



**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.*

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Tuesday, January 22, 2019, 7:00 pm

Avon High School, Community Room

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**Minutes**

**Attendance**

**Members Present:** Jackie Blea, David Cavanaugh, Debra Chute, Jeffrey S. Fleischman, Jason Indomenico, Houston Putnam Lowry, 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. Call to Order

*The Board was called to order in public session by Debra Chute, Board Chair at 7:02 pm*  
The mission statement was also read by Chair Chute.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Avon Achiever -

A. Lucia Esposito and Kelli Shea (TBS staff) – in recognition for their instrumental support at Thompson Brook School and help in introducing TBS families to new district systems and protocols, such as eCollect and the new security system. Ms. Esposito’s and Ms. Shea’s assistance in helping TBS’s new principal transition into the school has been especially instrumental and they have gone above expectations.

IV. Approval of Minutes

A. Board of Education Regular Monthly Meeting, December 18, 2018  
*Mr. Lowry moved, Mr. Indomenico seconded, to approve the Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes of December 18, 2018 with the change to IX D – Gross Increase instead of Gross Income.*  
*The motion carried 9-0-0.*

*Ms. Young moved, Mr. Lowry seconded, to add to the agenda Discussion concerning Strategy Concerning Pending Litigation during Executive Session.*  
*The motion carried 9-0-0.*

V. Communication from Public

There was no communication from the public.

VI. Items of Information and Proposals

A. Student Representative Report – Addisen Ganiats & Amir Johnson, AHS Student Representatives

No report was given as student representatives were not present.

B. Financial Report – Heather Michaud, Director of Fiscal Affairs

- Ms. Michaud stated Journal entries for health insurance were posted for the first six months. Employer contributions between July 1 and Dec. 31 totaled just over \$1.7 million. The Cigna administration and stop/loss fees for the same time period totaled \$445,000. The employer health contributions for just retirees, which are done separately, totaled \$157,000. These changes dropped the district from 64% of unencumbered balance to 38.35%. Ms. Michaud said postings will be made in six months, five months and one month periods at year end.

VII. Committees & Liaison Reports

A. Committee Reports

1. Curriculum & Professional Practices – Jackie Blea, Chair

Ms. Blea reported that the last meeting was in December, which was reported at last month's Board meeting; will meet again on March 5. Ms. Blea expressed she would like the committee to revisit the topic of school climate.

2. Finance – Jay Spivak, Chair

Mr. Spivak stated that Ms. Michaud's financial report covered what was discussed at the January meeting; the next meeting is Feb. 12

3. Negotiations – Jason Indomenico, Chair

Mr. Indomenico shared that the committee did not meet and had nothing to report.

4. Policy – Laura Young, Chair

Ms. Young reported that during the last meeting in January the discipline policy was reviewed with regards to vaping and expulsions. Mr. Medic reviewed the revised organizational chart; discussion was had on bylaws regarding the minutes whereas the reviewed minutes will be handed back to the recording secretary by the committee chair and the to the Board secretary who will state on the minutes that the minutes were received. Next meeting will be in Feb.

B. Liaison Reports

1. Board Representative to Curriculum Professional Development Council – Bogdan Oprica and Deb Chute, Board Rep.

Ms. Chute stated that there was nothing to report as the next CPDC meeting will be Feb. 28<sup>th</sup>.

2. Board Representative to Avon Board of Finance – David Cavanaugh, Board Rep.

Mr. Cavanaugh stated there was no update to report.

3. Board Representative to Avon Town Council – Jason Indomenico, Board Rep.

Mr. Indomenico shared he attended the Jan. 3 meeting of the Town Council and spoke of possible revisions to the charter. The Town Council is also putting together a stakeholder group regarding the radio project and the turf field committee was established with six members led by Mark Zacchio as the Chair.

4. Board Representative to Capital Region Education Council – Jackie Blea, Board Rep. Ms. Blea shared that they did vote affirmatively for the resolution, right choice especially after meeting with the superintendent and reviewing the numbers. Legislative breakfast coming up with several Board members expected to attend as well as the Superintendent.

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

A. Board Chair Update – The Chair had nothing additional to report.

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

A. Hiring Report

New hires included Thomas Kline as the Senior Network Administrator, certified occupational therapist assistant, and kindergarten teacher at Pine Gove; resignations of a para-educator and English Language tutor; and a transfer of a support staff to the middle school.

B. Enrollment Report

Enrollment shows it is fairly steady.

C. Organizational Chart

Changes included the addition of the Director of Human Resources. Mr. Medic added that additional changes moved Director of Security; added School Nurses; moved Director of Nutrition Services; and added a part time secretary to the Director of Nutrition Services and Food Service Workers. The Superintendent stated that a FAQ sheet will be developed to go along with the Organizational Chart to help clarify whom to contact for specific concerns. No action was required of the Board as per the policy.

D. 2020-2021 School Year Calendar

Dr. Carnemolla explained how the proposed 2019-2020 calendar was developed with consideration of contract guidelines such as the number of additional days for certified staff as well as how holidays fell in regards to the school week. The Superintendent, while not seeking any action asked the Board to consider the 2020-2021 calendar as Dr. Carnemolla explained that many surrounding districts put out calendars 2-3 years in advance while historically Avon has put out calendars one year at a time. Board members were in favor of approving calendars earlier, A Board member also asked for consideration to start school after Labor Day; to be mindful of Passover which is right before the April vacation and to have a March break to allow students a break in the long period of school weeks. Dr. Carnemolla reminded the Board that March is the primary window for standardized testing which may explain why many districts have done away with the March break. Board Chair Chute stated her pleasure that the Board is considering the calendar sooner in the year than previous years. Ms. Chute asked the Superintendent to bring back the 2020-2021 calendar for further consideration.

X. 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. 18-19/29 Approval of Budget Transfers

B. 18-19/30 Approval of Network Administrator's Contract

C. 18-19/31 Approval of COTA Contract

***Mr. Indomenico moved, Ms. Blea seconded, to approve Items 18-19/29-31 as listed on the Consent Calendar.***

***The motion carried 9-0-0.***

XI. New Business

A. 18-19/32 Policy 5144 – Discipline, First Read

Policy Committee Chair, Ms. Young explained that the language of the policy was examined by the district attorney who then suggested some of the changes. Dr. Carnemolla added that some changes made were due to changes in the state statutes such as the ones that delineate suspension by age as well as further defining electronic cigarettes. A line was also added to clarify that being subject to discipline at the school level is a requirement of school policy, but if students engage in illegal conduct in or outside of school they are also subjecting themselves to legal actions and

consequences. Board members asked how appropriately the policy was being enforced or whether strict adherence to the policy was being implemented and stated their concerns about the strict regulations and the administrators' discretionary authority. Board discussion included what schools are allowed to enforce and those with which schools should not be concerned (i.e., immigration). However, students are still subject to the legal aspects of their actions. Also, the School Resource Officer is not a school employee and therefore the district has no control of his/her actions. Dr. Carnemolla reassured the Board that there is some discretion used with policies especially when surrounding students. Policy Chair Young added that the Policy Committee's focus is having policy adhere to state statute not so much how administrators enact the policy. This policy addresses discipline as state statutes dictate, referring to what students cannot do. Board members stated that the policy should be communicated to remind parents, to which the Superintendent agreed and reminded that the policy is in student handbooks and available on the website. Conversation regarding e-cigarettes and alcohol clarified that NO student should have possession of any of these products on school grounds. The Board asked for additional data as to the extent of the vaping issues at the schools and asked if waiting another month to pass the policy was an issue to which Dr. Carnemolla stated what is already being enforced in the schools follows what is the law. Board members asked that the Superintendent seek additional legal counsel regarding the regulations of the policy before bringing the policy back for a second read.

B. 18-19/33 Proposed 2019-2020 School Year Calendar

***Mr. Indomenico moved, Mr. Fleischman seconded, to approve the 2019-2020 School Year Calendar as presented.***

***The motion carried 8-1-0 (Yay – Blea; Cavanaugh; Chute; Fleischman; Indomenico; Oprica; Spivak; Young. Nay – Lowry due to school starting before Labor Day)***

C. 18-19/34 Proposed 2019-2020 Board of Education Budget

Chair Chute was very pleased with the number of 1.96% increase. There was Board discussion as to whether the district had the MOU with the teachers association for the Chinese teachers to which Dr. Carnemolla said yes for one more year to cover the middle and high school. A question was asked and answered about the custodians/maintainers' provision to subcontract.

***Mr. Spivak moved, Mr. Oprica seconded, to adopt a 2019/2020 Board of Education general fund gross budget in the amount of \$58,605,549.10, having a gross increase of 1.96% over the prior fiscal year.***

A board member asked if the Chinese language now stops below 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Dr. Carnemolla confirmed Chinese will continue to be offered with 6<sup>th</sup> grade and above beginning the next school year though in coming years it may only be offered in middle school and high school. Ms. Young asked for a line item for non-certified administration which was missing.

***The motion carried 9-0-0.***

XII. Communication from Avon Board of Education Members

There was no communication.

XIII. Communication from the Public

There was no communication.

***The Board invited Dr. Carnemolla, Dr. Nestler-Rusack, Ms. Michaud and Shipman & Goodwin attorneys Rebecca Santiago and Peter Murphy to join the Executive Session.***

***At 8:19 pm, Mr. Lowry moved, Ms. Blea seconded, to adjourn Public Session and enter Executive Session after a brief recess prior.  
The motion carried 9-0-0.***

XIV. Executive Session

- A. Discussion Regarding Superintendent's Evaluation
- B. Discussion Concerning Strategy Concerning Pending Litigation

***Dr. Nestler-Rusack and Ms. Michaud left Executive Session at 9:18 pm.***

XV. Return to Public Session

***The Board exited Executive Session and entered Public Session at 10:02 pm.***

XVI. Adjournment

***Ms. Blea moved, Mr. Lowry seconded, to adjourn at 10:03 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 1/28/19*

**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.**