

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 27, 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 27, 2023.

1.0 Establish Quorum

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

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

Student Representatives present: Anaya Tolton and Aedan Ruddock were 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 by Maple Street School Students (BOE Goal #1, #2)

Mr. Joshua Egan, Maple Street School Principal, introduced Mrs. Perrett-Manly, Music Teacher at Maple Street School. Mrs. Perrett-Manly then introduced her students. She explained that COVID shut down Chorus for the past few years and that it's so nice to be able to resume classes once again. The students have worked very hard learning the standards of music. They sang two songs: "Get Your Winter On" by Teresa Jennings and "Hot Chocolate" by Andy Beck and Brian Fisher. Their choices were very appropriate

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given that a snow storm was expected later in the evening. They did a great job and everyone really enjoyed the songs.

4.3 Recognition of RHS Art Students' Exhibits at Central Office (BOE Goal #1, #2)

Superintendent Dr. Macary explained that this is the first time students' art has been displayed since COVID began. Jason Mago, Principal of Rockville High School, introduced Art Department Chair Stephanie Symkowicz. Also present were students and their families whose art is currently being displayed in the 3rd floor foyer at Central Office. Ms. Symkowicz expressed how proud she is of these students, that they're always in the art room, eager to create something. The current art display features drawing, painting and digital art. The next display will be installed in March and will feature photography and sculpture. She also mentioned that they will be holding their first "Rock the Arts", an evening of the Arts at Rockville High School on May 25th at 6:00 PM. Mrs. Fischer, Board Chair, presented certificates of recognition to the following 12 art students:

- Finnegan Bartolotta
- Ali Columbo
- Morgyn Farina
- Allison Ghostlaw
- Kiley Gray
- Sarah Harlow
- Camden Huynh
- Summer Knoff
- Joslyn Lyons
- Jenna Michaud
- Matthew Purvis
- Kyle Schambach

Mrs. Fischer thanked the students for their beautiful work.

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 and Aedan Ruddock were absent. No report was given.

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 Finance Committee Meeting held on February 13, 2023
- (b) Approval of the Minutes of the Board of Education Regular Meeting held on February 13, 2023

MOTION: Mr. Kalina moved to approve Consent Agenda Items 7.1(a) and (b).

SECOND: Dr. Buxton

VOTE: Unanimous

8.0 Personnel

8.1 Employee Census Update (BOE Goal #1, #2)

Assistant Superintendent Mr. Testa presented a handout of all open positions as of February 22, 2023. We do have 2 openings for nurses. We have 94 subs, which is a good number and an increase from the last two years. Current employees total 851.

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9.0 Teaching and Learning

9.1 New Teacher Academy Update (BOE Goal #2)

Dominique Fox, Director of Teaching and Learning–Secondary, introduced herself and her colleague, Mrs. Melissa Trantolo, Director of Teaching and Learning-Elementary. Mrs. Fox noted that studies have shown a direct relationship between student achievement and teacher effectiveness. Vernon places a great deal of importance on teacher support, especially to individuals who are new to teaching and to teachers who are new to Vernon Public Schools. They recently met with new teachers to help them prepare for their mid-year conferences with their primary evaluators. They also completed all informal observations of 32 Elementary and 25 Secondary Year 1 and Year 2 teachers and provided feedback. Mrs. Trantolo said that upcoming (and ongoing) plans include peer to peer observations, where new teachers go out and observe their more seasoned colleagues. Once they return, they hold a group share activity to review their observations and try to plan strategies to implement what they have learned. Our seasoned teachers are very supportive and collaborative and are a great resource to Year 1 & 2 teachers. Dr. Macary noted that Vernon is one of the top 5 districts for new teacher support.

10.0 General Business

10.1 2022-2023 Enrollment Projection Report from NESDEC (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3)

Superintendent Dr. Macary noted that Vernon is a member of NESDEC and that we try to do this report every 2 – 3 years. Due to COVID, this has not been done since 2019. According to the report, we've seen a drop in Elementary enrollment. Middle School enrollment remains flat and High School enrollment is up due to the ASTE Program. Geography plays a large part in enrollment figures; New England is seeing a decrease in population in general.

10.2 ESSER III Update (BOE Goal #2)

Mr. Testa noted that we are required to provide an update of ESSER III expenditures. We have one more year of these funds to use for the following priorities:

1. Building Safe and Healthy Schools

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2. Family and Community Connections
3. Learning Acceleration, Academic Renewal and Student Enrichment
4. Strategic Use of Technology, Staff Development and the Digital Divide
5. Social, Emotional and Mental Health of Students and School Staff

Mr. Testa spoke of how we plan to utilize the funds for items 3, 4 and 5 and the goals set to achieve those plans. All funds will be done by September 2024.

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

No reports were given.

11.0 Review and Update Board of Education Calendar

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

No updates were made. Dr. Macary did note that we may have a change to the Budget Presentation to the Town Council from April 3, 2023 to March 20, 2023. He will update everyone once this change has been confirmed.

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 7:51 PM
SECOND: Mr. Kalina
VOTE: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,



Patricia Buxton, Board Secretary