

# The Board of Education Town of Vernon

30 Park Street – PO Box 600  
Vernon, Connecticut 06066

Anne Fischer, Chairperson  
Mason Thrall, Vice Chairperson  
Patricia Buxton, Secretary  
Paul Grabowski  
Karen Colt  
Mark Kalina  
Stephen Linton  
Deborah Rodriguez  
Kristiana Wintress

April 24, 2023

## APPROVED MINUTES BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

A meeting of the Vernon Board of Education was held in-person and via Zoom Webinar at the Administration Building on Monday, April 24, 2023.

### **1.0 Establish Quorum**

Roll call was taken at 7:00 p.m.

There was a quorum. Board members present: Mrs. Fischer, Mr. Thrall, Dr. Buxton, Mr. Grabowski, Ms. Colt, Mr. Linton and Ms. Wintress. Mrs. Rodriguez and Mr. Kalina were absent.

Student Representatives present: Anaya Tolton. Aedan Ruddock was absent.

Administration present: Superintendent Dr. Joseph Macary and Assistant Superintendent Mr. Robert Testa and Director of Business and Finance Mr. William Meier III.

### **2.0 Call to Order**

Chairperson Fischer called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

### **3.0 Pledge of Allegiance**

### **4.0 Recognitions and Presentations**

#### **4.1 Presentation by Vernon Center Middle Students (BOE Goal #1, #2)**

Mr. David Caruso, Principal of Vernon Center Middle School, thanked the Board for letting him showcase some of the great things going on at VCMS. He introduced Social Studies Teacher Keith Miller, who spoke about a “Note Taking” strategy he has shared with his students. He has worked on this for the last three years and has come up with a plan to help students navigate through the vast amounts of information given to them throughout the year. He outlined skills that would help his students organize information into a format that helps them to better understand what they are learning. He introduced 2

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of his students who went through a PowerPoint presentation and explained how they break down information into a format that helps them understand the material better. They then showed the Board their notebooks, which contained the progression of their note taking skills throughout the year.

#### 4.2 Presentation by Samantha Randazzo, Endeavor Program Teacher (BOE Goal #1, #2)

Samantha Randazzo, Endeavor Program Teacher for all 5 Elementary Schools, spoke of a project she just finished with her students about “Food Loss and Food Waste”. She introduced 2 of her 5<sup>th</sup> Grade students, Amelia Sahadeo and Samerah Beason. Amelia spoke of her project called “Come Have a Bite” where she highlighted, through a PowerPoint presentation, the amount of food wasted in the US. She spoke of her idea on how to resolve this problem by having restaurants donate the food they don’t use in order to help feed those in need. She would do this in a “cafeteria” setting in order to make it a welcoming environment. Samerah spoke of her project called “The Reunir Garden” and how it would also help to prevent food waste and offer better food options for the community. She would have a scale to weigh the food the community takes and set a 10lb. limit so that there would be enough food for everyone. Both students hope to implement their ideas in the near future.

## 5.0 Secretary’s Report

### 5.1 Opportunity for Board of Education to add/delete urgent agenda items

No agenda items were added or deleted.

### 5.2 Rockville High School Student Representative Report

Anaya Tolton reported on the following:

- Juniors had their prom this past weekend on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. Everyone had a good time.
- Girls’ Lacrosse earned their first win of the season with a score of 18-2
- Boys’ Volleyball is off to a great start with a record of 7-1
- Golf has had some great rounds and is showing improvement
- Girls’ Tennis is off to a good start with a record of 5-1. Boys’ Tennis earned their first win last week over Windsor Locks.

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- Softball has a record of 6-2
- Baseball is off to a 6-3 start
- Both the Boys' and Girls' Track teams are undefeated and individuals are qualifying for the State meet.
- There are approximately 300 athletes participating in the Spring season
- Over Spring Break, students went to Spain & France. They had a blast.
- Senior Prom is coming up this weekend on April 29<sup>th</sup>
- Students taking AP exams are studying as their test dates are coming up
- The game of the week is the Boys' Volleyball game against Amity tonight
- The RHS production of the Wizard of Oz is scheduled for May 5-7

### 6.0 Community Forum

Opportunity for comments on agenda items, potential future agenda items, or general information provided to the Board from citizens and community organizations (Individual speakers shall be limited to five minutes and the total time for public forum shall be limited to 15 minutes.)

Mr. Michael Carlo, 177 Dockerel Road, Tolland, CT, addressed the Board. He spoke of his daughter having her private information exposed over 20 years ago as a result of taking a college board exam while at Rockville High School. She had checked off a box in the "Leadership Conference" section and wanted to let everyone know of the battle he and his daughter have faced since that happened. He petitioned several State officials and tried to have a bill passed that would expose this situation. The College Board fought it and it went nowhere. He said that CBS is interested in his story and he will keep the Board posted should that progress.

Regina Lee, VCMS Teacher, spoke of the comeback of VCMS International Pot Luck which will take place at VCMS from 6-9 PM on May 11<sup>th</sup>. All are invited to attend; it will be a great night of sharing food and culture.

### 7.0 Consent Agenda

#### 7.1 Consent Agenda

- (a) Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting held on March 27, 2023

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- (b) Approval of the Board of Education – Special Meeting (Expulsion Hearing) held on April 5, 2023
- (c) Approval of Revised Board of Education Policy #5144.1 – Students – Use of Physical Force

Mrs. Fischer pulled Consent Agenda item 7.1(c). She noted that page 12 has “his/her” and page 14 has “him or herself”. These statements will need to be changed to more gender-neutral wording.

MOTION: Dr. Buxton moved to approve Consent Agenda Item 7.1(c) as amended.  
SECOND: Mr. Linton  
VOTE: Unanimous

MOTION: Mr. Thrall moved to approve Consent Agenda Items 7.1(a) and (b).  
SECOND: Mr. Linton  
VOTE: Unanimous

**8.0 Personnel**

8.1 Results of the March 28<sup>th</sup> UCONN Neag Education Recruitment Career Fair and the April 4<sup>th</sup> CCSU Education Career Fair (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3)

Mr. Testa shared the results of the March 28<sup>th</sup> UCONN Neag Education Recruitment Career Fair and the April 4<sup>th</sup> CCSU Education Career Fair. The Vernon Public Schools team interacted with numerous teaching candidates and reached out to all those identified to participate in the interview process. There are several individuals who have applied. We hired one Special Education Teacher today from this group.

8.2 Approval of Cafeteria Workers’ Contract (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3) (Executive Session Anticipated)

Mrs. Fischer asked that this item be moved to the end of the meeting. All agreed.

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## 9.0 Teaching and Learning

### 9.1 UCONN's Human Rights Close to Home Program (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3)

Mr. Testa spoke of UCONN's "Human Rights Close to Home" Program. This program engages educators and youth in the development and implementation of human rights education for civic action, with the aim of strengthening democracy and respect for human rights in Connecticut communities and beyond. This program ties well with our Vision of the Graduate. Rockville High School teachers Amy Matyseck and Brian Forte have been accepted into the program through a partnership with UConn's Dodd Impact and the NEAG School of Education. Both Amy and Brian will work with curriculum and content experts to integrate human rights education into their existing classes. The program will run from July 2023 to July 2025. Additionally, Rockville High School juniors Madison Patton and Bridget Barry were recruited to participate as student fellows. They both will work with UCONN college student mentors and HRCH staff to plan a civic action project in our community. Their program will run from July 2023 to July 2024. Mr. Testa will invite the students and teachers back in the Fall to share their experiences with the Board. This program is funded through a grant and is no cost to the District. Students and teachers receive a stipend for participating.

## 10.0 General Business

### 10.1 Approval of Mohegan Challenge Grant Award (BOE Goal #1, #2)

Dr. Macary announced that VCMS teacher Regina Lee was awarded the Mohegan Challenge Grant of \$1,000.00. Regina spoke of her plans to use the funds to hold a PD workshop with her 6<sup>th</sup> graders as well as a future visit to the Mohegan Museum.

MOTION: Mr. Thrall moved to approve and accept, with gratitude, the Mohegan Challenge Grant of \$1,000.00 awarded to Regina Lee of VCMS.

SECOND: Ms. Wintress

VOTE: Unanimous

### 10.2 Reports from Board of Education Liaisons Regarding Attendance at Organization / Committee Meetings (BOE Goal #1)

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Kristiana Wintress mentioned the VCMS International Pot Luck Dinner taking place from 6-9 PM on May 11<sup>th</sup>. She also mentioned that the VCMS Spring Play will take place on April 28<sup>th</sup>.

## 11.0 Review and Update Board of Education Calendar

<https://www.vernonpublicschools.org/district-information/district-calendar>

No updates were made.

## 12.0 Opportunity for Questions from the Press Regarding Agenda Items

No one from the Press was in attendance.

MOTION: Dr. Buxton moved to go into Executive Session at 7:53 PM, inviting Dr. Macary  
SECOND: Mr. Thrall  
VOTE: Unanimous

The Board came out of Executive Session at 8:25 PM.

MOTION: Mr. Thrall moved to approve the Cafeteria Workers' Contract as presented and discussed in Executive Session  
SECOND: Mr. Grabowski  
VOTE: Unanimous

## 13.0 Adjournment

MOTION: Mr. Linton made a motion to adjourn at 8:26 PM  
SECOND: Ms. Wintress  
VOTE: Unanimous

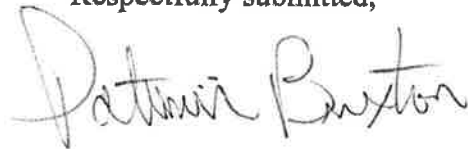
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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patricia Buxton". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name of the signatory.

Patricia Buxton, Board Secretary