

The Board of Education Town of Vernon

30 Park Street – PO Box 600
Vernon, Connecticut 06066

Anne Fischer, Chairperson
Mason Thrall, Vice Chairperson
Patricia Buxton, Secretary
Paul Grabowski
Karen Colt
Mark Kalina
Stephen Linton
Deborah Rodriguez
Kristiana Wintress

February 13, 2023

APPROVED 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, February 13, 2023.

1.0 Establish Quorum

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

There was a quorum. Board members present: Mrs. Fischer, Mr. Grabowski, Ms. Colt, Mr. Kalina and Mr. Linton. Mrs. Rodriguez and Ms. Wintress were present via Zoom meeting. Mr. Thrall and Dr. Buxton were absent.

Student Representatives present: Anaya Tolton. Aedan Ruddock was absent.

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

Chairperson Fischer called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

3.0 Pledge of Allegiance

4.0 Recognitions and Presentations

4.1 Presentation of the “Bonnie B. Carney Award of Excellence for Educational Communications” (BOE Goal #1)

CABE’s Vice President, Mr. Leonard Lockhart, came to present the “Bonnie B. Carney Award of Excellence for Education Communications” to the Vernon Board of Education for their “Member Handbook”. This item was selected by CABE for meeting the following criteria needed to receive the award: clarity of the message, image and consistency, readability, editing, graphics, type, format, presentation, design and value of

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the expenditure. He explained that this award has been given since 1975 and was renamed in 2016 to honor Bonnie B. Carney, a longtime staff member of CABE, who devoted 47 years to education with a focus on communications. He then asked Board Chair Mrs. Fischer to come up so that he could present the award. Dr. Macary thanked Mr. Lockhart for coming out this evening to present this to our Board. He expressed how proud he is to work with the Board of Education. Mrs. Fischer thanked Mr. Lockhart for honoring the Board.

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

Dr. Brenda Greene, Northeast School Principal, introduced Ms. Kristan Doyle and her students. Ms. Doyle runs the “Northeast News Crew” after school. Each of the 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students introduced themselves and went on to explain what they do to create the monthly video newsletter. They meet twice per month to plan the subject matter and create the video. They really enjoy working with one another and enjoy being in front of the camera. They then played a YouTube video to show us the final product of their efforts. The video is sent to all the school families each month. Mrs. Fischer thanked the students for a great presentation and asked if the video could be sent to the Board each month as well.

4.3 Poetry Presentation by RHS Senior Tovah Oslovich (BOE Goal #1, #2)

RHS Senior Tovah Oslovich was awarded 1st Place in the 2022 International Renee Duke Youth Award Poetry Contest. She introduced herself to the Board and spoke of the parameters required to win the award. She had to write about a human rights hero and had to find a way to quote the International Declaration of Human Rights in her poem. She then read her poem aloud to the Board of Education members. Mrs. Fischer and Dr. Macary expressed how proud they are of Tovah. They asked her what she thinks about when writing poetry. She explained that she loves to write late at night and looks at multiple perspectives when writing. She loves to write “outside of the box”.

5.0 Secretary’s Report

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

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No agenda items were added or deleted.

5.2 Rockville High School Student Representative Report

Anaya Tolton announced that Boys' Basketball had their Senior Night on 2/6/23 against Stafford. Girls' Basketball had their Senior Night on 2/8/23 against SMSA. Girls' Indoor Track won the Conference Championship. The Football team had their banquet on 2/12/23. Esports season starts this week. The Biology team has their frog dissections coming up. Wrestling is competing in their conference meet this weekend. Spring Sports registration closes March 6th. The local RHS Scholarship process is underway for the Class of 2023. School Counselors presented the information last week and a ParentSquare was sent to students and parents. Last year, over \$440,000.00 was awarded to the Class of 2022. The scheduling process has begun for the 2023-2024 school year. School Counselors are meeting one-on-one with students to review course recommendations and requests. Two RHS school counselors will be visiting VCMS on February 7th to review the process with the current 8th Graders.

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.)

No one addressed the Board.

7.0 Consent Agenda

7.1 Consent Agenda

- (a) Approval of the Minutes of the Board of Education Special Meeting – Budget Workshop held on January 18, 2023
- (b) Approval of the Minutes of the Board of Education Special Meeting – Budget Workshop held on January 23, 2023
- (c) Approval of the Minutes of the Board of Education Regular Meeting held on January 23, 2023
- (d) Approval of the Minutes of the Board of Education Special Meeting – Budget

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Workshop held on January 30, 2023

- (e) Approval of the Minutes of the Board of Education Special Meeting – Budget Workshop held on February 1, 2023
- (f) Approval of the Minutes of the Board of Education Special Meeting – Approval of Superintendent’s Proposed 2023-2024 Budget held on February 6, 2023

Mrs. Fischer asked that Consent Agenda Items 7.1 (a), (c), (d) and (e) be pulled for review.

MOTION: Mr. Linton moved to approve Consent Agenda Items 7.1(b) and (f).
SECOND: Mr. Kalina
VOTE: Unanimous

Mrs. Fischer noted the following corrections in Consent Agenda Items 7.1 (a), (c), (d) and (e):

- Item (a), page 6: add “***and aligning with the contracts***” to the last line on the page.
- Item (c), Page 19, section 12.0: add Item number ***8.1*** before the statement “Although there was no power in the building...”. On this same line, replace the statement “the Board decided to review the Leave of Absence Request so as not to delay notification of the employee requesting the leave” with “***the Board chose not to go into Executive Session because the Leave of Absence Request was in line with the VEA contract***”.
- Item (d), page 20: add “***Mr. Linton was absent***” under section 1.0. Page 23, last paragraph, second line, replace “uniform sports” with “***unified sports***”. Page 28, fourth paragraph, first line, replace “Skinner Road School” with “***Center Road School***”. Page 29, first paragraph, last line, add “***and SRS***”.
- Item (e), page 30, add “***Mr. Thrall was absent***” under section 1.0. Page 34, eighth paragraph, second line, replace “they wasn’t” with “***it was***”.

MOTION: Mr. Kalina moved to approve Consent Agenda Items 7.1(a), (c), (d) and (e) as amended
SECOND: Mr. Grabowski
VOTE: Unanimous

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8.0 Personnel

8.1 Superintendent's Mid-Year Evaluation (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3) (Executive Session Anticipated)

Mrs. Fischer asked that this item be moved to the end of the meeting.

8.2 Personnel Matter – Proposed Settlement (BOE Goal #1) (Executive Session Anticipated)

Mrs. Fischer asked that this item be moved to the end of the meeting.

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

Mrs. Fischer asked that this item be moved to the end of the meeting.

9.0 Teaching and Learning

9.1 Next Generation Accountability Index by School Level (BOE Goal #2)

Assistant Superintendent Mr. Robert Testa presented the Next Generation Accountability Index by School Report to the Board. He said this is used as a tool to guide and track progress. The report breaks down the results of each school, identifying areas they did well in as well as areas where improvement is needed. He met with Administrators at all seven schools and spoke about areas such as fitness goals and achievements of high-needs students vs. non high-needs students. Through these meetings, they walked away with a better understanding of each school. One take away from the meetings was that Administrators want to look for better ways to track data in real time throughout the course of the year rather than just once per year. Physical Education scores continue to be low. Athletic Director Jeff Farrell has been meeting with his staff to come up with ways to get kids more active.

10.0 General Business

10.1 Approval of Vernon Public Schools District Calendar for 2023-2024 (BOE Goal #1, #2)

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Dr. Macary noted that he worked with the School Culture Committee to set the dates for the 2023-2024 District Calendar, noting scheduled PD Days, the 13 standard holidays and a longer February Break. Good Friday will take place on March 29, 2024. April 1st will be a PD Day in order to give the students a long weekend. It was decided to keep the second week of April as a vacation week.

MOTION: Mr. Kalina moved that the Board approve the District Calendar for the 2023-2024 school year as presented.

SECOND: Mr. Linton

VOTE: Unanimous

10.2 Approval of the Vernon Education Foundation Mini-Grant (BOE Goal #1, #2)

Dr. Macary announced that the Vernon Education Foundation has generously awarded a \$250.00 Mini-Grant for Leadership Council Training. He and Mrs. Fischer thanked the Vernon Education Foundation for their support of our teachers.

MOTION: Mr. Linton moved that the Board of Education accept, with gratitude, the Vernon Education Foundation Mini-Grant award of \$250.00 for Leadership Council Training as presented.

SECOND: Mr. Grabowski

VOTE: Unanimous

10.3 Student Expulsions Update (BOE Goal #2) (Executive Session Anticipated)

Mrs. Fischer asked that this item be moved to the end of the meeting.

10.4 Board of Education Finance Committee Report (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3) (a) Asset Disposal Request

Business and Finance Director William Meier III announced that the Finance Committee met this evening to discuss the Finance Packet in detail. He announced that the Board Approved 2023-2024 Budget was successfully transmitted to the Mayor's Office in accordance with the Town Charter and is now in the hands of the Mayor and the Town

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Council. He also announced that the General Assembly unanimously passed an “Emergency Certification” that provides free lunches to all students for the remainder of the 2022-2023 school year. The Governor supports this initiative and will be signing in the coming days. This is great news for our Food & Nutrition program, and we are waiting for guidance from the State as to how to implement this in our schools. Mr. Meier also presented an action item for the Board’s consideration; an asset disposal request for a safe that is broken and needed to be replaced.

MOTION: Mr. Kalina moved that the Board approve the asset disposal request as presented.
SECOND: Mr. Linton
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.

Executive Session:

MOTION: Mr. Linton moved that the Board of Education go into Executive Session at 7:54 PM to discuss items 8.1, 8.2, 8.3 and 10.3, inviting Superintendent Dr. Joseph Macary and Director of Business and Finance Mr. William Meier III.
SECOND: Mr. Grabowski
VOTE: Unanimous

The Board returned from Executive Session at 8:44 PM.

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8.2 Personnel Matter – Proposed Settlement (BOE Goal #1) (Executive Session Anticipated)

MOTION: Mr. Linton moved that the Board of Education approve item 8.2, the proposed settlement, for the reasons discussed in Executive Session.
SECOND: Mr. Grabowski
VOTE: Unanimous

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

MOTION: Mr. Kalina moved that the Board of Education approve item 8.3, the request for an unpaid leave of absence submitted by Katelyn Gagliardi, for the reasons discussed in Executive Session and authorize the Superintendent to inform the employee of the Board’s decision and the reasons therefore.
SECOND: Ms. Wintress
VOTE: Unanimous

13.0 Adjournment

MOTION: Mr. Linton made a motion to adjourn at 8:45 PM
SECOND: Ms. Colt
VOTE: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,



Patricia Buxton, Board Secretary