

The Board of Education Town of Vernon

30 Park Street – PO Box 600
Vernon, Connecticut 06066

Anne Fischer, Chairperson
Mark Kalina, Vice Chairperson
Stephen Linton, Secretary
Patricia Buxton, Treasurer
Jennifer Buckler
Kevin Brown
Deborah Rodriguez
Mason Thrall
Kristiana Wintress

February 22, 2021

APPROVED MINUTES BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

A meeting of the Vernon Board of Education was held via Zoom Webinar and in person on Monday, February 22, 2021.

1.0 Establish Quorum

Roll call was taken at 7:05 p.m. Board members present in person: Mrs. Fischer, Mr. Linton, Dr. Buxton, Ms. Wintress, and Mr. Brown. Board members present via Zoom: Mrs. Rodriguez, Mrs. Buckler and Mr. Thrall. Absent: Mr. Kalina

Student Representatives present via Zoom: James Wheeler and Allison Blume

Administration present in person: Superintendent Dr. Joseph Macary, Assistant Superintendent Robert Testa, Director of Business and Finance Angela Wang

2.0 Call to Order

Chairperson Fischer called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

3.0 Pledge of Allegiance

4.0 Recognitions and Presentations

4.1 National Parks Service - Connecticut Daughters of the American Revolution Grant (BOE Goal #2)

The National Park Service has confirmed funding the Connecticut Daughters of the American Revolution grant.

The project is entitled Feel the Rhythm: *Reviving the Heartbeat of the American Revolution in 5th Grade Youth*. The essence of this project is to give 5th grade youth access to culture, history, and art of the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route by

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visiting the Governor Jonathan Trumbull House Museum and War Office in Lebanon, Connecticut.

Connecticut Daughters of the American Revolution will be using First Student Transportation charter school busses. Each trip is currently scheduled to depart the school at 10:00 a.m. and return at 2:00 p.m. The dates are as follow:

October 1, 2021 Center Road School
October 8, 2021 Lake Street School & Maple Street School
October 15, 2021 Northeast School and Skinner Road School

This is an all-expense paid trip. Lunch will be provided.

Christy Anderson Hendrie, CTDAR State Regent, attended the meeting via Zoom and gave information about the grant and field trip. Dr. Macary thanked her and also Board member Dr. Buxton for connecting and making this happen for Vernon students. Dr. Macary is familiar with the Governor Jonathan Trumbull House Museum and War Office in Lebanon, Connecticut and noted that it will be a great experience for our students.

5.0 Secretary's Report

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

No items were added or deleted.

5.2 Rockville High School Student Representative Report

Student Representative Allison Blume reported the following:

- The senior students have won the Powder Puff competition with 30,348 points. Junior students had 2,175 points. The total amount of food collected will soon be revealed.
- Esports team tryouts were held today.
- This week is FFA Week – America Monday, Tired Tuesday, Wednesday Blue & Gold Day, Thursday Throwback Day, and Funky Friday.

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- On 3/3 the seniors will have a meeting to discuss Senior Prom, graduation and other celebratory events.
- The two lambs are doing well. They are expecting another one to birth any day now.
- The trout eggs are hatching.

Student Representative James Wheeler reported the following:

- The Political Alliance Club raised \$1,007 out of their goal of \$1,011 to help towards rebuilding the “Hole in the Wall Gang Camp”. Each student was asked to donate \$1.
- Live streaming is going well with the Basketball games. Athletes can have one spectator attend the games.
- He is going to be rocking “Tired Tuesday” tomorrow.
- On 2/24 the girls’ softball team will be meeting via Microsoft Teams.
- The spring sports season begins 3/27.

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 (limited to 15 minutes)

No one addressed the Board.

7.0 Consent Agenda

- 7.1 (a) Approval of the Minutes of the Special Board of Education Meeting (New Board Member Orientation) held on February 17, 2021
- (b) Approval of the Minutes of the Special Board of Education Meeting (Ad Hoc Committee) held on February 10, 2021
- (c) Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting held on February 8, 2021
- (d) Approval of the Minutes of the Special Board of Education Meeting (Budget Workshop) held on February 1, 2021

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MOTION: Mr. Linton moved to approve all the items on the Consent Agenda.
SECOND: Mr. Brown
VOTE: Unanimous

8.0 Personnel

8.1 Leave of Absence Request (BOE Goal #2) (Executive Session Anticipated)

This item was moved to the end of the meeting.

8.2 Vernon Education Association Agreement – Appendix VIII – Special Areas – Stipend Tiers and Criteria (BOE Goal #2)

In accordance with the Agreement between the Vernon Board of Education and the Vernon Education Association dated 7/1/21 to 6/30/25 it specifically states that “The parties agree to create a committee with representation chosen by the Superintendent and the Association to create a tiered system for all stipends in Appendix VIII by February 1, 2021. The total compensation for Appendix VIII stipends shall not be changed by the committee. There shall be no annual increase to the stipends throughout the contract. Dr. Macary worked collaboratively with teachers and staff to create a tiered system for all stipends in Appendix VIII. The stipend tiers and criteria are grouped into four different tiers: Tier A, Tier B, Tier C, and Tier D. Each stipend position for special areas is listed in the appendix and it is an equitable system. Mrs. Fischer noted that in the budget it will need to be fixed but the bottom line equals the amount listed. Mr. Brown asked about marching band and jazz band and why they are two different tiers. Dr. Macary noted that marching band has a week-long band camp prior to the start of school. The Board was asked to approve Appendix VIII – Special Areas – Stipend Tiers and Criteria.

MOTION: Dr. Buxton moved to approve the Appendix VIII – Special Areas – Stipend Tiers and Criteria as presented.
SECOND: Mr. Linton
VOTE: Unanimous

8.3 Presentation on Minority Teacher Recruitment (BOE Goal #1, #2)

Mr. Testa gave an overview of the CREC Teacher Residency Program. Vernon will be participating in the program in the 2021-2022 school year. The program is an alternative

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route to certification program designed to recruit, train, certify and retain elementary school teachers of color. The 18-month long program includes intensive course work during the summer, on some weekends and at night. The centerpiece of the program is a year working in the classroom, side by side with an experienced mentor teacher. Teacher trainees, who are referred to as residents, receive a salary and benefits during the school year. Residents who successfully complete the program and earn state certification are guaranteed a teaching position in the district in which they received training with a starting salary of about \$50,000. The Teacher Residency Program is an innovative way for schools to bring people of color into the teaching ranks. Candidates have to meet a variety of standards for admission to the program, including having a grade point average of 3.0 or higher. Teachers of color can be role models for students. Vernon's resident teacher will work at Lake Street School with a mentor teacher.

9.0 Teaching and Learning

9.1 Overview of Professional Development to be held on March 12, 2021 and March 15, 2021 (BOE Goal #2)

Assistant Superintendent Mr. Testa shared the draft of the Professional Development schedule for March 12th and March 15th. There are three learning themes:

1. Educational Equity in Opportunities for Learning
2. Trauma Informed Instruction
3. Teaching and Learning in a Blended/Hybrid Learning Environment

In January teachers were asked to submit proposals and we are pleased to be able to offer many different professional development opportunities. One new option is educational podcasts ranging from teaching and learning to reading, equity, etc. At the completion of the professional development days, teachers will complete a feedback form and this information will help us determine future sessions.

10.0 General Business

10.1 Board of Education Member Handbook (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3)

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New Board of Education Member Handbooks (adopted by the Board in January 2021) were given to Board members. This Handbook contains information that all Board members could access easily. This Handbook includes (1) The Board's Mission and Vision; (2) The Board's Equity Stance; (3) School Governance Statement; (4) specific Board of Education By-Laws/Policies that have a direct impact on our job as Board members; (5) The Board's Rules of Procedure; (6) A Simplified version of Robert's Rules of Order; (7) Education Glossary and Acronyms; and (8) References.

10.2 Board of Education Ad Hoc Field Turf Committee Update (BOE Goal #3)

Dr. Macary and Mr. Linton reported that approximately 6 months ago an Ad Hoc Committee was put together for the Rockville High School Field Turf and Track and it has met several times. It is comprised of 10 members. The committee has visited over a dozen different school fields and a RFP was put together. There were seven bidders that responded to the RFP. The top three bidders were chosen and presentations were video recorded. The committee has chosen Liberty Landscape. The high school field and track will be artificial. The subsurface of the track is deteriorated so the whole track is being done also. Contract negotiations are happening right now and the town attorney is reviewing the contract. There is excitement about this and the committee hopes to have this done in the summer. The approximate cost will be \$1.5 million.

Dr. Macary and Mr. Linton thanked all of those who volunteered their time for this project.

10.3 COVID-19 Update (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3)

Dr. Macary reported that he received an email from the State Department of Education last evening and there was a big meeting today regarding the next phase of vaccinations. Beginning on March 1, 2021, people age 55 and over will be eligible to be vaccinated along with all school teachers and school personnel. Dr. Macary met with Town Administrator Mr. Purcaro and Police Lt. Meier and we will be holding our vaccination clinic here in Vernon for all teachers and staff. The clinic will be set up at the Vernon Senior Center. On the dates of the vaccinations, there will be remote learning days for students. Our goal is to get everyone vaccinated by April vacation. We are looking forward to getting back to full in-person learning by May. The Town of Vernon has done a great job getting everyone vaccinated. Dr. Macary sent an email out today letting

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teachers and all staff know that everyone who wants to get vaccinated will be able to - including bus drivers. The present plan is to have the first vaccination on 3/11 and the second dose on 4/9. The alternate dates are 3/5 and 4/1. The clinic will be able to handle 500-600 vaccinations.

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

Mr. Brown reported that the Center Road School student council participated in a coat drive and it was successful. They are now gearing up for the Invention Convention. This year it's a little different due to COVID but it's still exciting. They are also gearing up for a second reading challenge of the year with a growing a garden theme. There is also a poster contest regarding the social emotional learning strategies that have been used.

Dr. Buxton reported that she could not attend the Lake Street School PTO meeting. Based on their newsletter, they are actively selling the yearbook through March 15th. They are also engaged in the Munson's annual fundraiser. The next PTO meeting is being held on 3/17 virtually.

Mrs. Rodriguez reported that Northeast School made a profit on their butter braids. The holiday store was held and Dr. Greene and staff went to each classroom with the store. A little library has been set up outside the school. The family picnic is being planned for August. They had a virtual "Categories" night in January and they want to schedule another one. Mrs. Buckler will be taking over Northeast School as the Board liaison.

11.0 To Review and Update Board of Education Calendar

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

No changes were made to the calendar.

12.0 Opportunity for Questions from the Press Regarding Agenda Items

There were no questions from the press.

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Mr. Linton made the motion at 7:54 PM to go into Executive Session inviting the Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent to discuss a Leave of Absence request. Dr. Buxton seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 8:27 PM.

Dr. Buxton made the motion to deny the request for leave submitted by Tamara Joy for the reasons discussed in executive session and authorized the Superintendent to inform the employee of the Board's decision and the reasons therefore. Mr. Linton seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

13.0 Adjournment

Mr. Linton made the motion to adjourn at 8:29 PM. Ms. Wintress seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Stephen Linton, Board Secretary