



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, January 18, 2022, 7:00 pm

via Remote Meeting

Avon Board of Education
34 Simsbury, Avon, Connecticut 06001

Minutes

Attendance

Board Members Present: Jackie Blea; Debra Chute, Board Chair; Jeffrey S. Fleischman, Board Secretary; Katie Kapisak; Lynn Katz, Lisa Seminara; Thej Singh; Jay Spivak, Board Vice Chair; Laura Young

Board Members Absent: none

Administration Present: Dr. Bridget Heston Carnemolla, Superintendent of Schools; Roberto Medic, Director of Human Resources; Donna Nestler-Rusack, Assistant Superintendent; Susan Russo, Business Manager

- I. Call to Order
Deb Chute, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.
 - A. Roll Call
Ms. Chute conducted a roll call of Board members and administrators.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance
The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
- III. Mission Statement
Chair Chute opened the meeting by reading the District's Mission Statement.
- IV. Recognition
 - A. Avon Achievers
AHS – Mike Renkawitz Principal; Diana DeVivo, AHS Assistant Principal; and David Kimball, AHS Assistant Principal honored:
 - Katie O'Connor (student) for her efforts to make possible the broadcast of AHS' fall play, "It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play."
 - Jeffrey Dubois (staff) in appreciation of all his help that allowed the school to successfully present two events, "It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play," and the Music Service Society fundraising concert.
 - Tom Kline (staff) for all his efforts in researching and implementing the ability to successfully live stream the Music Service Society concert from the auditorium onto the BenQ boards in every classroom at AHS.

- V. Approval of Minutes
- A. Board of Education Special Meeting on December 21, 2021
Jackie Blea made a motion to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting held on December 21, 2021, Laura Young seconded.
The motion passed 7-0-2 (yay – Blea, Chute, Fleischman, Kapisak, Seminara, Spivak, Young; nay – none; abstained – Katz, Singh (due to not having been at the meeting)).
- B. Board of Education Regular Monthly Meeting on December 21, 2021
Lisa Seminara made a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on December 21, 2021, Jackie Blea seconded.
The motion passed 8-0-1 (yay – Blea, Chute, Fleischman, Kapisak, Seminara, Singh, Spivak, Young; nay – none; abstained – Katz (due to not having been at the meeting)).
- C. Board of Education Special Organizational Meeting on January 11, 2022
Lynn Katz made a motion to approve the minutes of the Special Organization Meeting held on January 11, 2022, Katie Kapisak seconded.
The motion passed 9-0-0.
- D. Board of Education Special Budget Workshop Meeting on January 12, 2022
Jay Spivak made a motion to approve the minutes of the Special Budget Workshop Meeting held on January 12, 2022, Thej Singh seconded.
The motion passed 9-0-0.
- VI. Communication from Public
There was no communication from the public.
- VII. Items of Information and Proposals
- A. Student Representative Report – Sawyer Hernandez and Charlotte Parry, AHS Student Representatives
Mr. Hernandez reported the second semester was coming up at both the high school and middle school with midterms taking place; Northern Regionals is also currently taking place as is winter sports with wrestling competing for conference title next week. Ms. Parry shared that students at TBS recently participated in a reading challenge logging in over 17,000 minutes and is preparing for its band, orchestra and choral concerts at the end of January. The elementary schools are reminding parents to provide proper winter clothing for their children during outdoor recess. PGS is also recognizing their school nurse, Ms. DeRossi. Schools are also reminding students and parents of the COVID protocols in place.
- B. Financial Report – Susan Russo, Business Manager
Ms. Russo informed the Board that the Finance Committee did not meet this past month and therefore there are no financials to report.
- VIII. Committees & Liaison Reports
- A. Committee Reports
1. Curriculum & Professional Practices – Jackie Blea, Chair
Ms. Blea reported that the first meeting of the year will be on January 25.
 2. Finance – Jay Spivak, Chair
Mr. Spivak informed the Board that the next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 8 at 6 pm.
 3. Negotiations – Deb Chute, Chair
Ms. Chute stated that tonight during Executive Session, they will discuss the para, interventionists and nutrition services contract.
 4. Policy – Laura Young, Chair
Ms. Young informed the Board that Policy did not meeting in January but there is an upcoming meeting on Feb. 1.

B. Liaison Report

1. Board Representative to Capital Region Education Council – Jackie Blea, Representative
Ms. Blea stated that she intended to attend the first meeting of the new year scheduled for tomorrow.

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

A. Board Chair Update

1. List of Board Members and Committees

Being the first Regular Monthly meeting of the Board of Education for the new year after an election year, Ms. Chute announced the Board members of each Board committee.

- Curriculum & Professional Practices
 - Jackie Blea, Chair
 - Katie Kapisak
 - Lynn Katz
 - Thej Singh
- Finance
 - Jay Spivak, Chair
 - Jeffrey S. Fleischman
 - Lynn Katz
 - Laura Young
- Negotiations
 - Deb Chute, Chair
 - Jackie Blea
 - Jeffrey S. Fleischman
 - Jay Spivak
- Policy
 - Laura Young, Chair
 - Deb Chute
 - Lisa Seminara
 - Thej Singh
- Capital Region Education Council (CREC)
 - Jackie Blea, Representative

Ms. Chute informed Board members of a school finance training opportunity that would help explain the ACS funding formula including Open Choice funding to be held possibly in the evening at the end of February or March. Ms. Chute said she may extend the invitation to Town Council and Board of Finance members as the information will be specific to Avon. Ms. Chute will see what the availability of dates are and will email Board members.

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

Dr. Carnemolla officially welcomed the new Board members to their first actual Board of Education Regular meeting. Following up on the conversation of Town budget meetings, the Superintendent will have the schedule of dates sent out to Board members.

A. Hiring Report

Mr. Medic reviewed the report for January which included the hiring of an art teacher due to a retirement, as well as several non-certified personnel including a technology support specialist, paras, teaching assistant and food service worker. There were also resignations from two paraeducators. Mr. Medic stated that the schools remain fully staffed with non-certified vacancies the lowest all year.

B. Enrollment Report

Dr. Carnemolla informed the Board that the enrollment numbers are similar to last year; the difference in the number of students stem mostly from student withdrawn for homeschooling reasons. Also, the Superintendent reminded everyone to get the word out that kindergarten registration for the upcoming year has begun. Dr. Carnemolla took a moment to explain that the budget numbers utilize the October 1 enrollment numbers which may not be reflective of current enrollment numbers. Compared to October 1 2020, there are actually more students in October 1, 2021.

C. Strategic Plan Update

A review of the full day of professional development held on January 14th including a wide scale session done in partnership with the teachers association regarding teachers in the law which provided teachers relevant legal updates and case work; recognizing trauma; and restorative practices. Dr. Nestler-Rusack spoke of the smaller sessions such as readers workshop; cyber security training; elective curriculums; Team update training and practicing self-care to reduce and manage stress. If the proposed Feb. 9 PD half day is approved, the day will be utilized for some of the bigger initiatives at the building level with K-6 continuing their work on readers and writers workshop; middles school doing data team work and the high school will be rolling out the Portrait of the Graduate to the entire faculty.

D. Updates

Dr. Carnemolla spoke briefly on the progress made toward the focus areas of the Blueprint for Excellence including the performance data, both statewide and school level, of some of the common assessments. The Superintendent reiterated the need for the Feb. 9 PD half day to include continuation of the Portrait of the Graduate work.

XI. Consent Calendar

A. 21-22/39 Approval of Budget Transfers

Mr. Spivak asked that the Budget Transfers be pulled so that Ms. Russo could explain the transfers since the Finance Committee did not meet to discuss the transfers. Ms. Chute acknowledged the request; the Approval of Budget Transfers was pulled and moved to New Business.

B. 21-22/40 Contract for Technology Support Specialist

Jay Spivak made a motion to approve remaining Consent Calendar item, Contract for Technology Support Specialist, Lynn Katz seconded.

The motion passed 9-0-0.

XII. New Business

A. 21-22/39 Approval of Budget Transfers

Ms. Russo explained that the first transfer, 2022-055, was due to the transportation of a student attending a vocational technical school and to budget it on the appropriate line item. There were no questions regarding the second budget transfer, 2022-056 for maintenance supplies and repairs and safety/security supplies.

Jay Spivak made a motion to approve the Budget Transfers as presented, Laura Young seconded.
The motion passed 9-0-0.

B. 21-22/41 Revision to 2021-2022 School Year Calendar

The Superintendent stated the revision was to provide additional professional development on Wed., Feb. 9 but if there is inclement weather, the half day would be moved to Feb. 16th. She also clarified that the half day of professional development did not impact the last day of school and still counts towards the required 180 school days.

Deb Chute made a motion to approve a half day on February 9 for our students and a full day for our staff to allow for professional development with the option to use February 16 if there is inclement weather, Lynn Katz seconded.

The motion passed 9-0-0.

C. 21-22/42 2022-2023 School Year Calendar

The Superintendent explained that the proposed calendar was created to align dates with surrounding districts due to the child care needs of the District's staff. The Superintendent reviewed the calendar dates and addressed the newly added holiday to the school year calendar of Diwali pointing out that 20% of the student enrollment identifies as Asian. Dr. Carnemolla added that she has received many requests from parents asking that Diwali be added to the calendar as it is one of the most important religious holidays for South Asians. After a brief discussion, the Board asked for additional information at the next meeting and to hear from the community to learn more about what Diwali represents and how the District can acknowledge the holiday. Ms. Chute asked that this be moved forward to the February agenda with a notation on the agenda concerning the continued Diwali conversation.

D. 21-22/43 Superintendent's Proposed 2022-2023 Budget

Dr. Carnemolla reminded that although the Board has worked on the proposed 2022-2023 budget, until it is officially adopted by the Board, the budget is still technically considered the Superintendent's Budget. After the Board adopts the budget, it will move forward to the Town for consideration on the Town side. The Superintendent explained the process of developing the budget and reviewed the details of the budget which was also shared at the Budget Workshop:

- Budget Process – an overview of the budget process
 - Process begins in the Fall
 - Asks two important questions
 - What are our top priorities in this budget?
 - How do the identified budget priorities support the Blueprint for Excellence focus areas?
- Mission Statement
 - The grounding force for everything the District does
- Blueprint for Excellence Focus Areas – four focus areas
 - Student Learning
 - Personal Growth & Relationships
 - Communication & Partnerships
 - Systems
- Focus Area I: Student Learning General Budget Funded – Net Cost \$307,260
 - 1.0 FTE Elementary Teacher
 - .2 FTE Science Teacher
 - 1.0 FTE Special Education Teacher
 - 1.0 FTE World Language Teacher
 - 1.4 FTE Wellness Teacher
- Focus Area I: Student Learning Transfer from ESSER Grant Funded to General Budget Funded – Net Cost \$154,246
 - 1.0 FTE ESOL Teacher
 - 4.0 FTE Teaching Assistant

- Focus Area I: Student Learning IDEA Grant Funded – Net Cost \$138,784
 - 1.0 FTE PreK Teacher
 - 2.0 FTE PreK Para-educators
- Focus Area II: Personal Growth & Relationships
 - 1.0 FTE School Counselor (ESSER Grant Funded) – Net Increase \$91,632
 - 1.0 FTE Social Worker (General Budget Funded) – Net Increase \$96,722
- Focus Area IV: Systems – Net Decrease (\$471,154)
 - Health Insurance
 - OPEB & Pension
- Focus Area IV: Systems
 - Senior Technology Support Specialist - \$0
 - Technology Hardware - \$47,117
- Budget Distribution – Total Gross Budget \$64,355,604
 - Salaries & Benefits - \$51,069,216 or 79.35%
 - Tuitions - \$3,869,425 or 6.01%
 - Transportation - \$3,343,442 or 5.20%
 - Contracted Services - \$2,139,737 or 3.32%
 - Supplies & Equipment - \$2,103,152 or 3.27%
 - Utilities - \$1,415,219 or 2.20%
 - All other - \$415,413 or 0.65%
- FY 2022/2023 Budget Drivers – Total Gross Budget Increase \$1,721,301 or 2.75%
 - Salaries & Benefits - \$994,116 or 57.75%
 - Tuition - \$271,029 or 15.75%
 - Supplies & Equipment - \$196,468 or \$11.41%
 - Utilities - \$140,565 or 8.17%
 - Transportation - \$54,740 or 3.18%
 - Contracted Services - \$37,471 or 2.18%
 - All Other - \$26,912 or 1.56%
- FY 2022/2023 Superintendent’s Budget
 - Superintendent’s Proposed Budget - \$64,355,604
 - New Money - \$1,721,301
 - Gross % Increase – 2.75%

After discussions regarding the budget, including the topics of teaching assistants; grants; benefits and pension; technology; budget drivers; utility costs; as well as cuts that didn’t make it into the budget, Dr. Carnemolla stated that while she wished it were a 0% increase, she is proud of being able to do as much with as little an increase of 2.75%.

Jay Spivak moved, Ms. Young seconded, to adopt the Superintendent’s Proposed 2022-2023 Budget in the amount of \$64,355,604, having a gross increase of 2.75% over the prior fiscal year. The motion passed 9-0-0

XIII. Communication from Public
There was no communication from the public.

XIV. Communication from Avon Board of Education Members
There was no additional communication from Board members.

XV. Executive Session
Discussion Concerning Tentative Agreement between the Avon Board of Education and CSEA, SEIU Local 2001 on behalf of the Avon Para-Educators, Interventionists & Nutrition Services Employees

At 9:01pm, Chair Chute asked to enter into Executive Session and invited Dr. Carnemolla, Dr. Nestler-Rusack, Roberto Medic and Susan Russo to join the session for the discussion concerning the Tentative Agreement between the Avon Board of Education and CSEA, SEIU Local 2001 on behalf of the Avon Para-Educators, Interventionists & Nutrition Services Employees.

XVI. Return to Public Session
Possible Action Discussion Concerning Tentative Agreement between the Avon Board of Education and CSEA, SEIU Local 2001 on behalf of the Avon Para-Educators, Interventionists & Nutrition Services Employees

At 9:37 pm the Board left Executive Session and returned to Public Session.

*Deb Chute moved to approve the Tentative Agreement between the Avon Board of Education and CSEA, SEIU Local 2001 on behalf of the Avon Para-Educators, Interventionists & Nutrition Services Employees. Jeffrey S. Fleischman seconded the motion.
The motion passed 9-0-0*

XVII. Adjournment
*At 9:39 pm, Jackie Blea moved to adjourn the meeting, Lynn Katz seconded.
The meeting adjourned by unanimous consent.*

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

Jeffrey S. Fleischman, Jan. 27, 2022

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.