

U.S. Department of Education
2017 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [] Title I [] Charter [] Magnet [] Choice

Name of Principal Mr. Jason Richard Shetler

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Avon High School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 245 Clinton Street

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Avon State NY Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 14414-1495

County Livingston County

Telephone (585) 226-2455 Fax (585) 226-3989

Web site/URL <http://www.avoncsd.org/HighSchool.cfm?subpage=11696> E-mail ajohnson@avoncsd.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Dr. Aaron Johnson E-mail ajohnson@avoncsd.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Avon Central School District Tel. (585) 226-2455

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mr. Rodney George
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

Part I – Eligibility Certification

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group and all subgroups, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2017 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2011 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, or 2016.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
9. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
10. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
11. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
12. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2016-2017) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 3 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
 - Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
 - Suburban
 - Small city or town in a rural area
 - Rural
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2016 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	44	39	83
9	42	59	101
10	34	22	56
11	43	43	86
12 or higher	39	33	72
Total Students	202	196	398

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 1 % Asian
 - 2 % Black or African American
 - 2 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 92 % White
 - 3 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2015 – 2016 school year: 5%

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	5
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	9
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	14
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	298
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.047
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	5

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 1 %
2 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):

Spanish

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 23 %
Total number students who qualify: 71
8. Students receiving special education services: 8 %
25 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- 2 Autism
- 0 Deafness
- 0 Deaf-Blindness
- 2 Emotional Disturbance
- 0 Hearing Impairment
- 1 Mental Retardation
- 0 Multiple Disabilities
- 0 Orthopedic Impairment
- 2 Other Health Impaired
- 6 Specific Learning Disability
- 5 Speech or Language Impairment
- 0 Traumatic Brain Injury
- 0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness
- 0 Developmentally Delayed

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 2
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects	21
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	12
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	20
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	4

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 141:1
12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Daily student attendance	96%	94%	93%	93%	94%
High school graduation rate	93%	89%	93%	94%	92%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**
Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2016.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	83
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	52%
Enrolled in a community college	35%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	8%
Joined the military or other public service	5%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.
Yes No X
If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school's mission or vision statement.

Our mission is to develop lifelong learners and responsible citizens equipped to prosper in the global society.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

PART III – SUMMARY

Avon Central School District is the center of learning for 1,004 students from Kindergarten through grade 12. Located in northern Livingston County, the Avon Central School district combines the benefits of a tight-knit rural community with proximity to the technology and cultural opportunities of Rochester, New York, just 20 miles to the north. Avon lies in the heart of the Genesee Valley, an area of great natural beauty and historical significance. Opportunities for recreation abound - from fishing and boating on the nearby Finger Lakes, to hiking and camping at Letchworth State Park, as well as skiing, golf and equestrian activities. Nearby colleges offer cultural and educational opportunities. Area businesses offer convenient services and light industry provides local employment. At the center of the community is Avon Central School District.

Avon Central School District consists of one K-4 primary school, one middle school (grades 5-8) and one high school (grades 9-12). All three buildings are located on the same expansive complex with athletic complex nestled in the center of campus. Although grades 5 -12 are located under the same roof, the middle school and high school are separated by a large double set of stairs.

This District Vision and Mission continue to guide the district and ensure that all stakeholders have a common purpose. Avon Central School's Mission statement clearly states that the district is committed to Develop life-long learners and responsible citizens equipped to prosper in the global society. Our District Vision holds that we will foster an environment where all students will compete globally through the collaborative efforts of the Board of Education, school personnel, parents, community members and students.

At Avon we support the students in all aspects of their lives. For a small rural school the students have access to a wide range of interscholastic sports to compete in. For example, we are the only school of our size to offer lacrosse and three levels of football. Our participation in interscholastic sports is an impressive 68%. We have also teamed with neighboring districts to provide our students to participate in ice hockey and indoor track.

In addition to sports we value and celebrate the arts at Avon. Our theatre program is recognized around the region for its high quality and production values that rival commercial productions. For over 20 years the community kicks off the holiday season by attending our annual production of Scrooge. We also have a very active choral program including the Bel Canto select group that performs around the area. We have a full band program as well as a jazz band that occasionally treats the students and staff to wonderful music while they dine in the cafeteria.

Academically the students at Avon High school also have a wide range of opportunities despite our relatively small size. We offer sixteen classes that students can take for college credit through Genesee Community College. There are also seven Advanced Placement classes that students can take advantage of.

We recognize the importance of attendance and the parents share our commitment to making sure that students are here and ready to learn each day. Last year we had a daily student attendance rate of 96%. Many of our students are here well before the start of the school day to work with teachers who volunteer to come in before what is contractually required to assist students. After school many classrooms are brimming with students who are working with teachers on homework and solidifying concepts. At a recent department leader meeting we had two students come in and present a plan for establishing a peer tutor program as well.

Another great opportunity for our students is to participate in the Peer Mentoring or "Buddies" program. The "Buddies" program is a great way for younger and older students to connect and work on a variety of soft skills. Each of the peer mentors receives training from our mental health staff on how to build relationships and work on building confidence with younger students. The high school students play strategy based games with their and establish positive connections with students that are sometimes missing positive role models or struggling socially. I have often heard that it is hard to tell who is having a better time between the mentors and buddies.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Avon firmly believes in and applies the principles of Understanding by Design (McTighe and Wiggins) in all of its curriculum development. Simply put, teachers begin by determining the desired results for students after having learned the content, identify the evidence that shows students have learned what is expected, and develop the learning plan of activities and opportunities for students to learn. We believe in teaching students to understand the content to ensure transfer of skills across settings, and the use of regular, repeated and authentic opportunities to practice these skills to ensure maintenance and generalization. The principles of Understanding by Design also include a cycle of continual improvement, including the use of data-driven practices, where teachers regularly analyze student data in order to drive instructional planning. Targeted Professional Development is offered annually around the principles of Understanding by Design, and in smaller focused opportunities throughout the school year.

Avon also firmly believes in providing learning opportunities for our teachers related to instructional practice. In response to the changing needs of our students, we are presently focusing professional development in a number of ways around strategies for engaging students in the learning, including Total Participation Techniques (Himmele and Himmele), understanding Levels of Engagement (Schlechty), and Explicit Instruction (Archer). Additionally, we have begun the work of developing an Instructional Playbook to help focus our initiatives and reinforce the collaborative relationships among teachers and to develop opportunities for peer instructional coaching.

Reading/English Language Arts:

The mission statement of the Avon Central School District challenges each educator within our district to provide an educational experience that inspires each student to become a life-long learner who will prosper in the global society. In order to fulfill this challenge, our educational program is built upon a solid, well-balanced literacy foundation. This foundation will develop reading, writing, listening and speaking skills that will enable each student to achieve his/her goals, develop his/her knowledge and potential, and allow each student to participate in global society.

The Avon High School's core English Language Arts program is rooted in the Expeditionary Learning program based on its recommendations by the New York State Education Department, but is supplemented with a variety of ancillary resources and materials to ensure a well-balanced literacy program. Decisions to supplement this curriculum were based on data-driven discussions of student performance on local and state-wide assessments and community-based information from our local business and educational partners. Our English Language Arts program places a significant emphasis on the development of vocabulary and writing skills to develop content knowledge and language skills ensure success in all areas of literacy beyond the High School experience. The program uses both whole-class and small-group instructional frameworks, where small-group opportunities are provided among other students with similar skills and needs. Reading materials are balanced as recommended by the State Education Department, with the percentage of informational text increasing at each grade level. In order to encourage civic learning and engagement for our students, our English Language Arts program utilizes the problems of personal and social development common to our youth in the selection and treatment of text, complete service projects with our community partnerships, visit our local collegiate campuses and libraries, and participate in the United Way Day of Caring.

Mathematics:

The Avon High School's mathematics program is designed to inspire and challenge the learning community by ensuring students are actively engaged in the learning of mathematics. The Avon High School employs the Eureka Math program as it fully aligns with the content and rigor of the Common Core learning standards. However, like the English Language Arts program, we supplement the Eureka math program with ancillary materials from a variety of sources to ensure a well-balanced mathematics program. The program employs teaching strategies that include multiple procedures/algorithms to solve problems, provides opportunities for students to apply reasoning skills and to think abstractly, and builds on conceptual knowledge. In order to ensure students are engaged in civic learning opportunities and activities that can be

applied after the learning experience, the program includes challenging mathematical problems with real-life applications and uses a gradual release of responsibility to ensure guided, collaborative and independent opportunities to practice skills.

Science:

The Avon High School's science program follows the learning sequence and activities outlined in the New York State expectations and standards. However, Avon High School teachers design lessons using an inquiry approach, where students have opportunities to explore materials to develop their own questions and later developing the methods and activities to find the answers to their existing questions. The lesson design is focused on students developing the science skills needed to learn the science content, which we believe is critical to ensuring students are able to apply these skills across settings. Activities are designed to be authentic, with opportunities for community-based learning. Recently, the District has completed a large solar array project, regularly completes community-based environmental projects, our students volunteer at our neighboring nursing home, and develop presentations and forums to share learning with the community.

Social Studies:

Avon High School's approach to social studies instruction is focused on inquiry-based learning and engagement with a wide variety of text types and sources. The content follows the learning sequence and activities outlined in the New York State expectations and standards. The social studies teachers collaborate with local historians to complete community-based projects and to share learning. Our students organize and participate in local community-based events, including Memorial Day activities, Veteran's Day activities and historical simulations.

College and Career Readiness:

Avon High School carefully selects programs and activities for our students based on global and locally defined skills needed for College and Career Readiness, and based on the feedback we receive from our community partners related to student preparedness and needed skills. These activities are embedded into all of our curricular areas and programs to ensure multiple opportunities for skill development and application.

Avon High School offers a remarkable number of courses at the college level for our students, so they have the opportunity to secure a solid foundation of college-level classes in preparation for a post-secondary education. We partner with our neighboring districts to offer cooperative services for our students so they can experience content classes in a work experience setting, which include culinary arts, cosmetology, small animal care, automotive and mechanical technologies, health care, among others. In addition, we have a local Work Experience program for students needing explicit instruction in career-ready skills who are supported in community placements with job coaches.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Avon Central School District's commitment to developing "life-long learners and responsible citizens equipped to prosper in the global society" evidences in the wide variety of learning opportunities provided to our learners. The LOTE, Music, Art and Drama activities support the NYS Learning Standards 1-4 in the Arts and LOTE develops both Communication Skills and Cultural Understanding. Avon's Physical Education, Health, and Family and Consumer Sciences teach students the importance of personal health, finding life-long enjoyable physical activities, staying safe and utilizing community resources. Avon's Technology, Occupational Education, K-12 STEAM opportunities, and engineering courses help students develop critical thinking, inquiry and problem-solving skills. Avon students have the opportunity to participate in an average of sixteen courses a year which are offered for college credit at the local Genesee Community College. The breadth and depth of Avon's K-12 "Other Curriculum Areas" supports the Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical subjects and the belief that "The Standards insist that instruction in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language be a shared responsibility within the school." Additionally, many authentic experiences are offered through various service and project opportunities.

Avon offers a strong K-12 Physical Education program with a defined health focus for all students in Grade 8 and high school. The K-12 students receive physical education every other day. Additionally, staff offers

Adaptive Physical Education classes where appropriate. In both physical education and health, students learn about social, emotional, and mental well being and how they affect each other. Avon also strives to teach the importance of service and helping others. Each year the physical education department organizes a food drive for the local food pantry. In 2017, the students collected and donated forty-six boxes of food.

Avon's LOTE program begins with an Introduction to Languages in Grade 5 where students are taught Spanish and then taught French for half of the year. Students then select which language to further study in grades 6 - 8. In grades 6 - 8, 100% of our students take French or Spanish. In grades 9 - 12, 50% of our students take either Spanish II, III, IV, V or French II, III, or IV. To help students learn the culture of a language, students are offered the opportunity to take a trip to a foreign country. In 2017 the students are traveling to Costa Rica where they will be immersed in the culture for ten days. To help build authentic cultural experiences, students also engage in pen pal writing activities and use Skype to communicate with students in other countries. Avon Central School District's Interact Club also hosts Rotary Exchange Weekend which is a cultural exchange event for the area foreign exchange students.

Avon is a Project Lead the Way (PLTW) school. In grades 9-12 66% of Avon's students participate in a technology based class. In grades 8 - 12, our middle school and high school offer a variety of technology and introductory engineering courses that range from Computer .5 to Computer 1.0, Introduction to Programming, Drawing and Desk Pad, Principles of Engineering, Engineering Design and Development, Website Design, Digital Electronics and Computer Integrated Manufacturing. Our NYS course "Design, Drawing for Production" is known in PLTW as "Introduction to Engineering and Design." The students in Engineering Design and Development determine a real life problem, problem-solve, design and build a prototype and present their project to a panel of engineers. 7-10% of the seniors typically choose this class. The high school also offers a robust business program where 25% of the students in grades 9-12 develop various skills in Career and Financial Management, Marketing, Business Finance, Business Law, and Personal Money Management. One of the authentic projects our students participate in is the yearly designing and marketing a product to a local business. In the past they have partnered with Kraft and based on the product and marketing design, Kraft now offers a peppermint flavored Cool Whip!

A core link integrated throughout Avon's K-12 instruction includes the Library Media Specialists (LMS). Our LMSs support the learning standards through authentic research whether it's science and coding for younger students using Bloxels or older students engaged in content specific learning. Students learn higher level thinking skills including multi-media research and presentation skills. The LMSs integrate the NYSED Common Core Standards. Our middle school and high school libraries transform into "Coffee House" style venues and host sessions where 100% of the students share poetry they have written or other artistic presentations like singing and dance. The high school hosts "Tales and Tea Leaves" to showcase reading of poetry and short stories. K-12 our libraries offer maker-spaces where students can design and create a variety of STEAM projects including 3-D snowmen, lamps created from recycled materials, crocheted hats for a winter clothing drive, repurposing book covers to create a table, to designing basic code for logic instructions or building guitars complete with design and circuitry. Our high school library also serves over 50% of the high school population offering extra-curricular activities like Page Turners, Library Advisory, Game Club, Gay Straight Alliance and the funding of \$500 for the Kenya Student Scholarship. Avon schools have partnered through the K-12 LMSs where students each contributed to the creation of a peace quilt which will be donated in 2017 to Focus on the Children, a local agency that serves the needs of children in our county.

The Art program is offered K-12 and in the high school offers a diverse art study program whether it's for personal enjoyment or to help define a career path. The arts support the district's initiatives. High School courses include: Studio in Computer Graphics I, Studio Art, Advanced Studio Art, Printmaking, Advanced Printmaking, Ceramics, Advanced Ceramics, Drawing, Advanced Drawing, Painting, Advanced Painting, and Photography. Each year about 28% of the student body in Grades 9-12 choose to take an art course. The Art department works with other school departments and offers students the opportunity to create art for community art shows and sells products like stamped cards in order to raise money for charities such as Avon's Community Cares. The art students also partner with our BOCES metal trade students for project work. Students have attended local art galleries and photography museums and exhibits. The art department also supports real life business experiences with designing, marketing, producing, and selling a

school yearbook. Avon also participates in the Global Art Exchange and yearly donates over 55 pieces of art.

Our K-12 music department offers a strong general education music curriculum as well as vocal and instrumental programs which includes Music Theory, Chorus, Band, Jazz Band, and Bel Canto. On average 24% of our high school students participate in the high school specialized music offerings. Our students and staff share their talents in live performances during various school assemblies, Superintendent's Conference Days and county and regional competitions. Our music department also works closely with our school drama club and students are offered outstanding opportunities to participate in school theatre which allows a wide variety of involvement from stagehands, visual artists, set designers, actors and actresses, to wardrobe, hair and makeup artists. Students use a variety of talents like dancing, singing, playing musical instruments, and designing sets. An average play involves at least fifty students and many parents and community members for cast and pit support. Avon typically offers three plays a year.

Avon Central School District's commitment to developing "life-long learners and responsible citizens equipped to prosper in the global society" evidences through the students' "other curriculum area" choices and opportunities.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

The Avon High School continues to refine instructional methods, interventions and assessments based on the ever-changing needs of our students and in response to guidance as set forth by State and Federal agencies. Differentiation of instruction is a critical component of our school-wide program as we recognize the need to meet the learning needs of each individual student. The goal of differentiated instruction is to maximize the capacity of teachers to design and deliver instruction based on the diverse range of learners. Teachers differentiate instruction through content, process, product, affect, and learning environment to provide opportunities for a productive struggle for all students.

practice through programs such as IXL, illustrative mathematics, Kahoot, etc.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Avon High School is always looking for ways to meet the individual needs of each of our students. One belief that we collectively hold is that every student should be connected to the school in at least one meaningful way. I will work closely with the faculty and staff to encourage every student to be involved in at least one extracurricular activity. We have found that students who participate in the arts, instructional clubs, and athletic teams tend to have higher grade-point averages, lower dropout rates, better attendance, fewer discipline problems, and a more positive view of their education. Part of our counselor meeting agenda involves cross referencing the names of each student with the list of students involved with band, chorus, after school clubs, academic competition clubs, intramurals, and each of our interscholastic athletic teams. Individual students that do not show up on any of the lists are brought in to collectively determine potential areas of interest.

At Avon we have taken active steps to celebrate the successes of our students. At the conclusion of each marking period the names of all students who achieved high honor roll, honor roll, and merit distinction are read aloud throughout the school as teachers in their homeroom pass out their certificates. Each time our student athletes participate in a state competition the whole school lines the hall and applauds the students as they walk out to their bus. We have also developed an academic varsity letter to show that we value academic achievement as much as we value athletics. Each of the aforementioned items are some examples of how we have created an environment that supports the academic, social, and emotional growth.

At Avon High School, we truly value our teachers that work closely with our most precious resource each day. Avon High has established an environment where teacher expertise is highly valued. Our department leaders meet monthly to discuss important issues and develop their professional arsenals of strategies and supports. Teacher leaders then turn-key train and inform the other teachers directly and each department takes collective ownership of new learning. At faculty meetings teachers also take ownership of their own learning by participating in professional circles to discuss new research based strategies and findings. We also tap the expertise of our teachers by having them present at superintendent conference days. At one such day earlier this year the teachers planned and taught a series of workshops related to building relationships and restorative justice. We also honored the teacher's ability to choose which teacher facilitated workshops they wanted to attend.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

One of the great things about Avon Central has to do with the partnership and integration of families and the community. Avon Central School is truly the center of the community in many ways. On any given night the parking lots are filled with cars and the stands are packed with fans of all ages to watch our highly successful sports teams compete. The same is true when the drama club, chorus, and band are performing in the auditorium.

Family members of our students are highly involved and active at Avon High School. Each month our School Improvement Team (SIT) meets to discuss any issues that are impacting the school and discuss how to continuously strengthen programs and school culture. Parents each year are full members of the team and provide valuable insight and community perspective. When we consider significant changes we always involve the families of our students. For example, when we looked at potentially weighting grades we convened a committee of parents, teachers, and students to examine the research and discuss the pros and cons of weighting. At sporting events and drama productions you will always see family members that volunteer to take tickets, sell refreshments, and usher in patrons.

Avon High School students are also very much engaged with the community. Each year our National Honor Society students participate in the United Way Day of Caring. Our students spend a full day working on projects that are identified by local leaders in the community. Some of the projects include

mulching beds at the town park, painting fences at the community baseball fields, and pulling weeds at the local nursing home and school. On Memorial Day our school band always marches in the parade and performs in the center of town at the War Memorial.

We also work very closely with local law enforcement agencies. Each year the police dogs receive valuable real world training by sweeping our building. We also involve our school resource officer in coordinating with law enforcement and the fire department during emergency drills at the school.

Avon High School also works closely with two local companies, Barilla pasta and Kraft foods. Each year our marketing class creates real products and advertising campaigns to pitch to Kraft executives. The Kraft panel provides the students with valuable feedback about their presentations. Barilla pasta also sponsors tours and discusses with the students how a food production facility operates and also discusses potential career paths.

3. Professional Development:

Professional development in Avon Central School District is integral to the teaching process and directly supports the mission of the district and our overarching slogan, "Learning for a Lifetime." The Avon Central School Professional Development Committee is the District-Wide Shared Decision Making Team (SDM) comprised of multidisciplinary school staff, representatives of building teams, and parents who work together to review and recommend a plan for appropriate professional development experiences and opportunities that support the district goals identified in The District Long Range Strategic Plan.

Our Professional Development Plan is designed to provide quality opportunities for all district professionals to participate in staff development opportunities that support professional growth and appeal to their professional interests while also improving student achievement through increasing instructional capacity.

Avon Central has identified four strands to be the focus for all professional learning experiences. These strands are aligned with the domains identified in Charlotte Danielson's work and are the foundation of the ACSD professional growth plan. The following four strands have been identified: Planning and Preparation, The Classroom/School Environment, Instruction, and Professional Responsibilities.

Staff members are encouraged to participate in professional development opportunities that support their professional growth plans and appeal to their professional interests. Our district works in a collaborative way to provide a variety of learning experiences and opportunities with the identified strands and domains designed to improve student achievement. We have articulated specific learning experiences and opportunities at the district, building, and individual level. Some of the district opportunities include, credit-bearing courses, superintendent conference days, curriculum planning and development, and mentoring. Grade level, department, and faculty meetings and professional learning groups (study groups, collegial circles, guided reflection) represent building level opportunities. Lastly, reading professional literature, publishing in educational journals, serving as an instructional coach, and action research projects are all examples of Individual opportunities.

Avon Central School District believes that the educational profession of teaching is a continual developmental process. Therefore, the district aims to provide a program where new staff/interns can receive professional support from their more experienced peers. In order to help prepare and retain quality staff, the Avon Central School District has established a comprehensive mentoring program. Some of the goals include: Acquainting teachers with district building policies and procedures, providing support in a non-judgmental environment, encouraging professional practice aligned with professional standards for teaching and learning, promoting the use of a continuous cycle of standards-based planning, teaching, assessment, reflection, and re-teaching.

4. School Leadership:

As is the case in many smaller sized districts, the building principal at Avon High School wears many different hats. The Principal is responsible for being an instructional leader, a person who maintains order and safety, someone that promotes the district strategic plan, and someone who continually plans for the short and long term future of the school.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

There are many practices that contribute to the overall success of Avon High School. One such practice involves the work of our Instructional Support Services Team (ISST). The ISST team has been established to help all students have a more positive, successful, and appropriate school experience. The ISST team consists of teachers, the building principal, our school social worker, guidance counselors, our school psychologist, school based preventive services caseworker, and recently we added a representative from the Livingston County Council on Alcohol and Substance Abuse (CASA). Of course the most important participants in the ISST process are the students and their parents.

Our meetings always begin by having the student share their thoughts and feelings about what is preventing them from being as successful as possible. We look into whether issues are academic, social/emotional or a combination of both. The students typically possess awareness about the factors that are impeding their success and are genuinely interested in us generating meaningful interventions. Parental input helps to establish a baseline for behaviors and academic patterns. By integrating parents and students into the process we increase buy-in and promote successful home-school partnerships.

The ISST practice is used to assist staff in implementing strategies to improve student performance. The team shares ideas that would address specific needs and support the student. We remind staff that even if you have developed a strategy that works well for a struggling student that has mitigated the need for an ISST, it is important to have an ISST plan in place so that future teachers and substitutes will know what works best for that child. This practice increases positive student outcomes by building off past successes and avoiding strategies that were proven to be ineffective in the past. By reading an ISST plan teachers can quickly gain a sense of who the students are as people and learners.

After the student and parent have an opportunity to share, the teachers have an opportunity to discuss the strengths of the student as well as areas for growth. If a teacher is unable to attend it is the expectation that they send detailed notes in the form of our student information form. After all of the teachers have had the opportunity to share, we turn to our mental health team and supports from the community.

The final steps involve solidifying the plan by implementing time-tested, research based interventions as well as additional interventions that are specifically tailored to meet the needs of each individual student. Before the conclusion of the process we check to ensure that all stakeholders have a clear understanding of the plan and action steps with specific timelines that are assigned to members of the team. By clearly identifying targeted interventions that are carried out by individuals both inside and outside of the classroom with specific timelines for monitoring progress and adjusting the plan if necessary, we effectively promote positive student outcomes.