

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
Kevin Brown
Deborah Rodriguez
Mason Thrall

January 11, 2021

DRAFT MINUTES BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

A meeting of the Vernon Board of Education was held via Zoom Webinar and in person on Monday, January 11, 2021.

1.0 Establish Quorum

Roll call was taken at 7:01 p.m. Board members present in person: Mrs. Fischer, Mr. Kalina, Mr. Linton, Dr. Buxton, Mr. Brown, Mrs. Rodriguez, and Mr. Thrall. There was a quorum.

Student Representatives present via Zoom: Allison Blume and James Wheeler.

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 7:02 p.m.

3.0 Pledge of Allegiance

4.0 Recognitions and Presentations

4.1 Next STEP Student Made Face Masks (BOE Goal #1, #2)

To make up for lost income during the pandemic, Next STEP students have learned to create wonderful masks. These masks are for sale to the public. All proceeds go directly back into the program to fund independent living lessons, such as cooking lessons. Director Peter Lynch shared more about the program and the masks and thanked the staff for their support of the students with this project. Dr. Macary and Mrs. Fischer thanked the students for their great job. Mrs. Fischer inquired about the new learning center. The students love the new facility. They now have a kitchen, classroom, living room space and two conference rooms. It has a home feeling.

5.0 Secretary's Report

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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 Allison Blume reported the following:

- She wished everyone a happy new year.
- On 12/23 there was an ugly sweater day held. Students who participated could submit a photo and win a gift card. Photos were posted on Instagram. Her favorite ugly sweater was the teacher who wore an Ellington sweatshirt.
- On 12/31 the Boys Basketball team held a trivia game via zoom. Students could win a Rockville High School t-shirt.
- Between 11/30 and 1/17 students have participated in at home workouts and by participating they can be included in a raffle for prizes.

Student Representative James Wheeler reported the following:

- On 1/19 in the evening the student athlete leadership team will attend a NCAA college night and learn about playing sports in college. During that zoom there will be Rockville High School alumni who will share what life is like as a college student and how you can set yourself up for academics and a sports life.
- The CIAC will be meeting on Thursday for winter sports. Sports are set to begin on 1/19.
- The quarter ends on 1/20 which marks the end of the first semester. Students are almost half-way through the school year.
- Today during the Vet Science ASTE class they learned that their two goats are pregnant. Carrot Cake has triplets and the black goat is confirmed with twins. Students are excited about that. The sheep are pregnant with twins also.
- Exams start on 1/21.

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)

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No one addressed the Board.

7.0 Personnel

7.1 Certified Staff Retirements (BOE Goal #2)

The following certified staff members have submitted their letters of retirement:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Date of Retirement</u>
Anne Cilfone	Social Worker - Rockville High School	June 30, 2021
Holly Jensen	K Teacher – Center Road School	June 30, 2021
Shaune Santos	Reading Teacher - Rockville High School	June 30, 2021
Susan Zylberman	PK Teacher – Skinner Road School	June 30, 2021

All these retirees are great people who will be sorely missed. Mrs. Fischer wished them well in their retirement.

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

The Board will review and may take action on an employee's request for Leave of Absence in Executive Session. This agenda item was moved to the end of the meeting.

8.0 Consent Agenda

8.1

- (a) Approval of the Minutes of the Board of Education Policy Committee Meeting held on December 10, 2020
- (b) Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting held on December 14, 2020
- (c) Approval of the Donation of Office Supplies from Ark Underwriting of Hartford, CT

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

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9.0 Teaching and Learning

9.1 Agricultural Science & Technology Education (ASTE) Program Update (BOE Goal #2)

Erika Bahler, ASTE Department Head, and ASTE teacher Mrs. Lanz gave the Board an update on the ASTE program.

They highlighted the following:

- ASTE is a Regional high school program for 10 area towns incorporated into RHS.
- 3 Pathways - Animal Science, Plant Science, Agricultural Mechanics, also offer courses in Natural Resources, Aquaculture & Biotechnology

Additional components of Agricultural Education include:

- FFA organization - focus on personal growth, premier leadership & career success
- SAE - Supervised Agricultural Experience occurs outside of classroom time

Enrollment is: October 1 - 94 students; Out of Town – 36 and Vernon - 58

Recruitment Plan Overview:

Potential applicants - all 8th grade students in our 10 sending towns

1. Postcard to introduce ASTE program
2. Invitation letter to our ASTE Open House
3. Recruitment video sent to schools - (included at the end of slideshow)
4. Zoom Q & A sessions with each town
5. Open House - scheduled families for tours every 5 minutes (over 70 signed up)
6. New student interviews begin Jan 13th

Projected Enrollment:

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>
<u>Grade 12th</u>	19	21
<u>Grade 11th</u>	21	22
<u>Grade 10th</u>	22	32
<u>Grade 9th</u>	32	34
Total	94	109

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Curriculum:

CASE institute

- Animal Science pathway
- Plant Science pathway
- Biotechnology

College credits - ECE and Middlesex Community College

- Animal Behavior & Training, Companion Animals
- Floral Design, CT Agriculture in the 21st century
- New course proposal - Advanced Floral Design
- Veterinary Science 1 & 2

Facility Upgrades:

- Compost Facility - 3 bay aerated system for animal & greenhouse waste
- Land Lab - land cleared for crop production
- Equipment Shed - Morton storage building with cement floor
- Animal Barn - Kloter Farms building for Livestock Housing
- ASTE Front Landscape - new plantings, patios, and pond
- Aquaponics System - media beds, raft system and NFT channels

9.2 Rockville High School Class Weight Change Proposal (BOE Goal #2)

The Board was asked to review and approve the Rockville High School Class Weight Change Proposal. Dr. Macary shared the recommendations from administration regarding the class weight changes. Mr. Magao has worked on this for a few years.

Class rank is determined by the weighted numerical average of grades earned in all subjects. The class rank is computed for the two-and-one-half year average (five semester) and is also computed at the start of the senior year (three year or six semester rank). The rank is used for colleges, scholarships and post-secondary counseling. A three year, three marking period rank is used for selection of awards, and the selection of valedictorian, salutatorian, and RHS scholars.

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The change would include three levels of courses with each assigned a quality point multiplier based upon academic difficulty. A student's final grade is multiplied by the assigned point multiplier and then averaged to determine class rank.

Non-weighted	1.00
Honors	1.05
Advance Placement/ Dual Enrollment	1.10

Rockville High School Counselor Ms. Kimberly Marinar noted that South Windsor has removed rank and other schools are working on it also. Each school is different and some are trying to eliminate some of the competition. Some do percentages and some have even eliminated valedictorian and salutatorian. Rockville High School is not looking at eliminating rank at this moment.

The reason for the change:

- To streamline many years of collapsing and uncollapsing levels
- To raise the expectations of Rockville High School Students
- To increase enrollment and flexibility in under-utilized electives for student choice

MOTION: Mr. Kalina moved that the Board of Education approve the Rockville High School Class Weight Change proposal as presented.

SECOND: Mr. Thrall

VOTE: Unanimous

9.3 Accreditation Quality Improvement Support for Preschool Program (BOE Goal #2)

Next school year, Vernon's Preschool Program will be applying for the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Re-Accreditation. The State of Connecticut's Office of Early Childhood Education has partnered with the RESC Alliance and the Connecticut Association for the Education of Young Children (CTAEYC) to provide preschool programs with a grant to receive accreditation support. Preschool Program Specialist Shelley McCone is requesting Board approval of the grant application.

MOTION: Mrs. Rodriguez moved that the Board approve the Accreditation Quality Improvement Support grant application.

SECOND: Dr. Buxton

VOTE: Unanimous

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10.0 General Business

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

Superintendent Dr. Joseph Macary gave the Board a COVID-19 update. He noted that the information changes daily. The letters that go out regarding COVID to everyone identify a person confirmed with a COVID case. He has had conversations with parents and the issue is that the transmissions of COVID are happening outside of the school. It says a lot about the mitigation we have in place. Our school model as of right now is not changing. We may possibly make changes at the middle school bringing in another day. The Vaccination Committee is making preparations for Phase 1B to give vaccinations to our school staff. We are preparing for that now and working with the North Central Health District. We had a good first week back from the holidays. We don't have any staff out right now due to travel from the holidays.

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

Dr. Macary shared that when they attended the past CABA Convention they saw a Board Member Handbook and thought that it was important to have. The Policy Committee has created a 45 page handbook. The handbook includes the Mission & Vision Statement, Board Equity Stance, School Governance Statement, Board of Education Policies, Vernon Board of Education Rules of Procedure, and Robert's Rules of Order. Dr. Macary thinks it's a great tool. The parts in the handbook are already approved items; it's a compilation of everything and just restated. It will be a guideline for Board members. Dr. Macary thanked the policy committee for their work on the handbook. Mrs. Fischer thanked Dr. Macary for formatting the handbook.

MOTION: Dr. Buxton moved to approve the Board Member Handbook as presented.
SECOND: Mr. Kalina
VOTE: Unanimous

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

Ms. Angela Wang, Director of Business and Finance, gave the Board an updated report including the Year-to-Date Budget.

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The district is on track for spending down the budget. This year, due to COVID, there will be some surpluses due to no field trips, etc. There was only one budget transfer request item this month. There were some magnet school tuition increases from CREC. The profit and loss for Food & Nutrition (net income) is -\$3,755.56.

10.0 To Review and Update Board of Education Calendar

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

No changes were made to the calendar.

11.0 Opportunity for Questions from the Press Regarding Agenda Items

There were no questions from the press.

Mr. Kalina made the motion at 8:09 PM to go into Executive Session inviting the Superintendent to discuss a request for a Leave of Absence. Mr. Linton seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 8:46 PM.

Dr. Buxton made the motion to deny the request for leave submitted by Kara Ormsby 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. Those in favor of the motion were: Dr. Buxton, Mr. Kalina, Mr. Linton, and Mr. Thrall. Those opposed to the motion were Mr. Brown and Mrs. Rodriguez. The motion carried.

12.0 Adjournment

Mr. Linton made the motion to adjourn at 8:48 PM. Mr. Brown seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Linton, Board Secretary