



**Minutes**  
**Curriculum & Professional Practices Committee**  
**Avon Board of Education**  
**34 Simsbury, Avon, Connecticut 06001**  
**Via Zoom**  
**Tuesday, December 8, 2020 - 7:00 p.m.**

**Attendance**

**Members Present:** Jackie Blea, Chair; Debra Chute; Jeffrey S. Fleischman; Bogdan Oprica

**Member(s) Absent:** none

**Administration Present:** Dr. Donna Nestler-Rusack, Assistant Superintendent; Mike Renkawitz, Avon High School Principal; Diana DeVivo, Avon High School Assistant Principal; Eileen O’Neil, Avon High School Assistant Principal

**Others Present:** Shirley Moy, Board Clerk; Jenna Aylsworth, Lisa Berliner, Andrew Brochu, Jaclyn Lawlor, Betsy Sanborn, John Salerni, Aaron Schrag, Samantha Spitzer, AHS Teachers and Dept. Coordinators; Todd Dyer, Director of Guidance

I. Call to Order

*Committee Chair Blea called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm*

II. Approval of October 27, 2020 Minutes

*Debra Chute moved, Jeffrey Fleischman seconded, to approve the October 27, 2020 Curriculum & Professional Practices minutes as presented. The motion carried 4-0-0.*

III. Communications from the Public

There was no communication from the public. Chair Blea reminded the public that the best way to communicate to the Board members during the pandemic was to email Shirley Moy prior to the meetings.

IV. Course Proposal Recommendations

Dr. Rusack explained to the Committee members the courses being recommended for change and introduced Avon High School staff members who would be giving further detail on the courses.

- Accounting 1; Advanced Accounting; Intro to Business (Business Courses) – Change in level from CP or Honors to CE (College Experience) due to the partnership with Tunxis University. Students can earn college credit for these courses.
- Business Communications (Business Course) – half year class to be added the next year that will book end with Intro to Business. It will be a CP/Honors level class. This is not in conjunction with Tunxis.
- Treble Voices (Music Course) – name change from Women’s Choir
- Essential Harmony Singers (Music Course) – name change from Men’s Choir

- Music Technology II (Music Course) – to expand the newly revived music technology program. The three mentioned music courses can be taken as CP or Honors levels.
- Health and Safety 11 and 12 (Wellness courses) – to meet the state requirement for a full credit of health and safety as well as a full credit of wellness. These are half credit courses and make a full credit when paired together. The wellness courses are being restructured so there are health and wellness courses for students each year in high school.
- Mastery Based Learning (Administration requirement) – to meet the state requirement for the classes of 2023 and beyond to have a mastery learning credit with Avon meeting this requirement through its half credit Capstone program, as well as a half credit through internships, work experience and community service (includes police and fire explorer programs), These are choice programs which allows students to choice how they meet the requirement.

These course recommendations will be brought to the Board for approval at the next Board meeting.

V. Primary Instructional Materials Recommendations

Dr. Rusack introduced Avon High School staff members who would be giving further detail on the primary instructional recommendations for textbooks/books to be used in the district. Dr. Rusack confirmed that digital versions of the textbooks were available.

- Big Ideas Math – Modeling Real Life Common Core Grade 6 Advanced – aligns with the State Math standards which was the basis for writing the grade 6 Math curriculum and works well with the district’s current Grade 7 textbook.
- American History: Reconstruction to the Present – to support the US History courses at the high school for both CP & Honors levels
- The Tenth of December – a collection of short stories for the ECE level course Post-9/11 Culture and is a recommendation from UConn.

***Jeffrey Fleischman moved, Bogdan Oprica seconded, to open the thirty day review period of the Primary Instructional Material Recommendations as presented. The motion carried 4-0-0.***

VI. Daft Avon High School Course of Studies 2021-2022

Mr. Renkawitz gave an overview of the changes made to the AHS Course of Studies for the upcoming year. Some notable changes include:

- Changes to the graduation requirements beginning with the class of 2023
- New courses that will be brought to the Board at the December Board meeting
- Revisions to course descriptions
- Defining Captstone as a course and requirement

Board members asked if all courses in the Course of Studies was approved by the Board to which Dr. Rusack confirmed yes. Also asked was whether the curriculum website would be updated to include all the courses to which Dr. Rusack said it was the intention to have the website update last Spring before COVID hit and now hopes to have the website updated by the end of the year. Parity in classes was also discussed where Dr. Rusack and teachers shared that common assessments and alignment is discussed during planning times and addressed through various processes. Mr. Salerni explained the placement process and requisites in regards to Science courses. Also discussed was the process of class changes/drops; how the

courses align with the district’s strategic initiatives; encouraging students to take college level classes; mastery based learning; and what courses are determined by the State, including the Civics course which is required.

The Committee Chair thanked the administrators, teachers and department chairs for the demanding work they have been doing which is appreciated by the Board as well as the community. Dr. Rusack also expressed her appreciation.

VII. Gifted Process Update

Dr. Rusack reminded the Committee that last year the gifted identification process was revamped, however, due to COVID, adjustments were made. In mid-Oct the OLSAT exam was administered to all identified fifth grade students, including students who were remote. Those who qualified were notified through the PPT process. The OLSAT will be administered to all fourth graders next week unless parents have opted their children out of the test. The second process for qualification will be looking at the students’ quantitative and qualitative data. It is hoped that all third graders can be assessed in the Spring as it is intended to be done. However, this is to identify students but there is no formalized program. To address a Committee member’s concerns, Dr. Rusack will ask the school administrators if they have heard any comments from parents. Dr. Rusack stated there were 15 students identified and eight qualified. Notifications are sent to parents prior to the assessment and to those who are identified and then qualified.

VIII. Adjournment

***The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 8:10 pm.***

Minutes prepared by Shirley Moy, Board Recording Secretary

Minutes respectfully submitted by Jackie Blea, Curriculum & Professional Practices Chair

*Jackie Blea, January 15, 2021*

Minutes respectfully received by Jeffrey S. Fleischman, Board Secretary

*Jeffrey S. Fleischman, January 15, 2021*