/j/83929716821?pwd=dExTeWsxeFINdXFReFQwWEFzSHICUT09>

To dial in, call:
(646) 558-8656 or (301) 715-8592
Meeting ID: 839 2971 6821
Passcode: 839335

Minutes

- I. Call to Order
Ms. Deb Chute, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.
 - A. Roll Call
Ms. Chute conducted a roll call of Board members and administrators.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance
- III. Mission Statement
- IV. Recognition - Due to the weather, recognition of students and staff will take place at the March 21, 2023 BOE Meeting
- V. Approval of Minutes
 - A. Board of Education Special Budget Workshop Meeting Minutes of January 11, 2023
Lynn Katz made a motion to approve the Minutes of Special Budget Workshop Meeting of January 11, 2023, Jackie Blea seconded
Motion passed 8-0-1
Board Member Nicole Russo abstained
 - B. Board of Education Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes of January 17, 2023
Sara Thompson made a motion to approve the minutes of January 17, 2023, Thej Singh seconded
Motion passed 8-0-1
Board Member Nicole Russo abstained
- VI. Communication from Public
No Communication from the Public

VII. Items of Information and Proposals

A. Student Representative Report – Charlotte Parry and Lillian Peng, AHS Student Representatives

- AHS - Project Graduation continues with a fundraiser at Da Vinci Pizza
 - Spring sports registration has begun.
 - Wrestling won the Class A Championship and is moving onto New Englands.
 - Senior class is getting ready for their Hollywood themed Prom.

- AMS - Robotics had their 2nd competition this year in Meriden against 26 other schools.
 - An informational meeting about Relay for Life was held for those interested.
 - AMS Student Council held their Winter Dance on February 24,2023.

- TBS - TBS celebrated Black History Month by celebrating black musicians and other inspirational Americans.
 - Tickets are on sale for Peter Pan the Musical.
 - Student Council had a Kindness month where sticky notes were placed on lockers and desks with kind thoughts and words for all TBS students.

- PGS & RBS - An assembly was held for National Read Aloud Day.
 - Valentine Celebrations were held in both schools.

- PGS - Black History month was celebrated by making posters of influential African American people and putting them around the school.
 - Student Council held a winter dance.

- RBS - RBS held an assembly for Lunar New Year.

B. Financial Report – Susan Russo, Business Manager

Ms. Russo started by discussing salaries and the savings and deficits due to new hires, FMLA leaves, and vacancies, with both certified and non-certified staff. Budget transfers were facilitated to offset the deficits on the salary level.

In other expenses, given the weather conditions, the rise in utilities was not seen in January, but is expected to be felt in the months of February and March. Labor and materials are up, as well as some increases in insurance, maintenance supplies and some bus expenses. These were all remedied by budget transfers.

Special Education is at 1.4M unencumbered. In May or June, Ms. Russo will be asking the Board to move some of those funds to escrow to help fund SPED for next school year. There were also some transportation needs/expenses for Special Education this month, but a budget transfer was able to rectify those costs.

Ms. Russo stated that we are at 4.0M unencumbered, which is 6.24%, which is up from 6.22% from last year, most likely because of the weather not being a huge factor in the expenses, but anticipating that February and March may make up for that difference.

VIII. Committees & Liaison Reports

A. Committee Reports

- Curriculum & Professional Practices – Jackie Blea, Chair
 - C&PP Meeting for April 4, 2023 will be rescheduled to April 18, 2023, due to the Town of Avon Budget meeting being the evening of April 4th.
- Finance – Lynn Katz, Chair
 - Finance met on Feb 7, the committee discussed the budget transfers and donations that will be voted on tonight, and will next meet on April 18, 2023.
- Negotiations – Deb Chute, Chair

Administrative Assistant negotiation meeting dates are being coordinated to start the process.

- Policy – Laura Young, Chair

Policy met on February 13th to discuss a number of brand new policies to the District that are on the agenda for possible action, as well as replacement of a few of our polices and a revision to an existing policy.

Next Policy Committee meeting will be held March 14, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

B. Liaison Report

- Capital Region Education Council – Jackie Blea, Board Representative

Ms. Blea referred to the email the Board received from Rep. Currey who offered to have a Zoom meeting to discuss with the Board of Education the HB5003 Bill (Education Cost Sharing). If any Board member can make it, it would be helpful to go to the Zoom meeting he is offering to understand the meaning and importance of this bill.

Ms. Blea also noted the contracts of the Executive Director, Teachers and Administrators were settled for CREC.

IX. Chair's Report –Ms. Debra Chute, Board Chair

A. Board Chair Update - Ms. Chute discussed how she was a guest reader at Pine Grove School yesterday for Read Across America Week, and the students were attentive and kind, and the questions were excellent. Ms. Chute was grateful for the opportunity.

Ms. Chute also congratulated all the athletic teams doing so well and all the students excelling academically and in the Arts.

X. Superintendent's Report – Dr. Bridget Heston Carnemolla

A. Hiring Report -

Mr. Medic went through the hiring report with new hires, resignations and transfers. Specifically mentioning Mary Tribuzio retirement from AHS with a breakfast being held for her this Friday.

B. Enrollment Report -

Dr. Carnemolla stated we are up 5 students from this time last year, with no issues as a result of the additional students. Kindergarten Registration is still ongoing. Open Choice seat declarations are due tomorrow, making some changes with the seats that are opening up with PreK and Kindergarten.

C. Strategic Plan Update -

- APS is preparing for transition to Schoology, piloting is continuing within the district as well as training. This program is one that teachers, administrators, parents and students can all utilize to streamline the process of where to find information.

- The process of end of school year planning is starting; the final PD day is on March 17, 2023.

- C&PP Submitted the waiver for the Science of Reading to the state; at this time, Dr. Carnemolla had Mr. Giannini discuss the waiver.

Mr. Giannini began by explaining that the state gave each school district 3 choices:

1. To purchase the Science of Reading program approved by the state
2. To postpone purchasing the Science of Reading program
3. To submit a waiver to the state, defending that the current curriculum in place meets the Science of Reading standards

Mr. Giannini went on to say that Avon submitted the waiver, contending that our curriculum satisfies the state requirement. There were 3 parts to the waiver; outlining the curriculum, testing data, and early literacy plan as the final part (training staff and

monitoring of earliest learners). Mr. Giannini is confident that the work speaks for itself, and that the state will agree that we comply with the Science of Reading requirements with our existing curriculum.

Mr. Giannini also reiterated that there was Professional Development on March 17, 2023, where there will be training on Schoology and Performance Matters.

One Board member asked about Performance Matters software- it was explained that it was a data warehouse software, which allows the teachers to input all the performance data (grades, test scores etc.), and teachers as well as administrators will be able to run sophisticated reports from this software.

D. Updates-

- Dr. Carnemolla began with a discussion that was held with the Farmington Valley Muslim community to discuss the request for adding 2 Muslim holidays to the school calendar. As was done when Avon added Diwali to the calendar, a request was made to figure out how many students and staff observe the 2 Muslim holidays to make an informed decision.
- Continuing with community relations, Dr. Carnemolla updated the Board on the Community Dialogue initiative which is a grant given to the town of Avon which includes town officials and community members. The writing of this Dialogue has taken on much momentum.
- Dr. Carnemolla mentioned there were numerous policies to go through tonight. At the next policy meeting, the Shipman & Goodwin Board Council will attend the meeting to help answer any questions on state legislation pertaining to policy and any other general questions on policy as well.
- Dr. Carnemolla and other administrators have met with the Bushnell to firm up the details of the graduation.
- Dr. Carnemolla met with all the PTO Executive Boards last week and all are very busy with events at every school that are very well attended.
- Good luck to the Boys Wrestling team going to New Englands, and congratulations to Iasah Adams for breaking the school record. Good luck to the Girls Basketball as well in round 2 of the playoffs.

A question was posed to Dr. Carnemolla before the board meeting about the 3rd Safety and Security Officer, and the hours they worked. The officer works 9 am to 5 pm, unless there are absences at other schools where they need to fill in.

- Town Budget meeting is April 3rd and 4th at 7:00 p.m., and the budget is uploaded on our website.

XI. Consent Calendar

- A. **22-23/50** Motion to approve Budget Transfers
- B. **22-23/51** Motion to approve donation to Avon High School from the West Avon Congregational Church for \$1,047.37
- C. **22-23/52** Motion to approve donation to Thompson Brook for \$510.50 from PTO for Outreach Program.

Jackie Blea made a motion to approve the consent calendar as it appears, Lynn Katz seconded Motion passed 9-0-0

XII. Old Business

The BOE approved a 30 day review period of the following instructional materials, which concluded on January 19, 2023.

- A. **22-23/53** Motion to adopt 2 new primary instructional materials: *Chew on This!* by Eric Schlosser and *The Cage* by Ruth Minsky Sender

Jackie Blea made a motion to approve the 2 new instructional materials, Chew on This! by Eric Schlosser and The Cage by Ruth Minsky Sender, Liz Sommerkorn seconded Motion passed 9-0-0

XIII. New Business

- A. **22-23/54** Policy 5141.22 *Revision* – Administration of Medication- First Read with possible action

Dr. Carnemolla began the discussion by stating there is a change in legislation on medications in schools. Our policy was just updated last year, so the only changes were to define who (other than school nurse) is able to administer Opioid Antagonist, (as well as other medications) and the circumstances in relation to that. There is also an option for parents to opt out of their child receiving emergency medication (an Opioid Antagonist and Epinephrine).

The other major change is related to Glucose monitoring, and the administration of insulin.

Laura Young made the motion to adopt the revised policy 5141.22, Administration of Medication , seconded by Thej Singh

Motion passed 9-0-0

- B. **22-23/55** Policy 5141.7 *New* – Exertional Heat Illness Awareness for Intramural and Interscholastic Athletics - First Read with possible action

Dr. Carnemolla stated this is a brand new policy mandated by the state. All of the aspects of this policy are already in place with our athletics and PE teachers.

Laura Young made motion to approve new policy 5141.7, Exertional Heat Illness Awareness for Intramural and Interscholastic Athletics, seconded by Lynn Katz

Motion passed 9-0-0

- C. **22-23/56** Policy 5141.72 *New*– Emergency Action Plan for Interscholastic and Intramural Athletic Events - First Read with possible action

Dr. Carnemolla stated once again, this is a new policy to stay in compliance with CT General Statutes. This policy is catching up with the practice already in place at APS, which was developed with the nurses and district physician. Some of the policy is also about concussions and spinal cord injuries, making sure all protocols are in place. Training for CPR, First Aid and the Concussion Module is also mentioned in the policy, which are all part of our Athletic Handbook. AED training is a piece of this policy as well.

Laura Young made a motion to adopt the new policy 5141.72, Emergency Action Plan for Interscholastic and Intramural Athletic Events, seconded by Nicole Russo

Motion passed 9-0-0

- D. **22-23/57** Policy 6148 *New* – Policy to Improve Completion Rates of the FAFSA - First Read with possible action

Dr. Carnemolla began by stating that this is also part of the legislation that all districts put into place a plan to improve the rate of completion of the FAFSA. The high school currently holds workshops for filling out the FAFSA, and is fulfilling the requirements of the policy.

***Laura Young made a motion to adopt the new policy 6148, Policy to Improve Completion Rates of the FAFSA, seconded by Lynn Katz
Motion passed 8-0-0***

- E. **22-23/58** Policy 1212 *Replacement*- School Volunteers, Student Interns and other Non-Employees - First Read with possible action

Dr. Carnemolla started by mentioning the last two policies are related. This policy defines that interns, which Avon does employ, are following all health protocols, as well as the requirements of DCF background checks, fingerprinting etc. There are other procedures that we follow that fall under this policy; when a volunteer comes into a building (parent helping in child’s classroom, for example) their license is run through our Visitor Management System, where the name, address and birthdate is checked against the National Sex offender Registry to make sure they are able to legally be present in school. Once that is done, a visitor pass is given so that all staff and students understand that person has been checked and is allowed to be there.

Board member posed a question, does this relate to guest speakers? All visitors are required to go through the Visitor Management System, and all guests are vetted according to their proposed interaction with the students.

***Laura Young made a motion to replace policy 1212, seconded by Sarah Thompson
Motion passed 9-0-0***

- F. **22-23/59** Policy 1250 *Replacement* - Visitors and Observations in Schools- First Read with possible action

The Superintendent started with the discussion referring to the legal reference at the bottom of the policy, where it specifically states “observations that take place in the school setting”. This relates to the observation end and not necessarily interaction with students. This policy gives us the freedom to limit how many observations/people can do on any certain day, so as not to fully interrupt the educational process.

***Laura Young made a motion to replace policy 1250, Visitors and Observations in Schools, seconded by Lynn Katz
Motion passed 9-0-0***

XIV. Communication from Public

Please remember communications are generally limited to 15 minutes as a total maximum for all speakers, with each speaker limited to 3 minutes in accordance with standing Board policy. The Board may waive these limits in exceptional circumstances.

XV. Communication from Avon Board of Education Members

- Ms. Blea mentioned the videos from PGS and RBS for the snow days made by the Principal and Assistant Principals at each school. She said they were fun and exciting to see.
- Ms. Katz wanted to thank the two Student Representatives that come to our meetings every month and report on all the school activities and happenings. She wanted to tell them they do a wonderful job, they are thorough and she thinks the world of them. Ms. Chute concurred with Ms. Katz.

- Ms. Russo, the newest Board member, thanked everyone for the warm welcome. She went on to say she was excited to be on the board and looking forward to helping in the process of furthering the Avon Culture of Excellence. She stated she loved all the activities the schools provide. Ms. Russo was a guest reader at PGS and loved to see the eagerness and excitement and engagement all the students had with Read Across America. She loved seeing the culture and community in Avon and is happy to be here.
- Dr. Carnemolla spoke again about athletics mentioning the girls basketball won their first state tournament game for the first time in 9 years, so the school is very excited about it.
- Ms. Young wanted to echo what Ms. Blea said about the videos, and she would love to see more of them too! She also mentioned the Robotics Team was doing well too, and referenced an article in the Valley Press about the team.
- Ms. Thompson wanted to reiterate that the Avon Aspires Community Dialogs, that Dr. Carnemolla mentioned earlier in the meeting, the registration is open and it is not just for Avon residents but anyone connected to the Avon Community.
- Dr. Carnemolla wanted to mention, in reference to what Ms. Young mentioned that the 2 Robotics teams placed 1st and 2nd in their last competition. And finally, Dr. Carnemolla told the Board there was an AHS student who started a Coding Chapter, the first one in the state of CT, and we will be hearing more about that.

XVI. Adjournment

***At 8:12pm Jackie Blea made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Sarah Thompson seconded
Motion passed 9-0-0***

Minutes prepared by Christine Sardinskas, Board Recording Secretary

Minutes respectfully submitted by Jeffrey S. Fleischman, Board Secretary

NOTE: If there is any person interested in an item that does not appear on the agenda, please arrange to speak with the Chair or the Superintendent of Schools before the meeting to discuss the matter. If the item is appropriate to the meeting, it may be discussed under New Business or Old Business. If the item requires extensive discussion or additional information, it may be placed on a future agenda.