

# 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  
Michele Arn  
Kevin Brown  
Latasha Hyatt  
Deborah Rodriguez  
Mason Thrall

October 13, 2020

## APPROVED MINUTES BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

A meeting of the Vernon Board of Education was held via Zoom Webinar and in person on Tuesday, October 13, 2020.

Chairperson Fischer called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

Present in person when the meeting was called to order were: Mr. Kalina, Mr. Linton, Dr. Buxton, Ms. Arn, Mr. Brown, and Mrs. Rodriguez. Mr. Thrall attended via Zoom Meeting. Ms. Hyatt was absent.

Student Representative Allison Blume was absent.

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

### **1.0 Consent Agenda**

#### 1.1

- (a) Approval of the Minutes of the Board of Education Ad Hoc Committee Meeting held on September 23, 2020
- (b) Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting held on September 28, 2020
- (c) Approval of the Minutes of the Special Board of Education Meeting (PD Workshop) held on October 5, 2020
- (d) Approval of Donation of Computer Mice to Center Road School
- (e) Approval of Revised Board Policy #9323 – Agenda Construction/Meeting Materials
- (f) Approval of Revised Board Policy #9324 – Meeting Conduct and Parliamentary Procedures
- (g) Approval of Revised Board Policy #9325.2 – Order of Business

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Mrs. Fischer pulled Consent Agenda Item #1.1(c).

MOTION: Mr. Kalina moved to approve Consent Agenda Items #1.1(a), (b), (d), (e), (f), and (g).  
SECOND: Mr. Linton  
VOTE: Unanimous

Mrs. Fischer noted that on Consent Agenda Item #1.1(c) - Minutes of the Special Board of Education Meeting (PD Workshop) held on October 5, 2020, Mr. Thrall was in attendance at that meeting. The minutes should be amended.

MOTION: Mr. Linton moved to approve Consent Agenda Item #1.1(c) as amended.  
SECOND: Mr. Kalina  
VOTE: Mr. Linton, Mr. Kalina, Dr. Buxton, Mr. Brown, Mrs. Rodriguez, and Mr. Thrall voted in favor of the motion. Ms. Arn abstained. The motion carried.

## **2.0 Secretary's Report**

### **2.1 Opportunity for Board of Education to add/delete urgent agenda items**

No agenda items were added or deleted.

### **2.2 Rockville High School Student Representative Report**

Student Representative Allison Blume was absent.

## **3.0 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.

## **4.0 Personnel**

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4.1 Superintendent’s Evaluation (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3) (Executive Session Anticipated)

The Board will discuss the Superintendent’s Evaluation in Executive session.

This item was moved to the end of the Agenda.

4.2 Superintendent’s Employment Agreement (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3) (Executive Session Anticipated)

The Board will discuss the Superintendent’s Evaluation in Executive session.

This item was moved to the end of the Agenda.

## 5.0 Teaching and Learning

5.1 Virtual Learning (BOE Goal #2)

Assistant Superintendent Mr. Robert Testa provided the Board with an update on virtual classroom learning. Virtual learning teachers Ms. Jessica Bradway and Ms. Emily McArthur, along with Director of Teaching and Learning (elementary) Mrs. Melissa Trantolo, shared a presentation about Adapt, Advance, Achieve – Connecticut’s plan to learn and grow together for parents and students who may temporarily choose not to participate in the return to school . They shared what virtual learning looks like at the elementary level. At the current time Vernon has 23 virtual learning teachers that represent all 5 elementary schools to ensure that all students are learning the same that is being taught in the classroom. What happens in school is aligned to what is happening at home.

<u>School</u>	<u>Total Enrollment</u>	<u>VL Enrollment</u>	<u>% of population</u>
Center Road	444	117	26%
Lake Street	209	31	15%
Maple Street	265	103	39%
Northeast	174	42	24%
Skinner Road	326	119	37%
District	1,418	412	29%

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Mrs. Trantolo shared the Systems and Structures for Alignment :

- Weekly PLC Meetings with grade level virtual learning team.
- Bi-Monthly PLC meetings with district-wide grade level.
  - ✓ Curriculum units and priority standards
  - ✓ Sharing of best practices and resources
  - ✓ Development of learning targets

Ms. Bradway shared some of the components of virtual learning. Teachers try to make it like the students are in the classroom. They have:

- “Morning Meeting” which is focused on social emotional learning
- Foundations/Phonics (grades K-2)
- Word Work (grades 3-5)
- Read Aloud
- Reading Workshop
- Writing Workshop
- Math Workshop
- Science (upper grades separate subject - lower grades interdisciplinary)
- Social Studies- interdisciplinary
- Small group instruction to meet student needs

Ms. McArthur shared how the teachers are meeting individual needs and have created platforms for connecting and family engagement. There are live small group and/or 1:1 sessions, reading, math, writing, and Social Worker and/or psychologist check-ins. Through this virtual learning the teachers are in constant communication with the parents. They are building amazing partnerships with the families. The parents see what their kids are learning and they see how they can support their child at home. They have established routines and procedures. Hopes and Dreams Conferences were recently held. Teachers have provided Zoom “Office Hours” for student and family support, announcements and messages on Seesaw, phone calls, and feedback on student work. Screen time is broken down into chunks of times – breaks, small groups, flip lessons. There are many ways to showcase their learning not on the screen. Platforms for connecting include Zoom, Seesaw (K-2), and Google Classroom (grades 3-5)

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Virtual learning is meeting the community needs. The virtual teachers have done outside assessments in person with students. In grade K Ms. Bradway did curbside drive by assessments. Food and nutrition needs have been met by having “Meal Boxes” ordered ahead of time. These are picked up by parents.

Chairperson Fischer thanked all the teachers for making learning successful for all the learners.

## 5.2 Update on the Vernon Re-Opening Plan (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3)

Superintendent Dr. Macary gave the Board an update on the Vernon Re-Opening Plan. Today is the first day of students 5 days a week in elementary. There was one positive case of COVID-19 yesterday. There were a few “hiccups” on bus arrivals and dismissals. There were additional school climate and police officers present for traffic. It was like a new first day of school. Otherwise, the day went well. Right now, 26% of elementary students are on line, that is down from 31% a few weeks ago.

With respect to buses and social distancing, the buses are capped at 24 students - 1 child per seat. However, siblings may sit together. The seat behind driver is empty. Most students were driven today and 20% of our students are walkers.

With regard to class sizes, the schools are monitoring this closely. Everyone is at their own desk; there are no tables anymore. When Dr. Macary visited a classroom, there were 15 students all at their desks and they were socially distant. Every grade level also has a virtual classroom and if more students return to school, that classroom space will be used.

With regard to attendance, it is still being tracked as this has to be reported to the state. The data is placed into the Aspen databases. There were a few issues where students did not have proper internet, but now we have hot spots. Some students have received home visits and phone calls to check on absences.

With regard to physical education, the students in elementary schools are having class in their rooms. At the high school and middle school levels, they are walking the track, etc.

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Last week they played tennis. They go outside during class. There is no basketball, soccer, etc.

With regard to the high school science lab for students in school, that is a problem. They are still working on how to do this. Virtual labs are taking place though.

With regard to special needs students, the alternative programs are running five (5) days a week. They are having breakout features and still receiving their IEP hours. This is a work in progress.

## **6.0 General Business**

### **6.1 Annual Report 2019-2020 (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3)**

Superintendent Dr. Macary reviewed the Board of Education's Annual Report for 2019-2020 which has been submitted to the Town of Vernon. This is a report that is done for the Town of the Vernon. It's late this year due to COVID. All the sections and schools are delineated. For many years we never gave it to the Board as it is submitted directly to the Town of Vernon. The appendix in the report is the year in review that is given in January.

Mrs. Fischer noted a few corrections that need to be made. Linda Gessay was not listed and Dr. Buxton was listed twice. Also, she suggested adding a section about COVID. The correction and suggestion will be added and the report will be resubmitted to the Town of Vernon.

### **6.2 Fiscal Impact on FY2020 Budget (BOE Goal #2)**

Superintendent Dr. Macary gave the Board an updated fiscal impact analysis of the 2019-2020 Vernon Public Schools Budget, specifically in regards to Magnet School Tuition – Special Education (Object Code 55816) under the Office of Pupil Personnel. This is a continuation from the Board's last meeting. The present costs are more than what was budgeted for. There is a fiscal impact to the negative. Dr. Macary is working to create a task force of five (5) Superintendents who will be making a recommendation to the Scheff Task Force about the special education magnet school tuition costs. They will be making a complaint to the state. The Board feels strongly about this issue and thanked Dr. Macary

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for willing to push this. Dr. Macary shared that he could also address the issue with the legislators and share with them the costs. Board members suggested making this request into a motion and have this action be agreed upon.

MOTION: Mr. Brown moved to generate from the Board communication to the Vernon legislators to press for improved funding to magnet schools with the Scheff mandate.

SECOND: Ms. Arn

VOTE: Unanimous

## 6.3 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. She reviewed the following:

### **Budget**

- ✓ Executive Summary of Account Balances
- ✓ Master Scholarship Account Balances
- ✓ FY2021 Year-to-Date Budget Summary
- ✓ Budget Transfer Requests
- ✓ Budget Transfers and Amendments Summary
- ✓ Tuition Revenue and Expenses

(There is no Special Ed. Magnet Tuition report this month due to invoices not yet received for FY21.)

### **General Business**

- ✓ FY2021-2022 Budget Handbook

### **Food & Nutrition Services**

- ✓ Financial Report – P & L through August 2020

## 7.0 To Review and Update Board of Education Calendar

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

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No changes were made to the calendar.

## **8.0 Opportunity for Questions from the Press Regarding Agenda Items**

There were no questions from the press.

Mr. Linton made the motion to go into Executive Session at 8:04 PM to discuss the Superintendent's Evaluation (agenda item #4.1) and the Superintendent's Employment Agreement (agenda item #4.2) Mr. Kalina seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 8:37 PM.

Mr. Kalina made the motion to approve the Superintendent's Evaluation as discussed and presented. Mr. Linton seconded the motion. Mrs. Arn, Mr. Brown, Dr. Buxton, Mr. Kalina, Mr. Linton, Mrs. Rodriguez approved the motion. Mr. Thrall abstained. The motion carried.

Mr. Kalina made the motion to approve the Superintendent's Employment Agreement as discussed in Executive Session. Mrs. Rodriguez seconded the motion. Mrs. Arn, Mr. Brown, Dr. Buxton, Mr. Kalina, Mr. Linton, Mrs. Rodriguez approved the motion. Mr. Thrall abstained. The motion carried.

Mr. Linton made the motion to adjourn at 8:39 PM. Mr. Brown seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

To view the video of the October 13, 2020 Board of Education Meeting, please go to the Vernon Public Schools website link:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VFO3wrnD\\_NNJE0dvHDW5CoxUCaIVyRw4/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VFO3wrnD_NNJE0dvHDW5CoxUCaIVyRw4/view)

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Linton, Board Secretary