

The Board of Education Town of Vernon

30 Park Street – PO Box 600
Vernon, Connecticut 06066

Anne Fischer, Chairperson
Mark Kalina, Vice Chairperson
Linda Gessay, Secretary
Patricia Buxton, Treasurer
Michele Arn
Kevin Brown
Latasha Hyatt
Stephen Linton
Deborah Rodriguez

Date: January 27, 2020

APPROVED MINUTES

BOARD OF EDUCATION SPECIAL MEETING – BUDGET WORKSHOP

A Vernon Board of Education Budget Workshop was held on Wednesday, January 27, 2020.

Chairperson Fischer called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.

Board members present were: Mrs. Fischer, Dr. Buxton, Ms. Gessay, Ms. Arn, Mr. Brown, Mr. Linton and Ms. Hyatt.

Also present were Dr. Macary, Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Testa, Assistant Superintendent and Angela Wang, Director of Business and Finance.

1.0 Community Forum

There was no public comment.

2.0 Personnel Budget Follow-up

The Superintendent reviewed the requested changes and questions asked by the Board at the January 22nd Budget Workshop:

- Special Education costs total 10.81 million dollars, which represents 19.7% of the total proposed budget.
- Angela Wang completed the Administrator's Salary grid and Dr. Macary distributed copies to the Board members.
- Dr. Macary said he will present a final document of all budget book changes to the Board once the last Budget Workshop has taken place.

3.0 Rockville High School Budget

The RHS budget was reviewed beginning with page 19.

Several questions were asked regarding needs for coaches and assistant coaches based on student participation in programs such as Golf, Hockey and the Dance Team. Mrs. Fischer asked how many students are on the Dance Team. Dr. Macary said he would find out and report back to the Board.

Mrs. Fischer questioned the need for E-Sports, a new program proposed for students who do not participate in clubs or sports. Dr. Macary said we would like to offer this opportunity to these students.

Mrs. Fischer noticed that the Student Council is currently not in operation and wanted to know why. Mr. Testa will find out more about this and will report back to the Board.

There was a lengthy discussion about a line item at the bottom of page 23 titled “Tutoring wages to support academic needs of student athletes.” Ms. Arn asked “why do we pay for tutors for athletes?” Dr. Macary explained that this is more a of a study hall environment for students who stay in the building after dismissal to wait for their practice or club to begin. He went on to say that we are responsible for the safety of our students while on school property. If they leave school property, they are no longer our responsibility. If practice begins at 3:00 PM or later, this study room would serve as a supervised area for the students to go to do their homework. Dr. Macary said that the students who stay after school would be strongly encouraged to come to this room, and that it would be open to anyone whether an athlete or not. A student’s ride home could be delayed and this would serve as a good place for them to wait for their ride and get some homework done. Ms. Arn suggested that we make it a requirement to go to this room if a student needs to stay in the building after dismissal for any of these reasons. Dr. Macary said he will find out who the proctor will be for the room and how many practices are scheduled. Dr. Buxton expressed a concern that there should be no “double-dipping” between 2:00pm and 2:30 PM should a teacher proctor the room as they are already being paid until 2:30 as part of their salary. With all of this said, the Board suggested we change the description of this line item to “After School Supervised Study Hall.”

Ms. Arn asked about a line item on page 24 titled “Student Labor” in the ASTE program. She wanted to know why students would be paid for something that is part of their curriculum. Dr. Macary explained that students are paid to feed the animals, etc. and that this takes place after school and is not part of their SAE. Ms. Arn asked if we could look into alternatives to this cost as \$8,500.00 is a lot of money.

Ms. Arn asked about proposed costs of Animal Vet Care and are we additionally paying the vendors. Dr. Macary said he will get more information on this.

The Board noticed a large increase (from \$100.00 to \$1,000.00) in the Oregon State University Diagnostic Samples line item on page 24. Dr. Macary said he will check into this.

Ms. Arn asked if it would be possible to move the RHS Graduation ceremony out of the courtyard to an offsite facility. Dr. Macary said we would have to book a venue very early in the year which is sometimes difficult to do. It would not be viable as the costs would be significantly higher.

The Board asked various questions concerning the cost of student travel for athletic events. Dr. Buxton asked about the “Golf Travel” line item on page 26. Dr. Macary explained that the Golf League has to travel to an off-site venue to practice whereas other teams, such as football, practice on school property.

Ms. Gessay asked about the cleaning of band uniforms. Do we own them or should students buy them? Mr. Linton said they are cleaned once a year at the end of the season, usually in the spring.

Mrs. Fischer noted on page 28 that the NCTM membership fees show a significant increase from \$80.00 to \$590.00. Dr. Macary explained that we are trying to build professional learning and development.

Ms. Arn wanted to know why the Agricultural field trip transportation has such an increase. Dr. Macary said he will check into this.

The Math League field trips were also questioned, particularly the Boston Field Trip. Dr. Macary said he will check into that as well.

Mr. Linton asked about the Eastern Regional Music Festival on page 29. Did we stop this? Dr. Macary said we do want to attend and that he will check into this. Dr. Macary also said that we will do the Spring Musical.

Mrs. Fischer asked what GIZMO was on page 34. Dr. Macary explained that this is an on-line dissection tool for students.

Review of the RHS budget ended on page 35 and will continue, beginning on page 36, at the January 29th Budget Workshop.

The workshop adjourned at 7:00PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Gessay, Secretary