



**SPECIAL MEETING  
AVON BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**Board of Education Central Office  
Monday, October 28, 2019 – 6:00 pm**

**MINUTES**

**Attendance**

**Members Present:** Jackie Blea; David Cavanaugh; Debra Chute; Jeffrey S. Fleischman; Jason Indomenico; Houston Putnam Lowry; Bogdan Oprica; Jay Spivak; Laura Young

**Member(s) Absent:** none

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

**Others Present:** Dr. Jerry Belair, Connecticut Center for School Change

I. Call to Order

*The meeting was called to order by Debra Chute, Board Chair at 6:04 pm.*

II. Reflection Session

A. Discussion regarding Updated Mission and Strategic Plan with Dr. Jerry Belair, Connecticut Center for School Change

1. Dr. Carnemolla introduced Dr. Jerry Belair and reminded the Board that Dr. Belair was part of the team that conducted the Capacity and Coherence Review, which gave Dr. Belair a good perspective of the District. Dr. Belair is currently working with the administrative team in looking at the teaching and learning in the District and how the rigor is defined as well as teacher evaluation.
2. Dr. Carnemolla explained the changes made to the District's Mission Statement, which drives the work, and described how the statement focuses on how all actions impacts the students; who are the students who are graduating; what do they know and what are they able to do? Dr. Carnemolla added that the goals are a three to five year plan.
3. Dr. Nestler-Rusack further explained the edits made to the Mission Statement including adding the category of "Systems." There are four focus areas: Student Achievement, Personal Growth & Relationships (culture), Communications & Partnerships, and Systems. Two to three goal areas were developed under each focus area. Discussion was had on common standards/measurements, mastery of subjects and equity of grading practices.
4. Discussion was also had on the Course of Studies and the various course levels at the high school. Dr. Carnemolla stressed that it is a goal that every student take at least one college level course and to change the culture to encourage students to enroll in these courses. The Superintendent reviewed with the Board members the enrollment data of students taking AP and ECE courses. The Board members discussed the possible obstacles students may encounter that discourage them from considering taking college level courses. Dr. Belair suggested interviewing the students for a better understanding of why they are not taking

more AP/ECE courses. Dr. Belair also stated that concern about GPAs and transcripts to colleges may also prevent students from taking higher level courses in their earlier high school years. Dr. Belair believed it is a worthy goal to have every student take at least one college level class.

5. Dr. Carnemolla also spoke of the various Pathways offered to students according to their needs including the Internship Program. Dr. Rusack introduced to the Board members the new program being piloted with Tunxis College for students interested in business.
6. Highlights of the Gifted and Talented education was briefly reviewed by Dr. Rusack. Achievement is identified through the results showing mastery in all areas on the Smarter Balance test, 95% or more on the Degrees of Reading Power and finally a score of 95% or more on the OLSAT intelligence test. Dr. Carnemolla added that third grade is the ideal time to administer the OLSAT exam. State law requires that students be identified and families notified if they child is identified. Discussion was had on who and how to identify students and how to communicate what is already in place. Dr. Rusack shared that the District follows the Renzulli Enrichment for All model, which has been in place in the District for a number of years. Enrichment clusters were first placed at Thompson Brook School and since moved down to the two elementary schools. These clusters allow students to explore rather than being teacher directed. The District has hired an enrichment coach to help teachers create extension opportunities. Dr. Rusack mentioned other in District enrichment programs available to students. It was asked that when letters go out to parents notifying them of their child's G&T identification additional information be included regarding resources available to their child. Dr. Carnemolla summarized that regarding the identification process for identifying G&T students will be reviewed and possibly changed. Discussion was also had regarding compressing curriculum versus giving students opportunities to accelerate. Conversation was also had concerning being mindful of the whole child. Dr. Carnemolla recapped the importance of Pathways – to let people know what exists, to meet the needs of students and to collaborate with the parents to move forward.
7. The Superintendent concluded by asking the Board members to review the Mission Statement that was presented especially the focus areas and goals to gain a sense of the direction forward.

### III. Adjournment

***Houston Putnam Lowry motioned, Laura Young seconded, to adjourn the meeting. The Board adjourned by unanimous consent at 8:27 pm.***

*Jeffrey S Fleischman 11/14/2019*

*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.*