

VERNON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Vernon, Connecticut 06066
BOARD OF EDUCATION SPECIAL MEETING

DATE: Monday, January 8, 2024

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

PLACE: Vernon Board of Education, Administration Building, 30 Park Street, Vernon – 3rd Floor Board Conference Room

ZOOM MEETING: zoom.us **Phone:** +1 309 205 3325 **Webinar ID:** 935 6300 4208 **Passcode:** 223075

Mission Statement

The Vernon Public Schools, in partnership with family and community, is committed to provide a quality education, with high expectations, in a safe environment where all students become independent learners and productive contributors to society.

Goals

1. *Build and improve relationships and partnerships with family and community.*
2. *Increase the achievement of every student through high quality curriculum, instruction and assessment.*
3. *Promote safe environments that are socially, emotionally, and physically conducive to learning.*

Civility Statement

The Board of Education expects mutual respect, civility and orderly conduct among all individuals on school property or at school-sponsored events. District staff will treat parents and other members of the public with respect and have the right to expect the same in return. The Board encourages positive communication and discourages volatile, hostile or aggressive actions. The Board seeks public cooperation with this endeavor.

AGENDA	NOTES
1.0 Establish Quorum	
2.0 Call to Order	
3.0 Pledge of Allegiance	
4.0 Recognitions & Presentations 4.1 Presentation by Northeast School Students (BOE Goal #1, #2)	
5.0 Secretary's Report 5.1 Rockville High School Student Representative Report	
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 (Individual speakers shall be limited to five minutes and the total time for public forum shall be limited to 15 minutes.)	
7.0 Consent Agenda 7.1 (a) Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting held on December 11, 2023	
8.0 Personnel 8.1 Certified Staff Retirements (BOE Goal #2) 8.2 Approval of the Vernon School Nurses Association Memorandum of Agreement (BOE Goal #2)	

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BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
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DATE: Monday, January 8, 2024
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: Vernon Board of Education, Administration
Building, 30 Park Street, Vernon – 3rd Floor
Board Conference Room

9.0 Teaching and Learning

- 9.1 District Strategic Plan Implementation Update
(BOE Goal #1, #2, #3)
- 9.2 K-3 Reading Waiver: CSDE Memo & Summary
(BOE Goal #2)

10.0 General Business

- 10.1 Approval of Board of Education 2024-2025 Budget
Priorities (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3)
- 10.2 Approval of the Center Road School Roof Project
as Complete (BOE Goal #3)
- 10.3 Reports from Board of Education Liaisons
Regarding Attendance at Organization /
Committee Meetings (BOE Goal #1)

**11.0 Review and Update Board of Education
Calendar**

[https://www.vernonpublicschools.org/district-
information/district-calendar](https://www.vernonpublicschools.org/district-information/district-calendar)

**12.0 Opportunity for Questions from the Press
Regarding Agenda Items**

13.0 Adjournment

VERNON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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Information Only	<u>X</u>	Agenda Item	<u>4.1</u>
Decision Requested	<u> </u>	<u>January 8, 2024</u>	<u>Date</u>

AGENDA REPORTING FORM


Subject: Presentation by Northeast School Students (BOE Goal #1, #2)

Background: Northeast School students will give a presentation to the Board about their ESL Program and will share a video called "Journey to Northeast School: Coming to America".

Recommendation: No action required.



Signature of Person(s) Submitting Report



Superintendent of Schools

VERNON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Vernon, Connecticut 06066

Information Only

Agenda Item 7.1

Decision Requested

X

January 8, 2024

Date

AGENDA REPORTING FORM

Subject:

Consent Agenda

Background:

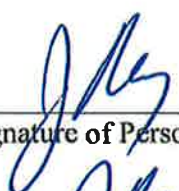
The Board is requested to approve the items listed on the Consent Agenda for January 8, 2024:

7.1

(a) Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting held on December 11, 2023

Recommendation:

Motion: That the Vernon Board of Education approve the items listed on the Consent Agenda for January 8, 2024.



Signature of Person(s) Submitting Report



Superintendent of Schools

The Board of Education Town of Vernon

30 Park Street – PO Box 600
Vernon, Connecticut 06066

Paul Grabowski, Chair
Kristiana Wintress, Vice Chair
Karen Colt, Secretary
Anthony Bedlack
Patricia Buxton
Susan Jablonecki
Kriste Nucci
Simone Sewell
Mason Thrall

December 11, 2023

DRAFT MINUTES

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

A meeting of the Vernon Board of Education was held in-person and via Zoom Webinar at the Administration Building on Monday, December 11, 2023.

Roll call was taken at 7:00 p.m.

There was a quorum. Board members present: Mr. Grabowski, Ms. Wintress, Ms. Colt, Mr. Bedlack, Dr. Buxton, Mrs. Jablonecki, Ms. Nucci, Ms. Sewell and Mr. Thrall.

Student Representatives present: My-Ngoc Lai-Huyen and Aedan Ruddock.

Administration present: Superintendent Dr. Joseph Macary, Assistant Superintendent Mr. Robert Testa and Director of Business and Finance Mr. William Meier III.

2.0 Call to Order

Board Chair Mr. Grabowski called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

3.0 Pledge of Allegiance

4.0 Recognitions and Presentations

4.1 Presentation from State Senator Jeffrey Gordon (BOE Goal #1)

State Senator Jeffrey Gordon, along with Representative Kevin Brown, Representative Jamie Foster and Representative Tammy Nuccio, were present this evening to honor Dr. Macary for being named Connecticut's Superintendent of the Year. They presented him with an Official State Citation from the Connecticut General Assembly, noting his outstanding commitment to the students of Vernon. The delegation also congratulated the Board of Education for being named a "Board of Distinction" for the eighth year. Dr. Macary thanked the delegation for this special honor and said he would not have been Superintendent of the Year if it were not for the students, their families, the Board, the teachers and Administration. The entire school community played an important role in his

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receiving this award and he is most grateful to be the Superintendent of Vernon Public Schools.

4.2 Recognition of Elementary School Art Student's Exhibits at Central Office (BOE Goal #1, #2)

Board Chair Mr. Grabowski announced that we will be honoring the Elementary Art students present this evening for their art displays that are currently adorning the walls of the third floor lobby in Central Office. Art teachers from each elementary school were also in attendance to present certificates of achievement to their students. The following students were honored this evening:

Rian Coma
Liam Virkler
Ivory Huot
Olivia Boudreau
London Martinez
Khloe Cruz
Addilyn Hakian
Hussain Chaudhry
Roxie Farrell
Evers White
Erickson Fronczek
Asia Ouellette

4.3 Presentation by Rockville High School's Culinary Arts Students (BOE Goal #1, #2)

Chef Amy Lessard, Culinary Arts Teacher at Rockville High School, introduced two of her students from the program and asked them to pass out a special treat that the students made for the Board members. She then spoke about the Culinary Arts program and all that it offers to the students, including the Thanksgiving Bread Making Fundraiser, of which all proceeds go to assist families in need in the community. The students then spoke of how much they love the program and how it has taught them life skills that they would never have known had they not taken this class. They encourage all incoming Freshmen to take the class; they said they love the class and it's a lot of fun!

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4.4 Fall Sports Season Report (BOE Goal #1, #2)

Athletic Director Jeff Farrell gave a presentation to the Board regarding the 2023 Fall Sports Season. At Vernon Center Middle School, 20 girls and 23 boys participated in Soccer and 34 students took part in Cross Country. It was a successful season and all participants improved. Rockville High School had 257 student athletes take part in the following sports; Soccer, Unified Sports, Cheerleading, Football, Cross Country, Volleyball, E-Sports, Swimming and Field Hockey. Their overall academic average was 89 (B+) in quarter 1. The Student Athletic Leadership Team (SALT) expanded to 30 members this year and attended a leadership conference at SCSU as well as a CIAC Sportsmanship Conference. They are planning an Officials Appreciation for the winter. All in all, the students had a great Fall Sports Season and are now on to Winter Sports.

5.0 Secretary's Report

5.1 Opportunity for Board of Education to add/delete urgent agenda items

No agenda items were added.

5.2 Rockville High School Student Representative Report

My-Ngoc Lai-Huyen reported the following:

- 36% of the Senior class has applied to a post-secondary program and decisions are starting to be received by students
- The RHS School Store sale to support Mr. RHS was a big success. For updated information, you can follow their Instagram @RHS.SHOPTHEROCK

Aedan Rudock reported the following:

- Winter sports start their seasons this week
- Progress reports come out on Wednesday, December 13th

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 (Individual speakers shall be

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limited to five minutes and the total time for public forum shall be limited to 15 minutes.)

No one addressed the Board.

7.0 Consent Agenda

7.1 Consent Agenda

(a) Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting held on
November 27, 2023

MOTION: Mr. Thrall moved to approve Consent Agenda Item 7.1(a)
SECOND: Mrs. Jablonecki
VOTE: Unanimous

8.0 Personnel

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

This item was moved to the end of the meeting.

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

This item was moved to the end of the meeting.

8.3 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 District Profile and Performance Report (BOE Goal #2)

Mr. Testa presented the District Profile and Performance Report for school year 2022-2023 to the Board. He reviewed the data on each page of the 8 page report, including student enrollment and chronic absenteeism, educator statistics, instruction and resources and

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December 11, 2023

performance and accountability. There were no significant changes in enrollment. 18.5% of Vernon's student population has been identified as Special Education students. Mr. Testa noted that we are not pleased with our chronic absenteeism rate of 18% and are making efforts district wide to reduce the numbers. We hope to increase the diversity of our teaching staff. We did have 3 participants start in our Teacher Residency program over the last three years; only one has completed the program. Special Education students spend 80% or greater of their time with non-disabled peers. The district per pupil cost is currently \$18,050 whereas the State's per pupil cost is \$20,165. Special Education costs take up 22% of our total budget whereas the State's Special Education costs take up 24.9% of their total budget. We utilize grants, State funding and local funding to invest in our students. Students in sub groups in ELA, Math and Science made positive growth in the past year. Vernon Public Schools outperformed the State average in 18 out of 23 Accountability Index indicators.

10.0 General Business

10.1 2023-24 Enrollment Projection Report from NESDEC (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3)

Dr. Macary reviewed the 2023-2024 Enrollment Projection Report from NESDEC with the Board. He noted 3 takeaways from the report:

1. We have stable enrollment in Vernon – both historical and projected
2. There are certain fluctuations in the percentages:
 - a. Lower K-5 students
 - b. Stable in 6-8 students
 - c. Higher in 9-12 students (due to ASTE and VoAg program popularity)
3. This report is grounded in birthrates. It does not take into account the new Kindergarten entry age ruling. The state's student rate is projected to decrease by 6.5%; the number in Vernon is projected to decrease by 3.3%.

This report is very important as it is used to plan for facility needs, projection and our school budget.

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10.2 CAPSS Alliance Districts Narrative (BOE Goal #2)

Dr. Macary reviewed the CAPSS Alliance District Narrative with the Board. Vernon is one of 36 Alliance Districts who service 44% of the students in Connecticut. Alliance District students include more than 64% of CT's students of color, 66% of CT's low-income students and 77% of CT's English Learners. When Alliance Districts are put together with Non-Alliance Districts, the State of Connecticut spends one billion dollars less annually on students in Alliance Districts. Alliance Districts are seeing growth in graduation rates, ELA SBAC rates and improvement in chronic absenteeism rates. However, per pupil expenditure is less.

10.3 Creation of an Ad Hoc Committee on Legal Services (BOE Goal #2)

Mr. Grabowski announced that our Board Attorney has submitted his retirement letter. We put out an RFP for Legal Services and received 5 bids. The proposals are rather lengthy and we have a short window of time to review them. After speaking with Dr. Macary, it was thought that an Ad Hoc Committee should be created to interview each law firm during two afternoons in January from 3 – 5 PM. The new firm would handle items such as expulsions and policy. Mr. Grabowski asked if any Board members would be interested in serving on the Ad Hoc Committee; Mr. Thrall said he would be interested. Mr. Grabowski asked the remaining Board members to reach out to him should they be interested.

10.4 Approval of a Revision to the Board of Education Meeting Calendar for 2024 (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3)

Dr. Macary mentioned that a technicality was discovered regarding submitting the Board Meeting Calendar to the Secretary of the State. When submitting, the calendar must also include all Board meetings in January of the following year per CT State Statute Section § 1-225. If not included, they must be labeled as a "Special Meeting". Since our Board meeting calendars have always listed meetings from January through December of a given year, we are asking that the Board approve the revised meeting calendar for 2024, which now includes the Board meeting for January 2025. This will keep us in compliance with the State statute going forward. As a result of this discovery, our January 8, 2024 meeting

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Mason Thrall**

December 11, 2023

will now need to be labeled as a “Special Meeting” since it was not included in last year’s submission.

MOTION: Dr. Buxton moved to approve the revised Board of Education Meeting Calendar for 2024, which now includes the January 2025 meeting.
SECOND: Ms. Nucci
VOTE: Unanimous

Board Chair Mr. Paul Grabowski asked for a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss agenda items 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3, inviting Superintendent Dr. Joseph Macary and Assistant Superintendent Mr. Bob Testa.

MOTION: Mr. Thrall made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:00 PM to discuss agenda items 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3, inviting Superintendent Dr. Joseph Macary and Assistant Superintendent Mr. Bob Testa.
SECOND: Ms. Wintress
VOTE: Unanimous

The Board returned from Executive Session at 8:46 PM.

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

MOTION: Dr. Buxton moved that the Board deny the request for an extended leave of absence, submitted by Leah Hill, for the reasons discussed in Executive Session, and authorize the Superintendent to inform the employee of the Board’s decision and the reason therefore.
SECOND: Mr. Thrall
VOTE: Unanimous

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

MOTION: Ms. Colt moved that the Board deny the request for an extended leave of absence, submitted by Julia Sullivan, for the reasons discussed in Executive

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December 11, 2023

Session, and authorize the Superintendent to inform the employee of the Board's decision and the reason therefore.

SECOND: Mr. Bedlack
VOTE: Unanimous

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

MOTION: Mrs. Jablonecki moved that the Board approve the request for an extended leave of absence, submitted by Amina Azeez, for the reasons discussed in Executive Session, and authorize the Superintendent to inform the employee of the Board's decision and the reason therefore.

SECOND: Ms. Nucci
VOTE: Unanimous

11.0 Review and Update Board of Education Calendar

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

No updates were made.

12.0 Opportunity for Questions from the Press Regarding Agenda Items

No one from the Press was in attendance.

13.0 Adjournment

MOTION: Mr. Thrall made a motion to adjourn at 8:48 PM
SECOND: Ms. Wintress
VOTE: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Colt, Board Secretary

VERNON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Vernon, Connecticut 06066

Information Only

X

Agenda Item

8.1

Decision Requested

January 8, 2024

Date

AGENDA REPORTING FORM

Subject:

Certified Staff Retirements (BOE Goal #2)

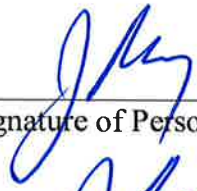
Background:

The following certified staff members have submitted their letters retirement:


<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Date of Retirement</u>
Debra Hill	Grade K, SRS	June 30, 2024
Paula Hughes	Instructional Coach, Elementary	June 30, 2024
Maureen Kearney	Reading Specialist, SRS	June 30, 2024
Victoria Nordlund	Language Arts, RHS	June 30, 2024

Recommendation:

No action required.



Signature of Person(s) Submitting Report



Superintendent of Schools

VERNON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Vernon, Connecticut 06066

Information Only

Agenda Item 8.2

Decision Requested

X

January 8, 2024

Date

AGENDA REPORTING FORM

Subject:

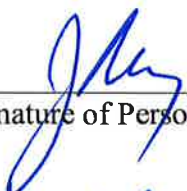
Approval of Vernon School Nurses Association Memorandum of Agreement (BOE Goal #2)

Background:

The Board will review the Vernon School Nurses Association Memorandum of Agreement and will be asked for their approval.

Recommendation:

MOTION: That the Vernon Board of Education approve the Vernon School Nurses Association Memorandum of Agreement as discussed and presented.



Signature of Person(s) Submitting Report



Superintendent of Schools

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
BETWEEN THE VERNON BOARD OF EDUCATION
AND
THE VERNON SCHOOL NURSES ASSOCIATION

The Vernon Board of Education ("Board") and the Vernon School Nurses Association ("VSNA") (referred collectively herein as "Parties") hereby enter into this Memorandum of Agreement ("Agreement") concerning the clarification of procedures for the deduction of employee health insurance premium cost shares, employee HSA deposits, and the timelines for health insurance premium deductions from employee salary payments. In addition, Nurses will now be paid bi-weekly throughout the school year (including the summer months)

Article XII, Insurance Benefits, of the collective bargaining agreement ("CBA") governs the health insurance provisions bargained between the Parties. The Parties agree to clarify the existing procedures for payroll processing of employee health insurance payments in the following way:

- As of January 1, 2024, the Parties are transitioning from having an employee's premium cost share contribution being deducted in eighteen (18) payroll checks to twenty-four (24) bi-monthly payroll checks, and not the third check in any given month.
- Any employee-elected contributions to their health savings account (HSA) will be deducted in twenty-four (24) payroll checks, and not the third check in any given month.
- The Board annually deposits either \$1,000 for a single coverage or \$2,000 for family coverage into an employee's HSA account. Half of these monies will be deposited in the first payroll cycle of September and the remaining half of these monies will be deposited in the first payroll cycle of January.
- The 'health insurance premium collection' plan year is being changed from the current July 1 to June 30; to September 1 to August 31. Premium renewals go into effect July 1, which will necessitate a change in the amount deducted from nurses' paychecks beginning with the first payroll cycle in July. In addition, those nurses retiring or resigning who have worked through June will receive health insurance coverage for the months of July and August at the contractually-provided premium cost share amount for active teachers.
- Effective, January 2, 2024, nurses will be paid bi-weekly (26 Pays) throughout the year, including summer months. Salaries will be adjusted in September per the CBA.

This Agreement is made without prejudice and is confined to the subject matter of this Agreement. This Agreement constitutes the full agreement between the parties regarding the Board's procedures for nurses to pay such health insurance contributions as are expressly named within this Agreement. Any matter dealt with herein shall supersede any conflicting terms in the CBA. This Agreement shall have no precedential value and shall not be presented in any other matter or proceeding in any forum, except to enforce its terms. Further, this Agreement is not subject to modification except through a written agreement signed by the Parties.

For the Board of Education

Patricia Albert, RN
For the Association

Date

12/20/23
Date

PROFESSIONAL AGREEMENT

BETWEEN THE

VERNON BOARD OF EDUCATION

AND THE

VERNON SCHOOL NURSES' ASSOCIATION

July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2027

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ARTICLE I

RECOGNITION

The Board of Education, (herein referred to as the “Board”), recognizes the Vernon School Nurses Association, (herein referred to as the “Association”), as the sole and exclusive bargaining agent for the purpose of:

1. Professional negotiations of wages, hours and other conditions of employment for all Registered Nurses (herein referred to as “Nurses”) employed by the Board.
2. To encourage and abet an effective and harmonious working relationship between the Board and the Nurses in order that the cause of healthcare in the educational environment may be best served. Recognition is granted pursuant to certification issued by the State Labor Relations Board in case no. ME-5257.

ARTICLE II

LICENSURE

Throughout the term of this Agreement, all Nurses will maintain and furnish the Board with a valid Registered Nurse’s license issued by the Connecticut Department of Public Health. If at any time during the term of this Agreement a Nurse loses or ceases to hold a valid license from the Connecticut Department of Health which entitles them to discharge the duties and responsibilities of a School Nurse, it shall be deemed just cause for immediate termination.

ARTICLE III

WORK YEAR

1. The work year for the Nurses shall be the student school year and shall not exceed 183 student days. In addition, Nurses will work five (5) additional days either before school begins or after school is no longer in session. Workdays may be at the discretion of the Nurse with prior approval of school building administration. These five (5) days can be worked in small blocks of time as long as the total amount of hours worked equals thirty-five (35). Any change shall be subject to negotiations between the Board and the Association.

2. Nurses shall have a duty-free lunch period in their assigned schools. Nurses who have their lunch period interrupted by student or staff medical needs may take compensable time immediately after providing the needed service.

It is understood that Nurses are free to leave the building during their lunch period, with prior arrangements for nursing coverage, mutual agreement of the building principal or designee, and notification of departure and destination prior to leaving.

3. On each workday, Nurses shall report for work fifteen (15) minutes prior to the opening time for that day and shall remain thirty (30) minutes after school closes. On half-day sessions or early closing, Nurses shall remain until the last bus leaves. Any change to the length of the workday beyond the current seven and one-half (7½) hours shall be subject to negotiations between the Board and the Association.
4. Nurses shall not be assigned scheduled duties such as cafeteria, playground, *etc.*
5. Any Nurse required to travel from one school to another during the course of their normal working schedule shall be reimbursed mileage using the current IRS standard mileage rate.
6. Nurses shall be compensated at their regular hourly rate for any medical emergency beyond their normal working hours for a contracted school year.

ARTICLE IV

PROFESSIONAL NEGOTIATIONS

1. The Board and the Association agree to commence negotiations in good faith, in accordance with state statute, to secure a successor agreement relative to all matters concerning wages, hours and other conditions of employment. The Agreement so negotiated shall bind and inure to the benefit of the Board, Nurses and the Association and shall be reduced to writing and signed by the Board and Association.
2. The Board and the Association shall cooperate with one another upon reasonable request to provide information, statistics and records which the Association or the Board may deem necessary for the proper administration of this Agreement. Either party may, if it so desires, utilize the services of outside consultants or negotiators and may call upon professional and lay representatives to assist in negotiations.
3. The Board will provide Nurses with electronic access to a copy of this Agreement within a reasonable time after the date of the signing of this Agreement; new Nurses will be provided with electronic access to a copy of this Agreement at the time of hiring.

ARTICLE V LEAVE PROVISIONS

1. Personal Days

Nurses shall be entitled to five (5) days of paid personal leave in each school year for imperative personal business which could not effectively be conducted outside of school hours. All personal days must receive prior notification and approval of the Nurse Supervisor and the Principal and/or the Superintendent.

Personal days are non-accumulative.

Requests for personal days shall, when possible, be submitted to the Nurse Supervisor and the Principal and/or Superintendent at least seven (7) days prior to the requested day of leave. In extreme emergencies, personal days may be granted by the Nurse Supervisor and the Principal or Superintendent to eligible staff members unable to request the day(s) in advance.

2. Bereavement

Up to three (3) days with full pay will be granted in the event of death(s) within the Nurse's immediate family. Immediate family for the purposes of this clause is defined as spouse, children, parents, grandparents, siblings, stepchildren, grandchildren, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, great grandparents, great grandchildren, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, and also any relative who is domiciled in the Nurse's household.

3. Religious Days

After five (5) personal days have been used during a contract year, the Superintendent may grant up to three (3) additional days for the observation of recognized religious holidays.

4. Unauthorized Absence

Loss of pay for a Nurse's unauthorized absence shall be based on the Nurse's current daily rate of pay in the year of occurrence. Such rate shall be determined by the number of days Nurses are required to work.

5. Professional Development

With prior approval of the Nurse Supervisor and the Superintendent, Nurses may attend up to three (3) health related in-services. Full pay and expenses shall be granted for attending these in-services. In lieu of in-services, Nurses may select to improve and expand one's knowledge base utilizing professional development funds

to obtain membership to professional organizations, and to obtain health-related subscriptions or textbooks. In addition, each Nurse shall be allowed one school day for the purpose of visiting health programs in some other school. Each Nurse shall submit a properly executed request form and furnish a report to the Superintendent following the conference or visit.

6. Maternity Leave

Employees will be granted maternity leave as applicable to state and federal statutes.

7. Childrearing Leave

1. Nurses wishing to apply for childrearing leave may make application for such leave to the Board through the Superintendent in accordance with established procedures governing all requests for unscheduled leaves of absence other than personal leave, sick leave, or other leaves specifically provided for in this Agreement.

2. Requests for childrearing leave shall be considered by the Board in good faith in a manner identical to other requests from Nurses for unscheduled leaves of absence.

8. Leaves of Absence

1. Leaves of absence may be granted by the Board after two (2) years of service. A letter of intent must be presented to the Board before May 1st for the leave of absence starting in September of the same year. In extreme emergencies, a leave of absence may be granted by the Superintendent to eligible staff members unable to request leave in advance.

2. Leaves of absence are limited to ten (10) school months in any five (5) year period. Exceptions may be granted upon request from the Superintendent and approved by the Board.

3. A Nurse receiving a leave of absence for one year shall be guaranteed that position or a comparable position, if available, upon return, if the Superintendent is notified in writing of the intent to return by March 1st. In the event of such return, such leave shall not be considered a break in service.

9. Military Leave

It is agreed between the undersigned parties that any permanent full-time employee of the Board who is called up for full time active U.S. military service or full time U.S. National Guard duty shall be granted military pay and will be

paid a differential between military pay and their Board pay for the period of active duty, not to exceed two years from the start of the leave. Further, the Board will pay the applicable employer medical insurance premiums and make any normally required employer pension contributions for employees absent on military leave under this memorandum for the period of active duty, not to exceed two years from the start of the leave. Employees on leave will continue to be responsible for making all required employee insurance premium share contributions and all required employee pension contributions during the term of the leave. Seniority rights will continue to accrue during the period of military leave in accordance with legal requirements and the applicable collective bargaining agreement and employees absent on military leave pursuant to this memorandum will have all reinstatement rights provided by law.

ARTICLE VI SICK LEAVE

1. Nurses shall be entitled to a minimum sick leave of fifteen (15) school days in each school year with full pay. Sick leave may accumulate to not more than 172 days. Nurses hired prior to July 1, 2006 retain 182 days of accumulation. Nurses hired after July 1, 2019 and before June 30, 2023 may accumulate not more than 125 days. Nurses hired after June 30, 2023 may accumulate not more than 90 days. Sick leave shall accumulate or be restored when the said limit is reduced below this limit at the rate of one and one-half (1^{1/2}) days per month during the school year.
2. Each Nurse's accumulated sick leave may be viewed electronically.
3. In exceptional cases, a written request for extension of sick leave may be granted by the Board when a Nurse's sick time has been used up.
4. Loss of pay for Nurses exceeding their sick leave shall be based on the current rate of pay of the Nurse in the year of occurrence.
5. A physician's certificate may be required after three (3) consecutive working days of absence of any Nurse.
6. Nurses shall receive no compensation for unused accumulated sick leave upon resignation, termination or retirement from the Board.

ARTICLE VII AFTER SCHOOL MEETINGS

1. Nurses may be required to remain after school to attend the following meetings: Superintendent General Staff Meeting or other meetings called by the

Superintendent; Monthly Nurses' Staff Meetings as called by the Nurse Supervisor; General Faculty Meetings called by the School Principal; and special groups as authorized by the Superintendent.

2. The total of such meetings shall not exceed two (2) evening meetings per school year and four (4) afternoon meetings per month. Attendance exceptions shall be determined by the administration. After school meetings shall not exceed one (1) hour but in extraordinary situations may be extended to 1½ hours. Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meetings and parent/nurse conferences shall not be included in the above totals.

However, the Board shall use its best efforts to encourage parents to, where feasible, schedule PPT meetings immediately before or after the normal school day.

ARTICLE VIII

ASSIGNMENTS AND TRANSFERS

1. Assignments and transfers of Nurses will be made by the Superintendent to best serve the interests of the educational program. Whenever possible, affected Nurses shall be given advance notice of assignments and transfers.

2. In the event that Nurse assignments for the coming year are changed during summer recess, written notice of the change in assignment will be provided to affected Nurses as soon as possible. The notice will be sent to the record address of the affected Nurse with a copy to the president of the Association. Nurses who anticipate being away from their regular mailing address for an extended period during the summer may, if they desire, leave a temporary address with the Superintendent prior to the close of school, and a copy of the change in assignment will be sent to that address.

3. Up-to-date listing of new and open positions shall be forwarded to the President of the Association and posted internally before it is advertised outside the District. Written notice will also be mailed to the President of the Association during the summer time period.

4. In the event a vacancy occurs within the bargaining unit, any Nurse may submit a written request to the Superintendent for a transfer.

5. Summer School Nursing positions must be offered internally for one week before the position is posted externally. Any nurse employed by the Board is eligible for employment as the Nurse for the Summer School Program. The salary for this position shall be the Nurse's current hourly rate.

ARTICLE IX

PROBATIONARY PERIOD

New Nurses shall serve a probationary period of ninety (90) days worked and shall have no seniority or grievance rights during this period, but shall be subject to all other provisions of this Agreement. The purpose of the probationary period is to permit the Superintendent or designee, with input from the Nurse Supervisor, to determine if the Nurse has the necessary skills and abilities to retain the position. Nurses who complete the probationary period shall acquire length of service records as to the date of their first day of work.

ARTICLE X

EDUCATIONAL REIMBURSEMENT

The Board shall, upon presentation of an official transcript, reimburse fifty percent (50%) of tuition costs and expenses up to \$300 per Nurse in a given year. All courses must have the prior approval of the Superintendent and courses must lead to a baccalaureate or higher degree in Nursing.

ARTICLE XI

REDUCTION IN FORCE

In the event of a reduction of the number of Nurses, length of service shall be a factor in the Board's determination of personnel to be retained. The salary of an individual shall not be a factor. The affected Nurse shall receive thirty (30) days' notice prior to the effective date of any such staff reduction. Nurses, who have been terminated due to reduction in force, shall have recall rights for a period of one (1) year, and shall be recalled in inverse order of layoff.

ARTICLE XII

INSURANCE

The Nurses will be entitled to the following:

1. Life Insurance

The Board agrees to provide and pay for Life Insurance coverage in the amount of \$50,000, with double indemnity for accidental death, for each Nurse.

Nurses shall be eligible to purchase at their own expense additional amounts of life insurance at applicable group rates to an amount of two (2) times their annual salary rounded to the nearest \$1000, to a maximum of \$75,000 contingent upon the insurer offering said coverage.

2. Health Insurance

The medical insurance plan available during this Agreement is the High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) combined, for eligible Nurses, with a Health Savings Account (HSA).

The HDHP shall have a \$2,000 single and \$4,000 family annual deductible for in-network services. Out-of-network services will also be subject to a \$2,000/\$4,000 initial deductible. Once the deductible is met, there shall be no coinsurance payments required for in-network covered services. Out-of-network services shall be subject to a 70% Plan payment/30% member coinsurance payment, to a coinsurance payment maximum of \$2,000 for individual coverage and \$4,000 for family coverage. This coinsurance payment shall be in addition to the initial deductible.

An HSA shall be established by the Board for each eligible Nurse. The Board will pay 50% of the employee's deductible. The Board will pay \$1000 for single coverage and \$2000 for two-person or family coverage. The Board shall deposit those funds bi-annually in the participating Nurse's HSA account.

Prescription drugs are covered as part of the HDHP and will count toward satisfying the applicable \$2,000/\$4,000 deductible. Prescription drug co-pays for drugs purchased after the deductible has been satisfied will be subject to co-pays of \$5/\$20/\$35 for a 30 day supply. A ninety day supply is available through mail order at twice (2X) the normal 30-day co-pay.

Premium share contribution levels for the HDHP shall be paid by each participating Nurse through the following payroll deductions.

Year	
2023-2024	21%
2024-2025	22%
2025-2026	23%
2026-2027	24%

Employees who are not eligible for an HSA can participate in a Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) with the Board providing the same contributions towards reimbursement as in the HSA. The parties acknowledge that the Board's contribution toward the funding of the HSA and/or HRA plans is not an element of the underlying insurance plan, but rather relates to the manner in which the deductible shall be funded for active employees.

Starting July 1, 2023, the Vernon Public Schools will engage in a Health Enhancement Program. The Health Enhancement Program (HEP) is a wellness program that requires all enrolled employees and their spouses/children to obtain

age-appropriate wellness exams and preventive screenings. Some examples of age-appropriate care would include the following services:

- Routine Physical
- Cholesterol Screen
- Mammogram
- Cervical Cancer Screening
- Colon/Rectal Screen

Those households that do not meet the annual HEP requirements will be expected to pay a higher employee contribution. Anyone not meeting the HEP requirements will pay 10 percentage points over the current medical insurance coverage. (For example, if the current medical insurance coverage for employees is 20% and they do not adhere to the HEP, then they will pay 30%.) The program is designed to positively impact the overall health of plan participants.

3. Dental Insurance

The Board agrees to provide individual and family membership in a Co-pay Dental Plan. The Nurses' contribution towards the applicable premium rate for basic dental is thirty-five percent (35%), including Riders.

The Board also agrees, subject to the rules of the dental insurance carrier, to make available to all Nurses Dental Rider "A".

4. Self-Insurance Option/Competitive Selection

The Board may provide health coverage for Nurses through alternate carriers. In no case shall the coverages and benefits provided through alternate insurance carriers, through self-insurance or through a combination of such alternatives shall be less than the coverages available to Nurses under the group health insurance policies described elsewhere in this Article.

Should the Board desire to change insurance carriers, the Association president shall be first notified and given an opportunity to review the proposed changes. Should the Association and the Board disagree that the alternative coverage proposed will provide equal coverage to that provided by the group plans, binding arbitration as set forth under Article XIII of this Agreement may be immediately implemented at the request of the Association or the Board. Such arbitration shall take place before an impartial arbitrator with expertise in insurance. None of the individual coverages set forth in this Article shall be subject to a proposed change in carrier and/or the self-insurance option more than once per year. Should the Board self-insure or change carriers pursuant to this section, the privacy of the members of the unit shall be fully respected.

5. Health Insurance at Retirement

The Board agrees to carry retirees on its insurance roll as part of the same group as active employees at no cost to the Board until eligible for Medicare. Eligible retirees will pay the full cost of health insurance at prescribed intervals as established by the Board's Director of Business and Finance. Current insurance plans available at retirement include: HSA Plan.

ARTICLE XIII
RETIREMENT/HEALTH AND SAFETY

1. Retirement Pay

Upon the retirement or death of a Nurse, such Nurse or surviving spouse and/or dependent shall be paid an amount equivalent to two (2) days' compensation established by the individual's current wages at the time of retirement or death for each year of service to the Board.

2. Town of Vernon Retirement Plans

- A. Employees hired prior to July 1, 2016, and eligible for the Town Pension, are required to participate in the Town's Defined Benefit Plan (see Appendix A). Employees hired on or after July 1, 2016 and eligible for the Town Pension, are not eligible for the Defined Benefit Plan and shall be enrolled in the Town's Defined Contribution Plan. Employees currently enrolled and contributing to the Town's Defined Benefit Plan are not eligible for the Town's Defined Contribution Plan.

3. Health and Safety

The Board shall provide free of charge to all Nurses who wish them, medical injections for the prevention of influenza (flu shots).

ARTICLE XIV
SALARY SCHEDULE

The Nurses' wage schedule is attached hereto as Exhibit 1.

For new hires, placement on the salary schedule shall be as follows:

- Step 1 for 1-3 years of school and/or related experience
- Step 2 for 4-6 years of school and/or related experience
- Step 3 for 7+ years of school and/or related experience

The middle school nurse will annually be paid an additional \$500 and the high school nurse will annually be paid \$1000. The Nurse at Center Road School will annually be paid \$250

Nurses shall be paid an educational stipend of \$500 per year for a Master's Degree.

The Nurses shall receive salary through direct deposit.

Any Nurse previously employed by the Board and who left the Board's employment in good standing, shall be allowed to return to the district to work as a substitute nurse.

ARTICLE XV GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

1. Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to secure, at the lowest possible administrative level, equitable solutions to problems which may arise affecting the welfare or working conditions of Nurses. Both parties agree that proceedings shall be kept as confidential as is appropriate.

2. Definitions

For the purpose of this Agreement, a grievance shall be defined as a written complaint by a Nurse that a specific provision or provisions of this Agreement has been misapplied or misinterpreted. A grievance shall state a specific section or sections of the Agreement claimed to be misapplied or misinterpreted and shall also contain a clear statement of the relief requested.

"Party in interest" shall mean the person or persons making the claim, including their designated representative as provided for herein and any person or persons who might be required to take action or against whom action might be taken in order to resolve the problem.

"Days" shall mean days when school is in session.

3. Time Limits

Since it is important that grievances be processed as rapidly as possible, the number of days indicated at each step shall be considered as a maximum. The time limits specified may, however, be extended by written agreement of the parties in interest.

If a Nurse does not file a grievance in writing within thirty (30) days after they knew, or should have known, of the act or conditions on which the grievance is based, then the grievance shall be considered to have been waived.

Failure by the aggrieved Nurse at any level to appeal a grievance to the next level within the specified time shall be deemed to be acceptance of the decision rendered at that level.

All grievances must be processed after school hours, unless otherwise mutually agreed upon.

4. Informal Procedures

If a Nurse feels that they may have a grievance, they must first discuss the matter with the Nurse Supervisor or other appropriate administrator in an effort to resolve the problem informally.

If a Nurse is not satisfied with such disposition of the matter, they shall have the right to have the Association assist them in further efforts to resolve the problem informally with the Nurse Supervisor or other appropriate administrators.

5. Formal Procedures

Level One - Principal

If an aggrieved nurse is not satisfied with the outcome of informal procedures, or if they have elected not to utilize such procedures, they may present their claim as a written grievance to their principal or other appropriate administrator. If the grievance is directed at the principal, the grievance would be presented to the Assistant Superintendent in lieu of the principal.

The principal or Assistant Superintendent shall, within five (5) days after receipt of the written grievance, render their decision and the reasons therefore in writing to the aggrieved Nurse, with a copy to the Association.

Level Two - Superintendent

If the aggrieved Nurse is not satisfied with the disposition of their grievance at Level One, they, within three (3) days after the decision, or within eight (8) days after their formal presentation, file their written grievance with the Association for referral to the Superintendent.

The Association shall, within five (5) days after receipt, refer the grievance to the Superintendent, but prior to so doing; the Association shall provide an opportunity for the aggrieved Nurse to meet with the appropriate Association committee to review the grievance.

The Superintendent shall, within ten (10) days after receipt of the referral, meet with the aggrieved Nurse and with representatives of the Association for the purpose of resolving the grievance. A full and accurate record of such hearing shall be kept by the Superintendent and made available to party or parties concerned or their authorized representatives and the Board of Education upon written request.

The Superintendent shall, within five (5) days after the hearing render a decision and the reasons therefore in writing to the aggrieved Nurse, with a copy to the Association.

Level Three - Board

If the aggrieved Nurse is not satisfied with the disposition of their grievance at Level Two, they may, within three (3) days after the Superintendent's decision, file the grievance again with the Association for appeal to the Board.

The Association shall, within three (3) days after receipt refer the appeal to the Board.

The Board or its designated Grievance Committee shall, within ten (10) days after the receipt of the appeal, meet with the aggrieved Nurse and with representatives of the Association for the purposes of resolving the grievance. A hearing of the grievance shall include testimony, if offered, from the aggrieved Nurse with representatives of the Association if desired as well as testimony from the Superintendent or administrator(s) if offered. Both parties may be allowed to present testimony if they wish. Under normal situations, the Board will avoid receiving testimony from either Administration, or the Nurse or their representative after the hearing has been concluded. Full and accurate record of such hearing shall be kept by the Superintendent and made available to any party or parties concerned on their written request.

The Board shall, within three (3) days after such meeting, render its decision and the reasons therefore in writing to the aggrieved Nurse, with a copy to the Association, unless extreme extenuating circumstances make it impossible for the Board to file a written decision within three (3) days, in which case a decision is to be filed as soon as possible.

Level Four - Arbitration

If the aggrieved Nurse is not satisfied with the disposition of this grievance at Level Three, they may, within three (3) days after the decision, request in writing to the president of the Association that their grievance be submitted to arbitration.

The Association may, within five (5) days after receipt of such request, submit the grievance to arbitration by so notifying the Board in writing.

The Chairperson of the Board and the President of the Association shall, within five (5) days after such written notice, jointly select a single arbitrator who is an experienced and impartial person of recognized competence. If the parties are unable to agree upon an arbitrator within five (5) days, the American Arbitration Association shall immediately be called upon to select the single arbitrator.

The Arbitrator selected shall confer promptly with representatives of the Board and the Association, shall review the record of prior hearings, and shall hold such further hearings with the aggrieved nurse and other parties in interest as they shall deem requisite.

The Arbitrator shall, within thirty (30) days after conclusion of the hearings, render their decision in writing to all parties in interest setting forth their findings of fact, reasoning, and conclusions on the issues submitted. The decision of the Arbitrator shall be final and binding upon all parties in interest.

The costs for the services of the Arbitrator shall be borne equally by the Board and the Association.

6. Rights of Nurses to Representation

No reprisals of any kind shall be taken by either party or by any member of the administration against any participant in the grievance procedure by reason of such participation.

The Association may act as or for an aggrieved Nurse at any stage in this procedure, provided that this shall not be interpreted to limit the right of a Nurse to present their own grievance at Levels One, Two and Three without representation by the Association. Any party in interest may be represented at Levels Two and Three of the formal grievance procedure by a person of their own choosing, except that they may not be represented by a representative or by an officer of any nurse organization other than the Association. The Association shall have the right to state its views when it does not represent the Nurse.

In the event that the Association shall not have elected to submit a grievance to arbitration, the aggrieved nurse may submit their grievance to arbitration independently by following the procedure outlined above in lieu of the Association, provided; however, that in such case the costs for the services of the arbitrator shall be borne by the aggrieved nurse.

The Association and/or the Board may, if they so desire, call upon any professional services for consultation and assistance at any stage of the procedure.

7. Miscellaneous

All documents, communications and records dealing with the processing of a grievance shall be filed separately from the personnel files of the participants, except for the final decision of the Arbitrator, should such be rendered.

ARTICLE XVI
JUST CAUSE/TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

No Nurse shall be discharged, demoted, suspended or disciplined in any way except for just cause.

ARTICLE XII
ASSOCIATION SECURITY

1. The Board agrees to deduct from the pay of its Nurses who provide written authorization for such deductions from their wages, membership dues, as may be fixed by the Association. Such deductions shall continue for the duration of this Agreement or any extension thereof.

2. The deduction for Association dues in any month shall be made during the first payroll week of said month and shall be remitted to the Association no later than the first day of the following month. A signed card approved by the Board authorizing the deduction will be provided to the Board by Nurses who voluntarily determine to join the Association. The Association agrees to hold the Board harmless from damages arising from the making of authorized deductions.

3. The Board agrees that there will be no lockout of any employee or employees during the life of this Agreement. The Association agrees that there will be no strike or other form of work stoppage during the life of this Agreement.

4. The Board shall prepare a list of Nurses showing their seniority in length of service with the Board and deliver the same to the Association on or before December 1 of each year. Unless the Association files a grievance concerning the list within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of same, the list will be presumed to be correct for all purposes of this Agreement. Upon completion of their probationary period, new Nurses shall be added to this list.

ARTICLE XIII
GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. This Agreement contains the full and complete agreement between the Board and the Association and neither party is required to renegotiate upon any item, whether it is covered or not, during the term of this Agreement.

2. In the event that any provisions or portion of this Agreement is ultimately ruled invalid for any reason by an authority of established and competent legal jurisdiction, the balance and remainder of this Agreement shall remain in full force and effect.
3. This Agreement shall not be altered, amended, or changed except in writing, signed by both the Board and the Association, which amendment shall be appended hereto and become a part hereof.

ARTICLE XIX
DURATION AND HOLDOVER

The provisions of this Agreement shall be effective as of July 1, 2023 and shall continue and remain in full force and effect to and including June 30, 2027.


In the event the Board and the Association fail to secure a successor agreement prior to the termination of this Agreement, the Board or the Association may elect to extend the duration of this Agreement until a successor agreement is made. Such successor agreement shall become effective on July 1st of the year in which the current Agreement would otherwise have expired.

SIGNATURE BLOCK

This Agreement is made and entered into on the 12th day of December, 2022 by and between the Board and the Association.



Anne Fischer, Chairperson
Vernon Board of Education



Patricia Albert, President
Vernon School Nurses' Association

EXHIBIT 1

Vernon Public Schools Nurses' Wage Schedule Years 2023- 2027

	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027
Entry 3 Years	\$59,000	\$60,180	\$61,384	\$62,611
4-6 Years	\$61,000	\$62,220	\$63,464	\$64,734
7+ Years	\$62,500	\$63,750	\$65,025	\$66,326
Nurse Supervisor	\$70,000	\$71,400	\$72,828	\$74,285

New hires will be placed on the Wage Schedule as follows:

Step 1 for 1-3 years of school and/or related experience

Step 2 for 4-6 years of school and/or related experience

Step 3 for 7+ years of school and/or related experience

An employee's hourly rate will be determined by dividing the annual salary by 187 days divided by the maximum hours per day (7.5 hours) an employee may work (Example: $\$50,000 / 187 / 7.5 = \35.65).

EXHIBIT 2



CO-PAY DENTAL with Rider A

The Co-Pay Dental plan covers diagnostic, preventive and restorative procedures necessary for adequate dental health.

COVERED SERVICES INCLUDE:

- ✓ Oral Examinations
- ✓ Periapical and bitewing x-rays
- ✓ Topical fluoride applications for members under age 19
- ✓ Prophylaxis, including cleaning, scaling and polishing
- ✓ Relining of dentures
- ✓ Repairs of broken removable dentures
- ✓ Palliative emergency treatment
- ✓ Routine fillings consisting of silver amalgam and tooth color materials; including stainless steel crowns (primary teeth)*
- ✓ Simple extractions**
- ✓ Endodontics-including pulpotomy, direct pulp capping and root canal therapy (excluding restoration)

*Payment for an inlay, onlay or crown will equal the amount payable for a three-surface amalgam filling when the member is not covered by Dental Amendatory Rider A.

**Payment for a surgical extraction or a hemisection with root removal will equal the amount payable for a simple extraction when the member is not covered by the Dental Amendatory Rider A.

ACCESSING BENEFITS:

Participating Dentists Benefits

When a member receives care from one of over 1,800 Participating Dentists, he or she simply presents his or her identification card showing dental coverage. The dentist bills us directly for all covered services. For dental care provided by a Participating Dentist, we will pay the lesser of eighty percent of the dentist's usual charge or eighty percent of the Usual, Customary and Reasonable charge as determined by us. The dentist accepts the allowance upon which the payment is based as payment in full and will make no additional charge to the member except for the remaining coinsurance balance.

Non-Participating Dentists Benefits

For covered dental services provided by a Non-Participating Dentist, in or out of Connecticut, we pay the lesser of eighty percent of the dentist's charge or the applicable allowance for the procedure, as determined by us. The member is responsible for any difference between the amount paid by us and the fee charged by the dentist.

This does not constitute your health plan or insurance policy. It is only a general description of the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Connecticut Co-Pay Dental Plan. Refer to your Master Group Policy or Description of Benefits, on file with your employer, for a complete listing of benefits, maximums, exclusions and limitations.

08/16/2016

Dental Amendatory Rider A **Additional Basic Benefits**

In addition to the services provided under your dental program, the following additional basic benefits are provided:

- ◆ Inlays (not part of bridge)
- ◆ Onlays (not part of bridge)
- ◆ Crown (not part of bridge)
- ◆ Space Maintainers
- ◆ Oral surgery consisting of fracture and dislocation treatment, diagnosis and treatment of cyst and abscess, surgical extractions and impaction
- ◆ Apicoectomy

The dental services listed above are subject to the following qualifications:

We will pay for individual crowns, inlays and onlays only when amalgam or synthetic fillings would not be satisfactory for the retention of the tooth, as determined by us.

We will not pay for a replacement provided less than five (5) years following a placement or replacement which was covered under this Rider. We will not pay for individual crowns, inlays or onlays placed to alter vertical dimension, for the purpose of precision attachment of dentures, or when they are splinted together for any reason.

ACCESSING BENEFITS:

Participating Dentists Benefits

Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield will pay the lesser of 50% of the dentist's usual charge or 50% percent of the Usual, Customary and Reasonable Charge, as determined by us, for the dental services described in this Rider. Dentists who participate in our dental programs agree to accept our allowance as full payment and may not bill the member for any additional charges except for the remaining coinsurance balance.

Non-Participating Dentists Benefits

In the event these services are rendered by a non-participating dentist, we will pay to the member the lesser of 50% of the dentist's charge or 50% of the applicable allowance for the procedure as determined by us. The member is responsible for any difference between the amount paid by us and the fee charged by the dentist.

This does not constitute your health plan or insurance policy. It is only a general description of the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Connecticut Co-Pay Dental Plan. Refer to your Master Group Policy or Description of Benefits, on file with your employer, for a complete listing of benefits, maximums, exclusions and limitations.

08/16/2016

EXHIBIT 3

A. Defined Benefits Plan for Employees hired prior to July 1, 2016

The Board will continue, without change, the existing Defined Benefits Plan, presently in effect, covering bargaining unit members as follows:

Normal Retirement: Age 62 and ten (10) years of services or Age 60 and thirty-two (32) years of service.

Multiplier: Two percent (2%)

Average Earnings: Monthly salary or wage received averaged over a five (5) year consecutive period which results in the highest average

Benefit: The monthly benefit rate is calculated as two percent (2%) of average monthly earnings times (x) credited service to a maximum of thirty-five (35) years and a maximum of seventy percent (70%).

Vesting: Five (5) to ten (10) year sliding scale, one hundred percent (100%) vesting at ten (10) years of credited service.

Employee Interest: Employees are guaranteed two percent (2%) interest on all their contributions

Employee Contribution: Effective July 1, 2016, employees shall contribute seven percent (7%) of base wages to the pension plan.

B. Defined Contribution Plan for Employees hired on or after July 1, 2016

Employees hired on or after July 1, 2016 are not eligible for the Defined Benefits Plan but will automatically be enrolled in the Defined Contribution Plan provided the employees have the option to opt-out of the plan. The Board will contribute 2% of the employee's base wages for all employees who elect to participate in the Defined Contribution Plan. If an employee contributes 7.5% or more of his or her wages to this plan the Board will contribute an additional 2% for a total contribution by the Board of 4% of the employee's annual base wages. Final payout of sick and vacation time will not be added to the final average earnings of the pension calculation. The Board will establish such Defined Contribution Plan as soon as administratively possible.

Vested Board contributions for the employee shall be as follows with no minimum age:

5 years of service	25%
6 years of service	40%
7 years of service	55%
8 years of service	70%
9 years of service	85%
10 years of service	100%

C. This change shall not affect any employee who is in the employ of the Vernon Public Schools and a participant of the Town of Vernon Pension Plan prior to the signing of this Agreement from participating in the Town of Vernon Pension Plan program upon transfer to this bargaining unit.

No employee hired prior to July 1, 2016 may participate in the Defined Contribution Plan.

At any time, should employees in this bargaining unit subject to the Pension Plan represent less than a majority of the bargaining unit; such employees will be permitted to maintain their Pension Plan benefits as listed in this Article, throughout their employment with the Vernon Public Schools.

EXHIBIT 4

Health Insurance Plan Summary

Please click on the link below to visit the Vernon Public Schools website

for current health plan information:

<https://www.vernonpublicschools.org/departments/human-resources/insurance>

VERNON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Vernon, Connecticut 06066


Information Only	<u>X</u>	Agenda Item	<u>9.1</u>
Decision Requested	<u> </u>		<u>January 8, 2024</u>
			Date

AGENDA REPORTING FORM


Subject: District Strategic Plan Implementation Update (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3)

Background: Laura Boutilier of Partners for Educational Leadership will provide an update to the Board on Vernon's District Strategic Plan Implementation.

Recommendation: No action required.



Signature of Person(s) Submitting Report



Superintendent of Schools



VERNON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

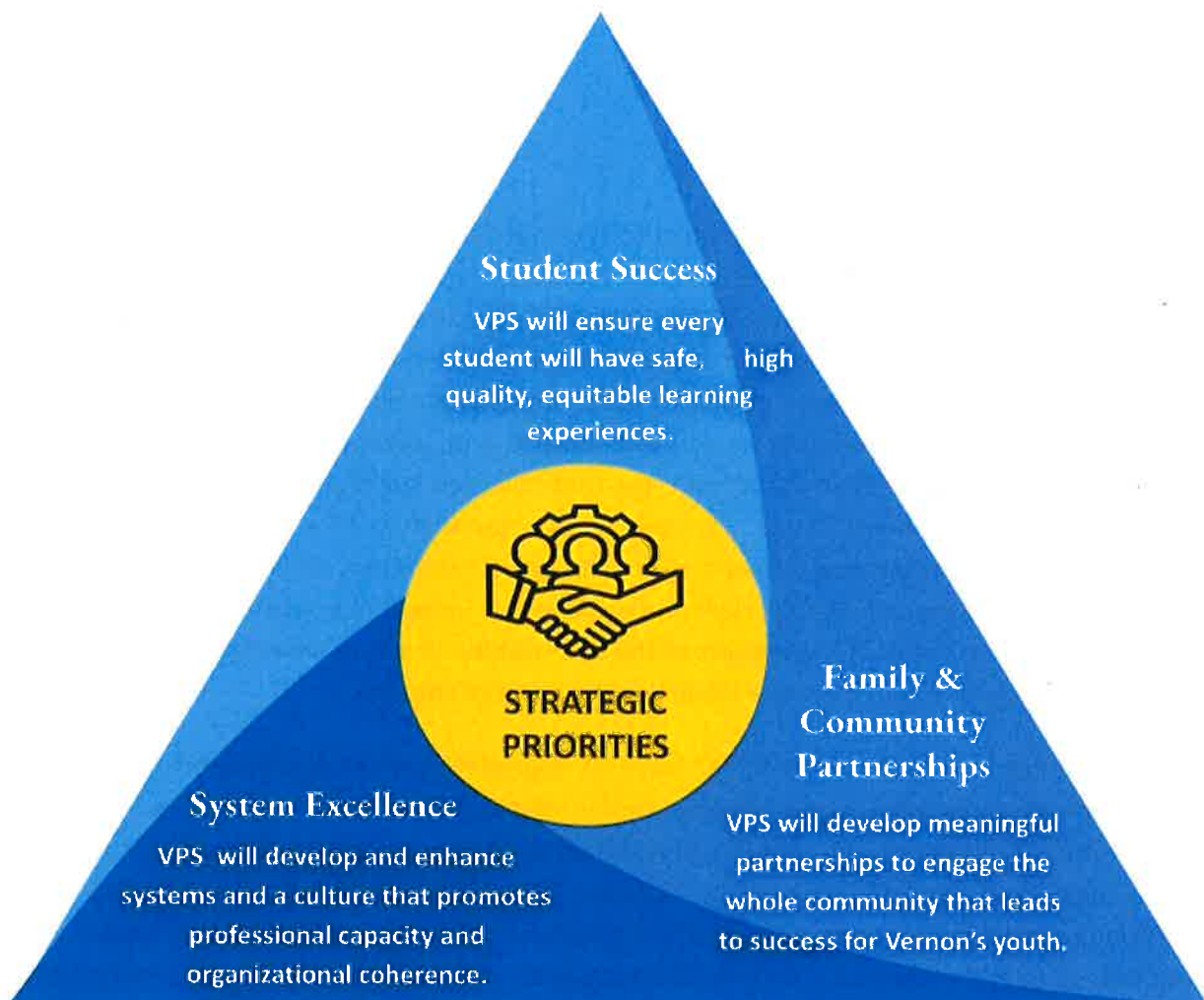
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STRATEGIC PLAN

2022 – 2027



Where Students Learn, Achieve and Succeed

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Forward

This *Strategic Plan* is a 3 to 5 year roadmap to drive school improvement efforts in Vernon. The Strategic Plan affirms our vision, mission and core beliefs, while creating a pathway towards the next level of educational excellence for all students. The Strategic Plan is built upon successful district initiatives like the Blueprint for Success, Vision of the Graduate, and District Equity Stance which have guided improvement efforts to date. Input was solicited from over 100 individuals and students through community based focus groups and stakeholder feedback. Gratitude is extended to the Strategic Planning committee that included key district leaders, administrators and Board of Education members. This plan is the culmination of a comprehensive strategic planning process that outlined a road map for the district to follow. This Strategic Plan ensures students will adopt the knowledge, skills and dispositions identified in our Vision of the Graduate in order to become successful members of the community. It will be monitored and adjusted as needed on a regular basis to ensure fidelity to the goals of the plan.

The Vernon Public Schools serves 3,500 students in grades pre-kindergarten through 12th. The district has 5 elementary schools (PK-5), a middle school (6-8) and one high school. Vernon is in northeastern Connecticut. In addition, Vernon administers a regional Adult Education program for 14 towns and a regional agriculture, science, technology, education (ASTE) program for 10 surrounding towns. The town of Vernon is a diverse community and is a compilation of urban, suburban and rural areas that comprise this microcosm of Connecticut. According to the October 2020 census, 55% are identified as free/reduced lunch students; 18% of the students are identified as special education; and 46% are minority students made up of 21% Hispanic, 10% African American, 7% Asian, and 7% two or more races. Four percent of the students are deemed as having limited English proficiency.

Strategic Planning Committee Members

Laura Boutilier	Facilitator, Partners for Educational Leadership
Kevin Brown	Member, Vernon Board of Education
Jennifer Buckler	Member, Vernon Board of Education
Patricia Buxton, Ed.D.	Secretary, Vernon Board of Education
David Caruso	Principal, Vernon Center Middle School
Anne Fischer	Chair, Vernon Board of Education
Melissa Iles	Director of Pupil Personnel
Mark Kalina	Member, Vernon Board of Education
Richard Lemons, Ed.D	Facilitator, Partners for Educational Leadership
Stephen Linton	Member, Vernon Board of Education
Joseph Macary, Ed.D	Superintendent of Schools
Jason Magao	Principal, Rockville High School
William Meier III	Director of Business & Finance
Jennifer Miller	Principal, Center Road School
Deborah Rodriguez	Member, Vernon Board of Education
Melissa Ross	Supervisor of Elementary Special Education
Robert Testa	Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Mason Thrall	Vice-Chair, Vernon Board of Education
Melissa Trantolo	Director of Elementary Teaching & Learning
Kristiana Wintress	Member, Vernon Board of Education
Cynthia Zingler	Director of Family, School & Community Partnerships

Mission Statement

The Vernon Public Schools, in partnership with family and community, is committed to provide a quality education, with high expectations, in a safe environment where all students become independent learners and productive contributors to society.

Core Beliefs

- Advocate a “whole child” approach to student learning
- Maximize student performance and set high expectations
- Integrate family and community with the education system

Diversity Statement

The Vernon Board of Education reaffirms our commitment to continue the work being done and continues to look for new opportunities that promote equity and diversity in the Vernon Public Schools. We embrace diversity and inclusion, and absolutely condemn racism and discrimination.

District Goals

Goal 1 – Build and improve relationships and partnerships with family and community

Goal 2 – Increase the achievement of every student through a high-quality curriculum, instruction, and assessment

Goal 3 – Promote safe environments that are socially, emotionally, and physically conducive to learning

Vision Statement

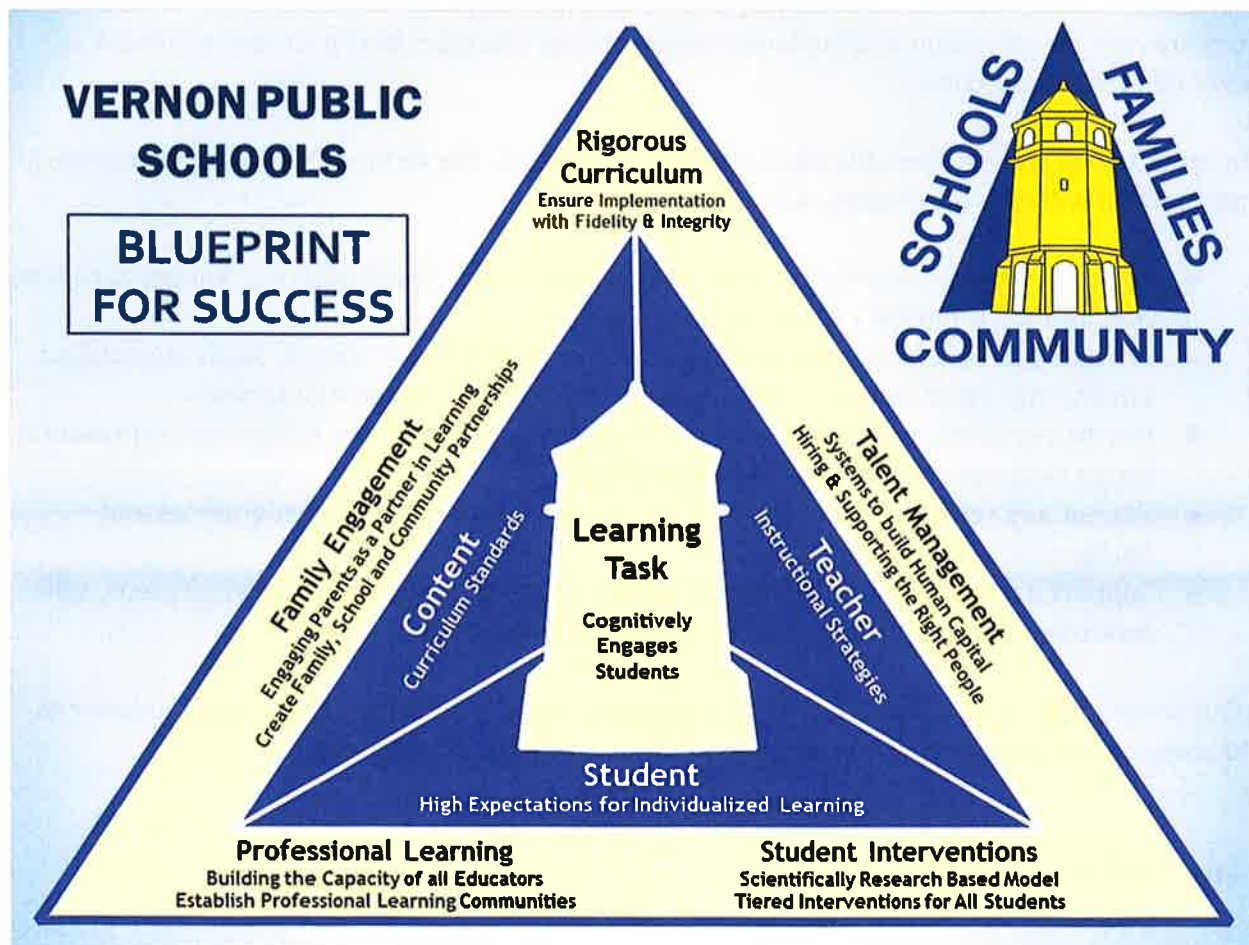
The Vision of the Vernon Public Schools is that every graduate is a Critical Thinker, Collaborator, Communicator, Resilient Individual, and Responsible Citizen.

Blueprint for Success

The Vernon Public Schools Blueprint for Success employs five district and school-level improvement drivers that will enhance and support our work around the Instructional Core. The five improvement drivers are:

- Rigorous Curriculum
- Talent Management
- Family Engagement
- Professional Learning
- Student Interventions

Each driver is integrated into the instructional core and linked to learning. The philosophy of the Vernon Public Schools is to maximize student achievement by setting high expectations for individualized learning and focusing on the Instructional Core. Leadership priorities and continuing support for high quality instruction for every child is grounded in the Vernon Public Schools Blueprint for Success to take the district to the next level of educational excellence. Together we can accomplish great things for the children and families we serve.



Equity Stance

The Vernon Public School district recognizes and values the rich diversity of race, ethnicity, abilities, gender identity, sexual orientation, and economic background of our students.

We also acknowledge the existence of a range of inequities that exist across our nation and within our local community that impact our students. These inequities create disproportionate outcomes ranging from gaps in academic achievement to dropout rates. The impact of these gaps extend well beyond school, correlating with indicators of physical health, emotional well-being, income, and civic participation.

Equity in education is achieved when student outcomes are not predicted by gender, race, ethnicity, economic background, sexual orientation, language or abilities and where all students reach a level of efficacy and competence that supports a rewarding and productive life.

This requires the elimination of inequitable policies, programs and practices that currently contribute to disproportionate learning and achievement among student groups. In addition, it requires the identification and implementation of new strategies that promote equitable experiences and outcomes.

In order to provide an equitable education for all students, the Vernon Public School district, in partnership with the community, will:

- Focus on inclusive Pre-K education and other research-based practices known to reduce bias and discrimination while reducing gaps
- Provide access, experiences and opportunities through an inclusive, student-centered environment that values voice and choice resulting in equitable outcomes
- Develop systemic practices that allow all students to learn from others that represent a broad range of backgrounds and experiences
- Recruit and retain a faculty and staff more representative of the experiences and backgrounds of students
- Support a professional learning community where educators have an equity lens, self-awareness, and professional skills to support all students

Our commitment to equity allows us to achieve our Mission, ensuring that every student can become an independent learner and a productive contributor to society.

Adopted November 2020

Vision of the Graduate

The Vision of the Vernon Public Schools is that every graduate is a Critical Thinker, Collaborator, Communicator, Resilient Individual, and Responsible Citizen.

Knowledge, Skill or Disposition	Definition or Explanation
Critical thinker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works through difficult challenges with analytic reasoning • Solves novel and complex problems with innovative and creative thinking • Functions as a problem solver by identifying and using appropriate resources, tools and technology to approach and solve challenges • Critically evaluates ideas and evidence by asking relevant questions, analyzing multiple sources of information, identifying and considering the reliability of sources, deliberately questioning competing information, and drawing conclusions
Collaborator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates openness to different viewpoints while demonstrating respect for others' assets and contributions • Effectively works with, and within, diverse groups to plan, strategize, make decisions, and successfully execute tasks • Seeks and utilizes feedback from others in solving tasks
Communicator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively listens to understand the perspectives of others • Communicates thoughts and opinions clearly and respectfully • Utilizes multiple communication mediums to express viewpoints effectively to a wide range of audiences for a variety of contexts • Uses technological skills and social media appropriately to meet goals
Resilient Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perseveres through challenges and setbacks while embracing failure as an opportunity for growth • Demonstrates flexibility by adapting approaches to the given situation and context taking appropriate risks as necessary • Demonstrates stamina in multiple contexts and persists in completing tasks • Possesses self-confidence and independence
Responsible citizen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizes the experiences and needs of others, demonstrating empathy, compassion and respect for all • Communicates and acts with ethics and values • Positively contributes to the quality of classroom, school, community and the environment • Possesses and acts with self-awareness

Adopted September 2019

Strategic Priorities

Student Success

Vernon Public Schools will ensure every student will have safe, high quality, equitable learning experiences.

Strategic Actions

- Provide a meaningful, culturally relevant curriculum that engages all students, beginning with universal pre-school continuing through college and career pathways.
- Deliver personalized instruction, assessments and interventions that support academic and social emotional needs for all students.
- Foster a culture of high-expectations for all students with goals for meaningful post-graduation success.
- Create a sense of belonging for all students by deepening connections and relationships with adults and others in the community supportive of the skills in the Vision of the Graduate.

Family and Community Partnerships

Vernon Public Schools will develop meaningful partnerships to engage the whole community that lead to success for Vernon's youth.

Strategic Actions

- Create innovative opportunities for student, family, and community voice that build connections based on trust and strong relationships.
- Deepen our understanding of family backgrounds and real life experiences within our community in order to promote student success.
- Foster comprehensive communication using multiple methods and languages, so families understand the district's vision, the educational progress of their child, and how to partner and advocate on behalf of their child.
- Nurture a culture that promotes wellness, diversity, and inclusion.

System Excellence

Vernon Public Schools will develop and enhance systems and a culture that promote professional capacity and organizational coherence.

Strategic Actions

- Develop a creative approach to recruiting high quality staff reflective of the population of Vernon.
- Enhance systems that encourage collaboration, address professional learning needs, maximize resources, and recognize good work.
- Create a positive school culture of teaching and learning for all students, staff and families.
- Promote safe classrooms and school environments that are socially, emotionally and physically conducive to learning.

Metrics for Success

- At least 95% of our students attended school every day
- On-Track for High School Graduation (measured in 9th Grade)
- Staff Demographics: Percentage of Minority Employees with the District
- Students in Kindergarten who have a pre-kindergarten experience (Target 100%)
- ELA Performance: Students at/or above grade level standards (SBAC)- All
- ELA Performance: Students at/or above grade level standards (SBAC)- High Needs
- Math Performance: Students at/or above grade level standards (SBAC)- All
- Math Performance: Students at/or above grade level standards (SBAC)- High Needs
- Physical Fitness: Student meeting the Health Fitness Zone Standard (passing all 4)
- Students & Families say 'they feel they belong to the Vernon School community'
- Family & Community supporting the District's Mission & Vision (June Survey)

VISION



**THE VISION OF THE
VERNON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
IS THAT EVERY GRADUATE
IS A CRITICAL THINKER,
COLLABORATOR,
COMMUNICATOR,
RESILIENT INDIVIDUAL,
& RESPONSIBLE CITIZEN.**



THE VERNON PUBLIC SCHOOLS, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH FAMILY AND COMMUNITY, IS COMMITTED TO PROVIDE A QUALITY EDUCATION, WITH HIGH EXPECTATIONS, IN A SAFE ENVIRONMENT WHERE ALL STUDENTS BECOME INDEPENDENT LEARNERS AND PRODUCTIVE CONTRIBUTORS TO SOCIETY.



VERNON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Vernon, Connecticut 06066


Information Only	<u>X</u>	Agenda Item	<u>9.2</u>
Decision Requested	<u> </u>		<u>January 8, 2024</u>
			Date

AGENDA REPORTING FORM

Subject: K-3 Reading Waiver: CSDE Memo and Summary (BOE Goal #2)

Background: Superintendent Dr. Macary will review the CSDE Memo and Summary regarding the K-3 Reading Waiver with the Board.

Recommendation: No action required.



Signature of Person(s) Submitting Report



Superintendent of Schools



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION



December 1, 2023

Joseph Macary, Superintendent
Vernon Public Schools
P.O. Box 600, 30 Park Street
Vernon, CT 06066

Dear Superintendent Macary,

Thank you for submitting an *Application Requesting a Waiver of Connecticut Approved K–3 Reading Curriculum Models or Programs* (Waiver). The time and effort that your organization devoted to organizing the submitted materials were evident.

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that the Waiver review process has been completed by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE). After a thorough review and careful deliberation of your Waiver, your curriculum model or programs show evidence of meeting the expectations of Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) 10-14hh, as amended by Public Act (P.A.) 23-167 in **phonemic awareness and phonics**. However, your curriculum model or programs do not meet expectations regarding **fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension**. Thus, your district is being granted a *transitional waiver*. A transitional waiver requires a district to add and substitute specific programmatic or curriculum components.

To fully meet the legislated requirement of implementing an evidence-based, scientifically based comprehensive reading curriculum your district must substitute a core program that meets expectations for **fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension** from the list of [Connecticut Approved K–3 Reading Curriculum Models or Programs](#).

As a result of the Waiver review process, the list of [Connecticut Approved K–3 Reading Curriculum Models or Programs](#) was expanded to include the following comprehensive reading curriculum models or programs and the comprehensive compendiums of reading curriculum models or programs:

Comprehensive Reading Curriculum Models or Programs:

The following list of comprehensive reading curriculum models or programs each meet all the requirements of C.G.S. 10-14ii, as amended by P.A. 23-167.

- Benchmark Education - Benchmark Advance (2022)
- McGraw Hill - Open Court Reading (2016)

Compendiums of Curriculum Models or Programs:

The following list of compendiums of curriculum models or programs must be used as a unit, as listed below, to meet the requirements of C.G.S. 10-14ii, as amended by P.A. 23-167. Please note that each curriculum model or program has been marked to reflect the evidence-based, scientifically based area of reading it addresses (e.g., Phonemic Awareness-PA, Phonics-P, Fluency-F, Comprehension and Vocabulary-CV).

- Great Minds - Wit and Wisdom®, 2016 (CV) with Curriculum Associates - Magnetic Reading Foundations, 2023 (PA, P, F)
- Great Minds - Wit and Wisdom®, 2016 (CV) with
 - Great Minds - Geodes® (F)
 - Literacy Resources, LLC. - Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum® (PA)
 - University of Florida Literacy Institute - UFLI Foundations, 2022 (P)
- Great Minds - Wit and Wisdom®, 2016 (CV) with
 - Great Minds - Geodes® (F)
 - Literacy Resources, LLC. - Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum® (PA)
 - William H. Sadler, Inc. - From Phonics to Reading by Wiley Blevins, 2020 (P)

- Great Minds - Wit and Wisdom©, 2016 (CV) with
 - Great Minds - Geodes© (F)
 - Literacy Resources, LLC. - Heggerty Phonemic Curriculum (PA)
 - Wilson-Fundations©, 2012 (P)
- Open Up Resources – Bookworms, 2021 (CV) with Curriculum Associates - Magnetic Reading Foundations 2023 (PA, P, F)
- Open Up Resources – Bookworms, 2021 (CV) with
 - Great Minds - Geodes© (F)
 - Literacy Resources, LLC. - Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum© (PA)
 - University of Florida Literacy Institute - UFLI Foundations, 2022 (P)
- Open Up Resources – Bookworms, 2021 (CV) with
 - Great Minds - Geodes© (F)
 - Literacy Resources, LLC. - Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum© (PA)
 - William H. Sadlier, Inc. - From Phonics to Reading by Wiley Blevins, 2020 (P)
- Open Up Resources – Bookworms, 2021 (CV) with
 - Great Minds - Geodes© (F)
 - Literacy Resources, LLC. - Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum© (PA)
 - Wilson - Fundations©, 2012 (P)
- Savvas Learning Company - ReadyGEN© K-6, 2016 (CV, F, PA) with Wilson – Fundations, 2012 (P)

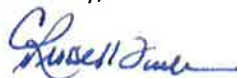
Enclosed with this letter is the completed Waiver Application Review Tool that documents the findings of your district's individual review and identifies areas in which the legislative requirements of your submitted materials are met or are not met.

Pursuant to C.G.S. 10-14hh, as amended by P.A. 23-167, your district is required to have fully implemented an approved comprehensive reading curriculum model or program or a comprehensive compendium of reading curriculum models or programs by July 1, 2025. Your district will have the 2024-2025 school year to begin partial implementation of an approved comprehensive reading curriculum model or program or a comprehensive compendium of reading curriculum models or programs.

If you are interested in receiving technical assistance regarding the implementation of the approved comprehensive [Connecticut Approved K-3 Reading Curriculum Models or Programs](#), please contact the Center for Literacy Research and Reading Success at sde.literacycenter@ct.gov.

Thank you for your dedication to this effort and working together to increase the effectiveness of literacy teaching and learning so that all Connecticut students are reading at or above grade level independently and proficiently by the end of third grade.

Sincerely,



Charlene M. Russell-Tucker
Commissioner of Education

cc: Dr. Charles Hewes, Deputy Commissioner for Academics and Innovation
Michael P. McKeon, Director of Legal and Governmental Affairs
Laura Stefon, Chief of Staff and Legislative Liaison
Irene E. Parisi, Chief Academic Officer
Ajit Gopalakrishnan, Chief Performance Officer
Dr. Melissa K. Wlodarczyk Hickey, Director of the Center for Literacy Research and Reading Success

Enclosure: (1)

CSDE Waiver Review Tool

Please note: Due to time limitations, formal meeting minutes were not captured during the one on one district meetings. Informal notes were captured, as appropriate, by the representatives of the review committee and may be found in the notes section of the review tool.

Sec. 10-14u. (a) (3): "Scientifically-based reading research and instruction" means (A) a comprehensive program or a collection of instructional practices that is based on reliable, valid evidence showing that when such programs or practices are used, students can be expected to achieve satisfactory reading progress, and (B) the integration of instructional strategies for continuously assessing, evaluating and communicating the student's reading progress and needs in order to design and implement ongoing interventions so that students of all ages and proficiency levels can read and comprehend text and apply higher level thinking skills. Such comprehensive program or collection of practices includes, but is not limited to, instruction in the following areas of reading: Oral language, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, rapid automatic name or letter name fluency and reading comprehension (https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_163c.html).

District Name:

Vernon

Review Date:

6/28/23

Date review tool is completed

Meeting Date:

Date district requested to meet with PCG

Section 1: Evidence-based and Scientifically-based [C.G.S. Sec. 10-40(1)]
Senate Bill No. 1202, page 622: "Scientifically-based reading research and instruction" means (A) a comprehensive program or a collection of instructional practices that is based on reliable, valid evidence showing that when such programs or practices are used, students can be expected to achieve satisfactory reading progress (<https://www.cga.ct.gov/2021/ACT/PA/PDF/2021PA-00002-R005B-01202551-PA.PDF>).

Did the district submit one comprehensive program or a collection of instructional programs?

Collection of instructional programs:

1A: Complete this section for the comprehensive program.

Notes

Notes from District Meeting

Did the district provide reliable and valid evidence showing that the program will support students in achieving satisfactory reading progress (e.g., copies of or links to studies that were scientifically conducted: replicated, peer reviewed, and independent)?

Select Yes or No.

This is not applicable because the district choose a collection of programs.

Title of component or program:

Choose a program.

This is not applicable because the district choose a collection of programs.

Does the program meet expectations on CURATE?

[This cell will autopopulate.]

Does the program meet expectations on Ed Reports?

[This cell will autopopulate.]

Is the program listed as an approved core program on CDE advisory list?

[This cell will autopopulate.]

1B: Complete this section for collections of instructional practices ("program" or "component").

Notes

Notes from District Meeting

Did the district submit a scope and sequence or other document demonstrating how the collection is coordinated (same terminology, same procedures, explicit transfer of skills from one component to another) to become a comprehensive program?

No

District provided an overview of the different curricular that is used in their programming. They didn't provide an explanation or scope and sequence showing how all of the different programming works to develop a cohesive comprehension program. It is not clear how they work with each other and appears through the documentation that perhaps teachers must make sense of the different curricular resources.

Did the district provide reliable and valid evidence showing that the collection will support students in achieving satisfactory reading progress (e.g., copies of or links to studies that were scientifically conducted: replicated, peer reviewed, and independent)?

No

District provides research showing how the curricular resources are based on research but didn't provide any research on how the mix of different resources will support student achievement.

Complete this section for each program or component.

Title of component or program:

Core 5 Reading K-3, Lexia

Units of Study K-5, Heinemann 2018

Wilson Foundations K-2, Wilson Language Training 2012

Geodes Decidables K-2, Great Minds 2020

Hegerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum K-3, Literacy Resources

Program Type:

Intervention

Core

Supplemental

Supplemental

Supplemental

Does each component in the collection meet expectations on CURATE?

Not reviewed

Not reviewed

Not reviewed

Not reviewed

Not reviewed

Does each component in the collection meet expectations on Ed Reports?

Not reviewed

Does not meet expectations

Partially meets expectations

Not reviewed

Not reviewed

Does each component in the collection appear on the CDE advisory list?

Approved intervention

Other (see notes)

Approved supplemental

Other (see notes)

Approved supplemental

Notes:

Approved by the Colorado Department of education. The website indicate that program is taught in a direct, sequential, systematic and cumulative manner.

Independent reviews of Unit of Study indicate a lack of explicit, systematic and sequential instruction in various components of reading, particularly in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency or vocabulary. Comprehension instruction was heavily focused on strategies and didn't have a consistent systematic approach to the instruction.

According to their website, Foundations/Wilson Reading systems provides direct, explicit, systematic and cumulative instruction. Independent reviews indicate that it lacks in phonemic awareness and that decodable text do not always align with the sequence of instruction.

Notes from District Meeting:

Section 2: All components of reading use explicit, systematic, sequential, and cumulative instruction.

• Focused competency in areas of reading [C.G.S. Sec. 10-14i(2)]: Students are introduced to a new skill before being asked to perform it.

• Sequential instruction in areas of reading [C.G.S. Sec. 10-14i(3)]: There is a detailed scope and sequence including a list of specific skills taught, a sequence for teaching the skills over the course of the year, and a timeline showing when the skills are taught (e.g., by week, month, or unit).

• Systematic and cumulative instruction in all areas of reading [C.G.S. Sec. 10-14i(4)]: The structured lesson format includes a plan, procedure, or routine that is carried through the sequence of teaching skill.

Does the curriculum use explicit, systematic, sequential, and cumulative instruction of ...

Notes

Notes from District Meetings

• phonological and phonemic awareness?

Yes

Hegerty

• phonics?

Yes

Wilson; core 5

• rapid automatic naming or letter naming fluency?

Yes

From Edreports: Materials include limited systematic instruction of

• vocabulary?

No

Embedded in the many instructional curricular with no indication of how

• reading comprehension?

No

From Edreports regarding Units of Study: Materials do not include

Section 3: Related Elements: Meets the expectations set forth in the Waiver Guidance Document and/or the Review Rubric used for CT approved programs [C.G.S. 10-14i]

Does the curriculum model or program ...

Notes

Notes from District Meetings

• provide frequent opportunities for students to practice or gain skills?

Yes

According to the district's strategy document, the program provides frequent opportunities for students to practice and/or gain skills.

• allow for high-quality, daily differentiation of foundational skills so that all students achieve mastery of foundational skills?

Yes

• provide for structured discussions that address grade level speaking and listening standards?

Yes

• include a wide range of authentic writing and explicit instruction in writing skills and strategies?

Yes

• provide for varied means of accessing content and demonstrating learning to meet the diverse needs of all students working above or below grade level?

Yes

CSDE Walver Review Tool				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> represent various cultures and perspectives, promote cultural affirmation, and value diverse identities, backgrounds, and perspectives? 	Yes			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include explicit alignment to state standards and grade level expectations? 	Yes			
Section 4: Additional Legislative Requirements-[C.G.S. Sec. 10-14hh(d)(2)]				
Did the district submit ...		Notes	Notes from District Meetings	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> student performance data? 	Yes			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> student performance data disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, second-language learning status, and ability? 	Yes			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a plan to address gaps between disaggregated subgroups and the whole population? 	No	No plan to address gaps among disaggregated subgroup; just addressed individual students needs.		

VERNON PUBLIC SCHOOLS



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March 8, 2023

Vernon Public Schools never wavers from its district core beliefs: advocate a “whole child” approach to student learning, maximize student performance by setting high expectations, and integrate family and community with the education system. In order to fulfill our core beliefs, the Vernon Public Schools has worked relentlessly on developing, implementing, and monitoring a comprehensive high-quality ELA curriculum that is specifically designed to meet the diverse learning needs of our students. Our curriculum writers, which include teachers, district coaches, central office administrators, and outside consultants, devised a curriculum to address the Connecticut Core Standards for English Language Arts comprehensively.

In order to address the standards, our curriculum model supports direct explicit instruction and authentic application in all areas of reading. Guided by the science of reading, our curriculum focuses on the main components that are fundamental to reading: oral language, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, letter name fluency, and reading comprehension. To address these different components of reading our district utilizes scientifically-based programs that professional development, professional learning committees, and coaching support.

Student progress and achievement are consistently monitored and analyzed by using various formative and summative data sources. Teacher teams meet after common assessments to discuss student results and instructional next steps. This process guarantees that every student is viewed as an individual to ensure they get the proper differentiated instruction needed for both growth and success. Each elementary school has implemented a WIN (What I Need) block. This time is dedicated to ensuring individual students’ needs are being met. During this time students who require reading intervention are provided support by our most qualified certified reading interventionists. Students receive a ‘Student Intervention Success Plan’ where individualized goals are determined and progress monitored.

Since implementing this process, our results for ELA student achievement can be measured over time...

Smarter Balanced Results in English Language Arts (ELA) Grades 3-8 Combined - Percent Level 3 or Above

District	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2021-22	% Change over 5 years (pre-Covid)
Vernon	40.8%	44.6%	49.7%	46.8%	53.3%	51.0%	+ 12.5%
CT Alliance Districts	40.5%	41.4%	40.0%	41.5%	42.0%	35.2%	+ 1.5%
State of CT	55.6%	55.6%	54.2%	55.3%	55.7%	49.1%	+ 0.1%

The Vernon Public Schools, in partnership with family and community, is committed to provide a quality education, with high expectations, in a safe environment where all students become independent learners and productive contributors to society.

The Vernon Public Schools truly believes in the Science of Reading- phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, and comprehension and strongly advocates that all students should be reading by the end of grade 1 and reading independently by the end of grade 3. That is how we are going to close the achievement gap in Connecticut. To achieve that goal: we believe in a comprehensive literacy curriculum developed by experts. This curriculum would detail the goals, objectives, and strategies that students need to know and should be able to achieve at each grade level. ELA interventionists, reading teachers and trained tutors must be available for those children who are struggling in challenged districts.

The Vernon Public Schools does not believe in a ‘magic bullet’ or canned programs. To expect results from such an attempt is a fallacy and quite naïve. Commercial programs are not the magic bullet – if they were, districts would have been using them decades ago. These programs de-professionalize teachers and cannot be a “one size fits all”, in addition to costing millions of dollars of taxpayer money. Teach the child - not the program. Successful implementation is needed to make this effort work and that takes effective leadership. Together, we need to lead an effort that will change CT not for next year but for the next decades to come, by making a difference in the lives of our children.

This ELA curriculum model has proven to be most effective for the students of Vernon. Since implementing this process, Vernon Public Schools has noted the following:

- The CT State Department of Education released the 2021-2022 Accountability Results for Schools. For the 2021-2022 school year, Vernon earned 73.5% points, in comparison to the CT State Average 69.6%. Vernon ranked #1 among the 33 Alliance Districts in Connecticut. In addition, Vernon ranked #1 in its District Reference Group (DRG-G). This was an amazing accomplishment considering the past 3 years of school disruption due to the COVID-19 health pandemic and school shutdown.
- The 2022 Smarter Balanced Results showed that the Vernon Public Schools outperformed the CT State Average in all three areas -- English Language Arts, Mathematics and Science. Out of the 33 CT Alliance Districts, Vernon students' scores were second (#2) in both ELA and Math results. In our DRG (District Reference Group), out of the K-12 districts, Vernon results were #1 in Mathematics and #2 in ELA.
- Schools with significant growth and achievement are deemed “Schools of Distinction” and represent the top 10% of all CT schools. For the past four ranking years, Vernon had 3 elementary schools recognized as Schools of Distinction.
- The best indicator of student learning is Connecticut’s Next Generation Accountability System Results, which is a broad set of 12 indicators that help tell the story of how well a school is preparing its students for success in college, careers, and life. School Accountability Results are similar to a student’s report card – looking at the overall growth in one’s education compared to others. Every school in Connecticut is ranked from 1 to 5, with one being the highest.

Vernon Public Schools Rankings:

	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2021-2022
Category 1	0	0	1	2	1
Category 2	1	5	3	3	4
Category 3	4	2	3	2	2
Category 4	2	0	0	0	0
Category 5	0	0	0	0	0

The Vernon Public Schools, in partnership with family and community, is committed to provide a quality education, with high expectations, in a safe environment where all students become independent learners and productive contributors to society.

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Vernon Public Schools K-3 Reading Programs			
Areas of Reading:	Grade Level(s) Implemented:	Program/Curriculum:	Assessment:
Oral Language	Kindergarten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundations • Lexia • VPS Connecticut Core Standards-based ELA Curriculum with alignment to Teachers College Reading and Writing (TCRWP) Units of Study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benchmark Assessment System 3rd edition • VPS Standards-based Kindergarten ELA Curriculum Unit Assessments
	Grade 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundations • Lexia • VPS Connecticut Core Standards-based ELA Curriculum with alignment to TCRWP Units of Study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benchmark Assessment System 3rd edition • VPS Standards-based Grade1 ELA Curriculum Unit Assessments
	Grade 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundations • Lexia • VPS Connecticut Core Standards-based ELA Curriculum with alignment to TCRWP Units of Study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benchmark Assessment System 3rd edition • VPS Standards-based Grade 2 ELA Curriculum Unit Assessments
	Grade 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundations • Lexia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benchmark Assessment System 3rd edition

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VPS Connecticut Core Standards-based ELA Curriculum with alignment to TCRWP Units of Study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VPS Standards-based Grade 3 ELA Curriculum Unit Assessments
Phonemic Awareness	Kindergarten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Foundations Lexia VPS Connecticut Core Standards-based ELA Curriculum with alignment to TCRWP Units of Study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DIBELS mClass 2023-2024 Foundations unit assessments
	Grade 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Foundations Lexia Geodes VPS Connecticut Core Standards-based ELA Curriculum with alignment to TCRWP Units of Study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DIBELS mClass 2023-2024 Foundations unit assessments i-Ready
	Grade 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foundations Lexia Geodes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DIBELS mClass 2023-2024 Foundations unit assessments i-Ready
	Grade 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programs are provided for students on an as needed basis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DIBELS mClass 2023-2024 i-Ready
Phonics	Grades K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foundations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DIBELS mClass 2023-2024

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lexia • VPS Connecticut Core Standards-based ELA Curriculum with alignment to TCRWP Units of Study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundations unit assessments
	Grade 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundations • Lexia • Geodes • VPS Connecticut Core Standards-based ELA Curriculum with alignment to TCRWP Units of Study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DIBELS mClass 2023-2024 • Foundations unit assessments • i-Ready
	Grade 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundations • Lexia • Geodes • VPS Connecticut Core Standards-based ELA Curriculum with alignment to TCRWP • Units of Study Tackling Longer Words and Longer Books (Unit 3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DIBELS mClass 2023-2024 • Foundations unit assessments • i-Ready
	Grade 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundations • Lexia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DIBELS mClass 2023-2024 • i-Ready • Fountas and Pinnell Word Study Skill Assessment
Fluency	Grades K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundations • Lexia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DIBELS mClass 2023-2024 • Benchmark Assessment System 3rd

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VPS Connecticut Core Standards-based ELA Curriculum with alignment to TCRWP Units of Study 	edition
	Grade 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foundations Lexia Geodes VPS Connecticut Core Standards-based ELA Curriculum with alignment to TCRWP Units of Study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DIBELS mClass 2023-2024 Benchmark Assessment System 3rd edition
	Grade 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foundations Lexia Geodes VPS Connecticut Core Standards-based ELA Curriculum with alignment to TCRWP Units of Study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DIBELS mClass 2023-2024 Benchmark Assessment System 3rd edition
	Grade 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foundations VPS Connecticut Core Standards-based ELA Curriculum with alignment to TCRWP Units of Study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DIBELS mClass 2023-2024 Benchmark Assessment System 3rd edition
Vocabulary	Grade K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foundations Lexia VPS Connecticut Core Standards-based ELA Curriculum with alignment to TCRWP Units of Study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DIBELS mClass 2023-2024 Benchmark Assessment System 3rd edition

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	Grade 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundations • Lexia • Geodes • VPS Connecticut Core Standards-based ELA Curriculum with alignment to TCRWP Units of Study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DIBELS mClass 2023-2024 • Benchmark Assessment System 3rd edition • i-Ready
	Grade 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundations • Lexia • Geodes • VPS Connecticut Core Standards-based ELA Curriculum with alignment to TCRWP Units of Study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DIBELS mClass 2023-2024 • Benchmark Assessment System 3rd edition • i-Ready
	Grade 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundations • Lexia • VPS Connecticut Core Standards-based ELA Curriculum with alignment to TCRWP Units of Study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DIBELS mClass 2023-2024 • Benchmark Assessment System 3rd edition • i-Ready • VPS Standards-based Grade 3 ELA Unit Assessments
Rapid Automatic Name or Letter Name Fluency	Kindergarten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heggerty Phonemic Awareness • Foundations • Lexia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DIBELS mClass 2023-2024 • Foundations Unit Assessments
	Grade1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heggerty Phonemic Awareness • Foundations • Lexia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DIBELS mClass 2023-2024 • Foundations Unit Assessments

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	Grade 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundations • Lexia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DIBELS mClass 2023-2024 • Foundations Unit Assessments
	Grade 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs are provided for students on an as needed basis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DIBELS mClass 2023-2024 • Foundations Unit Assessments
Reading Comprehension	Grade K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundations • Lexia • VPS Connecticut Core Standards-based ELA Curriculum with alignment to TCRWP Units of Study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benchmark Assessment System 3rd edition • VPS Standards-based Kindergarten ELA Curriculum Unit Assessments
	Grade 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundations • Lexia • Geodes • VPS Connecticut Core Standards-based ELA Curriculum with alignment to TCRWP Units of Study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benchmark Assessment System 3rd edition • VPS Standards-based Grade 1 ELA Curriculum Unit Assessments • i-Ready
	Grade 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundations • Lexia • Geodes • VPS Connecticut Core Standards-based ELA Curriculum with alignment to TCRWP Units of Study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benchmark Assessment System 3rd edition • VPS Standards-based Grade 2 ELA Curriculum Unit Assessments • i-Ready
	Grade 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VPS Connecticut Core Standards-based ELA Curriculum with alignment to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benchmark Assessment System 3rd edition • VPS Standards-based Grade 2 ELA

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		TCRWP Units of Study <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lexia	Curriculum Unit Assessments <ul style="list-style-type: none">• i-Ready
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Overview VPS ELA Curriculum Narrative

Vernon Public Schools has worked relentlessly on developing, implementing, and monitoring a comprehensive high-quality ELA curriculum that is specifically designed to meet the diverse learning needs of our students. Our curriculum writers, which include teachers, district coaches, central office administrators, and outside consultants, devised a curriculum to comprehensively address the Connecticut Core Standards for English Language Arts.

In order to address the standards, our curriculum model supports direct explicit instruction and authentic application in all areas of reading. Guided by the science of reading, our curriculum focuses on the main components that are fundamental to reading: oral language, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, letter name fluency, and reading comprehension. To address these different components our district utilizes scientifically-based programs that are supported by professional development, professional learning committees, and coaching.

Student progress and achievement are consistently monitored and analyzed by using data sources. This process guarantees that each and every student is viewed as an individual in order to ensure that they get the proper instruction needed for success. Each elementary school has implemented a WIN, What I Need, block. During this time students who need reading intervention are provided support by our most qualified certified reading interventionists. Students receive a Student Intervention Success Plan where individualized goals are determined and progress monitored. This curriculum model has proven to be most effective for the students of Vernon. Since the implementation of this process, Vernon Public Schools has had much to celebrate.

- The CT State Department of Education released the 2021-2022 Accountability Results for Schools. For the 2021-2022 school year, Vernon earned 73.5% points, in comparison to the CT State Average 69.6%. Vernon ranked #1 among the 33

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Alliance Districts in Connecticut. In addition, Vernon ranked #1 in its District Reference Group (DRG-G). This was an amazing accomplishment considering the past 3 years of school disruption due to the COVID-19 health pandemic and school shutdown.

- The 2022 Smarter Balanced Results showed that the Vernon Public Schools outperformed the CT State Average in all three areas -- English Language Arts, Mathematics and Science. Out of the 33 CT Alliance Districts, Vernon students' scores were second (#2) in both ELA and Math results. In our DRG (District Reference Group), out of the K-12 districts, Vernon results were #1 in Mathematics and #2 in ELA.
- Schools with significant growth and achievement are deemed "Schools of Distinction" and represent the top 10% of all CT schools. For the past four ranking years, we have had Schools of Distinction.
- The best indicator of student learning is Connecticut's Next Generation Accountability System Results, which is a broad set of 12 indicators that help tell the story of how well a school is preparing its students for success in college, careers, and life. School Accountability Results are similar to a student's report card – looking at the overall growth in one's education compared to others. Every school in Connecticut is ranked from 1 to 5, with one being the highest. Here are Vernon Public Schools' rankings: All elementary schools are category 2 or 1.

	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2021-2022
Category 1	0	0	1	2	1
Category 2	1	5	3	3	4
Category 3	4	2	3	2	2
Category 4	2	0	0	0	0

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Category 5	0	0	0	0	0
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Reading Curriculum Model or Program

Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum - Grades K-2	
1. How is the curriculum model or program evidenced-based and scientifically-based?	<p>Impact on Student Learning Research on Heggerty Implementation</p> <p>Studies have shown that phonemic awareness is a foundational skill, essential for learning to read. As students learn to identify sounds through oral and auditory activities, they become phonemically aware. Engaging in phonemic awareness instruction develops students' understanding of sounds, and that knowledge directly impacts their spelling and writing.</p> <p>The National Reading Panel found more than 50 studies verifying that explicitly teaching phonemes was one critical component of effective reading and spelling instruction. (Moats, 2012).</p> <p>The lessons in the Heggerty curricula are aligned to evidence and research-based practices. When considering Scarborough's Reading Rope, teaching phonemic awareness explicitly and systematically is an essential and critical component of literacy instruction. If this piece of the "rope" is missing, many students will struggle with reading.</p> <p>The lessons are designed and aligned to the large quantities of research noting the critical role of phonemic awareness in learning to read. Heggerty is based in the science of reading in both the content and delivery of instruction. Lessons follow a daily progression of working through easier to more complex tasks and each skill scaffolds instruction by building in difficulty. To further support the acquisition of these skills, many of the tasks students participate in will include use of a hand motion. As mentioned above, scaffolds such as utilizing Elkonin boxes, magnetic tiles, and felt pieces are brought in as optional ways to further that support.</p>

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	<p>Heggerty has also been collecting case studies about curriculum implementation from</p> <p>Mid-Ohio Educational Service Center and Pentucket Regional School District as well as this data-packed article from the perspective of a literacy specialist. Additionally, the Mebane Foundation recently shared their success with the Heggerty curricula, which you can read about here.</p>
<p>2. How does the curriculum model or program support direct, explicit instruction in all areas of reading (i.e., oral language, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, rapid automatic name, or letter name fluency and reading comprehension)?</p>	<p>Heggerty is an oral and auditory program used to supplement and augment the classroom language arts curricula. Its focus is on developing oral and auditory phonemic and phonological awareness. The program is organized into daily lessons from seven to eight varying phonemic awareness skills as well as one or two early literacy skills, alphabet knowledge, and language awareness.</p> <p>Within the Heggerty Phonemic Awareness (PA) Curriculum, students will work with five to eight phonological or phonemic awareness tasks each day over the course of twenty-four to thirty-five weeks of a school year. The number of daily skills included and the duration of lessons are dependent on the specific curriculum's scope and sequence. Students participate in 10-12 minutes of daily practice that is recommended to be placed immediately before phonics instruction. According to the National Reading Panel Report (2000), PA instruction is more effective when it makes explicit how children are to apply PA skills in reading and writing. In support of this, the Heggerty curriculum also brings in a phoneme-grapheme mapping component to offer students an opportunity to see the oral work transfer to working with print. This serves as a bridge to phonics lessons where students will be able to apply this work to independent reading and writing. In the Pre-K and Kindergarten curriculums, students will have the opportunity to engage with print through time spent building alphabet knowledge and language awareness. According to Marilyn Adams 1990, et al., "the two best predictors of early reading success are alphabet knowledge and phonemic awareness." Through an activity called</p>

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	<p>Alphabet Knowledge, students will work on building automaticity with letter-sound correspondences through a daily flashcard drill. Additionally, they will work with language awareness by hearing and reciting nursery rhymes. Teachers are encouraged to display the rhymes for children to follow along and engage in early print concepts, like tracking print and identifying patterns in words. Students will have the opportunity to also build oral word awareness by repeating sentences and counting the number of words.</p> <p>Each daily PA lesson follows a progression from easier to more complex skills. The curriculum also follows a systematic progression that begins work with larger phonological units like compound words, syllables, onset-rime and finally progresses to phoneme-level work. Once at the phoneme level, direct instruction progresses from working with isolating individual sounds to work with 2, 3, 4, or 5 phonemes as more advanced patterns are introduced. Each lesson includes explicit teacher directions, the inclusion of a skill focus, and hand motion support to offer a visual anchor for students as they work with isolating, blending, segmenting, and manipulating words, syllables, and phonemes. Instruction in the Pre-K manual follows an I Do/ We Do approach with the option to release students to independent practice later in the year. The Kindergarten manual offers a “Monday Model” which offers a more supported instructional format for students as new concepts are introduced. The instructional manual also offers teachers a weekly QR code providing access to a daily lesson model to support fidelity instruction. The instructional manual at all levels includes overview pages that offer further explicit instruction for teachers to look more closely at the objectives for a smaller block of lessons or within a particular phonological level. This allows teachers to be prepared for how to scaffold support (examples below), if necessary. For decades, the broad consensus is that a child's phonological awareness plays a critical role in learning to read and make sense of an alphabetic writing system (NELP 2008, NICHD 2000). The Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum allows teachers to offer daily direct, explicit, and systematic instruction in phonological and phonemic awareness skills to support a solid</p>
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	<p>foundation supporting literacy. Phonemic awareness is essential in teaching students to be automatic decoders of print. The Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum provides students with consistent and repeated instruction, and this transfers to developing a student's decoding and encoding skills. All students participate in the lessons as part of the Tier 1 curriculum. With curriculum offerings from Preschool through 5th grade. The National Reading Panel found more than 50 studies verifying that explicitly teaching phonemes was one critical component of effective reading and spelling instruction. (Moats, 2012)</p> <p>The lessons in the Heggerty curricula are aligned to evidence and research-based practices. When considering Scarborough's Reading Rope, teaching phonemic awareness explicitly and systematically is an essential and critical component of literacy instruction. If this piece of the "rope" is missing, many students will struggle with reading. The lessons are designed and aligned to the large quantities of research noting the critical role of phonemic awareness in learning to read. Heggerty is based in the science of reading in both the content and delivery of instruction. Lessons follow a daily progression of working through easier to more complex tasks and each skill scaffolds instruction by building in difficulty. To further support the acquisition of these skills, many of the tasks students participate in will include use of a hand motion. As mentioned above, scaffolds such as utilizing Elkonin boxes, magnetic tiles, and felt pieces are brought in as optional ways to further that support.</p>
3. How does the curriculum model or program support frequent opportunities for students to practice and gain literacy skills?	<p>Daily activities are led by teachers in a multisensory approach. This approach allows students to work with phonemes, the smallest component of language, to improve their foundation skills.</p> <p>The use of this program in grades Kindergarten through Grade 2 promotes the use of developmentally appropriate literacy skills for Tier 1 instruction on a daily basis.</p>

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4. How does the curriculum model or program **allow for high-quality, daily differentiation of foundational skills so all students achieve mastery of foundational skills?**

The program varies in complexity with phonological skills with whole words and phonemic awareness with sounds. The program works through a broad list of words that are rhymed, blended, segmented, and manipulated in each daily lesson. This work helps build students' oral vocabulary to support decoding. Lessons are designed to provide daily instruction in 8 phonological and phonemic awareness skills. The program creates an explicit and systematic approach in which students are practicing blending, segmenting, isolating, and manipulating words, syllables, onset-rime and/or phonemes each day. Heggerty lessons are oral and auditory, the words are not shown in print to the students. Letter cards are shown to the students in print to practice letter names and sounds.

CCSS covered by Heggerty Lessons in K and 1st grade

RF.K.2a, RF.K.2b, RF.K.2c, RF.K.2d, RF.K.2e, RF.K.1d

RF.1.2a, RF.1.2b, RF.1.2c, RF.1.2d

Kindergarten:

Phonological Awareness: blending and segmenting of compound words syllables, onset/rime, body/coda, of 2-4 phoneme words.

Advanced Phonemic Awareness: Adding, deleting and substituting phonemes in 2-4, phoneme words with short vowels, long vowels and blends.

Phonics and Decoding: Daily practice with Alphabet cards for the letter name and sounds of each letter and L, S, and R Blends.

Fluency: Reciting, from an oral model, Nursery Rhymes to develop cadence and prosody of spoken language, as well as reading of reading Nursery Rhymes

Primary:

This program is used for Grade 1. It can also be used with individual students or small groups in higher grades for remedial work on specific skills. The manual contains 35 weeks of daily, fast-paced instruction covering all of the early, basic and advanced phonemic awareness skills. When these lessons are taught

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	<p>consistently each day with explicit teacher modeling and scaffolded support, teachers see improvement in students' reading, spelling, and writing, as they learn to isolate, recognize and manipulate the sounds in words.</p> <p>Heggerty is a tier 1 core program that can also be used to provide tier 2 and tier 3 support through small group or individual instruction. Teachers can observe each student's response to the 8 Phonemic Awareness skills and 2 Early Literacy Skills during each lesson and then create 1-1 or small groups to help the students further develop particular skills.</p>
5. How does the curriculum model or program provide for structured discussions that address grade level speaking and listening standards?	<p>The Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum is a program for foundational skills, however, it does promote speaking and listening, especially Speaking and Listening Standards SL.K.1 and SL1.1, "Follow agreed-upon rules... (e.g. listening to others with care)."</p>

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<p>6. How does the curriculum model or program comprehensively address Connecticut Core Standards for English Language Arts through both explicit instruction and authentic application?</p>	<p>Heggerty addresses many language standards in a multisensory approach, especially in the area of vocabulary. Vocabulary acquisition is enhanced through the broad list of words that are rhymed, segmented, blended, and manipulated in each daily lesson. Working with this variety of words orally and auditorily adds to the student's oral vocabulary which will help them in decoding these words when they encounter them in print and using the vocabulary when speaking and writing.</p> <p>The Primary Curriculum is aligned with the first-grade Phonological Awareness Standards of the Common Core Standards. Click here for a summary of the first-grade alignment.</p> <p>The Kindergarten Curriculum is aligned with the Kindergarten Phonological Awareness Standards of the Common Core Standards. Click here for a summary of the kindergarten alignment.</p> <p>An alignment to the Spanish CCSS standards for Kindergarten and 1st grade is also available.</p>
<p>7. How does the curriculum model or program include a wide range of authentic writing and explicit instruction in writing skills and strategies?</p>	<p>Heggerty supports work in the core writing program by providing foundational writing skills such as segmenting. A student must be able to segment an unknown word into individual phonemes to write it accurately. These skills will be used in students' authentic writing throughout the school day and are integrated in the VPS writing units of study.</p>

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<p>8. How does the curriculum model or program provide for varied means of accessing content and demonstrating learning to meet the diverse needs of all students working above or below grade level?</p>	<p>The program follows a continuum of skills that grow and expand. Additionally, it allows for reteaching of targeted skills. The daily lessons in Heggerty are teacher-led and move from basic phonological awareness tasks at the word level, to more advanced phonemic awareness tasks such as phoneme substitution and manipulation. Every task is multisensory in approach allowing every student to access the lesson. The Heggerty curriculum is consistent, repetitive, and presents the same skill in multiple ways. Teachers can call on individual students to check comprehension of material. Portions of lessons can be used 1-1 or in small groups to give additional support for specific students. Teachers can observe each student's response to the eight Phonemic Awareness skills and two Early Literacy Skills during each lesson and then create 1-1 or small groups to help the students further develop particular skills.</p>
<p>9. How does the curriculum model or program represent various cultures and perspectives, promote cultural affirmation, and value diverse identities, backgrounds, and perspectives?</p>	<p>Literacy Resources LLC (publisher of Heggerty) has extensive experience assisting schools and school districts serving a variety of socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, including districts and schools with high poverty, linguistic minorities, and special education populations. Heggerty's curricula provide teachers with a scope and sequence and daily lessons that explicitly teach phonemic awareness.</p> <p>Research shows that the lack of phonemic awareness is the most common source of word-level reading difficulties for struggling readers and writers. Heggerty's curricula prevent these foundational skill gaps from forming in K-2 students who receive Tier 1 instruction with our resources. Heggerty's Tier 1 English curricula will provide English learners with daily lessons designed to improve their phonological sensitivity to English generally and their phonemic awareness specifically, both of which are essential to ensuring their English language and literacy development. Spanish-speaking students can receive systematic and explicit instruction in English, and in their native language. Literacy Resources LLC has Spanish phonological awareness curricula</p>

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	<p>designed for Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, and Primary level students. As of the 2021-2022 school year nearly 60% of the student population of Connecticut was Hispanic/Latino. Research has clearly demonstrated that literacy development in one's native language is beneficial to students for many reasons including their social-emotional development, and their English language and literacy development. The combination of Heggerty's English and Spanish curricula will support students striving towards biliteracy.</p> <p>In addition to Heggerty's Tier 1 resources, Tier 2 resources support both younger and older struggling students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teachers utilizing Heggerty's Tier 1 Pre-K, Kindergarten, and Primary curriculum can download free phonemic awareness assessments aimed at helping teachers identify areas of weakness within a student's PA skills. Teachers can then provide targeted instruction utilizing lessons from the Tier 1 curriculum manual within those specific skills to help students reach proficiency. Assessment resources include three different forms to measure overall growth as well as progress monitoring assessments for individual skills.• For older struggling students in 2nd grade and beyond, we have a Tier 2 curriculum titled, Bridge the Gap. This resource provides teachers with a placement assessment and scoring guidelines for instruction. The lessons in Bridge the Gap provide teachers, reading specialists, and interventionists with a simplified curriculum for teaching phonological and phonemic awareness with targeted instruction, based on student needs. Progress monitoring assessments are also included for each skill. <p>Literacy Resources, LLC and the Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum are grounded in the Science of Reading, a nation-wide literacy movement aimed at closing the literacy gap with science-based teaching methodologies.</p>
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Wilson Foundations & GEODES Decodable Text Sets- Grades K-2

1. How is the curriculum model or program evidenced-based and scientifically-based?

The Wilson Foundations early literacy program provides a multisensory approach to students in Grades K-3 designed to supplement core instruction in reading. Foundations is designed to support the systematic and explicit delivery of instruction for print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics, and word study. EdReports notes that the scope and sequence clearly delineates skills to be emphasized. The program is designed around the five critical areas of the science of reading. The program provides specific strategies to support English Language Learners and students experiencing difficulty and requiring additional scaffolds of support. To support the gaps in decodable text set availability within the program, the district has integrated the use of decodable text sets through the Great Minds program, GEODES. The text sets provide clear connections to the development of phonetic skills and emphasis of vocabulary directly aligned to instruction through Foundations in the Tier I environment.

Since the publication of Foundations®, several impact and efficacy studies of thousands of kindergarten and first-grade students have been performed in schools across the United States.

The consensus across these studies is that, when implemented properly, students using Foundations® in Tiers 1 and 2 achieve greater gains in foundational literacy skills compared to students using programs previously implemented by the schools. These results were consistent with English language learners (ELL) as well.

Studies of kindergarten students who received Foundations® instruction in Florida, New York, and Massachusetts demonstrated:

- Better learning of letter knowledge.
- Larger gains in phonological and phonemic awareness.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Greater gains in phonological decoding.• Reduction in risk of later reading difficulties. <p>First-grade students who received Foundations® instruction demonstrated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Larger gains in oral reading fluency.• Improvement in phonemic awareness (phoneme segmentation).• Improvement in phonological decoding (reading nonsense words).• Significant gains in basic reading skills.• Reduction in risk of later reading difficulties. <p>English language learners (Grade 1) who received Foundations® instruction demonstrated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Greater gains in phonemic awareness.• Greater gains in oral reading fluency. <p>For a full report summarizing research findings, please see: Foundations Program Effectiveness.</p> <p>In recent months, Foundations® has been approved in Arizona, Arkansas, Mississippi, Oregon, and Colorado as meeting those states' science of reading rubrics and ESSA requirements. It is also approved in California as meeting the state's social content standards.</p>
<p>2. How does the curriculum model or program support direct, explicit instruction in all areas of reading (i.e., oral language, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, rapid automatic name, or letter name fluency and reading comprehension)?</p>	<p>Foundations® is a 30-minute daily supplemental program for all students in grades K-3 that provides a comprehensive foundational skills program for word study, spelling, and handwriting that aligns with the science of reading. Although it also includes instruction in vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension strategies, it is designed to be combined with a literature-based program to comprehensively address English Language Arts (comprehension and writing).</p> <p>Students receive thorough instruction and practice in foundational skills to help them become completely proficient, rather than simply cover a</p>

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standards-based curriculum. There is a clear and research-based progression of skills and content presented in four levels of Foundations®: K, 1, 2, and 3. Concepts and skills are presented in a cumulative manner from Unit to Unit and year to year: To view the scope and sequence of all 4 levels of the program, please go to: [Foundations Curricular Overview](#)

The power of Foundations® is not just the **what** but the **how**. Principles and methods of structured literacy include the following: explicit, systematic, cumulative, hands-on, engaging and multimodal, diagnostic, and responsive instruction (International Dyslexia Association, 2017). In Foundations®, skills overlap and are taught in an integrated fashion, not in isolation. Within each lesson, there are several learning activities in which all students participate, aiming to both build on previously learned skills and teach new ones. These word-level skills are explicitly taught through a wide set of grade-level appropriate lesson activities. The daily rotation of learning activities results in varied and repeated practice using a multimodal approach with engaging materials. Manipulatives help students process information, understand it, and thus succeed in their learning and application of skills. Principles of instruction include:

- **Integrates skill instruction** so that a daily lesson teaches and then reinforces corresponding skills.
- **Scaffolds learning** while teaching all skills explicitly, sequentially, and systematically.
- **Actively engages students** in learning through the use of multisensory techniques, such as when teaching students sounds, their representative letters, and words with spelling options.
- **Provides multiple opportunities** for skills practice and application to build mastery.
- **Monitors student learning** through formative assessment tools built into the program.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Includes comprehensive and teacher-friendly materials to facilitate teachers' use of the program and promote student motivation.● Provides daily opportunities for students to practice decoding skills with controlled text to develop accuracy and automaticity.● Guides teachers on how to meet individual student needs by differentiating instruction.● Supports teachers through the online Wilson Learning Community, offering clear demonstrations of each teaching activity type used in the program.● Helps teachers achieve many of the requirements of state, local, and professional standards.● Encourages parental involvement through the use of the Foundations® Home Support Packet. <p>Fundations® has a clear and thoroughly documented research base and evidence of effectiveness. Independent review by the Florida Center for Reading Research identified the following program strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Foundations® is derived from research that has been proven to be successful with a wide variety of learners● Foundations® is highly systematic, both within lessons and across lessons● Multisensory methods are employed in teaching children sounds, their representative letters, and their combination into words, phrases, and sentences.● Students learn a variety of techniques to analyze multisyllabic and unknown words, and words with spelling options.● Frequent practice and review builds students' mastery● Foundations® can be used in a 1:1, small group, or whole-class setting, and can be used for prevention, intervention, or immediate, intensive intervention purposes● Many lesson activities and games for whole class or group participation are included
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- Materials are very teacher friendly and the online Learning Community for Foundations® gives excellent demonstrations of each of the teaching activity types used in the program. Teachers can review techniques as needed.
- No program weaknesses were noted.

Foundations®' phonological awareness instruction focuses most extensively on the key components related to the acquisition of reading and writing (i.e., phonemic awareness skills of blending, segmenting, and manipulation). Research strongly identifies that phonemic awareness instruction is most effective when also linked with letters.

By design, Foundations® Level K sets the goal to efficiently focus on the most complex phonemic awareness skill of phoneme blending and segmentation, which research identifies as the key skill and the functional value in decoding/reading. Phonemic awareness instruction begins in Level K by tuning students into the separate phonemes in a word and develops their understanding that sounds of spoken language work together to make words (phonemic awareness).

Although Foundations® doesn't name an activity "Phonemic Awareness," the oral language exercises of isolating phonemes in a spoken word are *ample*. The skill of isolating phonemes orally first (without letters) in a spoken word is emphasized in the procedure **of Echo/Find Words and Dictation Activities**. During these activities students first hear the word and must segment the sounds The Wilson® **finger tapping technique is used to analyze spoken words, segmenting and clarifying them into phonemes**. The teacher says a word; students echo and then tap out the individual phonemes. Students then identify letter tiles (manipulatives) or write the word applying the alphabetic principle. Although letters are used to first demonstrate segmentation and manipulation students do phonemic skills without letters and confirm the accuracy of the segmentation by then attaching letters.

During each activity, teachers dictate several words which helps students

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recognize the change in the spoken word when a specified phoneme is added, changed, or removed. This is phoneme manipulation. Words with digraphs, blends, digraph bends and words up to 5 sounds are segmented and blended. For multisyllabic words, the focus is on syllabic segmentation. The procedure for Echo/Find Words (multisyllabic words) and Dictation/Words (multisyllabic words) teaches students to first hear the word orally, then break the words into syllables.

Phonemic awareness is not just something performed at the beginning of the program and in isolation, but rather it is conducted (daily) throughout the year as it is directly integrated into the study of word structure as follows:

- Kindergarten students will orally segment three sound words including words with digraphs because the CVC pattern is the syllable pattern taught in Level K.
- In Level 1, students will progress to orally segmenting and identifying up to 5 sounds in a single syllable including digraph-blends as well as isolating and segmenting phonemes in words with the long vowel sound in the v-c-e syllable type as they learn this word structure.
- When students progress to learning multisyllable word structure at the end of Level 1 and in Levels 2 and 3, they are required to tune into (phonologically) the number of syllables in the word. When provided a word orally, students must break the words into syllables then further identify the phonemes in each syllable.

Thus, phonemic awareness is not just something that is done in isolation at the beginning of K through grade 1, but rather it is a skill that is integrated into the process of acquiring reading skills throughout the K-3 Foundations® curricula.

Foundations® also spends some (but not extensive) time dedicated to lower-level PA (phonological sensitivity skills) continuum (i.e., word awareness, rhyming, alliteration, syllable awareness, onset-rime) Even so,

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these activities are included in **Make it Fun, Word Play, and Storytime** activities in the standard lesson as well as with the Home Support Packet and additional activities provided on the Foundations® Learning Community (the companion website). (Please note that Foundations® doesn't name an activity "Phonological Awareness," rather these activities are integrated into other activities such as Make it Fun, Word Play and Storytime.)

Foundations® is a comprehensive word study program which teaches the alphabetic, syllabic, and orthographic structure of words. It presents all skills in a systematic and sequential manner in four levels: Level K, Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3. All previous taught skills are brought forward in a cumulative way. Students have ample opportunity to apply these skills for reinforcement. Instruction continually spirals back to relate the new concepts with previously mastered ones. In this way, students are able to develop a deeper understanding of the structure of English words.

While a synthetic, systematic phonics program is essential, it is not sufficient. Foundations® goes beyond phonics to thoroughly integrate the instruction of total word structure, including syllable patterns, affixes, and orthography (rules of English written language) so that students fully internalize the "system" of the English language. This is key for students to go beyond the recognition of single-syllable words and master multisyllabic word decoding. It is also essential to move students from reading words primarily via alphabetic decoding to more automatically recognizing written words (see Nation & Castle, 2017). Students investigate words and use a variety of techniques to analyze single-syllable and multisyllabic words, unknown words, and words with spelling options, including their knowledge around vowel sounds in syllables. This is important for students to efficiently read longer, unfamiliar words as their reading skills progress and the complexity of grade-level text increases.

Encoding (spelling) skills are taught in tandem with decoding skills. This is because spelling is a foundational skill for writing and strongly reinforces reading. Research demonstrates that spelling has a strong effect on reading

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	<p>fluency and word reading skills (Shaywitz, 2003; Reed, 2012). Mastering the spelling of words provides an orthographic mapping of the word so it can then be recognized during a reading task with more fluency. Spelling skills are taught with decoding skills through: Introduce New Concepts, Echo/Find Words, Dictation Words and Sentences. Additionally, students learn punctuation, capitalization, and proofreading skills.</p> <p>Fundations® and its materials and activities provide abundant practice with learned concepts of word structure and analysis, while also engaging students in metacognitive thinking as it is essential that students understand the underpinnings of word structure and can apply and generalize these concepts.</p> <p>In Fundations®, sound mastery is a critical component of phonics. In Fundations®, students are directly taught a consistently used keyword to help them remember a letter's sound. Research has shown that the use of keywords works as a memory device to help students associate the sound relationship to the letter. The Drill Sounds/Warm Up activity reinforces the alphabetic principle and allows students an opportunity to "warm up" for each lesson by practicing the letters, keywords, and sounds they have already learned. This two-three minute sound drill is designed to create fast and efficient neurotransmission pathways to access sounds (sound mastery and automaticity). Sound master is reinforced in the following activities: Letter-Keyword-Sound, Drill Sounds, Echo/Find Letters, Dictation/Sounds, Echo/Letter Formation, Skywrite/Letter Formation, and Make it Fun.</p> <p>Fundations® students develop deep word-level knowledge and automatic word identification skills beginning with strategies that target accuracy such as tapping out sounds and marking word elements. The Wilson® tapping technique adds a powerful tactile component to clarifying phonemes before blending to decode. Students cumulatively learn to process words more quickly by using the patterns of syllables and orthographic rules (spelling conventions) involving base words and affixes. Sounds Cards and Syllable Cards are used to teach concepts of syllable types in a multisensory way.</p>
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	<p>Students investigate words and use a variety of techniques, including their knowledge around vowel sounds in syllables, to analyze single-syllable and multisyllabic words. Lessons progress to a focus on quick automatic word recognition. Activities provide ample practice for decoding practice including Introduce New Concepts, Word of the Day, Word Talk, Teach Trick Words-Reading, Make it Fun, Storytime. For each Foundations® level, every unit includes a comprehensive list of controlled text for only the word structure taught in that unit or previously taught concepts. Additional single-word decoding practice for accuracy and automaticity as well as application of emerging decoding skills with connected text is provided in the Home Support Packet 1, Fluency Kit for Levels 1 and 2, the Foundations® Stories Set 1, and with the books in the Geodes® Classroom Libraries.</p> <p>With Foundations®, automatic word recognition of Level K, 1 and 2 Trick Words, combined with students' emerging phonetic knowledge, will provide mastery instruction for the most common sight words on both the Fry and American Heritage high frequency lists. Phonetically irregular high frequency words and high frequency words with regular sound-spelling patterns not yet introduced in the curriculum are taught as Trick Words in Foundations®. Trick words are introduced within the context of a sentence to promote automatic and fluent reading to aid in defining the word when necessary. Although students are taught to recognize these high frequency words by sight, Trick Word instruction is not taught in isolation. Kinesthetic-tactile memory techniques are used to help students create visual pictures of irregular parts of words to store them in memory. Trick Words are practiced in decoding and spelling activities that include sentences, phrases, and story reading.</p> <p>In Foundations®, print awareness is developed through varied practice designed to advance students' understanding that print has different purposes and is an ordered system that must be approached in a way that unlocks its meaning. Print awareness is explicitly connected to books and stories during the Foundations® Storytime Activity. It should be noted that Foundations® is designed to be combined with a literature-based program with the</p>
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	<p>understanding that ample opportunities to engage in meaningful print, including modeling print concepts in authentic reading contexts such as teacher read-alouds, will be provided with the core ELA (i.e., Vernon Connecticut Core Standards Based Reading Curriculum - see below) program.</p> <p>Print awareness is also demonstrated and reinforced during several Foundations® activities that use the Sentence Frames to teach concepts. Foundations® activities using Sentence Frames include Introduce New Concepts, Teach Trick Words, Trick Word Practice, Word Play–Word Awareness, Word Play-Read Sentences, and Dictation/Sentences.</p> <p>These activities emphasize that sentences are read left to right and words are separated by spaces in print. Also, key elements of sentence structure such as capitalization and punctuation are directly taught. Standard Sound Cards and Letter tiles help to demonstrate the difference between individual letters and printed words, and that letters make up words.</p> <p>Letter formation is tightly integrated with learning the letter name and letter sound. Students simultaneously learn its formation and the letter-sound correspondence; creating important linkages to the visual; motor; and phonological image of the letter. Students master letter formation with verbal cues, repetition, sky writing, tracing, and writing practice. Letter formation is initially introduced using gross motor memory during the Sky Write/Letter Formation activity. Teachers use a gradual release approach to support student’s incremental skill mastery. Students first use gross motor memory to trace the letter, then to copy it, and finally to write the letter from memory. Letters are grouped into “like patterns” and grid lines (Wilson grid) for writing are given specific names and used as reference points. Students are guided through a letter’s formation using consistent verbalization. The following daily activities offer practice in a multi-modal/multisensory manner using engaging materials. Letter-Keyword-Sound, Drill Sounds, Echo/Find Letters, Dictation/Sounds, Echo/Letter Formation, Skywrite/Letter Formation, Student Notebook, Alphabetical Order, Make it Fun In Level K, students</p>
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master the letter formations of all 26 letters, upper- and lowercase. Grades 1 and 2 teachers have all materials and instruction to reteach and review these as needed. Cursive letter formation is explicitly taught in Level 3 or can also be taught in grade 2. Throughout the curriculum, legibility is highly valued.

Also, the Foundations® Pre-K Activity Set is available from Wilson Language Training and supports students' emerging understanding of letter-sound associations and manuscript letter formation.

For phonetically regular word study, the Foundations® program introduces sounds and word structure based on the six syllable types. In Level K, students begin with blending CVC words that start with continuous consonant sounds that are more easily blended since the consonant sound can be held into the vowel. In subsequent levels, students progress systematically from CVC words to words with four then five sounds to words with more complex patterns including multisyllabic words and all vowel patterns. Part of the power of the Foundations® program is how it integrates decoding and spelling instruction. English orthography is complex, but it is systematic. Foundations® ensures that students are secure in their skills before spelling words with sound options, and therefore some syllable types are taught in depth later in the curriculum. This is so all syllable types are taught sequentially, cumulatively, and to mastery without confusion and an overreliance on memorization as a tactic for spelling. By the end of Level 2, however, *all* syllable types are taught for both reading and spelling.

Quick and automatic word recognition is necessary for fluency, but it is not sufficient. In addition to automaticity, students need to develop prosody and expression. In Foundations®, students have multiple opportunities to develop quick and automatic word recognition, which is taught to mastery during decoding activities such as **Introduce New Concepts, Word of the Day, Word Talk, Make it Fun, and Word Play**. For each Foundations® level, every unit includes a **comprehensive list of controlled text for only the word structure taught** in that unit or previously taught concepts. Students also work to develop prosody and expression with connected text with a variety of

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activities such as **sentence reading**, **Trick Word Practice**, **Word of the Day** and **Storytime**. To develop fluency and speed of reading, students learn how to read in phrases that connect meaning. Foundations® uses a scooping technique to provide a graphical representation of phrasing. The Storytime Activity is designed to help develop the students' awareness of print; understanding of story structure; cohesion of story events; visualization skill; auditory and reading comprehension; and retelling of a story or facts. Students also focus on vocabulary, punctuation, and reading fluency. The activity provides practice applying word analysis and fluency strategies to reading controlled stories.

Additional single-word decoding practice for accuracy and automaticity as well as application of emerging decoding skills with connected text is also provided in the **Home Support Packets**, the **Fluency Kits 1 and 2**, the **Foundations® Stories Set 1** and the **Books to Remember Sets 1 and 2**.

Foundations® includes a Fluency Kit (Level 1 and 2) which provides additional opportunities for practice and activities. There are timed exercises for sounds, word lists, trick words, and phrases. The controlled text material is used for repeated reading. Children chart their progress on an individual recording form. The students work toward a goal of 60 words per minute by the end of grade one and 90 words per minute by the end of grade two.

By Grade 3, given the depth of knowledge systematically imparted in all Levels, and the fact that Foundations® Level 2 is a prerequisite for Foundations® Level 3, students should be able to decode grade-appropriate non-controlled informational text and authentic literature. It is not necessary to limit Level 3 students to highly controlled text. Authentic, connected text, such as the texts provided through the Wit and Wisdom curriculum, allow students to practice and achieve reading fluency in order to read with purpose and understanding.

The Geodes® Classroom Libraries, published by Great Minds in collaboration with Wilson Language Training, support this indicator. Geodes are a collection

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	<p>of accessible, knowledge-building books for emerging and developing readers that specifically align with the scope and sequence of the Foundations® program. That is, the Geodes Level K library (48 books) aligns with Foundations® Level K, Geodes Level 1 library (64 books) aligns with Foundations® Level 1, and the Level 2 library (64 books) aligns with Foundations® Level 2. Each text is at least 80% readable at a designated point in the Foundations® scope and sequence. These authentic reading experiences empower students to apply their emerging decoding and word recognition skills that align with Foundations®' word study scope and sequence with a knowledge-building sequence or texts.</p>
<p>3. How does the curriculum model or program support frequent opportunities for students to practice and gain literacy skills?</p>	<p>Fundations provides 30 minutes of daily phonics practice through all of its multi-sensory components (see question 2. above). In addition, the GEODES readable texts that align with the scope and sequence of Foundations skills allow students to transfer the phonics skills to their reading of the engaging texts.</p> <p>Wilson Foundations leverages the utilization of diagnostic assessment information collected daily from formative assessments and observation of student learning to plan and differentiate student learning. Differentiation guidelines are provided through teacher resource manuals in the <i>Learning Activity Overview</i> in each unit's introduction to structure the delivery of instruction for students requiring additional support and those who are learning English as a second language</p>
<p>4. How does the curriculum model or program allow for high-quality, daily differentiation of foundational skills so all students achieve mastery of foundational skills?</p>	<p>The diagnostic nature of Foundations® combines assessment and instruction, allowing teachers to determine and address students' strengths and challenges. Teachers write their own lesson plans to diagnostically differentiate instruction based on need and mastery of previously taught material. Teachers assess student mastery by analyzing student outcomes on formative and summative assessments and daily observations.</p>

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	<p>Whole group instruction is delivered to the entire class during the Foundations® Standard Lesson to provide high-quality and consistent initial reading and spelling instruction. Multiple Learning Activities in each daily 30-minute lesson give students many ways to understand the content and assure that all students are able to participate.</p> <p>Foundations® lessons are designed to incorporate scaffolded steps to new learning: modeling and explanation, guided practice and explanation, and independent practice and demonstration as a skill is mastered. The sequence of Learning Activities also progresses on a given day or within a week to move students toward independence.</p> <p>Foundations® Teacher's Manuals provide guidelines for differentiation to help teachers challenge more advanced students during group lessons while systematically and thoroughly building their foundations knowledge of word structure. Guidelines are also provided for diagnostic planning of lessons with all students in mind so that teachers can use questioning to target student difficulties and challenge more advanced students.</p> <p>The companion website called the Learning Community for Foundations®, (previously called the Prevention Learning Community - PLC), provides many center-based activities or independent activities including phonemic awareness activities, phonics activities with manipulatives, and practice with decodable text. The Fluency Kit (Levels 1-2) provides additional timed practice for repeated oral readings.</p> <p>Students who are significantly below benchmark or who consistently score 80% on Unit Tests should be considered for additional support, such as small group Intervention lessons with targeted instruction. For students who need targeted support, small group instruction is provided. In Levels K (p. 12) and in Levels 1-3 (p. 13) see Students Who Are Struggling section. Please note: At-risk students in need of strategic and targeted intervention will:</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in the whole-class Foundations standard lesson (30 minutes daily). • Also receive targeted Foundations intervention lessons in small-groups (up to 5 students; 30 minutes 3-5 times per week). • Achieve increased instructional intensity through small, homogeneous group lessons; increased instructional time with intervention lessons; and targeted instruction in specific areas of difficulty. <p>The companion website provides recourse for targeted instruction and intervention including small group format, scheduling, lesson planning, activities, and progress monitoring tools.</p>
5. How does the curriculum model or program provide for structured discussions that address grade-level speaking and listening standards?	<p>Foundations has established a crosswalk instrument documenting the alignment of skills to the Common Core Standards for speaking and listening. The use of collaborative discourse with partners in small groups to discuss a text and the presentation of knowledge and ideas are two themes prioritized in the curriculum. The crosswalk document includes clear connections to the unit activities with embedded page number locations to connect learning to the Common Core Standards. Please reference pages 17-18 of the embedded document for specific detail.</p>
6. How does the curriculum model or program comprehensively address Connecticut Core Standards for English Language Arts through both explicit instruction and authentic application?	<p>The program supports the acquisition of language skills through the explicit teaching of decoding and encoding (spelling) skills. The skills are developed simultaneously targeting the development of total word structure. Fluent handwriting practices are reinforced beginning with letter formation and targeting the application of cursive writing in level three. These skills are partnered with letter-sound mastery. The use of the “echo” of letter formation and activities within the student workbook assists in developing capacity around these skills. The program connects students to the learning of standard English conventions including capitalization and punctuation to</p>

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	<p>support grammar usage when reading and writing.</p> <p>See pages 21-26, 46-52, 70-74, 82-87 for Language Standards Alignment Language Standards Alignment</p>
<p>7. How does the curriculum model or program include a wide range of authentic writing and explicit instruction in writing skills and strategies?</p>	<p>Fundations provides a wide range of materials to address grade-level language standards and authentic writing opportunities. Fundations contributes to the goals by setting the foundation for writing by directly teaching the study of English orthography for spelling of words and high frequency words and proofreading skills. The goal is for students to be automatic and fluent with writing so that instruction at higher levels of writing can be addressed.</p> <p>Explicit instruction in the development of writing skills occurs in a progressive manner from year to year. At early levels, students begin work in developing letter formation which ultimately leads to the development of full sentences to communicate ideas. Simultaneously, students are authentically acquiring strategies to write irregular (trick) words. Students utilize the GEODES decodable texts to authentically apply targeted skills from the Fundations curriculum. Additionally, students journal responses related to teacher-facilitated questions from the texts. Teachers analyze comprehension barriers for students by determining if students utilize evidence from the stories to answer text-based questions.</p>
<p>8. How does the curriculum model or program provide for varied means of accessing content and demonstrating learning to meet the diverse needs of all students working above or below grade level?</p>	<p>During the learning process (i.e., daily Learning Activities), informal formative assessment lets teachers know how well their students are learning. "Show me" is a phrase Fundations® teachers' use with clear instructional objectives. It requires learners to do intellectual work and demonstrate their thinking and understanding through performance activities such as Dictation, Echo/Find Words, and Guess Which One. Teachers provide immediate feedback to students.</p>

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Students' achievement is assessed by examining their progress from multiple perspectives, including direct observation of daily work and independent application of skills. For example, teachers might ask students to explain their thinking when determining unknown words or when attempting to spell a word in their independent writing. If a word or words are incorrect, teachers utilize guiding questions to observe if students can make self-corrections. Teachers observe whether students are beginning to self-monitor their responses and if they are using problem-solving strategies to complete decoding or spelling tasks.

Formal formative assessments are completed via Unit Tests in which each student is assessed individually. Eighty percent of the class should be at benchmark (scoring 80% on each subtest) before moving to the next Unit. Students receiving Tier 2 intervention with Foundations are also assessed using the Progress Monitoring Tool.

The guiding instructional principles of Foundations, including multisensory, structured, and integrated skills instruction, as well as explicit modeling and ample opportunity to practice taught skills in a variety of contexts and activities, provide for high quality lessons that address students' needs at various levels.

Foundations provides guidance to the teacher on how to differentiate the Learning Activities for advanced and struggling learners. Given that these learning activities are conducted **daily**, the teacher can differentiate with every lesson. Furthermore, Foundations provides guidance at the beginning of the units for ways to challenge students within the concepts being taught. It is important to recognize that Foundations inherently challenges advanced students while setting high expectations for learning of all students and supporting struggling learners along the way.

Foundations efficiently uses data to identify students needing varying levels of support and has integrated differentiation to target the support for these

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	<p>students. Differentiation within the Unit lessons is directly addressed at the beginning of each Unit in all Levels of the Teacher’s Manual, as well as in the Introduction sections</p> <p>Teachers are instructed to plan and teach diagnostically based on student mastery of concepts taught. Teachers write their own lesson plans to diagnostically differentiate instruction based on need and mastery of previously taught material. Teachers assess student mastery by analyzing student outcomes on formative and summative assessments and daily observations.</p> <p>In addition, each Learning Activity Overview provides guidelines for differentiation so that teachers are able to differentiate for various needs of students in each Foundations® activity.</p> <p>Foundations® instruction supports students at various levels of English proficiency by directly and systematically teaching how decoding and spelling works in the English language. Foundations®’ explicit instruction and many of the principles of instruction built into the program are particularly beneficial for ELs/MLs</p> <p>For example, during the initial teacher-led instruction, teachers model using classroom demonstrations of concepts which can be particularly effective for these students (Janney & Snell, 2004). Classroom demonstrations occur when a teacher’s verbal explanation for concepts is enhanced by visual, physical, and kinesthetic involvement. Thus, Foundations®’ multisensory instruction provides multiple examples of these demonstrations that can benefit these students. The interactive and hands-on activities help to reinforce the acquisition of language associated with reading and spelling as well as the literacy skills.</p> <p>In the <i>Practical Guidelines for the Education of English Language Learners: Research-Based Recommendations for Instruction and Academic Interventions</i> (2006), researchers recommend that “ELLs need early, explicit</p>
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	<p>and intensive instruction in phonological awareness and phonics in order to build decoding skills" (Francis et. al., p.17).</p> <p>The following key instructional principles implemented in Foundations® are critical for ELs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration of listening, speaking, reading and writing • Explicitly modeled skill and strategy instruction • Verbal explanation for concepts enhanced by visual, physical, and kinesthetic involvement. • Opportunities for student interaction in supportive groups • Procedures that ensure student engagement with hands-on activities • Clear and consistent directions and cueing systems • Ample opportunities to reinforce skills • Scaffolded instruction • Repetition of vocabulary, including the vocabulary of word structure(such as digraph, short vowel) • Assessment of content knowledge that is performance rather than language-based
<p>9. How does the curriculum model or program represent various cultures and perspectives, promote cultural affirmation, and value diverse identities, backgrounds, and perspectives?</p>	<p>Foundations® has been approved by the California State Board of Education as meeting the state's social content standards. This means the materials contained in each of Wilson's programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portray accurately and equitably the cultural and racial diversity of American society. • Demonstrate the contribution of minority groups and males and females to the development of California and the United States. • Depict people in varied, positive, and contributing roles to enrich students' school experiences. • Avoid inappropriate references to commercial brand names, products, and corporate or company logos <p>Geodes classroom libraries include various titles containing both informational and literary text with multiple copies for each child. The library aligns with the</p>

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	scope and sequence for Foundations and is organized into four topical modules. Topics covered in modules that address various cultures, backgrounds, identities and perspectives. For example grade one has the module Cinderella Stories. During this module students explore countries and cultures through the lens of this enduring tale.
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Vernon Connecticut Core Standards Based Reading Curriculum Document - Grades K-3	
1. How is the curriculum model or program evidenced-based and scientifically-based?	<p>The explanation for why TCRWP is both program evidenced and scientifically based program</p> <p>This report looks at testing data in TCRWP Connecticut schools by tracing growth over time, investigating the performance of English Language Learners and economically disadvantaged students, and comparing TCRWP schools with non-TCRWP schools overall.</p>
2. How does the curriculum model or program support direct, explicit instruction in all areas of reading (i.e., oral language, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, rapid automatic name, or letter name fluency and reading comprehension)?	<p>Throughout the curriculum, we continue to use the reading workshop model. The workshop model includes the mini-lesson (explicit instruction of a skill or strategy through various means and active engagement where students work together to practice the skill/strategy before independent reading), independent practice including reading conferences, and a wrap-up share. Other components of the literacy block include an interactive read-aloud with accountable talk (either through turn and talk or class conversations), shared reading (all eyes on the same text with students joining in choral reading and skill practice), and phonological/phonemic awareness work. During both read-aloud and shared reading components, an emphasis should be placed on close reading (rereading at a deeper level of the details of the illustrations and text). Key vocabulary are also addressed during the read-aloud and shared reading. Strategy groups and/or guided reading groups are incorporated into the classroom once routines are established.</p>

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	<p>Reading instruction is organized into 6 units with explicit information provided within the curricular documents. Within each unit, there is a list of mentor text, suggested texts and teacher resources to be utilized to support instruction. Students are engaged with authentic literature throughout the units of study. The text utilized addresses various cultures and multiple perspectives.</p> <p>Many of the reading foundational standards are taught concurrently to the units using the <i>Foundations</i> (Wilson) word study program.</p>
<p>3. How does the curriculum model or program support frequent opportunities for students to practice and gain literacy skills?</p>	<p>The Teachers College Reading and Writing Units of Study are embedded within our standards-based curriculum. The Teachers College Reading and Writing Project Units of Study meets the high expectations of Connecticut's Department of Education.</p> <p>The Vernon K-3 curriculum documents show curricula's alignment to Connecticut Core Standards for English Language Arts, the goals, methods, and materials for each unit as well as the rationale for each unit.</p> <p>Kindergarten ELA Curriculum Overview Grade 1 ELA Curriculum Overview Grade 2 ELA Curriculum Overview Grade 3 ELA Curriculum Overview</p> <p>Explicit Unit Examples for Vernon K-3 Reading</p> <p>Kindergarten - Unit 3 Superpower Reading Strategies</p>

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	Grade 1 Unit 2 - Puzzling Through a Good Story Grade 2 - Unit 2 - Learning About Myself Through Fairytales and Folktales Grade 3 Unit 5 - Characters, They're Just Like Us
4. How does the curriculum model or program allow for high-quality, daily differentiation of foundational skills so all students achieve mastery of foundational skills?	<p>Both the Vernon Standards-Based Curriculum with support from The Units of Study in Reading, Grades K-3 provide a comprehensive program of differentiated instruction in order to achieve mastery of foundational skills. Each day starts with a quick, focused mini-lesson that supports the skills and strategies relevant to the reading work students are doing across a broad range of levels. This lesson is followed by an “independent reading time” where students engage in a well-supported independent reading task while the teacher leads assessment-based, responsive instruction in small groups (guided reading, decoding, shared reading, skills-based instruction) and one on one conferring focused on a student’s specific reading goals. During a reading workshop, students will read from a vetted collection of just-right books, differentiated for each student, including a balance of both leveled and decodable books. These leveled texts support a child with repeated practice of the foundational skills that have been instructed. Some children may have a larger number of decodable texts in their reading baggies while other children in the class are already reading picture or chapter books and working to solidify a different set of skills, such as decoding multisyllabic words and reading with increased fluency, comprehension and</p>

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	understanding of vocabulary.
5. How does the curriculum model or program provide for structured discussions that address grade-level speaking and listening standards?	<p>Throughout the K-3 Vernon Curriculum Reading Units students are given the opportunity to develop strong skills that address the speaking and listening standards. Examples of structured discussions that occur daily are turn and talks during both mini lessons and interactive read-aloud (Reading and Writing Workshop). Throughout the units, students have the opportunity to have reflective conversations during grand conversations, book partnerships, and book clubs. Students continue to have conversations with both teachers and peers through guided reading.</p> <p>During the units teachers assess students speaking and listening skills based on the standards that were taught during a specific unit. Student performance is graded utilizing a checklist or rubric.</p> <p>The link below provides an example of a structured discussion that aligns with the following standards. SL.1c, SL.3, SL.1 a b SL.2, SL.6 Performance Task Grade 2 - Author Share</p>
6. How does the curriculum model or program comprehensively address Connecticut Core Standards for English Language Arts through both explicit instruction and authentic application?	<p>Both the Vernon Standards-Based Curriculum along with the TCRWP curriculum not only meets but exceeds the high expectations of Connecticut's Department of Education. Below you can find how the standards are explicitly met through units of study and Vernon's instruction.</p> <p>K-3 Units of Study for Teaching Reading - Common Core State Standards Alignment</p>

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	Kindergarten ELA Curriculum Overview Grade 1 ELA Curriculum Overview Grade 2 ELA Curriculum Overview Grade 3 ELA Curriculum Overview
7. How does the curriculum model or program include a wide range of authentic writing and explicit instruction in writing skills and strategies?	<p>The Vernon Standards Based K-3 Writing Curriculum with the support of TCRWP K-3 Writing Units provides a wide range of authentic writing and explicit instruction in writing skills and strategies.</p> <p>While utilizing the Vernon Standards Based K-3 Writing curriculum with the support of TCRWP K-3 Writing Units students produce informational, argumentative and narrative writing. They utilize a variety of tools from pencils to a digital platform, Google Classroom. They work through the processing steps to then publish pieces of writing in the form of persuasive speeches, posters, presentations, petitions, poems and both fictional and informational books. Across the curriculum, as students explore specific genres of writing and develop new writing skills, they also discover ways in which they can apply what they've learned in one genre to another. For example, writers discover that they can include a small-moment story as a way of providing evidence in an argumentative piece.</p> <p>The K-3 Vernon Standards-Based Curriculum and TCRWP Units of Study are developed to give students opportunities to move repeatedly through the writing process. During each unit, students are taught specific strategies for producing ideas,</p>

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drafting, revising, and editing so they can work independently to create a high volume of pieces. The writing workshop celebrates and nurtures each child's writing identity, encouraging students to generate ideas about topics that resonate with them.

Across each unit, students also use charts, checklists, and rubrics to self-assess and set goals. A writing checklist ([Example of Writing Checklist](#)) can be differentiated with illustrations for specific students. This assists in the students' understanding of what good work looks like across different genres, in order to create specific goals and decide the next steps for their own work. Students may also work with partners across all the stages of the writing process to give and receive feedback

Students also study and learn from mentor texts. Teachers use these mentor texts to show and teach key skills around craft and structure so that students can mirror those writing techniques in their own pieces.

The following 4 documents show the overview of all 6 writing units in K-3. You will see the specific standards for each unit.

[Kindergarten - Vernon Standards Based Writing Curriculum Overview](#)

[First Grade - Vernon Standards Based Writing Curriculum Overview](#)

[Second Grade Vernon Standards Based Writing Curriculum](#)

[Third Grade Vernon Standards Based Writing Curriculum](#)

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	<p>Here are four examples of our curricular writing documents for Grade K-3.</p> <p>Kindergarten - Unit 3 - Words Add to Your Story First Grade - Unit 4 - Opinion Writing Second Grade - Unit 2 - Personal Narrative and Author's Craft Third Grade - Unit 2 - Informational Expert Pieces</p> <p><i>Patterns of Power: Grades 1–5</i> <i>Inviting Young Writers into the Conventions of Language-</i></p> <p>Embedded within the Vernon Standards-Based writing curriculum is the program, <i>Patterns of Power</i>, where students examine authentic fiction and nonfiction books and come to recognize these “patterns of power”—the crucial grammar conventions that readers and writers require to make meaning.</p> <p>The first part of the program opens up a way of thinking about grammar instruction and arranges everything you need to immerse yourself in the practice of welcoming elementary students to experiment and play with language. The second part of the program offers more than 70 constructive, teacher-friendly lessons. These lessons align with the common core standards so they can be paced out appropriately through Grades 1-3.</p> <p>This program not only benefits writing but oral language based on peer-to-peer conversations when discussing the “notices” (grammar conventions).</p> <p>On the final lesson of a 3-5 day plan, students will be asked to look at their specific writing piece and identify and add the specific grammar convention that was discussed throughout the</p>
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	<p>week.</p> <p>Patterns of Power Lessons Correlation to Common Core Standards</p>
<p>8. How does the curriculum model or program provide for varied means of accessing content and demonstrating learning to meet the diverse needs of all students working above or below grade level?</p>	<p>The Vernon Standards-Based Reading Curriculum supports the diverse needs of all students working above or below grade level. Teachers adjust their curriculum and instruction to maximize the learning of all students working above or below level. Differentiated instruction is not a single strategy but rather a framework that teachers can use to implement a variety of strategies.</p> <p>Once whole group instruction (mini-lesson) is delivered, students are required to read independently and work on a specific reading goal or standards-based skill that was taught. Students performing above grade level may work on the skill(s) from the grade level above. They may work within book partnerships or clubs using higher-order questions and thinking.</p> <p>One-to-one conferring will be done more frequently with on-level readers to check in on individualized reading goals or confirmation of understanding of both the skill and text.</p> <p>Students working below grade level may be pulled into a small strategy group or guided reading group. During a small reading group, students will utilize a grade-level text to work on a differentiated strategy for a skill previously taught. Teachers may utilize strategies from Jennifer Serravallo's <i>The Reading Strategies</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• "The Reading Strategies Book 2.0 is designed to be a

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trusted, research-aligned companion for any K–8 reading classroom—no matter your curriculum, subject area, or instructional approach. Connect crucial research to powerful practice, whether you need engaging lessons for whole-class teaching, support for small-group instruction, ideas for intervention, or ways to fill gaps in a core curriculum. The friendly design makes it easy to find strategies that meet every student where they are *now*.”

Teachers may also meet with a guided reading group in which students are working at their instructional reading level. Students will work on decoding, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, and writing. The program used in Vernon for guided reading is *Literacy Footprints*.

- “Literacy Footprints is a complete guided reading system developed by Jan Richardson and Michèle Dufresne. The lessons are based on Jan’s *Next Step Forward in Guided Reading* and Jan and Michèle’s co-authored *Next Step Forward in Word Study and Phonics*. Literacy Footprints features leveled readers, unique teaching tools, and guided reading lesson plans integrated with reading, writing and phonics.”

Another form of small group instruction utilized within the classroom is the use of decodable texts for students to practice and strengthen their phonics skills which helps develop their fluency and comprehension of the text. The specific program utilized by Vernon is *Geodes*.

- “Geodes are accessible, knowledge-building books for emerging and developing readers, aligned with the developmental stages of the Wilson Foundations®

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	<p>foundational reading program.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Each book in the collection is designed to cultivate a deep reading experience, enabling students to apply decoding skills while building knowledge in history, science, and the arts.”
<p>9. How does the curriculum model or program represent various cultures and perspectives, promote cultural affirmation, and value diverse identities, backgrounds, and perspectives?</p>	<p>Through our read-aloud texts and classroom libraries our curriculum model includes various cultures and perspectives, promotes cultural affirmation, and values diverse identities, backgrounds and perspectives. Our texts provide students with opportunities to see aspects of their own lives and cultures reflected in the text. These positive and accurate portrayals validate readers and show them what is possible. Our diverse text collection also allows students to discover characters and cultures that are different from their own. When authentic, children gain valuable insights into the world around them.</p>

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Lexia - Grades K-3	
1. How is the curriculum model or program evidenced-based and scientifically based?	Evidence for ESSA Lexia Fits the Bill Lexia CORE 5 Benchmark Validity Document Lexia COR 5 Predictor Validity Document
2. How does the curriculum model or program support direct, explicit instruction in all areas of reading (i.e., oral language, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, rapid automatic name, or letter name fluency and reading comprehension)?	<p>Phonological/Phonemic Awareness: Lexia Core 5 provides a developmental sequence of activities that begins in the preschool years. With early activities in Lexia Core5 Reading, students develop phonological awareness through picture-matching activities that emphasize recognition of rhyming words and the ability to blend syllables in spoken words. They also learn to segment spoken words by identifying the number of syllables they hear. Blending and segmenting activities begin with compound words and progress to three-syllable words. Once phonological awareness of syllables has been established, students begin to develop phonemic awareness by analyzing and synthesizing individual sounds in words. During phonemic awareness activities, they match pictures with the same beginning and ending sounds, and also blend and segment individual phonemes in words. This phonemic awareness or sound analysis skills are critical for learning phonic word attack strategies related to word identification and spelling.</p> <p>Phonics: Beginning phonics activities start with the identification of letter symbols and the alphabetic sequence. Next, students delve into the relationships between sounds and letters for consonants and vowels as they match letters to the sounds in</p>

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pictured words. Growing letter-sound knowledge is quickly applied to written words in tasks that require the analysis of initial, final consonants, and medial vowels. Letter-sound activities reinforce phonemic awareness.

Students move to recognize letter patterns as they identify open, closed, and silent-e syllables in one-syllable words. Activities help them learn to combine syllables to construct and read two-syllable words. They also learn to apply phonic word attack strategies to read decodable phrases and sentences.

Through Lexia Core 5, students learn to identify all six syllable types and the basic rules for syllable division.

Automaticity/Fluency:

Automaticity: A feature of Lexia Core5 Reading is the inclusion of warm-up activities and review units designed to consolidate previously learned skills and bring them to a level of automaticity. Students engage with warm-up activities at the beginning of each session for approximately two to three minutes. Since students differ in their processing speed, the pace of these warm-ups is based on individual performance and allows the students to increase their rate of response relative to their level of automaticity. The content of the warm-ups follows the same sequence as the activities within previous levels.

Warm-ups begin with letters and sound-symbol correspondences and move to a recognition of both regular and irregular words, as well as key elements related to comprehension.

Fluency: Efficient readers learn to integrate automatic word identification with knowledge of sentence structure and meaning. In Lexia Core5 Reading, fluency instruction is built

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systematically by work that focuses on important aspects of sentence structure, as well as activities that involve the analysis of intonation, emphasis, phrasing, rhythm, and rhyme scheme. These activities are not timed and address critical elements of fluency related to prosody. Fluency activities also include work at the paragraph level through the timed silent reading of narrative and expository text that follows a maze format. These silent reading activities are designed to increase the speed of processing while maintaining a focus on meaning. In the passage fluency activities, a maze task is used in which students are timed as they silently read a passage and choose words to complete the text, ensuring that they are monitoring for meaning. Progression through the activity is based on both accuracy and rate. Additional teacher-led lessons also serve as key fluency resources as they support the development of additional skills important for reading fluency, including oral reading with a focus on expression and appropriate prosody.

Vocabulary: The vocabulary strand in Lexia Core5 Reading is structured to teach word-learning strategies, to provide exposure to rich and varied vocabulary words, to promote deep knowledge of abstract academic vocabulary words, and to allow students to develop insights into word relationships. These goals are systematically integrated into increasingly more complex activities. Throughout the vocabulary strand, activities require students to think critically about words and the concepts they represent, while also applying strategies to build their vocabulary breadth and depth. These vocabulary tasks begin by developing oral vocabulary through the association of word meanings with pictures. As students begin to develop word identification skills, they continue to enhance their vocabulary knowledge through activities involving reading. Early activities

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allow students to develop word-learning strategies as they deduce the meaning of unfamiliar, high-level words by analyzing pictures for similarities and differences. Other early vocabulary activities are aimed at building categorization skills as students must recognize relationships between words. As vocabulary activities progress, students are explicitly introduced to more abstract vocabulary concepts, such as multiple-meaning words, idioms, similes and metaphors, and academic vocabulary terms. Through these activities, students build both the knowledge and skills necessary for strong vocabulary development. For example, they acquire the strategies needed to use context clues to determine meaning. At the same time, students receive direct and deep instruction in complex and high-utility academic words, all in the context of multifaceted topics and texts. The most advanced vocabulary tasks continue to emphasize associations between words through a focus on analogies and shades of meaning. Students think about and recognize nuances in word meaning as they think critically about words and their relationships. In addition to targeted vocabulary activities, students acquire vocabulary knowledge by repeated exposure to the rich language activities that exist in all strands of the Lexia Core5 Reading program. For example, early phonemic awareness and phonics activities require students to match pictures to words, building concrete vocabulary knowledge. Later activities, found throughout the Structural Analysis strand, provide students with the skills to analyze prefixes, roots, and suffixes for meaning and encourage the application of this knowledge to connected reading tasks. As such, while the vocabulary strand focuses explicitly on building deep and generalizable vocabulary knowledge and strategies, students are constantly building their vocabulary as they progress through all strands of the program.

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Comprehension: The goal of the comprehension strand of Lexia Core5 Reading is to develop students' active reading skills, promote their language and knowledge development, and support their critical engagement with texts. Early comprehension activities aim to build a student's language comprehension skills and print awareness through listening activities and modeled readings. Students listen to stories as they think about key features, including the title and author, the sequence of events, and the main idea and key details. This teaches developing readers about the structure of text and provides a framework for later reading comprehension. In later levels, they also learn to use context clues by analyzing pictures as they begin to develop imaging skills. Once word-reading skills emerge, students are asked to associate decodable words and phrases with pictures, reinforcing comprehension at the word level. Students then engage more deeply with the structure of language as they sequence sentences within a story and then words within a sentence. Students are later required to think about the components of a sentence by attending to question words that identify key parts of a sentence (e.g., Who is the sentence about?). These activities encourage an active engagement with language while fostering the application of critical thinking skills. In later levels, the emphasis on understanding language structure is maintained with added complexity. Students learn how words function in sentences and how sentences can be built up to add precision and detail. As students move through the program, they are required to apply skills to independently read and comprehend multi-paragraph texts that represent a wide variety of genres and present a range of thought-provoking topics. Texts are organized around content-area themes and preceded by introductions designed to build disciplinary knowledge, pique interest, and set a purpose

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	<p>for reading. These texts are presented in varied formats, offering different modes of interaction (e.g., hyperlinked diagrams, shared-reading slideshows, and passages organized using genre-specific text features). Each reading is followed by questions and tasks designed to spur deep comprehension and develop higher order thinking skills. For example, students are expected to interpret an author's craft, draw on evidence to support conclusions, connect information across texts, and apply growing conceptual knowledge in varied reading contexts. Students must consistently monitor the meaning of what they are reading, as well as revisit and refer back to texts, in order to complete the activities.</p> <p>Lexia CORE 5 Detailed Scope and Sequence</p>
<p>3. How does the curriculum model or program support frequent opportunities for students to practice and gain literacy skills?</p>	<p>Utilizing technology Lexia is centered around a personalized approach to learning. Lexia combines effective, teacher-led instruction with interactive, user-centric experiences to support the cognitive abilities of a wide variety of students. With Lexia, teachers are able to prioritize and differentiate instruction allowing students to develop critical reading skills at their own pace. Students utilize Lexia during the literacy block as a center rotation. Recommended usage (minutes/week) for students k-3 high risk is 60 minutes, some risk 30-50 minutes, and on target 20 minutes.</p>
<p>4. How does the curriculum model or program allow for high-quality, daily differentiation of foundational skills so all students achieve mastery of foundational skills?</p>	<p>Lexia Core 5 Reading is a personalized, adaptive blended learning program that develops foundational reading and advanced literacy skills for students in grades pre-K–5. In Lexia's adaptive blended learning model, students learn and practice skills at their own pace using the student program; ongoing data provides educators detailed insight into their</p>

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	students' skills; and specialized instructional resources empower educators to target instruction.
5. How does the curriculum model or program provide for structured discussions that address grade-level speaking and listening standards?	Through teacher-led lessons, students using Lexia engage in small-group differentiated activities that support their oral language skills as both speakers and listeners.
6. How does the curriculum model or program comprehensively address Connecticut Core Standards for English Language Arts through both explicit instruction and authentic application?	The following link includes Core 5 alignment to the Foundational CCSS by grade level: Lexia Core 5 CCSS ELA alignment document
7. How does the curriculum model or program include a wide range of authentic writing and explicit instruction in writing skills and strategies?	Through teacher-led lessons, students using Lexia engage in small-group differentiated activities that support authentic writing and explicit instruction in writing skills and strategies. Lexia Grammar Components Writing Prompts- Learning Resources
8. How does the curriculum model or program provide for varied means of accessing content and demonstrating learning to meet the diverse needs of all students working above or below grade level?	Lexia reading is a personalized, adaptive blended learning program that develops foundational reading and advanced literacy skills for students in grades pre-K–5. In Lexia's adaptive blended learning model, students learn and practice skills at their own pace using the student program; ongoing data provides educators with detailed insight into their students' skills, and specialized instructional resources empower educators to target instruction.
9. How does the curriculum model or program represent various cultures and perspectives, promote cultural affirmation, and value diverse identities, backgrounds, and perspectives?	Pedagogy Overview - ELs

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VERNON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Vernon, Connecticut 06066

Information Only

Agenda Item 10.1

Decision Requested

X

January 8, 2024

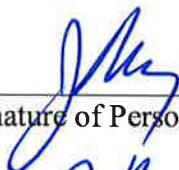
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AGENDA REPORTING FORM


Subject: Approval of Board of Education 2024-2025 Budget Priorities (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3)

Background: The Board will review and approve the 2024-2025 Budget Priorities. (See attached.)

Recommendation: MOTION: That the Board approve the Board of Education 2024-2025 Budget Priorities as discussed and presented.



Signature of Person(s) Submitting Report



Superintendent of Schools

Vernon Public Schools
Budget Worksheet FY2025

Mission Statement

The Vernon Public Schools, in partnership with family and community, is committed to provide a quality education, with high expectations, in a safe environment where all students become independent learners and productive contributors to society.

- **Universal Pre-Kindergarten Program for 3 & 4 Year Old**

District Strategic Plan

1. **Student Success** - will ensure every student will have safe, high quality, equitable learning experiences.

- **Enhance Minority Teacher Recruitment**
- **Social-Emotional Supports for Secondary Students**

2. **Family and Community Partnerships** - will develop meaningful partnerships to engage the whole community that lead to success for Vernon's youth.

- **Innovative Family & Community Outreach Initiatives**
- **Summer School Program (Free) to All Students**

3. **System Excellence** - Vernon Public Schools will develop and enhance systems and a culture that promote professional capacity and organizational coherence.

- **Teacher & Staff Recruitment and Retention Efforts**

Vision Statement

The Vision of the Vernon Public Schools is that every graduate is a Critical Thinker, Collaborator, Communicator, Resilient Individual, and Responsible Citizen.

- **Continue & Expand Rockville HS Career Pathways**

Vernon Public Schools
Budget Worksheet FY2025

Mission Statement

The Vernon Public Schools, in partnership with family and community, is committed to provide a quality education, with high expectations, in a safe environment where all students become independent learners and productive contributors to society.

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District Strategic Plan

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2. **Family and Community Partnerships** - will develop meaningful partnerships to engage the whole community that lead to success for Vernon's youth.

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Vision Statement

The Vision of the Vernon Public Schools is that every graduate is a Critical Thinker, Collaborator, Communicator, Resilient Individual, and Responsible Citizen.

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VERNON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Vernon, Connecticut 06066

Information Only

Agenda Item 10.2

Decision Requested

X

January 8, 2023


Date

AGENDA REPORTING FORM

Subject: Approval of Center Road School Roof Project as Complete (BOE Goal #3)

Background: The Board of Education will be asked to review the Center Road School Roof Project Completion Memo and approve the project as complete. This is a State requirement in order to submit closeout documentation

Recommendation: MOTION: That the Board approve the Center Road School Roof Project Complete as discussed and presented.



Signature of Person(s) Submitting Report



Superintendent of Schools



Memorandum

To: Dr. Joseph Macary, Superintendent of Schools

From: Samantha D'Agostino, Project Manager – Construction Solutions Group, LLC.

Date: December 11, 2023

Re: **Recommendation to Accept the Center Road School Roof Replacement Project - State Project #146-0140RR as complete**

The town of Vernon completed the Center Road School Roof Replacement Project (State Proj. 146-0140RR).

The State of Connecticut Office of Grants Administration (OGA) requires that the local Board of Education accept any project which receives State Grant reimbursement as complete prior to submitting the final grant application for payment. The recommendation included as part of this memo is required for submission of the final grant application.

Following the acceptance of the project as complete, the State requires that Form EDO-049F is submitted to close out the project to receive final payment based upon the completion of the project.

Recommendation

The Vernon Board of Education take the following action:

Accept the Center Road School Roof Replacement Project (State Proj. 146-0140RR) as complete and file a final grant application for a School Building Project, form EDO-049F with the State of Connecticut Office of School Construction Grants and Review.

VERNON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Vernon, Connecticut 06066

Information Only

X

Agenda Item

10.3

Decision Requested

January 8, 2024

Date

AGENDA REPORTING FORM

Subject:


Reports from Board of Education Liaisons Regarding Attendance at
Organization/Committee Meetings (BOE Goal #1)

Background:


The Board of Education liaisons will report on their attendance at any
meetings that were held recently.

Recommendation:

No action required.



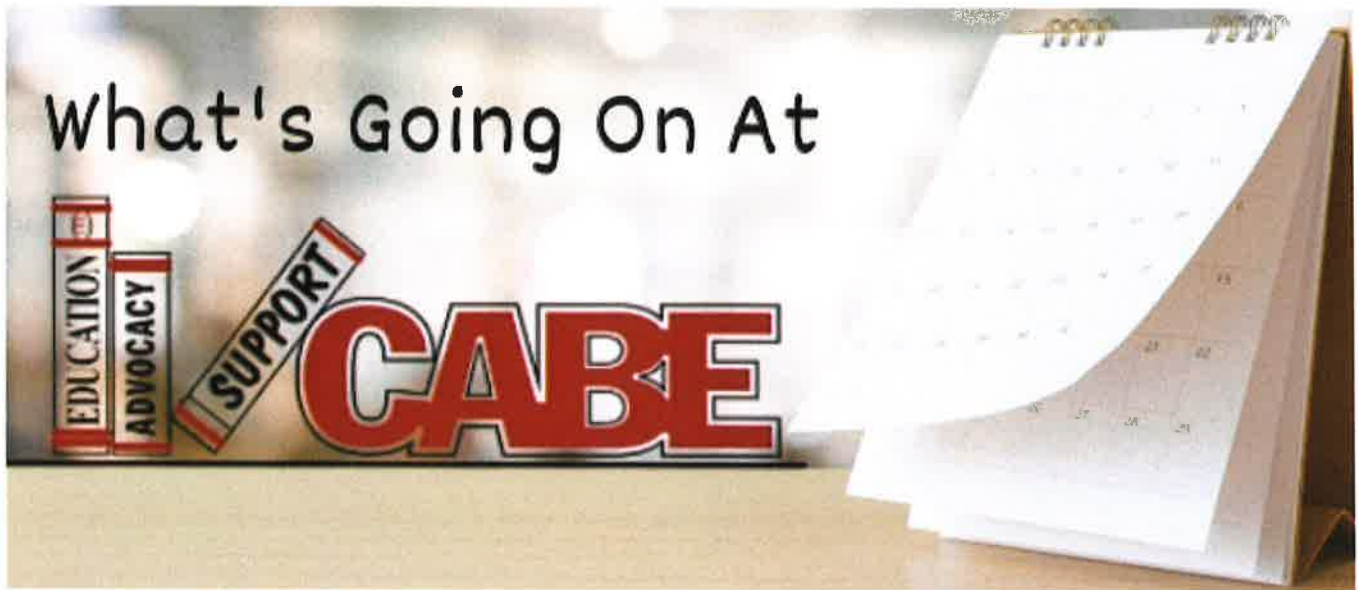
Signature of Person(s) Submitting Report



Superintendent of Schools



**FOR YOUR
INFORMATION**



January 3, 2024

happy new year

from all of us at CABE!

*Click on the red letters to open up a new screen that will provide you with more information on that topic.

School District Kindergarten Eligibility Implementation Survey

Please encourage your superintendent to complete the brief survey sent from CAPSS by **Tuesday, January 10, 2024**, which will provide valuable data for advocacy efforts.

◆ Upcoming CABE Events ◆



Free CABE Legislative Breakfasts

[Click here](#) for the CABE Area Map

This Friday! Register Today!

AREA 9

January 5, 2024

7:30-9:00 am

East Lyme Middle School - Meeting House Kiva

[Click here](#) to register.

AREA 5

January 9, 2024
7:30-9:00 am
Sandy Hook Elementary
[Click here](#) to register.

AREA 7
January 11, 2024
8:00-9:15 am
Seymour Middle School
[Click here](#) to register.

Area 6
January 12, 2024
8:00-9:15 am
Ox Ridge Elementary
[Click here](#) to register.

Area 8
January 25, 2024
9:00-10:00 am
Westbrook High School Library
[Click here](#) to register.

Area 3
January 31, 2024
8:00-9:15 am
Somers High School
[Click here](#) to register.

The Board's Role in Advocacy Webinar

Wednesday, January 24, 2024

11:00 am - 12:15 pm

FREE

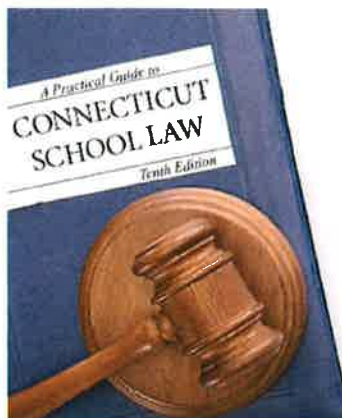
The 2024 Connecticut General Assembly Regular Session convenes on February 7, 2024. Now is the time to begin to plan your district's advocacy efforts.

Join us to understand the process and how your voice is necessary to advance public education.

[Click here](#) for more information.

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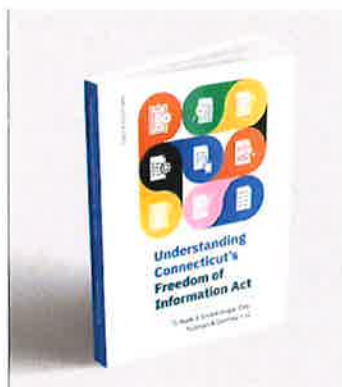
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