



**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, January 21, 2020, 7:00 pm

Avon High School, Community Room

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**Minutes**

**Attendance**

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

**Member(s) Absent:** none

**Administration Present:** Dr. Bridget Heston Carnemolla, Superintendent of Schools; Roberto Medic, Director of Human Resources; Heather Michaud, Director of Fiscal Affairs

I. Call to Order

*The January 21, 2020 Board of Education Regular Monthly meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by the Superintendent, Dr. Bridget H. Carnemolla following the Board's Bylaw #9115, Annual Organizational Meeting, which states, "The Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee will call the annual organizational meeting to order."*

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Elections

A. 19-20/27 Election of Board Officers

As per Avon Board of Education Bylaw 9115 – Annual Organization Meeting, Superintendent Carnemolla, presided over the meeting and election of the Board Chair.

***Mr. Indomenico nominated Debra Chute for Board Chair; the nomination was seconded by Mr. Fleischman. By unanimous consent, Debra Chute was elected as the Board Chair.***

Superintendent Carnemolla turned the meeting over to newly elected Board Chair, Deb Chute. Chair Chute thanked everyone for their support and continued with the election of Board officers.

***Ms. Young nominated Jay Spivak for Board Vice Chair; the nomination was seconded by Ms. Blea. By unanimous consent, Jay Spivak was elected as the Board Vice-Chair***

***Ms. Seminara nominated Jeffrey S. Fleischman for Board Secretary; the nomination was seconded by Ms. Young. By unanimous consent, Jeffrey S. Fleischman was elected as the Board Secretary.***

B. 19-20/28 Discussion of Board Subcommittee Chairs and Members

Ms. Chute explained the organization of the subcommittees (Finance, Policy, Nominations and C&PP) and asked Board members to indicate their interest to Chair Chute. Ms. Chute will inform Board members of the committee assignments later in the week.

C. 19-20/29 Discussion of Board Liaisons

Ms. Chute stated that the positions of Board Liaisons to Town Council, Board of Finance, and Curriculum Professional Development Council (CPDC) is no longer necessary. If the Board of Education appears on an agenda administrators and Board Chair will attend when needed to speak on the topic. The Board will keep updated by means of the Town Council and Board of Finance minutes. The Board will stay apprised of the work of the CPDC through updates at the Curriculum and Professional Practices subcommittee meetings as well as the Regular Monthly Board meetings. Ms. Chute added that the liaison to CREC would be kept with Ms. Blea continuing in the position.

Chair Chute read the District's mission statement.

IV. Presentations

A. Avon Achiever

Daniyal Athar; Sahiti Bhyravavajhala; Thomas Ko; Sophie Lin; Rachel Pastore; Emily Paul; James Ryan; Abigail St. Onge; Walden Yan (AHS students) – in recognition of being named as semifinalists in the 2020 National Merit Scholarship competition.

Dr. Carnemolla apologized on behalf of the high school administrators for not being in attendance due to confirmed illnesses. The superintendent explained the impressive honor it is to be recognized as a National Merit semifinalist.

B. Acknowledgement of Board Member

Houston Putnam Lowry

Chair Chute noted the lasting impressing of Houston Putnam Lowry, having served over 14 years as a Board member and in the roles as Board Chair and Secretary. Mr. Lowry is also an alumnus of Avon High School and was part of the inaugural class of Roaring Brook School. The Superintendent and Board members thanked and acknowledged Mr. Lowry's leadership, knowledge, wisdom and humor while he served on the Board.

V. Approval of Minutes

A. Board of Education Special Meeting, November 19, 2019

***Ms. Blea moved, Mr. Cavanaugh seconded, to approve the November 19, 2019 minutes of the Special Meeting as presented.***

***The motion carried by unanimous consent.***

B. Board of Education Regular Monthly Meeting, November 19, 2019

***Ms. Blea moved, Ms. Young seconded, to approve the November 19, 2019 minutes of the Regular Monthly Meeting as presented.***

***The motion carried by unanimous consent.***

C. Board of Education Special Meeting, December 18, 2019

***Mr. Indomenico moved, Ms. Blea seconded, to approve the December 18, 2019 minutes of the Special Meeting as presented.***

***The motion carried by unanimous consent.***

VI. Communication from Public

Megan Belval, Avon resident and Avon Public School parent, addressed the Board regarding a bill to remove the religious exemption to vaccinations. Ms. Belval expressed her concern that legislators intend to mandate, what is now optional, the Gardasil (HPV) vaccine and feels the bill targets and discriminates against a small minority of students. Ms. Belval asked the Board to consider the consequences these students would face and informed the Board of press conferences addressing this bill at the capitol on February 5<sup>th</sup>.

VII. Items of Information and Proposals

A. Student Representative Report –Addisen Ganiats & Alvin Guo, AHS Student Representatives  
Alvin Guo informed the Board of that the Mock Trial team moved on to Regionals; there was a first publication of a student run newspaper; the Investment team made Regionals and the close-out of the first semester with mid-terms.

B. Financial Report – Heather Michaud, Director of Fiscal Affairs

Ms. Michaud reported that the largest expenditure entered in December was from the employer health insurance admin stop loss fees for July to December totaling \$491,063.20. The employer medical share was entered in November and totaled over \$1.4 million. Ms. Michaud reminded the Board that the Town prepares the invoicing of fees, is provided quarterly, and will most likely be journaled in March.

VIII. Committees & Liaison Reports

A. Committee Reports

1. Curriculum & Professional Practices – Jackie Blea, Chair

Ms. Blea stated that the next meeting will be February 3 and will be a workshop where all Board members are invited to participate with high school administrators and department leaders present. The course of studies will be the topic of discussion. The meeting will be held in the Community Room at Avon High School. It was asked that the high school curriculum be made available to Board members prior to the meeting.

2. Finance – Jay Spivak, Chair

Mr. Spivak shared the last Finance committee addressed the transfer request of \$25,000 for unanticipated HVAC at RBS, a leak at PGS and elevator repairs at AMS. Next meeting is scheduled for Feb. 11<sup>th</sup>.

3. Negotiations – Jason Indomenico, Chair

Mr. Indomenico reported that negotiations with food service workers is ongoing.

4. Policy – Laura Young, Chair

Ms. Young stated that the Policy Committee has been reviewing three policies regarding bullying intervention and prevention, school calendar setting and graduation date, and controversial issues in regards to instructional material. Changes are due to changes in state statute. Next meeting will be on Feb. 4

B. Liaison Reports

1. Board Representative to Curriculum Professional Development Council – Bogdan Oprica and Deb Chute, Board Rep.  
Ms. Blea reported there was a CPDC meeting this past month with the meeting focusing on the vision of the graduate which the Superintendent will speak to later in the meeting.
2. Board Representative to Avon Board of Finance – David Cavanaugh, Board Rep.  
Mr. Cavanaugh had nothing to report
3. Board Representative to Avon Town Council – Jason Indomenico, Board Rep.  
Mr. Indomenico had nothing to report other than the Council did acknowledge outgoing Town Council members, David Pena and Bill Stokesbury.
4. Board Representative to Capital Region Education Council – Jackie Blea, Board Rep.  
Ms. Blea was unable to attend the last meeting but will be meeting with CREC Director, Greg Florio and will report back at the next meeting.

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

A. Board Chair Update

Chair Chute encouraged all to attend the C&PP workshop scheduled for Monday, Feb. 3<sup>rd</sup>. Ms. Chute also reminded Board members of the Legislative Breakfast on Feb. 20<sup>th</sup>, RSVP is needed.

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

A. Hiring Report

Dr. Carnemolla reviewed both the hiring reports for December and January, which included the hiring of a school psychologist at PGS and non-certified staff including three para-educators, teaching assistants and a tutor due to recent resignations. The Assistant Director of Nutrition Services also resigned. There were also transfers of school psychologists and long-term substitute hires.

B. Enrollment Report

The Superintendent reviewed the Enrollment Report for the Board, which showed an increase of 17 students from the last month.

C. Strategic Plan Update

The Superintendent reported that on January 9, the CPDC spent the majority of the time on the portrait of the graduate after asking for community, students and staff input. All responses were discussed and prioritized. Time was also used to define terms to ensure everyone has a common understanding of what is being discussed. The CPDC felt their meeting time was productive. The Administrative Team will be participating in the mid-year retreat with the Center for School Change where administrators will collaborate with three other districts on Jan. 29<sup>th</sup>.

D. Updates

Dr. Carnemolla stated she would give further updates later on other agenda items.

XI. Consent Calendar

- A. 19-20/30 Budget Transfers
- B. 19-20/31 Approval of Chemical Hygiene Officer Job Description
- C. 19-20/32 Approval of Field Trip
- D. 19-20/33 Approval of AHS PTO Donation to AHS for an Eight Top Table Station (value \$2,361.80)
- E. 19-20/34 Approval of Class of 1969 Donation to AHS for STEM-based Materials (value \$350)
- F. 19-20/35 Approval of Global Companies, LLC Two (2) Donations to AHS for STEM-

based Materials (value \$500 each)

***Ms. Blea moved, Mr. Indomenico seconded, to approve the Consent Calendar as presented.  
The motion carried 9-0-0.***

Ms. Chute acknowledged the donations and asked that a letter be sent on the Board's behalf.

XII. New Business

A. 19-20/25 AHS Grades 10 & 12 ELA Primary Instructional Materials

Dr. Carnemolla reviewed the process of approving instructional materials, the C&PP during the October 2019 meeting asked that books being considered be listed under New Business at a Board meeting before opening the review window to allow for Board discussion, after which books can be listed under Consent. These books were not listed under New Business as C&PP requested and was not brought to the Board for final approval because of the cancellation of the December meeting but are needed at the high school. The Superintendent explained that these books are optional and not required text except for *Salvage the Bones* used in grade 10. Discussion ensued regarding use of the books and whether these books are/were or can be used in other courses. The process of how CPDC decides which books to recommend was also discussed. CPDC committee members are not required to read through all material, but rely on the comprehensive process to go through the material. Dr. Carnemolla also explained that for ECE courses, UConn provides a list of books that can be used. Instructionally, if the books are approved for ECE sequence, the books should not be read elsewhere to avoid redundancy. The Superintendent stated that during the 30 day window there were no concerns or feedback regarding any of the recommended text. Board members discussed the need to communicate more clearly books under review to allow a more proactive and transparent process. The Superintendent encouraged Board members to have faith in the process and value the people who work on CPDC, especially if UConn also recommends the books for their courses.

***Mr. Indomenico moved, Ms. Blea seconded, to approve AHS Grades 10 & 12 ELA Primary Instructional Materials as presented.  
The motion carried 9-0-0.***

B. 19-20/36 Policy 6111 – School Calendar Setting & Graduation Date Revision, First Read

Dr. Carnemolla reminded the Board that the graduation date for 2020 was already set due to a change in the law. The Superintendent proposed that action be taken to accept the change in Policy 6111 so that the District is in compliance with their own actions and that the policy speak only of calendar setting.

***Mr. Blea moved, Mr. Cavanaugh seconded, to approve the changes to Policy 6111 – School Calendar Setting & Graduation Date as presented.  
The motion carried 9-0-0.***

C. 19-20/37 Proposed 2020-2021 Board of Education Budget

The Superintendent reviewed that three meetings have been had regarding the budget. Given the level of work done and the questions asked at the last three meetings, the Superintendent recapped the overview of the budget one more time prior to action asked to be taken tonight. The Town asked for the budget by Feb. 3 but now would like it on Friday.

Dr. Carnemolla reminded of the points discussed in the previous three Budget meetings:

- Highlights of last year’s budget of 1.96%
- FY 2020/2021 Budget Process
- FY 2020/2021 Budget Development Goals
- FY 2020/2021 Needs
  - Math Teacher at AHS
  - Investment in enrichment pathways
  - Library media and makerspaces
  - SEL
  - Technology acquisition and improvement
- Initial Budget Overview - \$62,670,625.50
  - Initial budget increase of 6.94%
- Budget Drivers
  - Increased student enrollment
  - Increased student needs
  - Contractual obligations
- Budget Major Drivers
  - Carry over additions from current fiscal year (.50%)
    - 2 kindergarten teachers
    - 1 grade 4 teacher
    - 3 paraeducators
  - Increased enrollment & increased student needs (.27%)
    - .7 LMS teacher
    - 3 paraeducators
  - Contractual obligations (.99%)
    - Transportation
    - Tuition
    - Benefits, primarily OPEB (after retirement)
  - Working Budget
    - Budget reductions of \$1,277,082.02.
    - Working budget total of \$61,393,543.48
  - Major working budget drivers
    - Overall % increase of 1.9%
    - All other needs increase of 2.86%
- Superintendent’s Proposed Budget
  - Proposed budget total - \$61,393,543.48
  - New money - \$2,787,997.38
  - Gross % Increase – 4.76%

The Superintendent gave a breakdown of the budget (percentages rounded up):

- Salaries & benefits – 80.06%
- Transportation – 5.20%
- Utilities – 2.04%
- Contracted services – 4%
- Tuition – 5.57%
- Supplies & equipment – 2.92%
- All other - .19%

Additional conversation was had about class size, consumables, use of technology, and projected general fund revenues.

Mr. Spivak thanked the Superintendent and her team for putting together the budget. Mr. Spivak also acknowledged the many hours the Board spent studying the budget presented.

***Mr. Spivak moved, Ms. Young seconded, to adopt the 202/2021 Board of Education general fund gross budget in the amount of \$61,393,543.48, having a gross increase of 4.76% over the prior fiscal year.***

***The motion passed 8-0-1 Yay – Blea, Cavanaugh, Chute, Fleischman, Indomenico, Oprica, Spivak, Young. Nay – none. Abstain - Lisa Seminara.***

Dr. Carnemolla thanked the Board members for the many hours Board members spent in reviewing the budget and for attending the various meetings.

XIII. Communication from Avon Board of Education Members

Ms. Blea thanked the administration for the work put into providing such detailed information regarding the budget and answering all the questions pertaining to the budget.

Mr. Oprica also thanked the administration for their work on the budget. He also recognized Mr. Fleischman's comments to create a more feasible budget that will be more sustainable and be more efficient in the upcoming years.

XIV. Communication from Public

There was no communication from the public.

XV. Adjournment

***Mr. Indomenico moved, Ms. Blea seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 9:26 pm.***

***The Board adjourned by unanimous consent.***

Minutes prepared by Shirley Moy, Board Recording Secretary

Minutes respectfully submitted by Jeffrey S. Fleischman, Board Secretary

*Jeffrey S. Fleischman, February 3, 2020*

***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.***