



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, November 20, 2018, 7:00 pm

Avon High School, Community Room

Minutes

Attendance

Members Present: Jackie Blea, David Cavanaugh, Debra Chute, Jeffrey S. Fleischman, Jason Indomenico, Houston Putnam Lowry, Bogdan Oprica, Jay Spivak

Member(s) Absent: Laura Young

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

Student Representative: Amir Johnson (arrived at 7:28 pm and left at 7:57 pm)

I. **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Debra Chute, Board Chair at 7:04 pm.

Chair Chute asked for a time of silence in memory of Avon High School student Ethan Na. Ms. Chute acknowledged the support of the Superintendent, administrators, the counselors, and staff during the difficult time.

II. **Pledge of Allegiance**

After the pledge, Chair Chute read the Mission Statement.

III. **Avon Achiever** -

A. Katelyn Wankier (AMS student) – in recognition for Katelyn’s commitment to scholarship, community service and leadership in school. Her involvement in the Arioso Choir, various athletic teams, the AMS Musical as well as working with special needs students show Katelyn is a devoted student who is passionate about her academics, extra-curricular activities and helping others.

B. Dakota DelCamp (AMS student) – in recognition for Dakota’s commitment to scholarship, community service and leadership in school. His academic achievements as well as his participation in leadership roles in after-school clubs and activities such as Student Council, AMS Safety Committee and Relay for Life prove Dakota to be a dedicated student with a passion to help others in your community.

IV. Approval of Minutes

A. Board of Education Regular Monthly Meeting, October 16, 2018

Mr. Lowry moved, Mr. Indomenico seconded, to approve the October 16, 2018 Regular Monthly Meeting minutes.

The motion carried 8-0-0.

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
Amir Johnson reported that as part of the Veterans' Day program, AHS students interested in serving in the military were invited to join the veterans for a reception. Mr. Johnson felt that providing the students with the opportunity to talk with the veterans was a great experience. During the time of the Board meeting many students were currently attending the Avon and Simsbury football game at Simsbury High. "Almost Maine" was recently presented by the high school. On Oct. 31st, Pine Grove students participating in a food collection with senior students. Mr. Johnson asked for a moment of silence as a reflection period for those who have feelings of not being able to voice their issues and to hope for a solution.

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

Ms. Michaud provided a financial summary report and shared that October was uneventful with everything in the black and on trend.

VII. Committees & Liaison Reports

A. Committee Reports

1. Curriculum & Professional Practices

Chair Blea did not have anything to report; the next meeting is Dec. 4 at 6:00 pm.

2. Finance

Chair Spivak reported items will be further addressed during the Board meeting and are listed on the Consent Calendar, Transfers and New Business for the RBS locker and turf contract.

3. Negotiations

Chair Indomenico reported that the Negotiations Committee was able to reach agreement with the custodians/maintainers in mediation. There are no pending negotiations.

4. Policy

Chair Young was not in attendance. The November Policy Committee meeting was rescheduled to Tuesday, November 27 at 6:00 pm. Superintendent Carnemolla explained the meeting had to be rescheduled as there was no quorum.

B. Liaison Reports

1. Board Representative to Curriculum Professional Development Council

Mr. Oprica attended CPDC with Chair Chute. CPDC was a full day event consisting of various administrators and teachers from all the schools. Topics included Update on Curriculum Work; Elements of a Quality Curriculum; Informational and Digital Literacy Continuums; New Course Proposals; Primary Instructional Materials; SRBI and Professional Development. The work was collaborative where the committee edited, reviewed and finalized various documents.

2. Board Representative to Avon Board of Finance

Mr. Cavanaugh reported that major concern of the Board of Finance is the ongoing revaluation with as much as a 2% decline on the grand list bringing budget implications. The upcoming referendum for the artificial turf field and town wide communications system is on Dec. 12th. Next meeting is Dec. 17th.

3. Board Representative to Avon Town Council

Mr. Indomenico reported here was a meeting on Oct 23rd where discussion was had regarding the teacher contract. Various Board members attended the Nov. 5th Town Meeting which was to move the turf project to referendum. A Town Council meeting was held on Nov. 14th which Board members attended. Next Town Council meeting is Dec. 6th which will still be within the 30 day filing period of the Teachers' Contract giving opportunity for the Town Council to discuss the contract further if they so choose.

4. Board Representative to Capital Region Education Council

Ms. Blea had nothing to report with the next meeting to be held in Dec. The Board is still looking for a volunteer to attend the meetings. Dr. Carnemolla added that much of the discussion at CREC has to do with magnet school funding and whether or not the State will be putting money toward magnet school funding or the possibility of looking at the Districts for additional funding through the tuitions. At a financial standpoint, CREC is operating at a loss.

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

A. Board Chair Update

Chair Chute recognized the how having school on Veterans' Day programs provide the students opportunities to engage with the veterans and the meaning of the day. Each building did something unique to honor the veterans starting with the impressive speech about the veterans' sacrifices by Mr. Kimball at the middle school. The entire day was very impressive with many parents attending the various presentations. Ms. Chute also acknowledged and appreciated what the District did and continues to do to help heal during the time of grief.

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

A. Hiring Report

Dr. Carnemolla reported some resignations including bidding farewell to longtime colleague Barb Barone from the Pupil Services Dept. The Special Education teacher from AMS is replaced with a long time sub and was just informed that the teacher will not be returning after her leave. The network specialist is also leaving after accepting a position closer to his home in MA. This is a key position that needs to be filled also the district is still trying to fill the field tech position that is vacant.

B. Enrollment Reports

The Superintendent explained that there is continued growth in kindergarten; from October to November the District has increased enrollment by 10 students.

C. Strategic Plan Update

The Superintendent informed Board members that a meeting request had been sent to Board members to discuss goal setting and the district plan. Dr. Carnemolla had been soliciting feedback from teachers and staff and is now at a point to have a conversation with the Board of what has been gathered and the path moving forward.

Dr. Carnemolla and Dr. Rusack discussed how feedback on current practices and what to focus on the future was discussed with staff during the November Professional Development. After reviewing the three areas in the District's Plan - Culture, Achievement and Communication, it became evident that a fourth area was needed in terms of systems which was done in conjunction with the rest of the administrative team and their staff. The use of Google Docs to share information on what is being discussed has given the superintendent insight into the discussions at the various schools. The Superintendent was happy to report that after reading all the input from the schools the focus areas fortunately show that the Board and District staff are not far apart.

Mr. Oprica expressed his appreciation for the work of the administrators and staff and was also pleased to hear that the goals of the Board and District seem to be aligned. Mr. Oprica asked what the Board can do to make progress faster to which Dr. Carnemolla replied the intention of the next meeting is to discuss the path forward.

D. Committee Meeting Dates

Dr. Carnemolla explained that meeting dates need to be submitted to the town and generally speaking, all committee meetings by definition are special meetings as they are not consisting of the full board. The Board can also reserve the right to add in meetings when meetings are needed without the fear of adding in a “special meeting.” A discussion was had as to the schedule of Regular Monthly Board meetings and the Board’s committee meetings. Finance meeting would continue to meet monthly. Communication & Professional Practices meetings were scheduled quarterly with attention to CPDC meetings and open to more meetings if needed. Ms. Blea expressed though she was open to less meetings was fearful of the meetings being too lengthy. Policy Committee is scheduled for every other month to address any legislative changes or other issues that warrant policy changes.

Mr. Spivak questioned the timing of the February meeting to which Ms. Michaud believed the date was fine.

Mr. Lowry asked if the full year of meetings was required by the Town to which Dr. Carnemolla replied we would only be able to provide the dates to the end of the school year.

***Mr. Lowry moved, Ms. Blea seconded, to approve the meeting dates as presented.
The motion carried 8-0-0.***

E. Update on Community Resource Guide and District Services

Dr. Carnemolla expressed her appreciation to all the Board members who attended the Town Council meeting showing the Board and District to be unified. The collaboration between the town and the schools provided a wonderful program for the veterans and gave the students a true understanding of Veterans’ Day.

Regarding the recent student tragedy, Dr. Carnemolla acknowledged that the District partnered with the Police Dept. in working with the family. The Police Dept. went above and beyond to be an assistance to the District. Dr. Carnemolla also thanked the Susan Alexie from Youth Services in providing resources and support. Mr. Na sent an email of appreciation to the District and Board for their support showed to the family.

Dr. Carnemolla and Dr. Mearman explained that the District had been working on a Community Resource Guide in collaboration with the Town and reviewed the actions taken to deal with the recent student tragedy. Dr. Mearman explained that Community resource guide has been in constant development for many years; it is not an exhaustive list and the District does not endorse any resource provider on the list.

Dr. Mearman shared that every school has a crisis team with school social workers/psychologists/counselors/nurses and the recent tragedy showed the crisis teams to be immediately responsive to situations of crisis. A plethora of resources is utilized and helps the team respond to both community and in school needs and gave support on the systemic level as well as to individuals. A local community provider was available for staff as well as our employee

assistance program. Professional development on mental health is planned for all staff to provide increased attention to this issue, including PD offered from the District's Cigna connection. The need to collaborate with community providers is essential to respond in a holistic manner. AHS Principal, Mr. Renkawitz, and the high school counseling team are working with students who have expressed various ideas on how to address issues of mental health.

Ms. Blea shared that comments she received regarding the attachments sent out were well received and very helpful. Dr. Carnemolla stated how impressed she was of the District staff who gave and continue to give so willingly of their services to support the students.

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. 18-19/21 Approval of Budget Transfers

Mr. Lowry moved, Mr. Spivak seconded, to approve the Consent Calendar, Item 18-19/21 Budget Transfers.

The motion carried 8-0-0.

XI. New Business

A. 18-19/22 Approval of Avon High School Course Proposal Recommendations

Dr. Rusack explained that this proposal is only a name change from Computer Modeling for Gaming 3 to Computer Programming for Gaming 1. Students who have already taken the course will need to take it at the honors level to move it to a higher level in order to get credit.

Mr. Lowry moved, Mr. Indomenico seconded, to approve the Avon High School Course Proposal as recommended.

The motion carried 8-0-0.

B. 18-19/23 Approval of RBS Locker Contract Award to PSI-New England Storage Products

Ms. Michaud asked for the Board's approval as the lockers in order to get the lockers in during the April vacation.

Ms. Chute moved, Mr. Spivak seconded, to approve the RBS Locker Contract recommended for award to PSI-New England Storage Products with an estimated total cost of \$46,449.14

The motion carried 8-0-0.

C. 8-19/24 Approval of AHS Natural Turf Field Contract to Liberty Landscape, LLC

Ms. Michaud clarified that this is the field hockey field and shared that if the ground is not yet frozen and they will try to seed. Mr. Spivak added that it was important that the company chosen had the experience to properly do the work that is well needed. Mr. Fleischman asked if the bid would hold should the work need to be delayed to which Ms. Michaud replied yes.

Ms. Chute moved, Mr. Spivak seconded, to approve the AHS Multi-Purpose Field Refurbishment Project to Liberty Landscapes, LLC with an estimated total cost of \$70,000.00.

The motion carried 8-0-0.

XII. Communication from Avon Board of Education Members

There was no further communication from the Board.

XIII. Communication from the Public

There was no communication from the public.

The Board adjourned Public Session and took a brief recess by unanimous consent at 8:09 pm.

The Board invited Dr. Bridget Carnemolla, Roberto Medic and Heather Michaud to join the executive session in discussion regarding the update on contractual negotiations.

The Board entered Executive Session at 8:24 pm.

XIV. Executive Session
Discussion of Nurses Contract

XV. Adjournment

The Board left Executive Session and entered Public Session at 8:50 pm.

The Board adjourned by unanimous consent at 8:51 pm.

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

Jeffrey S Fleischman 12/10/10

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.