



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, March 21, 2023, 7:00 pm

Avon High School, Library

Avon High School
510 West Avon Road
Avon, CT 06001

MINUTES

Attendance

Board Members Present: Jackie Blea (via Zoom); Debra Chute, Board Chair; Jeffrey S. Fleischman, Board Secretary; Lynn Katz; Nicole Russo; Liz Sommerkorn; Sarah Thompson; Thej Singh, Board Vice-Chair; Laura Young

Board Members Absent: None

Administration Present: Dr. Bridget Carnemolla, Superintendent of Schools; Jess Giannini, Assistant Superintendent; Roberto Medic, Assistant Superintendent; Susan Russo, Business Manager

I. **Call to Order**

Ms. Debra Chute, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

A. Roll Call

Ms. Chute conducted a roll call of Board members and Administrators

II. **Pledge of Allegiance**

III. **Mission Statement**

IV. **Recognition -**

The evening started off with a wonderful performance of Happy Birthday (for Mr. Jess Giannini) by the TBS musical ensemble.

Dr. Carnemolla then went on to recognize the Avon Board of Education for Board of Education Appreciation Month. The students of the District put together cards and presents for the Board to show their appreciation for all the hard work for what they do for all the students of Avon. TBS, in lieu of cards, made a presentation for the Board that the Student Council president, Cooper Brown went through with the Board to show TBS' appreciation for them.

Ms. Chute thanked Thompson Brook for the wonderful presentation and all the items they received for BOE Appreciation.

Ms. Chute asked Ms. Kristina Wallace and Mr. Mark Summa to come up and introduce Ms. Kirsten Markowski and Mr. Scott Parkinson for their Plant the Moon Challenge by the NASA Connecticut Space Grant Consortium. Ms. Markowski and Mr. Parkinson and a group of students from AMS will be dedicating time after school to join a global science experiment and research challenge to examine how vegetable crops can grow in lunar or Martian soil. <https://plantthemoon.com/challenge/>

Ms. Wallace and Mr. Summa introduced the many students who auditioned, with students from across the state, and were accepted into the Northern Region Middle School Music Festival, which Ms. Wallace mentioned was highly competitive and comprised over 40 school districts and private institutions. 26 students were accepted into all 4 ensembles.

Band: Aaron Mukherjee, Jai Verman, Abayambigai Vetrivel Gurusamy

Jazz Band: Oscar Blanc-Tural, Ryan Dalka

Orchestra: Ryan Curran, Lulu Hu, Nate Lee, Russell LIn, William Shin, Angela Zhou

Choir: Mahanur Ahmed-Islam, Sammy Bhyravavajhala, Gabi Carvalho, Cosette Champeau, Tarini Ganaraju, Poojaa Gopal, Sebi Lawton, Sofia Mucciacciaro, Naveen Natchiappan, Julia Pizzi, Page Sinclair, Julia Steremberg, Olivia Tonon, Arnav Wadhwa, Angela Zhou

Ms. Chute thanked the AMS staff for their time practicing with the students as she knows the commitment that is needed.

The TBS music students were recognized at this time, and Dr. Carnemolla reiterated that what the students did tonight was a small sample of what these students do on a daily basis to put a smile on the students and staff of TBS. Mr. Bill Duffy added that this is a student-led group, who plan out their time on their own to make sure they can perform for as many events that they are able, as they love instilling school spirit via their music at ‘Town Meetings’, Classrooms and Staff Birthdays:

Ashley Hazel, Max Wang, Elin Carboni, Leah Chen, Sarah Prado, Isabella Genov, Natalie Joo, Gabriella Grossman

Finally, Dr. Stephanie Lockhart then introduced a student at the high school who was awarded the Silver Key in the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards Competition for her short story *The Unripe Mango*.

Dr. Carnemolla ended by saying Spriha is a shining example of the type of students we graduate from Avon High School.

One last congratulations from Ms. Chute to Spriha, who recommended the short story to all and couldn’t wait to see her other works.

V. Approval of Minutes

A. Board of Education Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes of February 28, 2023

Ms. Thej Singh made a motion to approve the minutes of February 28, 2023, Ms. Lynn Katz seconded.

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 – Charlotte Parry and Lillian Peng, AHS Student Representatives. Ms. Parry started with the update; AHS: Capstones begin tomorrow, all seniors are preparing

Spring sports are in full swing
Footloose is to be performed on stage at the end of April
Best Buddies Friendship walk is also at the end of April

AMS: The Little Mermaid Jr. is set to be performed on March 24th and 25th
The AMS Robotics team went to the National Championships, and won 2 spots at the World Robotics Championships
Parent/Teacher conferences were held last week

TBS: TBS students competed in the CT Chess Association Championship and won Peter Pan the Musical tickets are on sale now
Ms. Peng continued:

RBS: Read Across America took place in the beginning of March
Children's Author David Kelly is making a visit to RBS on the 22nd
Bridges Program is going very well

PGS: Report Cards came out on the 8th, and conferences were on the 9th and 10th
Boosterthon has started and will run until the end of the month

B. Financial Report – Susan Russo, Business Manager

Ms. Susan Russo reported that there was no Financial Committee Meeting this month, so there are no financials to report.

VIII. Committees & Liaison Reports

A. Committee Reports

- Curriculum & Professional Practices – Ms. Jackie Blea, Chair
No C&PP this month
- Finance – Ms. Lynn Katz, Chair
No Finance Committee Meeting this month, next one is on April 18th
- Negotiations – Ms. Deb Chute, Chair - Ms. Chute mentioned dates are still being finalized for Administrative Assistants Negotiations.
- Policy – Ms. Laura Young, Chair - Ms. Young stated that at the committee meeting, there was a second read for the Discipline Policy, as well as first reads for the Gifted and Talented policy as well as the Electronic Communications Retention policy that we hope to read and approve tonight.

B. Liaison Report

- Capital Region Education Council – Jackie Blea, Board Representative
Ms. Blea was unable to attend the last CREC Meeting.

IX. Chair's Report –Ms. Debra Chute, Board Chair

A. Board Chair Update

Ms. Chute commented that the students they recognized tonight was just a handful of the wonderful students Avon has, and she is amazed at their talent. Ms. Chute continued on to say that she was excited and humbled by the cards she and the board received, she loved them and was very appreciative.

Finally, Ms. Chute asked for a moment of silence for a former Avon Graduate, Haley Gens, from the class of 2018, who was tragically killed in a car crash over the weekend.

(Moment of Silence)

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

A. Hiring Report - Mr. Medic went over the hiring report stating that we have found qualified candidates for our ParaEduator and Interventionist positions. We also had 2 resignations this month. Dr. Carnemolla asked Mr. Medic to explain the recent article in the local newspaper about 42 vacancies on our website. Mr. Medic explained that of those 42, 19 of them are for the Summer Program, ES (Extended School Year), and 6 of them are for the Summer Theater Program. Many are postings for next year, for the many maternity leaves we have. He went on to explain the process in place for the hiring of a new candidate, and when someone is hired, the posting is then closed. Some postings are kept open for the historically ongoing needs of the district (Paraeducators, for example). Mr. Medic mentioned that 42 seems like a lot, but again many are seasonal and for the coming year for Maternity and FMLA leaves.

B. Enrollment Report - Dr. Carnemolla stated we have three additional students in comparison to the same time last year.

C. Strategic Plan Update- Student Supports Update

Dr. Carnemolla started by saying there were a number of conversations over the last few years related to the kinds of support services in place for our students. Along with the nation the number of mental health supports have increased as well as the issues related to family resources and income. The Administrators put together a broad overview of ‘Whole Child Services’ that are available to the Avon School District, and that is what is being shared tonight in the presentation.

First a thank you to: Mr. Giannini, Mr. Medic, Ms Fox, Ms. Arnold, Ms. Ferry, Ms. Kryzanski, Mr. Haynes, and all the Principals and Assistant Principals for working together to present this information.

Dr. Carnemolla introduced Mr. Jess Giannini first, and he went on to talk about the way the presentation was broken up into sections: Goals, Structure, Communication and Challenges and Next Steps. He went on to say each child has their own unique need and going forward that is part of the challenge aspect for our support services, and next steps will to always be to improve our processes

Mr. William Duffy, Principal of TBS and Dr. Stephanie Lockhart, Principal of AHS began the presentation. Mr. Duffy started with Data Teams. The Goal of Data Teams is to provide oversight and accountability for academic and social emotional success.

Academic Data Team Structure: Multi-level teams working to ensure support happens with consistency by looking at achievement scores, school performance, behavior and school connectedness.

Create a watch list of those students who may need future assistance as well as continuing the assistance of those already receiving support. If it is determined that a student needs individual assistance, the type of intervention will be determined by the team.

The parent is then notified that their child is identified as needing some support and continually kept in the loop with their child’s support plan.

SEL Data Team uses the same cycle as the Academic team, keeping a watch list and determining individual support needs after assessing the SEL data of the students.

Dr. Lockhart continued with Avon High School and their support services. She mentioned it is a similar process across the district, but each school may call it something a little different. The high school meets weekly to collaborate to watch students who are not performing as they

should, whether it is academically, socially or emotionally. Department level meetings are held to discuss the students that need assistance and what kind of support is needed.

Ms. Elizabeth Ferry was able to discuss how the District is excited for the new program Performance Matters that will help us analyze and extract data to aid in identifying those in need of extra support.

Next RBS Principal, Mr. Noam Sturm and Curriculum Director Ms. Jodi Kryzanski discussed what schools call SAT's (Student Assistance Team) where staff works collaboratively to develop plans, monitor success and provide support with academics, behavior, attendance and positive school experiences for the individual student and how they can be supported. The SAT has been at all of the schools for years. All SAT's meet weekly at all schools to discuss the support needed for all the students identified. There is a tiered approach to the SAT, where a student will move up and down a tier depending on their needs. There is a team called the "Front Burner Team," this team tackles the most needed interventions, the ones that need to take priority.

Communication then comes from the teachers to the families of those students who they feel would benefit from SAT. The SAT process is reviewed annually.

Ms. Tiffany Fox and Mr. Tasonn Hayes continued with the presentation with the Student and Family Services portion. This is where Pupil Service helps provide the resources needed to provide the necessary interventions for all students.

The structure of this is to have a comprehensive staffing model of nurses, social workers, psychologists, BCBA's, RBT's, OT, SLP and PT in every school.

All of the above qualified staff helps the needs of all children, not just those with IEP's or 504's.

Communication is ongoing from Student and Family Services, in the form of communication logs and scheduled appointments and more.

Ms. Kristina Wallace and Ms. Amy Borio addressed the portion of the presentation that was Positive Student Behavioral Supports. These are school wide assemblies, Student/Team meetings, Restorative practices and general positive behavior supports to encourage and incite all students to do good things by promoting and rewarding good behavior.

Communication through each school's newsletter tells the families what is going on in the school, promoting positive behavior, as well as daily, weekly and monthly communication logs to families relaying the positive environment their child is creating for others or is being created for them.

A few board members gave praise to the Principals and Administrators for the amount of communication and the clarity and the way in which it is communicated; parents do appreciate it and it is extremely important.

The Board expressed appreciation to the administration for the extremely important work they are doing.

D. Updates

XI. Consent Calendar - There are no items to approve on the Consent Calendar for this Board meeting.

XII. Old Business

XIII. New Business

A. **22-23/60** Policy 5144 *Replace* – Student Discipline- First Read with possible action

Dr. Carnemolla mentioned that we have had many conversations about this already in two committee meetings in addition to the BOE meeting with Shipman attorneys regarding legislative updates. Legislation has changed and the Shipman model policy will keep us in compliance and help us maintain a consistent process on Discipline.

Dr. Carnemolla asked the Board to approve tonight, as it is in our best interest that what we say is our policy, is actually up to date and compliant to the law, and currently our discipline policy is not.

Ms. Laura Young moved to approve policy 5144 Student Discipline, Mr. Jeffrey Fleischman seconded

Motion Passed 9-0-0

- B. **22-23/61** Policy 6172.1 *New* - Policy on the Equitable Identification of Gifted and Talented Students

For us it is not a change in procedure, this is what we are presently doing in Avon. But legislation requires all BOE's to have a policy on Equitable Identification of Gifted and Talented Students so we are implementing this Shipman Model that will comply with the law, and ensure we have a process in place to follow.

Ms. Laura Young moved to approve policy 6172.1 Policy on the Equitable Identification of Gifted and Talented, Ms. Lynn Katz seconded.

Motion passed 9-0-0

- C. **22-23/62** Policy 3543.31 *New* - Electronic Communication Use and Retention

Dr. Carnemolla began by stating we have policies in place for use and retention of communication for staff, students, FERPA etc. but the law requires a policy in place for all to understand parameters of all Electronic Communication/Records and the retention of said communications and records. With all the technology we use, how we communicate to parents and the public, and all the records we keep on students electronically, it is important to have this policy in place.

Ms. Laura Young moved to approve policy 3543.31- Electronic Communication Use and Retention, Mr. Jeffrey Fleischman seconded

Motion passed 9-0-0

XIV. Communication from Public

Please remember communications are generally limited to 15 minutes as a total maximum for all speakers, with each speaker limited to 3 minutes in accordance with standing Board policy. The Board may waive these limits in exceptional circumstances.

XV. Communication from Avon Board of Education Members

XVI. Adjournment

At 9:49 Mr. Jeffrey Fleischman moved to adjourn the meeting, Ms. Thej Singh seconded the motion, all in favor 9-0-0

Minutes prepared by Christine Sardinkas, Board Recording Clerk

Minute respectfully submitted by Jeffrey S. Fleischman, Avon Board Secretary

NOTE: If there is any person interested in an item that does not appear on the agenda, please arrange to speak with the Chair or the Superintendent of Schools before the meeting to discuss

the matter. If the item is appropriate to the meeting, it may be discussed under New Business or Old Business. If the item requires extensive discussion or additional information, it may be placed on a future agenda.