

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

May 10, 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, May 10, 2021.

1.0 Establish Quorum

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

Board members absent: Kevin Brown, Mrs. Buckler

Student Representatives present via Zoom: James Wheeler and Allison Blume

Administration present in person: Superintendent Dr. Joseph Macary, Assistant Superintendent Robert Testa

Administration present via Zoom: Interim Director of Business and Finance Michael Santogatta

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 Recognition of Town of Vernon Vaccination Clinic Staff (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3)

Superintendent Dr. Joseph Macary and the Board recognized and thanked Youth Services Director Michelle Hill, Fire Marshal Daniel Wasilewski, and Parks and Recreation Director Martin Sitler for their significant contributions to Vernon Public Schools during the COVID-19 Pandemic and for their time and efforts to the Staff Vaccination Clinics.

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Dr. Macary shared that when the COVID-19 vaccinations became available Vernon Public Schools and the Town of Vernon created a committee. Michelle Hill took the lead role at the Call Center for scheduling and appointments. It was a huge task. Daniel Wasilewski took care of getting the vaccinators for the clinics. He was instrumental during the two school staff clinics also. Everything else was done by Martin Sitler. The Board honored them and thanked them and presented a small token of appreciation to each person.

4.2 Recognition of Vernon Public Schools Vaccination Clinic Committee (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3)

Superintendent Dr. Joseph Macary and the Board recognized and thanked the Vernon Public Schools Vaccination Clinic Committee members – Assistant Superintendent Robert Testa, Logistics and Safety Supervisor Steven Langlais, Nurse Supervisor Michelle Harlow, and Executive Assistant Trish Buchanan - for their significant contributions to Vernon Public Schools during the COVID-19 Pandemic and for their time and efforts to the Staff Vaccination Clinics.

Dr. Macary shared that right away our School Nurse Supervisor Michelle Harlow stepped right up along with all the school nurses. Dr. Rampal certified our school nurses to be vaccinators. Both Mr. Testa and Steven Langlais took care of logistics for the school clinics. Trish Buchanan made sure everything was all set. We had two successful school staff clinics and it went very well.

Mrs. Fischer thanked everyone for their hard work.

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 Allison Blume reported the following:

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- On 5/20 the current juniors will be inducted into the National Honor Society. The ceremony will take place in person at the RHS auditorium from 6-7:30 p.m.
- Teams that qualify for tournaments begin their post season on 6/1.
- Fall sports registration opens up this week.

Student Representative James Wheeler reported the following:

- Senior Prom is a go for 5/21. 75 tickets had to be purchased in order for it to go forward. Only Rockville High School students can attend.
- This week Rockville High School Peer Advocates are having “Mindful May” in honor of Mental Health Awareness Month which includes the following:
 - Mellow Monday
 - Twin Day
 - Wellness Wednesday
 - Wear green in honor of Mental Health Awareness
 - Fight it Friday
 - Saturday and Sunday Self Care Day
- Spring sports are almost over. They have 2 weeks left. The season is going well.
- The ASTE program is breeding their ram for the second time.

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 Regular Board of Education Meeting held on April 26, 2021
- (b) Approval of Revised Board Policy #1340-Access to School Procedures and Materials
- (c) Approval of Reviewed Board Policy #2000-Basic Concepts of Administration

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- (d) Approval of Revised Board Policy#2000.1-Board-Superintendent Relationship and Administrative Structure
- (e) Approval of Reviewed Board Policy #2001-Participatory Management Philosophy
- (f) Approval of Revised Board Policy #2100-Administrative Staff Organization
- (g) Approval of Revised Board Policy #2111-Equal Employment Opportunities
- (h) Approval of Revised Board Policy #1411-School System and Law Enforcement Agency Cooperation
- (i) Approval of Revised Board Policy #1412-School System and Fire Department Cooperation
- (j) Approval of Revised Board Policy #1416-School System and fiscal Authority Cooperation
- (k) Approval of Revised Board Policy #1500-School System Cooperation with Area, State, Regional, and National Associations

Mrs. Fischer pulled Consent Agenda Items #7.1 (d), (f), and (g).

MOTION: Mrs. Rodriguez moved to approve Consent Agenda Items #7.1 (a), (b), (c), (e), (h), (i), (j), and (k).
SECOND: Mr. Kalina
VOTE: Unanimous

Mrs. Fischer noted that on Consent Agenda Item #7.1(d), page 11, (Policy #2000.1), the last line reads “...**Board of 3**...” It should read “...**Board of Education**...”

Mrs. Fischer noted that on Consent Agenda Item #7.1(f), page 15, (Policy #2100) the date of the revised policy should read “**May 10, 2021**”.

Mrs. Fischer noted that on Consent Agenda Item #7.1(g), page 17, (Policy #2111), the second paragraph, third line, there needs to be a “,” after the word “**religion**”. Also, in the 7th line where there appears a strikethrough “~~;~~” there should be only one period. It was noted that when formatted there will be one period.

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MOTION: Mr. Thrall moved to approve Consent Agenda Items #7.1 (d), (f), and (g) as amended.
SECOND: Mr. Kalina
VOTE: Unanimous

8.0 Personnel

8.1 Update on Hiring Process (BOE Goal #2)

Assistant Superintendent Robert Testa gave the Board an update on the hiring process. Over the last 6 weeks the district has focused on filling 48 open positions created by new positions, transfers, retirements, and resignations. The positions were posted internally and externally in March, committees were formed and second round interviews were conducted including a performance task that had to be completed. Candidates were then recommended for third and final interviews with Dr. Macary and Mr. Testa.

Forty out of the 48 positions have been filled. Three more positions will be filled this week. Overall, positions included: 4 retirements, 8 resignations, 18 new positions and 21 transfers. The district was pleased to have hired a University of Hartford intern and a long term sub as permanent staff members. The hiring committee was pleased with the applicant pool. In alignment with the Board's equity stance, the district has hired five staff members that add to the district's racial diversity. Mr. Testa hopes to fill any remaining positions soon.

9.0 Teaching and Learning

9.1 Rockville High School Culinary Arts Presentation (BOE Goal #1, #2)

Rockville High School Family Consumer Science/Culinary Arts Teacher Amy Bernabe gave the Board a presentation on her Culinary Arts class.

The kids call her "Chef" Bernabe. She originally was teaching under DSAP but now has received her certification for culinary arts. Having students at home learning and in class has been difficult. Students have had the opportunity to cook and bake in the kitchen. The students who are virtual have come to school to pick up supplies and teachers have also helped dropping off the supplies to students. Last week students took apart chickens and

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cooked them. They were getting their hands dirty from start to finish. She is looking forward to doing a cupcake wars type event again in the future. Her in-person class is 14 students and the smallest class is 8 students. She is hoping to have a lot more students next year.

Mrs. Fischer shared that it looked like fun and thanked Ms. Bernabe.

10.0 General Business

10.1 First Student Update (BOE Goal #2)

Superintendent Dr. Macary gave the Board an update on First Student. First Student informed us that a company EQT from UK had bought First Student. There are no changes in the contract. He also noted that this is the 4th year of a 5 year contract with First Student. We will go out to bid next year. Transportation is a critical part of our organization. He noted that EQT is not involved in the transportation industry.

10.2 Interim Guidance for Remote Learning 2021- 2022 School Year

Superintendent Dr. Macary gave the Board information received from the Connecticut State Department of Education regarding Interim Guidance for Remote Learning 2021-2022 School Year. The way it looks like right now, there will be no remote learning option for parents for the next school year. There are caveats, however. The district will allow on-line classes at Rockville High School as they did even before COVID. Dr. Macary gave an example that if a student breaks his arm and needs remote learning, we will allow that and provide it. That is considered remote learning. However, the remote learning chosen by parents due to COVID, as of today, will not be allowed to do remote learning next school year. Dr. Macary is assuming that the State will allow remote learning days for inclement weather but is waiting on guidance from the state.

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

Superintendent Dr. Joseph Macary gave the Board a COVID-19 update. 98% of our COVID cases have come from families and not the schools. He shared that we did not have any cases today, Friday, Saturday or Sunday. Student vaccinations are being

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conducted at Rockville High School and we are awaiting on guidance from the CDC for students ages 5-15. It will be difficult to do in school for those students. We will highly recommend places for them to go. We also cannot force parents to vaccinate their children. About 60-70% of parents want their kids vaccinated. The district continues to have mitigation strategies in place to keep the schools healthy and safe.

10.4 Facilities Committee Update (BOE Goal #3)

Superintendent Dr. Joseph Macary gave the Board a Facilities Committee update and highlighted the summer projects in the district which included:

- Rockville High School artificial field turf and track project
- Center Road School Roof
- Parking lots at Center Road School and Northeast School
- HVAC controls at Center Road School and Northeast School
- Rockville High School - resurfacing of small gym floor, moving the Guidance Department suite to the main floor, updating three lavatories and sidewalk repair
- Vernon Center Middle School - retaining wall, sidewalk repair
- Repointing at Center Road School
- Window replacement at Lake Street School

It was noted that the summer school program for elementary and middle school students will be held at Vernon Center Middle School this year and will run for five weeks beginning on June 28, 2021.

10.5 Approval of Plans and Specifications for Center Road School Roof Project (BOE Goal #3)

Director of Public Works Dwight Ryniewicz briefly shared the plans and specifications for the Center Road School Roof Project with the Board. Both Mr. Ryniewicz and Mr. Peluso are on the Town's Building Committee. The plans and specifications need the Board's approval. The Center Road School roof will be stripped down and a new roof will be installed.

Mr. Thrall noted that a correction was needed on page 2. The words "*South Windsor*" need to be changed to "*Rockville High School*".

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MOTION: Mr. Thrall moved that the Board approve the plans and specifications for the Center Road School Roof Project presented and discussed.
SECOND: Mr. Linton
VOTE: Unanimous

10.6 Board of Education Business and Finance Report (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3)

Dr. Macary thanked everyone for their patience as the Business Department is in transition with Mr. Michael Santogatta as their Interim Director of Business and Finance. He is away out of state and is attending the meeting virtually this evening.

Mr. Santogatta reviewed and discussed the Business and Finance report and exhibits with the Board.

Mrs. Fischer thanked Mr. Santogatta for coming back and assisting.

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.

13.0 Adjournment

MOTION: Mr. Linton moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:08 p.m.
SECOND: Dr. Buxton
VOTE: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Linton, Board Secretary