



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, December 18, 2018, 6:00 pm*

Avon High School, Community Room

Minutes

Attendance

Members Present: Jackie Blea, David Cavanaugh, Debra Chute, Jeffrey S. Fleischman, Jason Indomenico, Houston Putnam Lowry (arrived 6:20 pm), Bogdan Oprica, Jay Spivak, Laura Young

Member(s) Absent: none

Administration Present: Dr. Bridget Heston Carnemolla, Superintendent of Schools; Roberto Medic, Director of Human Resources; Heather Michaud, Director of Fiscal Affairs; Dr. Kimberly Mearman, Director of Pupil Services; Dr. Donna Nestler-Rusack, Assistant Superintendent

I. Executive Session

The meeting was called to order by Debra Chute, Board Chair at 6:01 pm.

Mr. Cavanaugh moved, Mr. Oprica seconded, to enter Executive Session at 6:02 pm and invited Dr. Carnemolla to join the session.

The motion carried 8-0-0

A. Discussion regarding Superintendent's Evaluation

B. Negotiations Strategy – Information Technology

Ms. Young moved, Ms. Blea seconded, to exit Executive Session at 6:59 pm.

The motion carried 9-0-0

II. Call to Order

The Board was called to order in public session by Debra Chute, Board Chair at 7:06 pm

The mission statement was also read by Chair Chute.

III. Pledge of Allegiance

IV. Avon Achiever -

A. Brian Houle (AHS staff) – in recognition for the positive attitude displayed each day. Mr. Houle's actions show him to be easy to work with, extremely reliable and a man of action. He acknowledges both staff and students with a smile and sincerity and was selected as a Character Education Teacher at AHS.

V. Approval of Minutes

A. Board of Education Special Meeting, November 20, 2018

Mr. Cavanaugh moved, Ms. Young seconded, to approve the Special Meeting Minutes of November 20, 2018.

The motion carried 9-0-0

B. Board of Education Regular Monthly Meeting, November 20, 2018

Mr. Lowry moved, Mr. Indomenico seconded, to approve the Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes of November 20, 2018.

The motion carried 9-0-0

C. Board of Education Special Meeting, November 26, 2018

Mr. Lowry moved, Mr. Indomenico seconded, to approve the Special Meeting Minutes of November 26, 2018.

The motion carried 9-0-0

VI. Communication from Public

There was no communication from the public.

VII. Items of Information and Proposals

A. Avon Public School's PreK Program – Tiffany Fox, Pupil Services Supervisor and Noam Sturm, Roaring Brook School Principal

Ms. Tiffany Fox, Supervisor of Pupil Services and Mr. Noam Sturm, Roaring Brook School Principal, gave a presentation of the PreK program and the possible re-envisioning of the full day 4 year old and half day 3 year old program. The presentation showed that research found investments in early childhood education reap long term benefits; \$1 invested in strong early childhood programs returns \$7 in future revenue and public savings. With high quality education, at-risk children are less likely to drop out of school, less likely to become a teen parent, more likely to attend college and less likely to be placed in special education. At the early years the brain's ability to change in response to experiences is the highest with peaks at higher cognitive function, language development and sensory pathways.

Ms. Fox explained the PreK program currently breaks the students down by age; whereas the planned multi-age classroom allows for the many benefits of peer modeling between the ages, allowing young children to engage in more interactive and complex types of play with older children. In addition to enhancing the school day for children it will also expand the learning opportunities by providing a full day program for all the children in preschool. Currently the program consists of 2 half days for 3 yr olds and 3 full days for 4 yr olds with roughly 60 students. The ideal ratio is a 50/50 special education to peer student. Students can start the program after they have been assessed in the Birth to 3 process. Mr. Sturm and Ms. Fox feel a full day program for both 3 and 4 year olds, with multi-age classrooms, is the next step of the program which expands the learning opportunities for the children. Ms. Fox explained that there will be no financial impact to the expanded program. Mr. Sturm added that there currently are four teachers and he sees the program with the same number of teachers for the coming year.

Board members asked if there were any relationship to the State Health Improvement Plan to which Mr. Sturm replied there was no relationship. Also asked was if there was any anticipated concerns with the change to which Mr. Sturm replied that while parents of 3 yr. olds were enthusiastic, Mr. Sturm hoped parents of 4 yr olds would be equally excited that their children would take on leadership roles and help teach/be a role model to the younger children.

Chair Chute shared her own children's positive experiences with a similar program and asked Board members to feel free to contact Ms. Fox and/or Mr. Sturm should they have more questions.

- B. Student Representative Report – Addisen Ganiats & Amir Johnson, AHS Student Representatives
Mr. Johnson shared information regarding the winter season sports and that musical auditions have begun. The students at AHS and some of the other schools in the district participated in the 14th anniversary PJ Day donating \$1 to be able to wear pajamas to school; raising over \$2,000 to be donated to CCMC. AHS Student Government was also collecting hats and gloves for local shelters.

Ms. Ganiats shared that the junior class recently attended College Knowledge Night. Also, the Holiday Pancake for Supper event was held recently to raise funds for AHS' Camerata Singers' trip to Canada.

- C. Financial Report – Heather Michaud, Director of Fiscal Affairs
Ms. Michaud stated that the November expenditures showed the first payment was issued to Specialty Transportation \$1.41 million. There was nothing else to report.

VIII. Committees & Liaison Reports

A. Committee Reports

1. Curriculum & Professional Practices – Jackie Blea, Chair
Ms. Blea shared that at their last meeting the PreK program was presented to them. Also discussed with Dr. Mearman was the social/emotional services and the communication of these services, who to contact; as well as the SAT program and review process.
2. Finance – Jay Spivak, Chair
Mr. Spivak stated that the committee did not meet in December, but their next meeting will be on Tuesday, January 15th at 6:00 pm.
3. Negotiations – Jason Indomenico, Chair
Mr. Indomenico stated that there were currently no active negotiations and further discussion will take place during executive session regarding the custodians/maintainers contract.
4. Policy – Laura Young, Chair
Ms. Young shared that Policy Committee also did not meet in December with the last meeting held on November 27th. Discussions were held regarding student health and oral/medical assessments due to compliance of state changes; incoming medical advisor in relation to the medication administration policy; addition of language pertaining to juuling in discipline policy; update on suspensions and expulsions and discussion on Board bylaws pertaining to minutes. The next meeting will be held on Jan 8.

B. Liaison Reports

1. Board Representative to Curriculum Professional Development Council – Bogdan Oprica and Deb Chute, Board Rep.
There was nothing to report as the next CPDC meeting will be Feb. 28th.
2. Board Representative to Avon Board of Finance – David Cavanaugh, Board Rep.
Mr. Cavanaugh shared that the latest data on the reevaluation showed a 2% decline in the grand list with a tax increase to accommodate this. Both referendum items passed. Discussion was also had of construction projects (County Club and 167) and plan to replace bridge over Farmington River on Old Farms Road. The plan is to shut down the road for two weeks in the summer to avoid disruption when school is in session.

3. Board Representative to Avon Town Council – Jason Indomenico, Board Rep.
Chair Chute attended the meeting and shared that more presentations on capital improvement as well as discussion on teacher contract was had at the last meeting. The Town Council did not act on the teacher contract so it would approve automatically.
4. Board Representative to Capital Region Education Council – Jackie Blea, Board Rep.
Ms. Blea shared that CREC is struggling with a financial concern as the state will not meet the funding of mandates and is now asking Boards reps to vote on a resolution to have the state pay the funding fully. Board members discussed the issue including Open Choice funding as to what the state pays the districts and CREC funding vs. ECS money to the districts. Advice was not to count on the money. Support for funding for other organization may jeopardize Avon's funding. Dr. Carnemolla added that tuitions for any Avon student attending magnet schools will most likely be increased by an exorbitant amount. CREC cannot continue to run in a deficit and may have to close some of its schools. A suggestion was made to pursue efforts in offering a competitive program that the magnet schools offer. Ms. Blea will sit with the superintendent to discuss the various cost options and how to proceed prior to the next CREC meeting.

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

A. Board Chair Update

Chair Chute expressed the regrets from the Camerata Singers that they could not sing to the Board but invited everyone to attend the concert tomorrow night.

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

A. Hiring Report

Dr. Carnemolla shared the report which showed a hiring of new Enrichment Coach, a replacement para hire, transfer and resignation.

B. Enrollment Reports

The enrollment showed an increase of 12 students from November to December with new enrollment of 12 students this week.

C. Strategic Plan Update

Dr. Carnemolla stated that after the Strategic Plan was discussed during the Board retreat two weeks ago the administrative team will continue discussion of action steps this coming Thursday at their meeting.

Dr. Carnemolla also thanked Brian Houle in his role as a custodian at AHS and shared that RBS, PGS, TBS and AMS also participated in PJ Day and raised over \$3,000 combined. Dr. Carnemolla expressed her appreciation of the administrations' support of this student led fundraiser.

D. Superintendent's Proposed 2019-2020 Budget

Dr. Carnemolla reminded the Board that the budget being presented tonight was a starting point as additional budget workshops were still to be had. A final recommendation will be brought to the Board after more feedback is gathered. After reviewing the driver of the budget - the mission statement, the Superintendent went on to provide a brief overview of last year's budget:

- Gross approved budget was \$57,478,604.91
- New money - \$1,172,196.91
- Gross Income – 2.08%

The Superintendent reviewed with the Board the budget process of the last three to four months and explained the driving focus of the 2019/2020 Budget Development Goals used to directly align resources to meet these goals:

- Culture
- Achievement
- Communication
- Systems

The Superintendent went on to share the list of the 2019/2020 Enhancements or non-negotiables:

- Wellness teacher – increase .2 FTE at AHS
- Additional assistant cross country coach at AHS
- Athletic equipment at AHS
- Safety & Security Specialist – 1 FTE at TBS
- Community Advisor stipend at PGS
- Safety & Security Specialist – 1 FTE at RBS
- Preschool coordinating teacher stipend at RBS
- Kindergarten teacher – increase 1 FTE
- Additional seasonal maintenance help
- Certified OT assistant – increase .45 FTE

The preliminary budget overview showed an initial budget for 2019/2020 of \$60,134,820 (4.62%), which includes:

- Salary related contractual increases
- Initial rollover of expenditures
- Initial request from all District departments

The preliminary budget reductions brought the working preliminary budget to \$58,784,449.36 (2.27%) which includes reductions of:

- \$1,174,808.99 – change in proposed PreK rollout and staffing requests for the proposed AMS schedule change.
- \$178,562.01 – line by line reductions including various staffing requests; risers for PGS; kilns for PGS/RBS; tablets for AHS Math Dept.; preschool classroom expansion

With reallocations and additional reductions the total reductions equal \$1,639,233.00 which include:

- Elimination of a clerk typist
- Reduction of funding for the Competent Classroom
- Reduction of funding for Capturing Kids Hearts
- Reduction of contracted substitute coverage
- Reduction of contracted Chinese teachers

The Superintendent's Proposed 2019/2020 budget:

- Gross Budget Request - \$58,619,147
- Gross Difference from 2018-2019 budget - \$1,140,542
- Gross Difference from 2018-2019 budget – 1.98%

Board members asked the Superintendent questions regarding the budget. The Superintendent clarified issues concerning the Chinese teachers stating that money was included in the budget for two Chinese teachers but there are still decisions to be made before the budget is finalized. The Superintendent also expressed her gratitude to the Town for providing the funds for the SRO. Reserves for the health insurance was running as actuaries suggested and is very well funded.

Board members expressed their gratitude and appreciation for the fiscally responsible budget and were impressed with the numbers and how the budget reflected the Board's values.

The Superintendent shared with the Board information regarding the press release of the AP Honor Roll showing Avon to be one of fifteen in the state of Connecticut to receive the distinction.

XI. Consent Calendar

Any member may remove an item from the consent calendar and it will be considered in full in the ordinary course after the consent calendar is voted upon.

A. 18-19/20 Approval of Policy 5141 – Student Health Services, Second Read

B. 18-19/25 Approval of Senior Network Job Description

C. 18-19/26 Approval of COTA Job Description

D. 18-19/27 Approval of Nurses' Contract and Renewals

Mr. Lowry asked to pull Item 18-19/20 Approval of Policy 5141 – Student Health Services from the Consent Calendar

Mr. Lowry moved, Mr. Cavanaugh seconded, to approve Items 18-19/25-27 as listed on the Consent Calendar.

The motion carried 9-0-0

Mr. Lowry asked to approve Item 18-19/20 with the following modifications: page 23, section 3 delete all lettered items and end with “.....be given under oath; or” and on page 29 change “Acknowledgement” to “Oath.”

Mr. Lowry moved, Mr. Cavanaugh seconded, to approve Item 18-19/20 with the modifications as mentioned.

The motion carried 9-0-0

XII. New Business

A. 18-19/28 Mission Statement and District Goals – Dr. Bridget H. Carnemolla, Superintendent
Dr. Carnemolla gave a recap of the newly revised mission statement. Small adjustments were made from the original mission statement created in 2012. The Superintendent asked the Board to readopt the mission statement as it drives the work and approve the four focus areas – culture, achievement, communication and systems.

Mr. Lowry moved, Ms. Young seconded, to approve the revised mission statement and focus areas as presented.

The motion carried 9-0-0

B. 18-19/29 Approval of Grades 5, 9, 10, 11, and 12 English Language Arts Primary Instructional Materials – Dr. Donna Nestler-Rusack, Assistant Superintendent

Dr. Nestler-Rusack reviewed the material recommended by the CPDC. Each text is to supplement text already in use but gives voice to women writers.

***Mr. Lowry moved, Ms. Blea seconded, to approve the English Language Arts Primary Instructional Materials for Grades 5, 9, 10, 11 and 12 as presented.
The motion carried 9-0-0***

XIII. Communication from Avon Board of Education Members
There was no communication.

XIV. Communication from the Public
There was no communication.

The Board adjourned Public Session and took a brief recess by unanimous consent at 8:32 pm.

The Board invited Dr. Carnemolla, Dr. Nestler-Rusack, Mr. Medic and Ms. Michaud to join the Executive Session.

***Mr. Lowry moved, Ms. Young seconded, to enter Executive Session at 8:36 pm.
The motion carried 9-0-0***

XV. Executive Session
A. Continued Discussion regarding Superintendent's Evaluation
B. Continued Discussion regarding Negotiations Strategy – Information Technology
C. Discussion regarding Maintainers/Custodians' NAGE Contract

Dr. Nestler-Rusack, Mr. Medic and Ms. Michaud left Executive Session at 9:20pm.

XVI. Return to Public Session
***Mr. Lowry moved, Ms. Blea seconded, to enter Public Session at 9:43 pm.
The motion carried 9-0-0***
A. Possible Action regarding Maintainers/Custodians' NAGE Contract
***Mr. Indomenico moved, Ms. Young seconded, approve the Avon Custodian and Maintainer contract retroactive from July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2021. The new contract represents a total cost increase to the Board as follows: Year 1 – 2%; Year 2 – Wage adjustment for Licensed Maintainers and Maintainers of \$0.30, then a 2% GWI increase shall be applied; Year 3 – 2.25%. The total GWI cost increase is 6.25%. Additionally, the Avon Custodian and Maintainers will be migrating to a Health Savings Account (HAS) beginning July 1, 2019.
The motion carried 9-0-0***

XVII. Adjournment
***Ms. Blea moved, Ms. Young seconded, to adjourn at 9:44 pm.
The motion carried 9-0-0.***

Minutes prepared by Shirley Moy, Board Recording Secretary
Minutes respectfully submitted by Jeffrey S. Fleischman, Board Secretary

Jeffrey S. Fleischman 1/2/19

Board minutes are approved at the next regular monthly Board meeting, and any corrections to the minutes, if needed, will be made at that time.