



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 19, 2024, 7:00 pm

Avon High School, Library

Avon High School
510 West Avon Road
Avon, CT 06001

Minutes

Attendance

Board Members Present:; Christopher Campbell; Debra Chute, Board Chair; Jeffrey S. Fleischman, Board Secretary; Ramesh Kandipilli; Lynn Katz; Nicole Russo; Thej Singh, Board Vice-Chair; Suzanne Szekeres; Sarah Thompson

Board Members Absent: None

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

I. **Call to Order**

Board Chair Deb Chute called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

A. A.Roll Call

II. **Pledge of Allegiance**

III. **Mission Statement**

Ms. Chute read the Board's Mission Statement.

IV. **Recognition/Presentations:**

The month of March is Board of Education Month, the Avon Board of Education members were recognized this evening. Dr. Carnemolla thanked the Board for the time and effort put in to do their jobs as Board members. Each of the schools decided to show the Board their appreciation in different ways:

AHS- Singing the National Anthem AMS - Jazz Band performance

TBS - Buttons and Stickers of appreciation

RBS - Thank you letters

PGS - A slide show presentation of thanks to the Board

Board Chair Deb Chute thanked all the performers and she loved seeing them all in action, as it shows what is happening in the buildings. Ms. Chute also mentioned that the Board is such a great group to work with, and she thanked the students/community for letting the Board represent them on their behalf.

V. Approval of Minutes

A. Board of Education Regular Monthly Meeting minutes of February 27, 2024

*Ms. Lynn Katz made a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Monthly Meeting of February 27, 2024, Ms. Suzanne Szekeres seconded.
Motion passed 9-0-0*

VI. Communication from Public

An Avon resident and parent spoke to the legislative update letter that went out last week.

VII. Items of Information and Proposals

A. Student Representatives Report - Lillian Peng and Nikolai Meltser, AHS Student Representatives. Nikolai was not present Lillian read the report for all schools:

AHS: SAT day is tomorrow 3/20; Career Day for Sophomores and Freshman is 3/20; Student Government is having a movie night; School celebration for IFTAR, muslim holiday where they Break their Fast; Interact is having a fundraiser collecting donations and toys; AP Art class has a display on in the Library.

AMS: Dance was held last week; Bandapalooza was on the 13th; Newsies Musical is currently showing.

TBS: Frozen Jr. is coming next month; Bridges program is continuing at TBS

PGS: Bingo night was held; Boosterthon culminating in a Piney Dance Party.

RBS: Finding Nemo Jr. play was put on last week with great success.

B. Financial Report – Susan Russo, Business Manager

There was no Financial Report this evening, as there was no Financial Committee Meeting for the month of March.

VIII. Committees & Liaison Reports

B. Committee Reports-

1. Curriculum & Professional Practices – Ms Katz reported that the next meeting is March 26th where they will discuss the Math Pilot Programs.

2. Finance – Ms. Chute reported that the next meeting will be April 16th.

3. Negotiations – Ms. Szekeres reported that they are still in the beginning stages of negotiations

4. Policy – Ms. Singh reported that the next meeting will be May 7, 2024, although there are a few policies on the agenda tonight that need to be approved.

C. Liaison Report

1. Capital Region Education Council – Mr. Campbell reported that the meeting is tomorrow, March 20th.

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

D. Board Chair Update- Ms. Chute mentioned that the location for the town budget meeting has changed to the Library; Math Pilots at Roaring Brook school was so exciting to see in person, and she was impressed with the engagement of the students; Ms. Chute and Mr. Campbell were asked to be a part of Career Day tomorrow to talk about their roles as elected officials, and are looking forward to it.

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

A. Hiring Report - Mr. Medic began by mentioning that there was a new Math Interventionist hired to work at AHS and AMS; This time of year is when we start saying goodbye to staff that is retiring and he wanted to take the opportunity to thank Jeanine LaBrosse, Ellen McCabe, Janed Loynes, and Sally DeGozzaldi for their dedication to the students of Avon.

B. Enrollment Report -

Dr. Carnemolla reported that we are only up 10 students from this time last year. We continue to do the Kindergarten screening for next year and are still taking Kindergarten registrations as well.

C. Strategic Plan Update

Dr. Carnemolla stated that the new Math pilot programs are directly related to the Strategic Plan, and she was very happy to see many Board members were able to visit the math classrooms that are piloting the new math programs. We are continuing the vertical team meetings to discuss the math program that we will implement. On March 26th there is a CPP meeting to discuss and present all the materials to the CPP Committee and the action to approve the math program will take place at the May monthly Board meeting.

D. Updates

XI. Consent Calendar

There were no items on the consent calendar this month

XII. Old Business- Both items on Old Business were discussed last meeting, now the 30 day review window has concluded, the BOE can now approve the materials.

23-24/40 - Approval of Primary Instructional Material- Social Studies 8th Grade Textbook

***Ms. Lynn Katz motioned to approve the 8th Grade Social Studies Textbook, Ms. Sarah Thompson seconded
Motion Passed 9-0-0***

23-24/41 - Approval of Primary Instructional Material - Novel Rebecca for ECE English at AHS

***Ms. Lynn Katz motioned to approve the novel Rebecca as a Primary Instructional Material, Mr. Ramesh Kandipilli seconded
Motion passed 9-0-0***

XIII. New Business

23-24/42 - Changes to the 2024-2025 School Calendar

Dr. Carnemolla stated that next year's calendar, upon review, determined that since the election day in November was a Presidential election, those tend to be more crowded, it was determined it would be best to move the Professional Learning to another day. Professional Learning has moved from November 5th to September 25, 2024. This change resulted in adding one more day to the end of the year. Another small change was moving the half Professional Learning day from January 8, 2025 to February 12, 2025, so now January 8th is a full day and February 12th is a half day. The new calendar will be up on the district website.

***Ms. Deb Chute made a motion to approve revised 2024-2025 School Calendar with the changes discussed, Ms. Suzanne Szekeres seconded the motion.
Motion passed 9-0-0***

23-24/43 - Increasing Educator Diversity Plan

Mr. Roberto Medic began by explaining about the new law that each school district needed to develop a plan to Increase Educator Diversity (IED) pursuant to CT General Statute 10-220(a), Section 10 of Public Act 23-167. Avon formed a team to devise and propose this plan to be approved by the Board of Education.

The plan consists of three sections, Recruitment, Hiring and Selection and Retention. Mr. Medic presented each section to the Board and spoke in detail how Avon will Increase Educator Diversity through this plan. The Board posed a few questions for clarification purposes and a discussion ensued on the details of the plan. The plan will be sent to the state once approved by the Board.

***Ms. Sarah Thompson made a motion to approve the state mandated Increasing Educator Diversity Plan, Mr. Chris Campbell seconded the motion
Motion passed 9-0-0***

23-24/44 - 5131.81 -Use of Private Technology Devices by Students

Dr. Carnemolla began by saying this was a compliment to the policy we just approved (5131.71- Student Use of District Computer Systems). Since personal devices are allowed at certain times at schools, this has been updated to reflect AI (Artificial Intelligence), and the use of it on one's own device.

Ms. Katz posed a question on a student using their personal device not on the Avon internet for bullying or harassing, do they still get disciplined. Dr. Carnemolla answered they do, it is just covered under a different policy.

***Ms. Thej Singh made a motion to approve policy 5131.81 Use of Private Technology Devices by Students, Ms. Lynn Katz seconded.
Motion passed 9-0-0***

23-24/45 - 6146.12 - Advanced Courses and Challenging Curriculum

Dr. Carnemolla stated that this was a requirement by law in 2022, this revision stems from the office of Civil Rights where we are ensuring that multilingual students have equal access and opportunity to take advanced/challenging courses.

***Ms. Thej Singh made a motion to approve policy 6146.12 Advanced Courses and Challenging Curriculum, Ms. Suzanne Szekeres seconded.
Motion passed 9-0-0***

XIV. Communication from Public

There was no communication from the public.

XV. Communication from Avon Board of Education Members

Ms. Sarah Thompson wanted to express her thanks for being able to see the Math Pilot program in person, it was great to see first hand; she also wanted to say she is excited about the Increasing Educator Diversity (IED) plan, it seems prepped for success and it was really great work.

Ms. Nicole Russo wanted to mention how wonderful Finding Nemo at RBS was last week; she also wanted to say she enjoyed going to see the Math classes in person and she can see how the teachers are all invested in the students success; Ms. Russo also mentioned she is hearing parental concerns on the new legislative update that went out, and hopes a solution can be found.

Mr. Ramesh Kandipilli thanked the Administration for being able to go to the Math classes and see the Math pilot programs, it looks like it will be a success.

Mr. Christopher Campbell also wanted to comment on the IED, and thanked everyone for their work on the plan and is excited to see it go forward; Mr. Campbell also commented on RBS Bingo Night and how it was a huge success.

Mr. Jeffrey Fleischman thanked the Administration, staff, teachers and students for his BOE appreciation gifts. He is excited to continue to work with this board to get the best for our students.

Ms. Thej Singh wanted to say how she loved seeing the kids in action, singing, playing instruments and she loves seeing the cards and messages from the students on Board appreciation; Ms. Singh is also excited to see the plan for IED, and is happy we have a solid plan in place.

XVI. Adjournment

At 8:37 p.m. Ms. Suzanne Szekeres made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Christopher Campbell seconded.

Motion passed 9-0-0

Minutes prepared by Christine Sardinkas, Board Recording Secretary

Minutes respectfully submitted by Jeffrey S. Fleischman, Board Secretary