



Major Initiatives

From the Office of the Superintendent of Schools



Avon Grove School District

We champion
innovation

We celebrate
community

We demonstrate
sportsmanship

We define
school spirit

February 2018

The Avon Grove School District's Strategic Plan guides its work toward fulfilling its mission: to foster a learning environment for all students to be exceptionally well-prepared to succeed and lead full, meaningful lives.

This newsletter provides an update on the progress Avon Grove is making toward many of the strategic initiatives that are part of that plan.

- M. Christopher Marchese, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools

Community Invited to School Board Work Sessions on Facilities Input Group (FIG) Recommendations

As the Avon Grove School Board prepares to make a decision on how to proceed with its facilities plan, it's holding several work sessions which are open to the public.

Community members are invited to attend upcoming Committee of the Whole Facilities Planning Meetings at 6:00 p.m. on:

- February 8 - Avon Grove High School (Library/Media Center)
- February 27 - Fred S. Engle Middle School (Library/Media Center)
- March 8 - Penn London Elementary School (Little Theater)
- March 27 - Penn London Elementary School (Little Theater)
- April 3 - Fred S. Engle Middle School (Library/Media Center)
- April 12 - Avon Grove High School (Library/Media Center)

All Committee of the Whole Facilities Planning Meetings will be broadcast live on AGtv.

Community feedback on recommendations for the Avon Grove School District's facilities was presented to the School Board in January 2018. Details can be found in the [winter newsletter](#).

This Spring, the Board is expected to vote on the pathway for the District's facilities plan.

Full Day Kindergarten

Full day kindergarten classes in Avon Grove have given the district's youngest learners the gift of time. Teachers say they're seeing a real difference this year over previous years, as students have more time to master important skills.



Kindergarten registration for the 2018-19 school year is now open. Parents are asked to sign up [online](#) to schedule a 30-minute registration appointment. Screening appointments will be held May 1 - 11.

"I really enjoy the schedule and the extra time with the students," said Kindergarten teacher Jaclyn Bruno. "They love experiencing lunch, recess and science/social studies every day. They have blossomed socially because they have the time now to interact and get to know one another"

Bruno says the full day schedule gives students the chance to practice writing every day, and she's seen gains over student progress compared to previous years.

"Students have a better grasp and a more solid understanding of the key concepts being taught because we are able to move at a slower, more relaxed pace," Bruno said. "We have more time for crafts, fine motor activities, technology and science experiments. I also have more time to create class books, poetry journals and word of the week activities. It all makes a difference."

Contact Penn London Elementary School's Principal, Dr. Holland, at cholland@avongrove.org with questions about kindergarten and registration.

Photo credit: AGHS student Lea Boddorff



1:1 Tech Initiative Gets Great Reviews from Students, Staff, and Parents

Students and teachers have given great reviews to Avon Grove's 1:1 technology initiative that places a Chromebook in the hands of every student in grades 6 through 9. The program will be expanded through grade 12 next year.

Parents have seen some unexpected benefits of the program as they've found new ways to plan and keep better track of their children's schedules and homework.

By giving all middle and high school students a Chromebook, the district has also been able to use a learning management system called Schoology. It allows students to collaborate online with their classmates and teachers. It also includes a calendar that allows students and parents easy access to upcoming assignments, practice or club meetings, field trips, and homework due dates.

From Schoology, a parent can add items to their own schedule, as Schoology syncs with other online calendars like those in Outlook and Google. It also allows parents to alert the teacher, coach, or activity director if any family or special event may affect an assignment or

activity. Parents can view the calendar for each individual child or see all their children's schedules at once. It also gives parents of children living in multiple houses access to the same information.



Parent Speaker Series Addresses Injury Prevention for Young Athletes

How can a young athlete best protect themselves against an injury while playing sports? The fifth session in the new Avon Grove School District Parent Speaker Series addresses injury prevention and offers practical tips that parents should know. This session is hosted by the Jennersville YMCA. A staff member who specializes in sports medicine, athletic trainers, and a nutritionist will speak. As students look ahead to the spring sports season, it's important to prepare to prevent injuries. The presentation will be held at 6:30 p.m. on February 26 at the YMCA. Parents are asked to [register by clicking here](#).

Avon Grove Education Foundation Seats Board of Directors

The Avon Grove School District has seated its first Board of Directors for its new Education Foundation, and is eyeing a July 1, 2018 date for operations to officially begin. The non-profit organization is forming this year to maximize resources and help students achieve success.

Community members and business leaders have been selected to serve on the board following an applicant and interview process. They include:

Mike Adams, Tara Burns, Lou Chance, Sebastian Cioaba, Brenda Deaner, Leslie Erb Wallace, Michael Giacommetti, Carolyn Hammerschmidt, Deb L'Heureux, Roger Horowitz, John Hughes, Dorothy Linn, Tracy Litchfield, Scott Lucas, Courtney Miller, Maria Navarrete-Olvera, Nancy Rowan, Robert Ruddy, Terri Villa, Matt Walsh, Robert Weidenmuller, and student board member Kyle Shah.

The Education Foundation Board will embark on strategic planning over the spring months. An education foundation can make connections between the community and classrooms, and extend and diversify student learning capacities. Each year the Foundation will award scholarships and grants to teachers, support staff and students who want to maximize their learning through specific programs.

Padres Latinos Parent Group Reaches Out to Latino Families



"The Power of Parenting" is the topic of the next Padres Latinos meeting. The group, which started this school year, aims to help Latino families in the Avon Grove School District better communicate with their children's schools, access information, and help their children with school work.

The next meeting will be held Monday, February 26 at 7 p.m. in the Avon Grove High School cafeteria.

The group has met several times this year to share information, answer questions, and discuss concerns. Parents are eager for information on how to access grades, homework assignments, and how to contact teachers. Administrators are eager to speak with families about upcoming events and information, and about the best way to communicate with them.

For more information, or questions, contact Natalie Ortega-Moran



Task Force to Examine Gifted Program

Avon Grove's Gifted Task Force is collecting additional feedback about the District's gifted program and how it can be improved. Administrators have gathered feedback from parents and students through surveys and feedback forums.

Director of Pupil Services Jeremy Curtis is leading the task force, which is evaluating the program based on several guiding questions developed by parents and staff members. The task force is focusing on: professional development regarding gifted learners; design and delivery of the gifted program; effective communication about the program; screening and identification; and staffing and resources for the gifted program.

The Task Force is hoping to make recommendations to the Board before the end of the school year. More information about the task force is [available here](#).



Professional Learning for Staff

The Avon Grove library of professional learning options continues to grow, with an additional dozen courses being offered this spring to educators via Schoology, an online learning management system.

This brings the total of new course options for teachers to more than 40 for the 2017-2018 school year, including topics such as Writer's and Reader's Workshop, implementing new reading and writing resources, and data analysis and planning. With all of this work aligned to the three main district areas of focus (Teaching and Learning, Technology Integration, and Inclusion/Student Services), teachers have a variety of options available to enhance practices and learning in each classroom.

Professional Learning is also a focus throughout the year for specific groups of teachers within the district. Each team of teachers is participating in activities, locally or through county-wide sources, that will then be scaled to a larger district-wide teacher audience for current or future implementation.



Welcome to AGtv



District Calendar

To visit our school's AGtv pages, click the links below:

[Web Calendar](#)

Watch [AGHS AGtv](#)

[Printable 2017-18 Calendar](#)

Watch [FSEMS AGtv](#)

Watch [AGIS AGtv](#)

For the latest news, visit our [website](#) and follow us on Twitter.

