



**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, May 18, 2021, 7:00 pm

via virtual meeting

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**Avon Board of Education**  
**34 Simsbury, Avon, Connecticut 06001**  
**Via Zoom**

**Minutes**

**Attendance**

**Members Present:** Jackie Blea; David Cavanaugh; Board Chair, Debra Chute; Board Secretary, Jeffrey S. Fleischman; Jason Indomenico; Bogdan Oprica; Lisa Seminara; Board Vice Chair, Jay Spivak; Laura Young

**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.*

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Prior to the Pledge of Allegiance, a roll call was conducted of Board members and Administration present. Board Chair, Ms. Chute also read the District Mission Statement.

III. Presentations

A. Avon Achiever – AHS Principal, Mike Renkawitz, presented to the Board Luke Choi and Nicholas Yarnall as the Avon Achievers for Avon High School, both of whom will be attending Brown University in the fall:

1. Luke Choi (AHS student) – in recognition of Luke being named Valedictorian for the Class of 2021. Luke maintained a competitive and complex course schedule, which included ten AP classes. He is a member of the AHS National Honors Society. Luke has been a member of Chamber Orchestra and the Math Team all four years. He has competed as a member of the USA Math Olympiad and ran cross-country and outdoor track for the high school. Luke is a role model for all students at Avon High School
2. Nicholas Yarnall (AHS student) – in recognition of Nicholas being named Salutatorian for the Class of 2021. Nick also maintained a competitive and complex course schedule, which included nine AP classes and the ECE track for English. He is a member of the AHS National Honors Society. Aside from being captain of the Robotics team for four years, Nick also

participated in the Chess Club, LEO Club and on the Investing Team. Nicholas participated in soccer freshman year and ultimate Frisbee during sophomore year. Nicholas too, is a role model for all students at Avon High School

B. Avon Board of Education Student Representative

1. Alvin Guo, Class of 2021 - Chair, Deb Chute, thanked Alvin Guo for his service and dedication serving as the Student Representative for the last two years. Mr. Renkawitz also recognized and expressed his appreciation of Mr. Guo for representing the Student Body at the Board of Education meetings.

IV. Approval of Minutes

A. Board of Education Monthly Meeting, April 27, 2021

***Jackie Blea moved to approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of April 27, 2021. David Cavanaugh seconded the motion.***

***The motion passed unanimously 9-0-0.***

V. Communication from Public

There was no communication from the public.

VI. Items of Information and Proposals

A. Student Representative Report – Alvin Guo & Sawyer Hernandez, AHS Student Representatives.

Alvin Guo reported on the Senior Picnic, Senior Car Parade, and Prom as well as sports coming to an end for the school year. Sawyer Hernandez acknowledged his friendship and work with Alvin Guo and expressed how he will be missed. Sawyer also reported on the end of the year events, a sense of normalcy with students participating in spring sports, as well as his hopeful anticipation for the upcoming school year.

B. Financial Report – Susan Russo, Business Manager

Ms. Russo gave a review of the financial highlights as of April 2021.

- Salaries showed an unencumbered balance of \$1,157,146 for certified and non-certified staff. Remaining liabilities include retro pay for negotiations; end of year stipends; vacation liabilities and additional services at AHS.
- Other expenses are unencumbered benefits balance of \$1,234,563 which include health insurance and administrative fees and other benefits savings due to carrier changes and changes in health and dental enrollment.
- Property Services saw a deficit due to COVID related expenses, HVAC repairs as well as expenses for the alarm system, plumbing and security system.
- Over all, the year-to-date- balance was \$3,921,013 or 6.43% unencumbered balance compared with April 2020 at \$4,084,385 or 6.94%.
- Special Education had an unencumbered balance of \$559,989 in tuition. Currently have 43 students included in tuition lines and 6 students in escrow.

VII. Committees & Liaison Reports

A. Committee Reports

1. Curriculum & Professional Practices – Jackie Blea, Chair

Ms. Blea reported on the last committee meeting where the Business, Library Media and Visual Arts teachers presented their curriculums. Proposal recommendations and primary instructional materials were also discussed. Next meeting is May 27<sup>th</sup>.

2. Finance – Jay Spivak, Chair

Mr. Spivak stated that the Finance Committee did not meet. Next meeting is June 8<sup>th</sup> at 6pm.

3. Negotiations – Jason Indomenico, Chair

Mr. Indomenico conveyed that an initial meeting was had with the Safety and Security Specialists and finalized the agreement with Administrative Assistants with hopes of bringing in June an agreement to the full Board. The Committee continues to negotiation with the Paras/Interventionists/Food Service Workers.

4. Policy – Laura Young, Chair

Ms. Young informed the Board that long, thoughtful discussion was had at the last meeting regarding the use of facilities, fundraising and solicitations as well as the search and seizure policies. There will be one more meeting prior to the end of the school year, June 1<sup>st</sup>.

B. Liaison Report

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

Ms. Blea stated that the meeting is tomorrow, May 19<sup>th</sup> but is unable to attend; minutes will be forwarded by Ms. Blea when received.

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

A. Board Chair Update

Ms. Chute shared with the Board the celebration of the senior car parade and thanked everyone who organized and attended the event. Ms. Chute also acknowledged the welcomed presence of the Avon Volunteer Fire Department which added to the festivities. Appreciation was also expressed to the administrators for providing the various events to celebrate the achievements of the seniors.

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

A. Hiring Report

Dr. Carnemolla reviewed the hiring report which included hires for summer maintenance and to prepare for the fall. The Superintendent also mentioned those who are retiring as well as the AEA celebration to acknowledge all those who are retiring.

B. Enrollment Report

The Enrollment Report showed numbers without much change from last month; kindergarten registrations continue. As of May 12 there are 562 students who remain remote.

C. Strategic Plan Update

The Superintendent shared of the placement of staff in relation to the Strategic Plan (curriculum, internships, etc.). Work continues with partners at CREC in regards to diversity, equity, and inclusion; as well as looking critically at the District data. Dr. Rusack added the NEASC work being done as well as defining the skills and attributes on the Portrait of the Graduate.

D. Updates

Dr. Carnemolla reminded the Board that public schools are subject to local and state laws on COVID regulations and Governor’s orders to continue with mitigation strategies. What is required in the fall is still unknown but as a District, administrators are prepared to implement whatever is required. Answering Board questions, Dr. Carnemolla stated that unlike this school year, according to current state requirements, the District is not required to provide remote learning for those who wish to opt out during the next school year. The Superintendent also replied to another question that she believed approximately 40% of the staff have been vaccinated. Families were asked to inform school nurses if their children have been vaccinated to be able to adjust procedures should quarantining be needed. This information will be held privately in the students’ health files. This information can be asked of staff and students but cannot be required as vaccinations are not required. A Board member requested that those in authority as to these health measures be invited to speak on a panel to provide their rationale and scientific data in making their decisions. The Common Core state standards was also discussed and questioned by a Board member and asked that there be accountability provided about that as well. Dr.

Carnemolla replied that if having experts present on a panel is a Board decision to pursue, further discussion on this would be put on a future Board agenda. The Superintendent suggested that the District wait until the guidance was handed down as the information is still unknown and a meeting as suggested may not be necessary. Mask wearing during the upcoming school year was discussed and how if the decision was put on the local Boards of Education, it would be divisive for Boards to come to an agreement. The Superintendent believes that the state will once again provide reasonable requirements for the upcoming school year in regards to mask wearing; Dr. Carnemolla also reminded the Board of how students are allowed opportunities of being unmasked outdoors. Students meeting the requirements to graduate was also discussed. The Superintendent stated that the high school was watching and working closely with the students, and their parents, that needed to meet requirements in order to graduate. The Superintendent also spoke about the plans for graduation as well as other senior events including the new tradition of the senior car parade.

X. Consent Calendar

A. 20-21/68 Approval of Budget Transfers

***Jay Spivak moved to approve the Consent Calendar as presented. David Cavanaugh seconded the motion.***

***The motion passed unanimously 9-0-0.***

XI. New Business

A. 20-21/69 Grades 7-12 Business Curriculum (correction, should be Grade 9-12 Business Curriculum)

Dr. Rusack spoke of the standards which were shared with the Curriculum & Professional Practices meeting. The Business Curriculum utilizes the CT Career and Technical Educational Performance Standards and Competencies. Dr. Rusack reviewed the various Business courses.

***Jeffrey S. Fleischman moved to approve the Grade 9-12 Business Curriculum as presented. Laura Young seconded the motion.***

***The motion passed unanimously 9-0-0.***

B. 20-21/70 Grades K-7 Informational Digital Literacy Curriculum

Dr. Rusack informed the Board that Informational Digital Literacy is the new name for Library Media Curriculum as a conscience decision was made to include digital citizenship in the curriculum. The curriculum is based on the American Association of School Libraries Standards which are national standards; and the International Society for Technology Education Standards. Dr. Rusack reviewed the curriculum for the various grades.

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***Jackie Blea moved to approve the Grades K-7 Informational Digital Literacy Curriculum as presented. Jason Indomenico seconded the motion.***

***The motion passed unanimously 9-0-0.***

C. 20-21/71 Grades K-12 Visual Arts Curriculum.

Dr. Rusack stated that the National Core Arts Standards to develop the curriculum and reviewed the various grades' curriculum

***Jeffrey S. Fleischman moved to approve the Grades K-12 Visual Arts Curriculum as presented. Bogdan Oprica seconded the motion.***

***The motion passed unanimously 9-0-0.***

D. 20-21/72 Course Proposal Recommendations

Dr. Rusack reviewed the three course proposals being recommended which includes AP Physics I and II/ECE at the high school; Introduction to Computer Science and Robotics in Grade 7 and Digital Art II at the high school.

***Deb Chute moved to approve the three Course Proposal Recommendations as presented. Jason Indomenico seconded the motion.***

***The motion passed unanimously 9-0-0.***

E. 20-22/73 Primary Instructional Materials Recommendations

Dr. Rusack announced that as per voted at the last Curriculum & Professional Practices meeting there are currently primary Instructional Materials currently open for a 30 day review and available at the Central Office.

XII. Communication from Avon Board of Education Members

There was no additional communication from Board members.

Superintendent Carnemolla did ask to recognize Ms. Amy Borio as the new principal at Pine Grove School. Ms. Borio thanked everyone for the opportunity and stated that she is enjoying her new position.

XIII. Executive Session

A. Discussion and Possible Action regarding Superintendent's Evaluation

***At 8:25 pm, Chair Chute asked to enter into Executive Session and invite Dr. Carnemolla to join later during the session. Jackie Blea moved to enter into Executive Session for the discussion of the Superintendent's Evaluation. Laura Young seconded the motion.***

***The motion passed unanimously 9-0-0.***

***At 8:40 pm, Dr. Carnemolla was asked to join the Executive Session.***

***At 10:05 pm, Dr. Carnemolla left the Executive Session.***

***At 10:23 pm, the Board members left Executive Session and returned to Public Session.***

XIV. Adjournment

***At 8:10 pm, Jason Indomenico moved to adjourn; Lisa Seminara seconded the motion.***

***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, June 7, 2021*

***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.***