

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

March 8, 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, March 8, 2021.

1.0 Establish Quorum

Roll call was taken at 7:00 p.m. Board members present in person: Mrs. Fischer, Mr. Kalina, Mr. Linton, Dr. Buxton, Mr. Brown, Ms. Wintress and Mr. Thrall. Board members present via Zoom: Mrs. Rodriguez and Mrs. Buckler. There was a quorum.

Also in attendance via Zoom: Steve Wakefield and Mike of Mikro Industrial Finishing.

Student Representatives present via Zoom: James Wheeler. Absent: 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 7:00 p.m.

3.0 Pledge of Allegiance

4.0 Recognitions and Presentations

4.1 Approval of Donation of a Finishing Machine from Mikro Industrial Finishing to Rockville High School (BO Goal #1, #2)

Dr. Macary announced that Mikro Industrial Finishing has generously donated a Finishing Machine, valued at \$9,000.00, as well as their start-up time and a supply of tumbling media to Rockville High School. He said the Board would like to know what a finishing machine is. Steve Wakefield of Mikro explained that the machine is meant to improve a piece of metal at the end of a finishing process by tumbling the metal in polishing media.

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

March 8, 2021

Dr. Macary and Mrs. Fischer thanked them for their donation and said this will be a great enhancement to technical education at Rockville High School.

MOTION: Mr. Kalina moved to approve the generous donation of a Finishing Machine from Mikro Industrial Finishing to Rockville High School.
SECOND: Mr. Linton
VOTE: Unanimous

4.2 Board Member Appreciation (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3)

Dr. Macary announced that March is Board Appreciation month. Last year collectively, the Board put in 244 hours or 5 weeks of committee work, site work, focus groups, workshops, PD and board meetings without pay. These hours do not include their school liaison time. He presented each Board member with a carnation from the Future Farmers of America through our ASTE Dept., a set of hand-made note cards from the RHS Art Dept., a box of chocolates and a thank you note. He said they are doing the best for our students and thanked them for their efforts. Mrs. Fischer thanked Dr. Macary for the recognition of the Board.

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

Student Representative James Wheeler reported the following:

- Thursday, March 4th was a full virtual day due to the VPS staff receiving their first COVID-19 vaccine. He noted that FOX News did a newscast on the community support for this event.
- The Class of 2023 started their "Spring Flower Power" fundraiser. 50% of the proceeds will be used to bring down the costs of future events such as Junior and Senior Prom.

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

March 8, 2021

- February was Black History Month. At the end of each school day, students participated in a Black History moment which featured a Black leader.
- On March 5th, RHS and Pre-K students took part in Dr. Seuss Reading Day. The preschoolers had a great time!
- On February 26th, the RHS Creative Writing Class took part in the 2nd Annual High School Journalism Day hosted by the CCSU Journalism Dept.
- The Softball Team had their first pre-season meeting on February 24th.
- The Boys' Basketball team is doing very well. To date, they have 7 wins, 1 loss and 4 games remaining.
- The Girls' Basketball team has shown improvement with their first win.
- The eSports team did very well with their first match, but had an interruption in their schedule due to the power outage in the District.
- Moana the cow is pregnant and is due in October. James is very excited about this!
- The Class of 2022's Meadow Farms Fundraiser ends on March 12th. Proceeds from this will go towards next year's Senior Prom.
- Pre-Season meetings for Baseball, Golf and Lacrosse are coming up this month and will be held via Zoom meeting.
- Spring Sports are scheduled to begin on March 27th.
- The goats are due to give birth in April.
- The new cattle fencing installation should be completed by the end of this week.
- The SAE Night and Greenhand Degree Ceremony for the Freshmen are planned for March 25th.

Mr. Kalina asked what eSport games are being played. James was not sure and said he will have more information at the next Board meeting. Mrs. Fischer would love to see some of the baby animals. James said the lambs are doing very well.

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)

Maryann Levesque addressed the Board. She wanted to thank the Board members for their long hours of service and recognized the time they give.

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

March 8, 2021

7.0 Consent Agenda

7.1

- (a) Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting held on February 22, 2021
- (b) Approval of the Minutes of the Board of Education Policy Committee Meeting held on February 24, 2021
- (c) Approval of the Minutes of the Board of Education Facilities Committee Meeting held on March 1, 2021
- (d) Approval of Donation from ECHN's Vernon Family Resource Center to Vernon Regional Adult Based Education (VRABE)
- (e) Approval of Revised Board Policy #0000 Philosophy of Education for Vernon Public Schools
- (f) Approval of Reviewed Board Policy #0100 Mission Statement
- (g) Approval of Reviewed Board Policy #0200 Goals
- (h) Approval of Revised Board Policy #0210 Goals/Objectives for Student Accomplishment
- (i) Approval of Revised Board Policy #0521 Nondiscrimination
- (j) Approval of Reviewed Board Policy #1000 Board of Education Role in Communication with the Public
- (k) Approval of Revised Board Policy #1110.1 Parent/Guardian Participation
- (l) Approval of Revised Board Policy #1120 Public Participation in Board of Education Meetings
- (m) Approval of Revised Board Policy #1140 Community Relations
- (n) Approval of Revised Board Policy #1146 Recognition of Students, Citizens, Staff and Board of Education Members

MOTION: Mr. Kalina moved to approve Consent Agenda Items #7.1 (a) through (n).
SECOND: Mr. Linton
VOTE: Unanimous

8.0 Personnel

8.1 Certified Teacher Positions for 2021-2022 (BOE Goal #2)

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

March 8, 2021

Dr. Macary reported that 28 open positions were posted last week. We are attending job fairs in the area and hope to have our staff in place by May 1st. These open positions are due to staff resignations, retirement, District decisions and hiring additional staff through the ESSER 2 Grant.

Mr. Kalina asked if we see progress in the recruitment of minority applicants. Dr. Macary said yes, we keep pushing for this throughout the hiring process.

Ms. Wintress asked what will go on in the summer to help students catch up. Dr. Macary and Mr. Testa said they do have a plan in mind and will give an overview of that plan at the next meeting in April.

8.2 Unpaid Leave of Absence Request (BOE GOAL #2) (Executive Session Anticipated)

This item was moved to the end of the meeting.

9.0 Teaching and Learning

9.1 Presentation on Rockville High School Child Development Class (BOE Goal #1, #2)

Due to a death in the family, Miss Veilleux was unable to present.

Dr. Macary noted that three individuals who were scheduled to attend tonight's Board meeting experienced deaths in their families; Trish Buchanan, Allison Blume and Miss Veilleux. Dr. Buxton suggested we send condolences on behalf of the Board members to each family. Dr. Macary agreed and will take care of that.

10.0 General Business

10.1 First Reading of Proposed New Board Policy #0523 - Equity and Diversity Statement (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3)

Mrs. Fischer announced that a vote will take place on this at the next Board meeting as it needs to be read and reviewed in advance.

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

March 8, 2021

10.2 COVID-19 Update/Vaccination (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3)

On Thursday, March 4th, we vaccinated 445 VPS staff members. It was a great day and everyone was happy and excited to get their vaccines. Dr. Macary thanked everyone for their part; we couldn't have held the clinic without them. All staff received the Moderna vaccine. The second shot will be administered on April 1st. We also held additional hours from 4 p.m. – 7 p.m. to vaccinate 150 staff members from Ellington. Our mitigation strategies will still continue. Air filters will be changed in all buildings during the April break. Dr. Macary would like to set a goal to have all students aged 16 – 18 vaccinated before school begins in Sept. He would like to hold a clinic in June, but plans are still up in the air. The Pfizer vaccination is the only one recommended for this age group. Mrs. Fischer thanked everyone for their efforts.

10.3 ESSER II Funding (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3)

Dr. Macary announced that we will be receiving approximately 2 million dollars in ESSER II funding. He spoke about how these funds will be used. The Food & Nutrition Dept. is in a severe deficit, not because of operational issues, but because of the impact COVID-19 has had on the program. At first, these funds were not allowed to be used for this purpose, but through continued communication to push for this with Congressman Courtney's office, we were told we can use \$250,000.00 of the funds towards the Food & Nutrition deficit for this year and next year.

10.4 Board of Education Finance Committee Report (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3)

Angela Wang shared information from the Finance Committee meeting held this evening. Referring to the reports provided in the Finance Packet, she reported that we are on track to spend down the FY21 budget. She spoke of the Center Road School Roof Project appropriation, deposits and interest to the Master Scholarship account, budget transfers for January & February, tuition revenue and expenses, and the Food & Nutrition P & L through January 2021.

Mrs. Rodriguez questioned the purpose of the RHS Memorial Scholarship Loan Fund. Dr. Macary mentioned that this was a practice in the past where students were given loans for college. He and his predecessor stopped this practice and the funds have been sitting idle

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

March 8, 2021

ever since. He would like to form an ad-hoc committee of the Board to discuss the funds and what should be done with them as we will not be loaning any students these funds going forward. Mrs. Fischer said they will develop the committee once the RHS Field & Turf committee is finished.

Ms. Wang presented a budget amendment request to the Board for their review and approval. This amendment is requesting to move unused funds from RHS Boys' Soccer (due to COVID) to be used to purchase new uniforms for the Girls' Lacrosse Team through the Central Administration Interscholastic Sports Uniform account.

MOTION: Mr. Thrall motioned that the Board approve the budget amendment request as presented.
SECOND: Mr. Kalina
VOTE: Unanimous

Ms. Wang presented a new scholarship establishment request to the Board for their approval. The scholarship is called the "Power From Within; Rockville Strong" and is being established by Mr. Mike Patrizz. He will maintain the funds and will award a RHS student who plans to attend college, a trade school or the military a \$1,000.00 scholarship. This will be an annual award.

MOTION: Mr. Kalina motioned that the Board approve the new scholarship establishment request "Power from Within; Rockville Strong".
SECOND: Mr. Linton
VOTE: Unanimous

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.

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

March 8, 2021

Dr. Buxton made the motion to go into Executive Session at 7:43 PM, inviting Dr. Macary, the Superintendent, and Mr. Testa, the Assistant Superintendent, to discuss a request for an unpaid leave of absence. Mr. Linton seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 8:09 PM.

Dr. Buxton made the motion to deny the request for an unpaid leave of absence submitted by Tamara Joy for the reasons discussed in Executive Session and authorize the Superintendent to inform the employee of the Board's decision and the reasons therefore. Mr. Thrall seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

13.0 Adjournment

Mr. Thrall made the motion to adjourn at 8:10 PM. Mr. Linton seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

To view the video of the March 8, 2021 Board of Education Meeting, please go to the Vernon Public Schools website link: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Huiy1ZRUn4H3fiA74il4qixwD-qvRp60/view>

Respectfully submitted,



Stephen Linton, Board Secretary