



Avon YSAB/ LPC / COC Meeting

April 18, 2022 6:30PM

Hybrid Meeting

Avon Free Public Library, Community Room &

GoTo meeting – Avon Youth Services

Meeting Minutes

In Attendance:

Suzi Alexe, Youth Service Coordinator

Deborah Sacks – Board Member/ Parent/Community Member

Julie Tacinelli – Board Member/ Parent/Community Member

Christine Pescatore, Administrative Analyst, Social Services

Makena Logan – Avon High School Student

Marisa Hicking, Teen Librarian, Avon Free Public Library

Heather Toyen, Avon High School Counselor

Maria Mozzicato, Community Member - Online

Officer John O'Neill, Avon Police Department, School Resource Officer - Online

Lauren Lee – Avon High School Student - Online

Lori Stanczyk – Parent/Community Member

Meeting called to order at 6:45pm (due to technical issues)

I. Welcome and Introductions - Communication from the audience (limited to five minutes)

- **Suzi Alexe** – Introduced the two new board members present this evening, Deborah Sacks and Julie Tacinelli.
- **YSB Coordinator – Suzi Alexe, PowerPoint Presentation** - giving an overview of the YSAB role, as well as past and upcoming programs/events. PowerPoint attached.
- **Input from Student Leaders regarding topics that concern Youth**
- Makena Logan spoke to what is going on at the high school, restating what was discussed at the last meeting, that mental health and stress are still an issue that can be better addressed, students do not feel they are being heard. Lots of stress this time of year and in general, school is a major cause of stress for many, policies could be changed - training and awareness needed as well as more student voices are needed, to help with the lack of response, even when students bring concerns to teachers about stress, teachers don't seem to know how to respond, and nothing changes.
- Lauren Lee responded that she agrees with what has been said, she has noticed people aren't happy with what the school (Avon High School) is doing. It seems that people feel there isn't enough being done to help them. In terms of the Mental Health Awareness Club (an Avon High School club), we have created a survey and the club supervisor and I have managed to meet with Mr. Renkawitz to discuss the survey. This is an anonymous form, and would hopefully help get a better sense of the AHS mental health climate.
- Deborah Sacks told a story about a previous place of employment where they were served fresh baked cookies at every meeting. When they stopped serving those cookies, everyone was disappointed. This analogy was to show that sometimes it is the little things that mean the most and perhaps the schools can think of little things to provide the students, such as the ability to eat lunch outdoors on nice days, to show them that they are being heard. Communication is important.
- Heather said the pandemic has exasperated stress and mental health for students compared to other years. Students appear to have lost their managing skills they had prior to the pandemic and are having a hard time readjusting back to the regular school academic schedule. She also let the group know that the school is working on Equity Week, which will be five days of diversity and equity events in and out of school. They will have Falcon day, which will be a day of fun events.
- Julie Tacinelli agreed it was important to hear from students and elevate their voices.
- **Avon Police Department Update and JRB**

➤ **Partners in Prevention / Truancy / School Refusal Behaviors (Officer O'Neill)**

- No current JRB cases.
- No current requests for Truancy

- **Open Conversations**

- Connecting to Care Grant - Julie mentioned that The State of Connecticut has a system of care grant to help integrate and coordinate children mental health services. It's called the Connecting to Care initiative and offers free training, resources, and information on children's mental health. They also have a Facebook page and Instagram account and are planning posts for mental health awareness month. In the past they have also shared a calendar of activities for mental health awareness month. Information can be found on www.plan4children.org and www.connectingtocarect.org.
- Teen Mental Health book talk, presented at Avon Free Library with the Teen Library Staff & Avon Youth Services on Wed. May 18th.
- Pride month activities, flag raising, paint night, Fri. June 3rd.
- Continued discussions on mental health

II. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 7:45pm

Next meeting: June 2022 Date TBD