



**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, August 20, 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

**Member(s) Absent:** Jay Spivak, Laura Young

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

I. Call to Order

*The Board of Education Regular Monthly meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm by Chair Chute.*

II. Pledge of Allegiance

The Board Chair led the pledge, welcomed everyone back after the summer vacation and read the District's mission statement

III. Approval of Minutes

A. Board of Education Regular Monthly Meeting, June 18, 2019

*Mr. Lowry moved, Ms. Blea seconded, to approve the June 18, 2019 minutes.  
The motion carried 7-0-0.*

IV. Communication from Public

FormerThompson Brook School parents, Siddhartha Reddy Yenugu and Sahithi Reddy Rondla spoke about the lack of explanation of how students qualify for the advanced math classes and the vague answers they received. Mr. Reddy also spoke of what seems to be inconsistency with curriculum between classrooms in the grade levels. The Board was informed that in their discouragement, they withdrew their daughter and enrolled her in private school.

V. Items of Information and Proposals

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

Ms. Michaud reported on the June 30 report for the prior fiscal year. The District gave back to the Town \$408.26 which was the lowest in past history due to the Business Office and schools' work in getting their orders in for the upcoming school year which included orders for various classroom furniture; Phase II of interior shades; RBS student lockers; stage curtains for AMS, TBS, RBS & PGS; RBS intercom system; TBS projector system for presentations; crew trailer built to spec; and two new scoreboards at AMS & TBS. End of year showed 83 open encumbrances with a total of approximately \$490,000. The Board asked about the escrow account to which Ms. Michaud replied has approximately \$1,000,000 put aside.

VI. Committees & Liaison Reports

A. Committee Reports

1. Curriculum & Professional Practices – Jackie Blea, Chair

Ms. Blea reminded the Board that the next meeting of the Curriculum & Professional Practices is Sept. 3 from 6:00 to 7:00pm

2. Finance – Jay Spivak, Chair

3. Negotiations – Jason Indomenico, Chair

4. Policy – Laura Young, Chair

B. Liaison Reports

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

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

Mr. Cavanaugh reported the next meeting of the Board of Finance is Monday, August 26<sup>th</sup>.

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

Mr. Indomenico shared with the Board that the fields are on track to be completed next week. Few additions were recommended by the Building Committee and approved by the Town Council which included netting between the baseball field and the track as a safety measure; fencing around the portable toilets; up to 5 security cameras; and garbage receptacles. These additional items would be included in the Town's budget for the field. There was additional Board discussion regarding the particulars of the security cameras.

4. Board Representative to Capital Region Education Council – Jackie Blea, Board Rep.

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

A. Board Chair Update – Debra Chute, Board Chair

Chair Chute welcomed everyone back and reminded Board members about Convocation on Monday, August 26<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 am. Ms. Chute also wished everyone a good school year, which starts on Wednesday, August 28<sup>th</sup>.

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

A. Hiring report

Dr. Carnemolla shared that positions were mostly filled shy of a few positions for paras, teaching assistants and the assistant principal position at Avon Middle School.

B. Enrollment Reports

The Superintendent stated that kindergarten and 4<sup>th</sup> grade teachers had been added. Since August 1<sup>st</sup> over 70 new registrations were processed. Work has been done to ensure there is adequate classrooms, staffing, furniture and supplies. Board discussion was had regarding

capacity, especially in the elementary schools, given the development taking place in the town. Dr. Carnemolla replied there is no more capacity at Pine Grove School and Roaring Brook School is close to capacity. While it is hard to predict year to year, Dr. Carnemolla said it would be difficult to accommodate any more classrooms at Pine Grove School, however, there is capacity within the district but may have to do redistricting. The Board asked for a report showing the capacity at each school. Dr. Carnemolla informed the Board that Director of Operations, Myles Altimus, has started the process to look at either redistricting or utilizing the buildings differently.

C. Convocation

Dr. Carnemolla reminded the Board members about Convocation and explained that the program would differ from years past. The Superintendent also informed the Board of the various teacher events that were taking place including new teacher orientation, professional development and meetings to review procedures, policies, etc.

D. Updates

The Superintendent also informed the Board regarding the donation of the Swingulator from Power Ten, which is being dissolved. 10 of the 18 ergs will be returned. The Swingulator will be stored in the garage bay and ergs will be stored in the high school team room.

IX. Consent Calendar

- A. 19-20/01 Approval of Avon High School Studies Primary Instructional Material
- B. 19-20/02 Approval of Contract for Assistant Superintendent
- C. 19-20/03 Approval of Contract for Director of Human Resources
- D. 19-20/04 Approval of Contract for Director of Fiscal Affairs
- E. 19-20/05 Approval of Contract for Director of Nutrition Services
- F. 19-20/06 Approval of Contract for Assistant Director of Nutrition Services
- G. 19-20/07 Approval of Swingulator from Power 10 Indoor Rowing

*Dr. Carnemolla requested that item 19-20/02 – Approval of Contract for Assistant Superintendent be removed from the Consent Calendar. Mr. Lowry requested that item 19-20/03 – Approval of Contract for Director of Human Resources be removed. Mr. Indomenico requested items 19-20/05 & 06 – Approval of Contract for Director of Nutrition Services and Approval of Contract for Assistant Director of Nutrition also be removed from the Consent Calendar.*

*Ms. Chute moved, Mr. Lowry seconded, to approve the Consent Calendar minus items 19-20/02, 03, 05 & 06 as listed on the Consent Calendar.*

*The motion carried 7-0-0.*

Dr. Carnemolla explained that she asked the contract for Dr. Rusack be pulled as it has not been fully resolved and signed.

Mr. Lowry stated the Director of Human Services contract has an arbitration clause that did not seem correct as it used employment rules which are non-existent rather than commercial rules. Mr. Lowry asked that this be checked. The Superintendent clarified that the contracts were reviewed by legal counsel and will be added to all contracts as it mirrors the superintendent's contract but is not a standard clause the Board counsel recommends putting

in but a clause the Board has accepted putting in during deliberations. Dr. Carnemolla acknowledged Mr. Lowry's concern and agreed that a piece of that may have been altered accidentally. Mr. Lowry asked that the contract to be amended to reflect the correct rules. There was additional Board discussion regarding the amendment and approving the contract.

***Mr. Lowry moved, Ms. Blea seconded, to approve the Contract for Director of Human Resources as amended to reflect the changes and rules.***

***The motion carried 7-0-0***

Mr. Indomenico asked for a brief discussion regarding the sharing of the Nutritional Services between districts. Ms. Michaud responded that Avon, Canton, Region 10 and Litchfield have the only consortium model. The administration of the program was reorganized when Litchfield joined the consortium. Previously Region 10 employed the Director of Nutrition, part-time Assistant Director and clerical staff; and billed the other districts. With Avon being the largest district the employment of the staff, which now consists of the Director of Nutrition and a full time Assistant Director, has now moved to Avon and Avon will now bill the other three districts. Having a consortium allows the four districts to have purchasing power, the ability to share subs/employees when needed, staff training, and even food inventory.

***Mr. Indomenico moved, Mr. Lowry seconded, to approve both contracts for the Director of Nutrition Services and Assistant Director of Nutrition Services.***

***The motion carried 7-0-0***

X. New Business

A. 19-20/08 Lease Purchase Agreement for Instructional Computers

Ms. Michaud explained the lease would allow the District to provide the 1-1 model of technology for students as well as to upgrade the technology to faculty. The request is asking for 100 laptops to the elementary schools; and 500 additional chromebooks, which will allow the District to have 1-1 capacity for grades 1-12. After Board approval it will be sent to the Town for their approval. The Board asked for the interest rate to which Ms. Michaud replied it was 6.79% but may be lower when finalized. Dr. Rusack also added that chromebooks would be assigned by students in the elementary schools and assigned by team at the middle school. It is also being considered to allow individually assigned chromebooks to be taken home for student use. Kindergarten students will also have access to chromebooks in their classrooms but it is not 1-1.

***Chair Chute moved, Mr. Cavanaugh seconded, to approve the Lease Purchase Agreement for Instructional Computers as proposed.***

***The motion carried 7-0-0***

XI. Communication from Avon Board of Education Members

Ms. Blea commented on how she appreciated the new chairs in the Community Room.

Mr. Oprica thanked the administration for all their work done during the summer. Mr. Oprica also asked for a Strategic Plan update and asked that it return as a standing item on the agenda. He also thanked the parents who spoke regarding their concerns on the educational challenges for advanced students and asked how to best address these needs. Mr. Oprica suggested the possibility of conducting post exit interviews of students who leave the district. Dr. Carnemolla addressed

Mr. Oprica on his concerns and the Strategic Plan. The Superintendent informed the Board that the administrative team had scheduled two full days to work on the District's plans and will bring a draft to the Board, which will also address gifted and talented students.

Mr. Lowry asked that the Superintendent continue to update the Board monthly on the Strategic Plan.

Mr. Oprica expressed his appreciation on how Avon prepares its students very well for college. Differentiating for students at all levels prepares pathways for the students for life after high school.

XII. Communication from the Public

There was no additional communication from the public.

XIII. Executive Session

Discussion concerning Collective Bargaining Strategy

*At 7:55 pm, Ms. Blea moved, Ms. Blea seconded, to leave Public Session and enter Executive Session after a brief recess for discussion concerning Collective Bargaining Strategy.  
The motion carried 7-0-0*

*Dr. Carnemolla was invited, Ms. Michaud and Mr. Medic to join Executive Session at 8:04 pm.*

*The Board exited Executive Session and entered Public Session at 8:15 pm.*

XIV. Adjournment

*The Board adjourned by unanimous consent at 8:16 pm.*

Minutes prepared by Shirley Moy, Board Recording Secretary

Minutes respectfully submitted by Jeffrey S. Fleischman, Board Secretary

*Jeffrey S. Fleischman, September 3, 2019*

*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.*