

**Avonworth School District**  
**258 Josephs Lane**  
**Pittsburgh, PA 15237**  
**Avonworth Board of School Directors**  
**Minutes – Work Session/General Purpose Meeting – January 11, 2021**  
**Avonworth School District – LGI Room & Virtually**  
**7:30 P.M.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT IN THE BOARD ROOM (Roll Call Taken):**

Mr. Beau Blaser, Mr. John Brandt, Ms. Vicki Carlson, Ms. Danielle White

**MEMBERS PRESENT VIRTUALLY (Roll Call Taken & Verified by Voices & Video):**

Ms. Sandra Bolain, Ms. Yu-Ling Cheng, Ms. Kathryn Monti, Mr. Patrick Stewart,  
Ms. Kristin Thompson

**OTHERS PRESENT IN THE BOARD ROOM:**

Dr. Thomas Ralston, Superintendent  
Mr. Brad Waters, Director, Fiscal Mgmt.

Dr. Jeff Hadley, Asst. Superintendent  
Ms. Cindy Donovan, Board Secretary

**OTHERS PRESENT VIRTUALLY:**

Ms. Jennifer Handke, Parent	Ms. Emily McCaul, Parent
Ms. Debra Bacon, Parent	Ms. Elizabeth Genard, Parent
Ms. Gail Lipchak, Parent	Ms. Gretchen Crawford, Parent
Ms. Tracy Graff, APC Secretary	Ms. Elizabeth Dugan, Parent
Ms. Amanda Lemon, Parent	Ms. Maureen Frew, Teacher
Ms. Jessica Garavaglia, Parent	Ms. Sibyl Bevington, Parent
Ms. Nikki Milojevic, Parent	Ms. Jessica Johnston, Parent
Ms. Suzanne Basista, Parent	Ms. Carla Zimmerly, Parent
Ms. Jodi Buzzard, Parent	Ms. Kim Gallucci, Parent
Ms. Melissa Stewart, Parent	Mr. Jason Smith, Teacher
Ms. Erin Pascuzzi, Parent	Ms. Marlena Stevens, Parent
Ms. Emily Hellee, Parent	Ms. Patricia Schmigel, Parent
Mr. Gary Wilhelm, Custodian	Ms. Courtney Kuzma, Parent
Mr. Robb Pfeil, Parent	Ms. Natalie McMurtrie, Parent
Ms. Carol Loutzenhiser, Parent	Mr. James Loutzenhiser, Parent
Ms. Sarah Rider, Parent	Ms. Jackie Karwoski, Parent
Ms. Kate Campbell, Parent	Ms. Melissa Reagle, Teacher
Ms. Melissa Nelson, Parent	Ms. Siobahn Gallagher, Parent
Mr. Bill White, Teacher	Ms. Kelli Sommers, Parent
Ms. Tanya Rinaldo, Parent	Ms. Jennifer Wickert, Teacher
Ms. Alicia Mielnicki, Parent	Ms. Kari Johnson, Teacher
Ms. Gail Love, Substitute School Nurse	Ms. Erin Walker-Lodge, Parent
Ms. Pamela North, Parent	Ms. Jennifer Yoder, Parent
Ms. Janelle Reck, Parent	Ms. Tara Geouque, Parent
Mr. Jason Klein, Parent	Ms. Sara Klein, Parent
Ms. Jennifer Lindell, Parent	Ms. Amanda Berneburg, Parent
Ms. Carrie Brady, Parent	Ms. Jaclyn Keane, Teacher
Ms. Lisa Milsom, Parent	Ms. Nicole DeLuca, Teacher

**OTHERS PRESENT VIRTUALLY, continued:**

Ms. Makenzie Wetzal, Parent  
Ms. Hannah Fassler, Teacher  
Ms. Katie Libbon, Parent/Teacher  
Ms. Mara Alterio, School Nurse  
Ms. Hope Lucas, Parent  
Ms. Lindsay Scharding, Parent  
Ms. Stephani Machen, Parent  
Ms. Maureen O'Connor, Parent  
Ms. Michele Kline, Parent  
Ms. Jamie Sundo, Parent  
Ms. Sarah Chverchko, Parent  
Ms. Heather Dippold, Parent  
Ms. Briana Watts, Parent  
Ms. Laura Dzadovsky, Parent  
Ms. Stephanie Wetzal, Parent  
Mr. Dante O'Donnell, Parent  
Ms. Komal Kotwal, Parent  
Ms. Jackie Keith, Parent  
Ms. Ashley Harper, Parent  
Ms. Leah Plaks, Parent  
Ms. Lindsay Stover, Parent  
Ms. Cheryl Noethiger, Community Member  
Ms. Katy Ursta, Parent  
Ms. Nicole Acierno, Parent  
Ms. Trish Monahan, Parent  
Ms. Mala Mason, Parent  
Ms. Diann Brown, Parent  
Ms. Beth Roberts, Parent  
Ms. Melissa Stewart, Parent  
Ms. Jennie Liska, Parent  
Ms. Melinda Malsch, Parent  
Ms. Kimberly Johnson, Parent  
Mr. Will Guess, Teacher  
Ms. Megan Parreaguirre, Teacher  
Ms. Keera Dwulit, HS Principal  
Ms. Jenni Galbraith, Parent  
Ms. Jamie Myers, Parent  
Ms. Kimberly Syam, Parent  
Ms. Holly Pukylo, Parent  
Ms. Kim Zylinski, Parent  
Ms. Elizabeth Dugan, Parent  
Ms. Rasha Alrahahi, Parent  
Ms. Jamie Sundo, Parent  
Ms. Tracy Smallwood, Parent  
Ms. Elizabeth Pflueger, Parent  
Ms. Audra Blackson, Parent  
Ms. Jess Paredes, Parent  
Ms. Ellen Cernich, Parent  
Mr. Michael Hebor, Parent  
Ms. Julie Mannion, Parent  
Ms. Stefanie Wiegand, Teacher  
Mr. Dean Zuppe, Teacher  
Ms. Carrie Jane Novosel, Parent  
Ms. Ellen Cernich, Parent  
Ms. Brittany Covalt, Teacher  
Ms. Tracy Theobald, Parent  
Ms. Becky Marszalek, Paraprofessional/AESPA President  
Mr. Dave Bonini, Parent  
Ms. Melissa (Vietmeier) Wiggins, Parent  
Ms. Heather Sabala, Parent  
Ms. Jessica Boyd, Parent  
Ms. Kristy Alberts, Parent  
Mr. Jarret Schopf, Parent  
Ms. Anna Marie White, Parent  
Ms. Melissa Mohn, Parent  
Ms. Jennifer Rieger, Parent  
Ms. Jaime Mary, Parent  
Ms. Brianne McCarthy, Parent  
Ms. Colleen Barcaskey, School Nurse  
Ms. Kelly Ann Kunst, Parent  
Ms. Kara Roggenkamp, Parent  
Ms. Nora Silvey, Parent  
Ms. Jenifer Neiss, Parent  
Ms. Lindsay Scharding, Parent  
Mr. Tom DiOrio, Parent  
Ms. Katie Kalb, Parent  
Ms. Rhodora Huffmyer, Parent  
Ms. Christine Kohler, Parent  
Ms. Jennifer Csonka, Parent  
Ms. Mary Claire Arena, Parent  
Ms. Melanie Quinn, Parent  
Ms. Beth Zelinko, Parent  
Ms. Sara Croft, Teacher  
Ms. Julie Brown, Parent  
Ms. April Nicotero, Parent  
Mr. Brant Colamarino, Blgs./Grounds Supvsr.  
Mr. Jeremy Trexel, Parent  
Ms. Jana Stahl, Teacher  
Ms. Ashley Randall, Teacher  
Mr. Karim Alshurafa, Parent  
Ms. Bobbe Jo Radkowski, Parent  
Ms. Megan Jamison, Parent  
Ms. Pamela Rawlings, Teacher  
Ms. Selma Cetin-Ferra, Parent  
Mr. Scott LeBaron, Parent  
Ms. Casey Calland, Parent  
Ms. Amber Smalley, Parent  
Ms. Lisa Samarin, Parent

**OTHERS PRESENT VIRTUALLY, continued:**

Ms. Emily Hensch, Parent  
Ms. Beth Carter, Parent  
Ms. Steph Tinker, Parent  
Ms. Debi Van Mater, Parent  
Mr. David Farrah, Parent  
Ms. Jessica Kostewicz, Parent  
Ms. Natalie Camacho, Parent  
Ms. Sara Studt, Teacher  
Ms. Erin Woods, Parent  
Mr. Ken Kalb, Parent  
Ms. Lynn Hartle, Parent  
Mr. Daniel Conlon, Parent  
Ms. Ann Marie Harvey, Parent  
Ms. Jodi Piacenti, Parent  
Ms. Marissa Vulakovich, Parent  
Ms. Carrie Best, Parent  
Ms. Marcy Dinkfelt, Parent  
Ms. Megan Pastore, Parent  
Ms. Nancy Purcell, Parent  
Ms. Tanya Schmigel, Parent  
Ms. Lindsay Murphy, Parent  
Ms. Lashonna Austin, Parent  
Ms. Nancy Ambrass, Parent  
Ms. Lyndsay Marx, Parent  
Ms. Bobbie Farrah, Parent  
Ms. Omolara Fatukasi, Parent  
Ms. Lori Graham, Parent  
Ms. Ashley Binford, Parent  
Ms. Jennifer Kosarych, Parent  
Ms. Adrienne Leveto, Teacher  
Ms. Toni Reagan, Parent  
Ms. Tammy Scott, Parent  
Ms. Kerri Penrose, Parent  
Ms. Laurie Mathie, Parent  
Ms. Dyan McCall, Parent  
Ms. Lucy Negron, Teacher  
Ms. Vickie Railing, Parent  
Ms. Kathy Galecki, Teacher  
Mr. David Bacon, Parent  
Ms. Valerie Clark, Parent  
Ms. Jennifer Gould, Teacher  
Ms. Erica Livingston, Parent  
Ms. Linda Morgan, Parent  
Ms. Maureen Sweeney, Parent  
Ms. Diane Scheuring, Parent  
Ms. Lisa Stevens, Paraprofessional  
Ms. Maureen Odell, Parent  
Ms. Amy Kantenwein, Paraprofessional  
Ms. Christine Matthews, Parent  
Ms. Kristie Lulich, Parent  
Ms. Jennifer Reilsono, Teacher  
Mr. Randy Vulakovich, Parent  
Ms. Jen Ohar, Parent  
Ms. Jule Renner, Parent  
Ms. Rachel Vaughan, Parent  
Ms. Hannah Valeriano, Parent  
Ms. Michelle Ralston, Parent  
Ms. Emily Zupancic, Parent  
Ms. Christina Scott, Parent  
Ms. Jess Bonnet, Parent  
Ms. Tania Cook, Parent  
Ms. Lindsay Downs, Parent  
Ms. Raili Kieley, Parent  
Ms. Rachel Murray, Parent  
Ms. Jessica Jackson, Parent  
Ms. Sherry Ehrin, Parent  
Ms. Melissa Longmore, Parent  
Ms. Mellisa Pederson, Parent  
Ms. Melissa Isacco, Parent  
Ms. Heather Sabala, Parent  
Ms. Katie Simmons, Teacher  
Ms. Ashley Slaney, Parent  
Ms. Ashley Vranick, Parent  
Ms. Jessica Edmiston, Parent  
Ms. Kerri Renner, Parent  
Morgan Carpenter-Panuski, Parent  
Mr. Jon Kuretich, Parent  
Mr. Joshua Hollywood, Parent  
Mr. Dave Leibach, Teacher  
Ms. Gail Lipchak, Parent  
Ms. Julie Krul, Parent  
Ms. Melissa Schad, Food Service Mgr.  
Ms. Leah Abbott, Parent  
Ms. Jenny Anderson, Parent  
Ms. Julie Capo, Parent  
Ms. Joyce Raymond, Paraprofessional  
Ms. Renee Knipp, Parent  
Ms. Kristen Hubbell, Parent  
Mr. Matt Kline, Parent  
Ms. Patricia Veleke, Parent  
Ms. Marijane Antkiewicz, Parent  
Ms. Ashley Binford, Parent  
Ms. Marybeth Bolam, Parent  
Ms. Carrie Johnston, Parent  
Ms. Cathie Sayles, Parent  
Mr. Steven White, Parent

**OTHERS PRESENT VIRTUALLY, continued:**

Ms. Lara Grogan, Parent  
Ms. Alexandra Martin, Teacher  
Mr. Ed Clark, Community Member  
Ms. Carly Molchen, Parent  
Ms. Sherah Rothman, Teacher  
Ms. Heather Malarcik, Parent  
Ms. Nadine DeLeo, Social Worker  
Ms. Jaelynn Blakey, Parent  
Ms. Tracy Wiley, Teacher  
Ms. Jennifer Revesz, Teacher  
Ms. Pam Homol, Parent  
Ms. Mallory Accamando, Teacher  
Ms. Michelle Devine, Parent  
Ms. Molly Long, Teacher  
Ms. Cortney Norris, Teacher  
Ms. Stef Barnes, Parent  
Mr. Erich Dinkfelt, Parent  
Mr. Brian Gill, Parent  
Ms. Laura Ludwig, Parent  
Ms. Jeannette Davis, Parent  
Ms. Natalie Taylor, Parent  
Ms. Jennifer Tracy, Teacher  
Ms. Lauren Morgan-Douds, Parent  
Ms. Julie Navilliat, Parent  
Ms. Dory Kurpe, Parent  
Ms. Olena Thomas, Parent  
Ms. Rachael Latore, Parent  
Ms. Andrea Kimmel, Parent  
Ms. Cate Potter, Teacher  
Ms. Jocelyn Puskar, School Nurse  
Mr. Chad Osborn, Parent  
Ms. Emily Cropper, Teacher  
Mr. Michael Hetcko, Parent  
Ms. Mary Ann Mihalko, Teacher  
Mr. David Czuwara, Parent  
Ms. Melissa Cwynar, Teacher  
Mr. Craig Catanese, Parent  
Ms. Danielle Strobel, Parent  
Ms. Amy Maddalena, Parent  
Ms. Lea Ann Lope, Parent  
Ms. Emily Gavin, Parent  
Mr. Mike Hall, MS Principal  
Ms. Krista Staley, Parent  
Ms. Melissa DeSimone, Teacher  
Mr. Brian Aufman, Parent  
Ms. Jill Adkins, Parent  
Ms. Katelyn Straley, Teacher  
Ms. Kristina Stroyne, Parent  
Mr. John Shantz, Parent

Ms. Nicole Hahna, Parent  
Ms. Marybeth Harris, Parent  
Mr. Josh Birt, Parent  
Ms. Lisa Simmons, Parent/Paraprofessional  
Mr. Tom Yeh, Parent  
Ms. Lisa Cole, Parent  
Mr. Oscar Matous, Member of the Media  
Mr. Joe Bandi, Teacher  
Ms. Andrea Jacobs, Parent  
Ms. Jill Shipley, Parent  
Ms. Kimmie Johnson, Parent  
Ms. Sheila Talarico, Parent  
Ms. Julie McMinn, Parent  
Ms. Monica O’Neil, Parent  
Mr. Brett Cavanaugh, Parent  
Ms. Erin Dennis, Parent  
Mr. Gurdev Hanspal, Parent  
Mr. Ronnie Ziccardi, Teacher  
Ms. Carrie Velisaris, Parent  
Ms. Christine Hartmann, Parent  
Ms. Jessica Wright, Parent  
Ms. Courtnie DiPaola, Parent  
Ms. Natalie McMurtrie, Parent  
Dr. Scott Miller, APC Principal  
Ms. Beth Yovetich, Preschool in ASD  
Ms. Jenna Paulat, Parent  
Mr. Kevin Cameron, Parent  
Ms. Alicia Logue, Parent  
Ms. Alice Cahill, Community Member  
Ms. Meredith Cohen, Teacher  
Ms. Katherine Costa, Community Member  
Ms. Melissa Lesko, Parent  
Ms. Lauren Zivic, Teacher  
Ms. Loriann Facenda, Parent  
Ms. Pharlan Ives, Asst. APC/AES Principal  
Ms. Nicole Rossman, Parent  
Mr. Michael Lincoln, Teacher  
Mr. Ronald Antkiewicz, Parent  
Ms. Allison Beck, Student  
Ms. Caroline Boughton, Parent  
Ms. Kaitlin Remensky, Asst. MS/HS Principal  
Ms. Alexis Taylor, Teacher  
Ms. Julie Deringer, Parent  
Ms. Amy Besterman, Teacher  
Mr. Joshua Cable, Intern  
Ms. Angela Klaum, Parent  
Mr. Matt Orehowsky, Parent  
Ms. Sara Rose, Parent  
Ms. Pamela Hershey, Parent

**OTHERS PRESENT VIRTUALLY, continued:**

Mr. Chris Foreman, Parent	Ms. JoAnne Bova, Parent
Ms. Laura DelFratte, Parent	Ms. Michele D’Ambrosio, Parent
Ms. Kami Demirag, Community Member	Ms. Anne Blaser, Parent
Ms. Caroline Glidden, Parent	Mr. Jonathan Capo, Parent
Ms. Kelly Hansen, Teacher/AEA President	Mr. Adam Livingston, Parent
Ms. Deanna Calderaro, Parent	Mr. Wilson Meng, Parent
Ms. Tina Thomas, Parent	Ms. Laura Meng, Parent
Mr. Aaron Teague, Parent	Ms. Kim Chekan, Parent
Mr. Dave Chekan, Parent	

**Call to Order**

*Board President, Ms. Vicki Carlson, called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:35 P.M. Ms. Carlson announced a change in the format of virtual Board meetings. In order to manage the level of comments, the chat and Q&A will be disabled. Virtual visitors are now asked to use the “raise your hand” feature and be recognized to speak. Virtual visitors must use their first and last names when signing in.*

**Visitors’ Comments**

*Ms. Carlson asked for visitor comments that did not pertain to students returning to school. Questions and comments on that subject would be taken after Dr. Ralston and Dr. Hadley gave their COVID update. There were no visitor comments.*

*Mr. Justin Vancheri of Hosack, Specht, Muetzel, & Wood, LLC, discussed the 2019-2020 Audited Financial statements.*

*Dr. Ralston and Dr. Hadley provided a COVID-19 update which included a historical update, explanation of the Dept. of Education’s Attestation, a report from the District’s COVID working group, new guidance received from PDE and the Allegheny County Health Dept., a recommendation for instructional models moving forward, and an update on proposed K-2 full-day instruction plan. Members of the COVID working group are Board members Mr. John Brandt, Ms. Yu-Ling Cheng, AMS Principal Mr. Mike Hall, Dr. Ralston, Dr. Hadley, and Dr. Megan Culler-Freeman. School personnel fall in category B1 for the COVID vaccination and may be vaccinated in February. Recommendations are: for K-6 students to return to the AM/PM hybrid model on January 19 and the K-6 Virtual Academy would continue; K-2 would return to full time in-person instruction February 16; long term K-2 substitutes would be hired by January 25, undergo orientation and co-teach with established teachers until February 16 when they would then begin teaching their own K-2 classes. Grades 7-12 would continue remote learning until January 25 when they would return to the hybrid model of attending in-person classes on Monday/Tuesday and Thursday/Friday with Wednesdays being an asynchronous day. The start time for 7-12 would change to 8:00 AM on Monday/Tuesday/Thursday/Friday. The 7-12 Virtual Academy would continue but be aligned with hybrid classroom instruction with a synchronous learning model and attend classes synchronously following their daily class schedule.*

*Adjustments include moving the end of the K-2 second trimester to February 12 and starting the third trimester on February 13. There will be a 12:45 PM early dismissal for*

*K-2 students on March 25 and 26 in order to hold virtual parent/teacher conferences from 1:00 PM to 3:30 PM.*

*Ms. Carlson recognized virtual visitors for questions and comments as follows:*

*Ms. Courtnie DiPaola asked if there was a timeline for grades 3-6 to return to full day instruction.*

*Dr. Ralston said the Primary Center needs 10 substitute teachers to properly physical distance classrooms. The elementary would need 12 teachers. We advertised for Primary Center substitutes and received 30 applications and interviewed 24 of those applicants. Fourteen are scheduled for second round interviews. Adding these substitutes would cost the district \$200,000. We would like to bring 3-6 back but right now our focus is on K-2.*

*Ms. Jessica Jackson feels when reassigning students that teachers should be part of the decision on who would take a room switch well.*

*Dr. Ralston said we do take teacher input into consideration. New teachers would partner with an established teacher and get to know the students. We understand the social and emotional aspect with it.*

*Ms. Jessica Jackson asked if the district would require staff to be vaccinated.*

*Dr. Ralston said the district recognizes the vaccinations are a choice and some staff members may object due to religious or health reasons but the district will encourage staff to be vaccinated.*

*Ms. Carol Loutzenhiser asked what factors would prevent 7-12 from starting synchronous on January 25?*

*Dr. Ralston said when we make the changeover, in talking with teachers, they still felt it was important to connect with virtual academy students. We want to make sure we can continue connecting with our virtual families. By aligning the virtual academy and the hybrid model is a good thing.*

*Ms. Carol Loutzenhiser feels getting them back into Wednesday synchronous is important and they need to get back into keeping a schedule.*

*Ms. Hannah Valeriano asked if there was a plan to help kids who are out sick or need to quarantine.*

*Dr. Ralston said if it is for a short term illness and not COVID related it would be treated as it has in the past.*

*Ms. Hannah Valeriano asked if students would then move to the virtual academy.*

Minutes – Work Session/General Purpose Meeting January 11, 2021

*Dr. Hadley said we still need to address that and will look into it.*

*Ms. Monica O'Neil asked if 3-6 hybrid students would be synchronous half day and in-person the other half?*

*Dr. Hadley said our goal is to go back to the hybrid we had with 3-6 to be sure they get reading and math instruction from their teachers.*

*Tania Cook asked if her freshman, who has been virtual, will have to change teachers when students return.*

*Dr. Ralston said there may be just a few groups picked up by another teacher. We would need to know what classes she is in. She may have a different teacher during the second half of the year.*

*Melissa Nelson asked for clarification for merging virtual with hybrid students. She asked if virtual students be logging in 8am-3pm every day and watching along with hybrid students.*

*Dr. Ralston said they would be joining in with those hybrid students and interacting and going into breakout rooms. The goal is to get them on a schedule, get more synchronous instruction and interaction.*

*Ms. Nelson also asked if they would switch to hybrid and come to school two days and virtual for two days.*

*Dr. Ralston said yes, either Monday/Tuesday or Thursday/Friday and Wednesdays would be asynchronous.*

*Mrs. Carlson then asked if Board members had questions or comments.*

*Mrs. Bolain asked if there was a number of how many cases each building would have as a threshold before we would have to close a building.*

*Dr. Ralston said there is a chart that shows the number of days we would close down. They want to be sure to complete contact tracing and clean the building but this could be adapted depending on the number of days it would take to clean and notify close contacts.*

*Dr. Hadley referred to a slide in the presentation on Community Transmissions in the County and said these would only be the cases in our buildings.*

*Mrs. White said she fully supports K-2 getting back in. We might need to revisit what we intended to do for K-6. Could we look at 6<sup>th</sup> grade differently and look at 3-5 – could we model grade 6 like middle school and get 3-5 back?*

*Dr. Ralston said we could since the 6<sup>th</sup> model does work differently. We are open to ideas and suggestions to explore.*

*Mrs. Carlson suggested asking Dr. Battistone what grade he would recommend.*

*Ms. Cheng reiterated the working group knows this is a lot of change and as they were working through this process they were taking in new guidelines. We felt really confident that with Dr. Culler-Freeman's guidelines we should feel good about bringing students back into the building.*

*Mrs. Carlson thanked the working group. Mr. Brandt is glad to have scientific data and guidance from the Dept. of Health and the experts to help move forward. We have to be open to be flexible as much as we can. He thanked everyone and said we are trying to move forward and we are confident this is a safe approach for students and staff.*

*Mrs. Thompson is excited about students getting back to school and supports the concerns felt if we are able to pivot back if needed. She asked if the working group would continue to monitor or will Dr. Ralston pull them back if needed.*

*Dr. Ralston said they will continue to meet. He is grateful that Dr. Culler-Freeman and Dr. Rottinghouse continue to reach out and provide guidance.*

*Ms. Cheng said we should keep in mind that there are a number of K-2 families who wanted to remain in hybrid when we last surveyed. She recommended Dr. Miller put together a community night to help families understand the additional safety protocols put in place.*

*Mrs. Carlson recognized virtual visitor Ms. Selma Cetin-Ferra who said her 10<sup>th</sup> grade son, who has been 100% virtual, had issues with the some virtual classes overlapping his vocational school classes.*

*Dr. Ralston said Dr. Hadley will talk with Mrs. Dwulit and Mrs. Remensky tomorrow about this.*

*Mrs. Carlson encouraged parents to talk with their building principals with further questions or comments.*

*Mr. Blaser congratulated Ms. Cheng, Mr. Brandt, and the working group for their commitment and extra effort. He is concerned that spending \$200,000 for the final trimester leaves us falling short for grades 3-6 and feels it's not quite equitable. He feels efforts on the upper campus with regard to planning and efforts to get our Middle and High School students back into the classrooms was a good start. He asked if the January 25 start date was a good timeframe to clarify returning.*

*Dr. Ralston said when we advertise for substitute jobs we usually get 500 applications. This time we got 30 applications. We had hoped to get more from December graduates. We recognize the cost for K-2 but we felt it's most challenging for our youngest learners. He would move to bring back 3-6 when we bring back secondary students at the semester break. He feels this is best because dates would line up with Echo and Alma.*



*Mr. Blaser asked administrators to think about the decision to replace the report card with parent/teacher conferences and consider parent availability during the 1:00 – 3:30 PM time period with parents at home juggling work schedules and children learning at home. With regard to the cost, he thinks consideration should be given for future expenditures that may be required going into 2021-2022 to supplement any skill gaps.*

*Dr. Ralston said with the new stimulus package adopted by Congress the \$240,000 would offset the cost of hiring teachers for the remainder of the school year. We have operated summer learning for students who needed it and he would be an advocate for summer learning for students who have suffered through the pandemic.*

**Motion from the Floor:** P. Stewart; **Second:** J. Brandt:

1. To accept the recommendation of the Administration as is and as presented for returning students to in-person instruction.

*Return to school*

*Discussion followed. Mr. Blaser is torn and wonders if it is the right, most comprehensive move forward. He appreciates the attention addressing the needs of our youngest learners in K-2, but it still feels the planning and attention to bring back the remaining grades of the elementary school is incomplete.*

*Mrs. Carlson asked if this was in relation to 3-6?*

*Mr. Blaser said yes, he feels the elementary students aren't getting the same experience. Those years are a challenge.*

*Mrs. Carlson asked Dr. Ralston if hiring K-2 substitutes would prevent us from authorizing to post for job openings in 3-6.*

*Dr. Ralston said we will continue to look for every opportunity to bring students back. Right now 6 ft. distancing and masking is needed to bring back K-2. We have limitations with resources outside which is the teachers. We could disregard 6 ft. distancing or continue looking for teachers and we are not going to give up 6 ft. distancing. We would adapt if told but for now we are 6 ft. distancing. Our staff continues to be quite responsive and adapt.*

*Ms. Cheng knows this will create hardship because of two different schools. They did spend time discussing 3-6 but they did not want to hold back K-2. They talked about middle/high school and the difficulty in figuring out 6 ft. distancing due to class schedules.*

*Mrs. Bolain said it sounds like 3-6 school will change going back to half day schedule. Is there still synchronous time for them depending on AM or PM? She suggested sending out the schedule to parents so they know what the schedule would be.*

*Mrs. Carlson said every time we have made a change the building principals have sent out a schedule and that is a good thing to do.*

*Mrs. Monti asked if we authorized hiring when we authorized advertising for Primary Center substitutes.*

*Dr. Ralston said we would need permission to create the positions and hire them and ask parents for their commitment.*

*Mr. Brandt said we would hope to know this by next week.*

*After discussion, **Motion Carried:** Unanimous voice vote to approve item 1 as stated above.*

*Mrs. Carlson asked the Board for any comments on 3-6. Mr. Stewart would like administrators to look at 3-6 now. Mrs. Monti thinks we should look at getting K-6 back.*

*Dr. Ralston said he would talk with Dr. Battistone tomorrow. We will continue to reach out and advertise and see what we get.*

*Mrs. White asked if we were open to other creative options. Dr. Ralston said we have looked at other internal options. We would still need to hire but we could look at other creative opportunities.*

**Motion from the Floor:** P. Stewart; **Second:** K. Monti; **Motion Carried:** Unanimous voice vote to approve item 1:

1. To authorize the administration to continue the search for the next wave of long term substitute teaching candidates for grades 3-6.

*Search for Gr. 3-6  
Substitutes*

*Mrs. Thompson clarified this was just to advertise at this point and Dr. Ralston would get back to the Board with what they find.*

*Mrs. Bolain thinks synchronous format is good and it keeps kids in a routine. She thinks if teachers are on board that it's a positive move.*

*Mrs. Carlson noted that the Athletic Committee met this evening in the LGI Room and virtually at 6:30 P.M. to discuss athletic matters.*

*Mrs. Carlson noted the Board conducted an Executive Session at 7:15 this evening to discuss personnel matters.*

### **FOR VOTE THIS EVENING**

#### **FINANCE – D. White/P. Stewart, Co-Chairs**

**Motion:** D. White; **Second:** B. Blaser; **Motion Carried:** Unanimous voice vote to approve item 1:

1. To authorize the Administration to transition District banking and treasury management services to Dollar Bank and approve the attached Business Entity Resolutions and Certificate of Incumbency document.

*Dollar Bank*

**The following items were discussed for placement on the agenda of the Regular Meeting to be held Monday, January 18, 2021:**

*Approval of the Minutes of the November 23, 2020 Work Session/General Purpose Meeting, the Minutes of the December 7, 2020 Reorganization Meeting, and the December 7, 2020 Regular Meeting. (Voice Vote)*

**FINANCE – D. White/P. Stewart, Co-Chairs**

- 1.1 Ratify payment of General Fund bills for December, 2020, beginning with Check #5118 and ending with Check #50274 in the total amount of \$815,061.52.
- 1.2 Ratify the December, 2020 payroll in the amount of \$1,184,103.05.
- 1.3 Treasurer’s Report for November, 2020.
- 1.4 Ratify payment of Food Service Fund checks for December, 2020, beginning with Check #2775 and ending with Check #2779 in the total amount of \$12,959.78.
- 1.5 Ratify payment of Athletic Fund checks for December, 2020, beginning with Check #9202 and ending with Check #9203 in the total amount of \$110.
- 1.6 To approve capital project payments of \$2,376.00.
  
2. To approve the EITC Letter of Support for the YMCA of Greater Pittsburgh to accompany their application for inclusion for educational improvement organizations to the Dept. of Community and Economic Development.
  
3. To approve the 2019-2020 Audited Financial statements as presented by Hosack, Specht, Muetzel, & Wood, LLC.
  
4. To authorize the district’s solicitor (Andrews & Price) to continue the residential and commercial property assessment appeal program using the criteria detailed in their letter of January 4, 2021.
  
5. To approve Official Avonworth School District **Resolution #011821** Limiting Authority to Increase the Real Estate Tax Rate for 2021-2022 by More Than the Index of 3.0% as attached. (Based on the preliminary budget presented by Mr. Waters on December 7.)

**PERSONNEL – K. Monti/Y. Cheng, Co-Chairs**

1. To accept the resignation of \_\_\_\_\_ as Part-Time Administrative Assistant as of December 7, 2020.
  
2. To eliminate the position of Part-Time Administrative Assistant.
  
3. To eliminate the Maintenance Supervisor position.
  
4. To approve creating the position of Confidential Secretary to the Assistant Superintendent.

**Personnel, continued**

5. To approve the salary adjustments as shown on document P-2 effective January 1, 2021.
6. To approve the transfer of 25 sick days for \_\_\_\_\_ which were accumulated during his employment with the Lakeview School District.
7. To approve \_\_\_\_\_ as a Long Term Substitute for 9<sup>th</sup> grade Biology with benefits at Category M, Step 1, beginning January 11, 2021 through June 9, 2021.
8. To approve the creation of a Pre-K Transition Leader supplemental position for the 2020-2021 School Year. The stipend will be paid using Title I Transition funds.

*Mr. Brandt asked if anyone had been doing Kindergarten transitioning. Dr. Ralston said we do a really good job with the preschool programs. We share resources with our preschools and we have donated equipment to them that has been phased out. Mr. Waters said Dr. Miller recommends the stipend be the same as a Grade Level Chair which is \$750. The individual who has been doing this has been paid via contract. Mrs. White asked how Title I funds were spent and if we are putting this money toward that, what are we taking away from? Mr. Waters said Dr. Miller has to use this money by September 30. We are already spending money out of the budget. Ms. Cheng feels this position is really important especially if we have an increase in Kindergarten students for those parents who held their kids back due to the pandemic.*

**BUILDINGS & GROUNDS – P. Stewart/S. Bolain, Co-Chairs**

1. To enter into an agreement with Gateway Engineers at a cost not to exceed \$41,500.00 (approximately 4% of cost estimate) to develop documents to construct a parking lot on the high school expansion property.

*Mr. Stewart noted this item was on the Agenda months ago and we were waiting for the Facility Master Plan to be completed. We want to be sure we are maximizing the space and have better access for safety. Mrs. Carlson asked if this was time sensitive. Mr. Waters said we could wait until after the Buildings & Grounds meeting at the end of the month and put it on the February agenda. The architect would need three months before the Board would go out to bid, there would be a bid opening and the Board would have to approve the lowest responsible bidder. We want to have this completed by the start of the football season. Mrs. Bolain wants to make sure we can incorporate any changes to the entrance that Gateway could design. We want to try to alleviate the circulation problem.*

2. To accept the proposal from A & N Lawn Service, Inc., to provide snow plowing services at the elementary campus.

**ATHLETICS & ACTIVITIES – J. Brandt/B. Blaser, Co-Chairs**

1. To approve \_\_\_\_\_, as a volunteer Boys’ Varsity Basketball Coach for the 2020-2021 School Year, pending requirements of the District.
2. The Administration recommends approval of the following supplemental sponsor for the 2020-2021 School Year, pending requirements of the District. In the event that an athletic season or other activity is shortened or cancelled in its entirety, payment for the affected supplemental positions(s) shall be reduced on a pro rata basis. This appointment does not guarantee any of the persons listed below that his/her position will be needed and in place or that it will continue uninterrupted during the 2020-2021 School Year.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ as supplemental sponsor of the following beginning January 25, 2021:
    1. High School Chamber Choir Director
    2. Middle/High School Choral Director
    3. Elementary Choral Director

**POLICY – S. Bolain/K. Monti, Co-Chairs**

1. Approval of the Kindergarten Program Guide for the 2021-2022 School Year. *(Informational note: No major educational content changes were made this year, only annual dates, times, etc. were updated)*
2. To readopt the Principles for Effective Governance and Leadership as stated in Policy 011 as attached.

**Old Business**

*No old business.*

**New Business**

**Motion:** B. Blaser; **Second:** J. Brandt; **Motion Carried:** Unanimous Voice Vote to approve the Settlement and Release Agreement with Mr. Doug Haskins.

*Settlement Agreement*

**Adjournment**

**Motion:** B. Blaser; **Second:** J. Brandt; **Motion Carried:** Unanimous Voice Vote to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 9:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy S. F. Donovan,  
Board Secretary

**OFFICIAL  
AVONWORTH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
RESOLUTION #011821**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS OF THE AVONWORTH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
LIMITING AUTHORITY TO INCREASE THE REAL ESTATE TAX RATE FOR 2021-2022  
BY MORE THAN THE INDEX OF 3.0%**

WHEREAS, on June 27, 2006, the Pennsylvania legislature passed Act 1 of Special Session 2006, entitled the “Taxpayer Relieve Act” (Hereinafter “Act 1”), and

WHEREAS, Act 1 requires school districts to limit tax increases to the level set by an inflation index unless the tax increase is approved by voters in a referendum or the school district obtains from the Department of Education or a court of common pleas certain referendum exceptions; and

WHEREAS, Act 1 does, however, allow a board of school directors to elect to adopt a resolution indicating that it will not raise the rate of any tax for the support of the public schools for the following fiscal year by more than its index, provided this resolution must be adopted no later than 110 days prior to the date of the election immediately preceding the upcoming fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, the Avonworth School District index for the 2021-2022 fiscal year is 3.0%; and

WHEREAS, the Avonworth School District Board of Directors has made the decision that it shall not raise the rate of any tax for the support of the Avonworth School District for the 2020-2021 fiscal year by more than its index.

AND NOW, on the 18<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2021, it is hereby RESOLVED by the Avonworth School District (hereinafter “District”) Board of Directors (hereinafter “Board”) the following:

1. The Board certifies that it will not increase any school district tax for the 2021-2022 school year at a rate that exceeds the index as calculated by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.
2. The Board certifies that it will comply with the procedures set forth in Section 687, of the Pennsylvania Public School Code (hereinafter “School Code”), 24 PS §6-687, for the adoption of its proposed and final budget.
3. The Board certifies that increasing any tax at a rate less than or equal to the index will be sufficient to balance its final budget of the 2021-2022 fiscal year.
4. The Administration of the District will submit the District’s information on a proposed increase in the rate of a tax levied for the support of the District to the Pennsylvania Department of Education on the uniform form prepared by the Pennsylvania Department of Education no later than five days after the Board’s adoption of this Resolution.

5. The Administration of the District will send a copy of this Resolution to the Pennsylvania Department of Education no later than five days after the Board’s adoption of this Resolution.
6. The Board understands and agrees that by passing this Resolution it is not eligible to seek referendum exceptions under Section 333(f) of Act 1 and is not eligible to request approval from the voters through a referendum to increase a tax rate by more than the index as established for the 2021-2022 fiscal year.
7. Once this Resolution is passed, the Administration of the District is not required to comply with the preliminary budget requirements set forth in paragraphs (a) and (3. Of Section 311 of Act 1. Provided, however:
  - a) The Board understands and agrees that, upon receipt of the information submitted by the District as set forth in paragraphs 4 and 5 above, the Pennsylvania Department of Education shall compare the District’s proposed percentage increase in the rate of the tax with the index.
  - b) Within ten days of the receipt of this information, the Pennsylvania Department of Education shall inform the District whether its proposed tax rate increase is less than or equal to the index.
  - c) If the Pennsylvania Department of Education determined that the District’s proposed increase in the rate of the District’s tax exceeds the index, the District is subject to the preliminary budget requirements as set forth in paragraph (a) and (3. Of Section 311 of Act 1.

**ATTEST:**

**AVONWORTH SCHOOL DISTRICT**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cindy S. F. Donovan, Secretary

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Victoria Carlson, President

## Minutes – Work Session/General Purpose Meeting January 11, 2021

Book: Policy Manual  
Section: 000 Local Board Procedures  
Title: Principles for Governance and Leadership  
Code: 011  
Status: Active  
Adopted: April 13, 2009  
Last Revised: January 13, 2020

*This Board policy supports the Principles for Governance and Leadership adopted by the Board and signed by individual school directors.*

Pennsylvania school boards are committed to providing **every** student the opportunity to grow and achieve. The actions taken by the board ultimately have both short and long-term impact in the classroom. Therefore, school directors collectively and individually will . . .

### **Advocate Earnestly**

- Promote public education as a keystone of democracy
- Engage the community by seeking input, building support networks, and generating action
- Champion public education by engaging members of local, state and federal legislative bodies

### **Lead Responsibly**

- Prepare for, attend and actively participate in board meetings
- Work together in a spirit of harmony, respect and cooperation
- Participate in professional development, training and board retreats
- Collaborate with the Superintendent as the Team of 10

### **Govern Effectively**

- Adhere to an established set of rules and procedures for board operations
- Develop, adopt, revise and review policy
- Align decisions to policy
- Differentiate between governance and management, delegating management tasks to administration
- Allocate finances and resources
- Ensure compliance with local, state and federal laws

### **Plan Thoughtfully**

- Adopt and implement a collaborative comprehensive planning process, including regular reviews
- Set annual goals that are aligned with the comprehensive plan
- Develop a financial plan that anticipates both short and long-term needs
- Formulate a master facilities plan conducive to teaching and learning

### **Evaluate Continuously**

- Utilize appropriate data to make informed decisions
- Use effective practices for the evaluation of the Superintendent
- Assess student growth and achievement
- Review effectiveness of the comprehensive plan

### **Communicate Clearly**

- Promote open, honest and respectful dialogue among the board, staff and community
- Encourage input and support for the district from the school community
- Protect confidentiality
- Honor the sanctity of executive session

### **Act Ethically**

- Never use the position for improper benefit to self or others
- Act to avoid actual or perceived conflicts of interest
- Recognize the absence of authority outside of the collective board
- Respect the role, authority and input of the Superintendent
- Balance the responsibility to provide educational programs with being stewards of community resources
- Abide by the majority decision