

# 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

June 10, 2024

## **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, June 10, 2024.

Roll call was taken at 7:00 PM

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

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

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 by Center Road School Students (BOE Goal #1, #2)**

Mrs. Heather Earley, Principal of Center Road School, introduced Ms. Adamo, CRS Student Council Advisor, as well as some students from all three 5<sup>th</sup> Grade classrooms who are members of the Center Road School Student Council. The group meets during lunch and gathers information about different activities that take place around the school. They then put together a weekly message about these activities that is sent to all school families on Friday afternoons via ParentSquare. In the message, they highlight what is happening

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around the building and make sure to include activities about all grade levels. They then shared a presentation with the Board, showing examples of their weekly messages.

#### 4.2 Recognition of Board of Education Student Representative Aedan Ruddock (BOE Goal #1)

Dr. Macary announced that this will be Aedan's last Board meeting as our Student Representative, as he will be graduating later this week from Rockville High School. He said that it has been a pleasure to have Aedan as a Student Representative. His insight was very helpful to the Board and he will be sorely missed. Dr. Macary wished him all the best in college and in his future endeavors. Aedan thanked the Board for the opportunity and said he learned a lot from the experience, particularly with regard to public speaking, which has always been a bit of a challenge for him. He let everyone know of his plans to attend college in the Fall, play football while there and earn his MBA in 5 years. Mr. Grabowski presented Aedan with a gift of appreciation from the Board and wished him all the best.

#### 4.3 Spring Sports Update (BOE Goal #1, #2)

Athletic Director Jeffrey Farrell updated the Board on the Spring Sports Season. VCMS offered Baseball, Track and Softball this Spring. They had 21 participants in Baseball, 100 participants in Track and 15 participants in Softball. Baseball and Softball qualified for their conference tournaments and 37 Track athletes competed in the State meet. At RHS, 340 students participated in the following sports: Baseball, Softball, Volleyball, E-sports, Lacrosse, Tennis, Golf, Unified Sports and Track. The average GPA for participants was 88.5. Unified Sports had 28 participants and participated in the Penguin Plunge, College Baseball Game at Dunkin Park, hosted a flag football tournament and a corn hole and flag football event. E-sports had 15 participants and the top team qualified for the State tournament. They also attended GamerCon at Mohegan Sun. Girls' Lacrosse had 20 participants with a 4-11-1 improved record. They had 1 All-Conference athlete. Boys' Lacrosse returned after a 1-year hiatus as a co-op team with 2 other schools. There were 21 total athletes with 15 from RHS. They ended with a renewed energy in the program and a record of 4-16. Girls' Tennis had 22 participants with a 5-11 record. They also had

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4 All-Conference athletes and hosted the NCCC tournament. Boys' Tennis had 10 participants with a 2-14 record. They had 2 All-Conference athletes and improved throughout the season. Softball had 20 participants and finished with a record of 5-15. They had 2 All-Conference players. Baseball had 25 participants and finished with a 15-5 record. They had 2 All-Conference players and qualified for the State tournament and won the first round. Golf had 14 participants and finished 8<sup>th</sup> in the conference. They shot 25 strokes better at NCCC compared to last year. Boys' Volleyball had 21 participants with a 12-8 record. They had 2 All-Conference athletes and 1 All-State athlete and qualified for the State tournament. Outdoor Track had 66 girls and 84 boys participate. Boys won the conference championship and 41 athletes qualified for the Class MM State meet. 10 athletes qualified for the State Open. They had 17 All-Conference athletes and 5 All-State athletes. On Signing Day, 17 Seniors signed letters of intent to play sports in college. As of today, 20 Seniors will be playing sports in college.

## 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

Aedan Ruddock reported on the following:

- Seniors started their exams on Wednesday, June 5<sup>th</sup> and today was their last round of exams
- Fall Sports registration is now open for students for the next school year

My-Ngoc Lai-Huyen reported on the following:

- Exams will start this week on Wednesday for Grades 9, 10 & 11
- RHS Graduation will be held on Wednesday, June 12<sup>th</sup> in the courtyard. The ceremony starts at 6:00 PM. After graduation, Project Graduation will be held at Sonny's Place. Seniors will arrive at the school at 10:00 PM and will depart RHS at 10:30 PM.

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## 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.)

Terilynn Rogers of 26 White Street, Vernon, CT, spoke about the fact that she recently met a Vernon Public Schools student who did not know that a library card was free. So, she wanted to know if we promote this information through our communications to students' families.

## 7.0 Consent Agenda

### 7.1 Consent Agenda

- (a) Approval of the Minutes of the Board of Education Finance Committee Meeting held on May 13, 2024
- (b) Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting held on May 13, 2024
- (c) Approval of Adopted Board of Education Policy #1252 – Community Relations – Sexual Offenders on School Property
- (d) Approval of Adopted Board of Education Policy #1332 – Business and Non-Instructional Operations – Hazardous Materials in Schools: Pesticide Application
- (e) Approval of Reviewed Board of Education Policy #3516.5 – Business and Non-Instructional Operations – Sexual Offenders on School Property
- (f) Approval of Revised Board of Education Policy #3517 – Business and Non-Instructional Operations – Security for School System Facilities and Property
- (g) Approval of Adopted Board of Education Policy #3524 – Business and Non-Instructional Operations – Green Cleaning Programs

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(h) Approval of Revised Board of Education Policy #5141.27 – Students – Use of Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs)

MOTION: Mr. Thrall moved to approve Consent Agenda Items 7.1(a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g) and (h)  
SECOND: Ms. Wintress  
VOTE: Unanimous

## 8.0 Personnel

8.1 Appointment of Rockville High School Assistant Principal (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3) (Executive Session Anticipated)

This item was moved to the end of the meeting.

8.2 Non-Affiliated Staff Salaries (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3) (Executive Session Anticipated)

This item was moved to the end of the meeting.

8.3 Certified Staff and Non-Certified Staff Retirements (BOE Goal #1, #2)

Assistant Superintendent Robert Testa announced the following Certified and Non-Certified Staff Retirements:

Debra Hill	Kindergarten Teacher – SRS	08/27/1992	31 Years, 10 Months
Paula Hughes	Instructional Coach - Elementary	08/30/1999	24 Years, 10 Months
Maureen Kearney	Reading Specialist – SRS	10/03/1994	29 Years, 9 Months
Victoria Nordlund	Language Arts – RHS	08/27/1990	33 Years, 10 Months
Laurie Lippmann	Paraprofessional – MSS	11/03/1997	26 Years, 7 Months
Rosalie Seman	Paraprofessional – LSS	02/25/2016-10/16/2020 08/18/2021-06/17/2024	4 Years, 8 Months 2 Years, 10 Months
Kathy LaPlante	Paraprofessional – LSS	10/19/1998	25 Years, 8 Months
Janice Doherty	Paraprofessional – CRS	09/18/2000	23 Years, 9 Months

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Pamela Colon	Library Media Manager - VCMS	11/20/2002	21 Years, 7 Months
Elizabeth Burke	Secretary – RHS	06/22/2021	3 Years
Leslie Sherman	Paraprofessional – MSS	01/16/1990	34 Years, 5 Months

Mr. Testa noted that the collective experience of all these retirees is over 300 years. Dr. Macary thanked them for their service to Vernon Public Schools and wished them well in the next chapter of their lives.

## 9.0 Teaching and Learning

### 9.1 Approval of the Educator & Leadership Evaluation and Support Plans (BOE Goal #2)

Assistant Superintendent Robert Testa presented the Educator & Leadership Evaluation and Support Plans to the Board for their review and asked for their consideration in approving both plans. He also provided a “Quick Reference Guide” of the plans to the Board members. He noted that the PDEC Committee worked on this throughout the year to revise the plans based on feedback from their colleagues. The plans are in alignment with CT State Guidelines and serve to strengthen individual and collective practices of our teachers that will positively impact student growth and achievement.

MOTION: Ms. Wintress moved to approve the Educator & Leadership Evaluation and Support Plans as discussed and presented.

SECOND: Ms. Nucci

VOTE: Unanimous

## 10.0 General Business

### 10.1 Review of a Pending Litigation (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3) (Executive Session Anticipated)

This item was moved to the end of the meeting.

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10.2 Board of Education Finance Committee Report (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3)

Mr. William Meier III, Director of Business and Finance, announced that the Finance Committee met this evening and reviewed the Finance Report and the Year-to-Date Budget.

10.3 FY2024 Ending Year-to-Date Summary - Resolution (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3)

Mr. Meier asked the Board for their consideration in approving a resolution indicating that the Superintendent is authorized to request from the Town of Vernon that the remaining, unexpended funds in the FY2024 BOE Budget be transferred over to the Medical Self-Insurance Account.

MOTION: Dr. Buxton moved to approve the FY2024 Ending Year-to-Date Summary - Resolution as discussed and presented.  
SECOND: Ms. Colt  
VOTE: Unanimous

10.4 Approval of the 2024-2025 PEGPITIA Grant Request Form (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3)

Mr. Testa presented the 2024-2025 PEGPITIA Grant Request Form to the Board for their consideration in approving. This technology grant would provide reimbursements for 300 Chromebooks and 28 laptops purchased between 05/01/2024 and 12/31/2024. The Chromebooks will be distributed to the 5 Elementary Schools and the laptops will be distributed to teachers in the District as needed.

MOTION: Mrs. Jablonecki moved to approve the 2024-2025 PEGPITIA Grant Request Form as discussed and presented.  
SECOND: Mr. Bedlack  
VOTE: Unanimous

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10.5 Approval of the George Sykes Foundation Grant Request Form (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3)

Mr. Testa presented the George Sykes Foundation Grant Request Form to the Board for their consideration in approving. This grant will cover purchases for a technology upgrade and new furniture for the VCMS Art Room and RHS Early Childhood Education Classroom renovation.

MOTION: Ms. Nucci moved to approve the George Sykes Foundation Grant Request Form as discussed and presented.  
SECOND: Mrs. Jablonecki  
VOTE: Unanimous

10.6 Approval of the IDEA Part B: Transition Support Activities (TSA) and Extended Support Paraeducator (ESP) Grant Request Form (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3)

Mr. Testa presented the IDEA Part B Transition Support Activities (TSA) and Extended Support Para-Educator (ESP) Grant Request Form to the Board for their consideration in approving. These funds must be used to support Special Education students transitioning to the next phase of their life/education/vocation. These funds also support training for Paraeducators that would focus on how to support students in this transition.

MOTION: Mr. Thrall moved to approve the IDEA Part B: Transition Support Activities (TSA) and Extended Support Paraeducator (ESP) Grant Request Form as discussed and presented.  
SECOND: Mr. Bedlack  
VOTE: Unanimous

10.7 Approval of the Title IV Part A: Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) Grant Request Form (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3)

Mr. Testa presented the Title IV Part A: Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) Grant Request Form to the Board for their consideration in approving. These



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funds help to address three priority areas: 1) provide all students with access to a well-rounded education; 2) improve school conditions for student learning; and 3) improve the use of technology in order to improve the academic achievement and digital literacy of all students. Funds will be used for partnering with various consultants to provide staff with training on effective teaching practices.

MOTION: Dr. Buxton moved to approve the Title IV Part A: Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) Grant Request Form as discussed and presented.  
 SECOND: Mrs. Jablonecki  
 VOTE: Unanimous

10.8 Naming of the Members of the 10-Year Facility Study and Master Plan Ad Hoc Committee (BOE Goal #3)

Dr. Macary announced that a varied group from the Community has been selected to serve on the 10-Year Facility Study and Master Plan Ad Hoc Committee and is asking for the Board’s approval of these members. The Committee plans to meet in the next 2 weeks.

MOTION: Mrs. Jablonecki moved to approve the naming of the following individuals as members of the 10-Year Facility Study and Master Plan Ad Hoc Committee as discussed and presented:

<b>Ad Hoc Committee</b>		
<b>Board Members:</b>	Mason Thrall	Paul Grabowski
<b>Town Council Members:</b>	MaryAnne Levesque	Laura Bush
<b>Parents:</b>	Amanda Ruttinbere-Haicen	Allison Chiasson
<b>Teachers:</b>	Amy Osten	Lindsey Robbins
<b>Administrators:</b>	Josh Egan	Mark Rizzo
<b>Community Members:</b>	Steven Linton	Kevin Brown
<b>At-Large Members:</b>	Anne Fischer	Michael Colt

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SECOND: Ms. Wintress  
VOTED YES: Mr. Grabowski, Ms. Wintress, Ms. Colt, Mr. Bedlack, Mrs.  
Jablonecki, Ms. Nucci and Mr. Thrall.  
ABSTAINED: Dr. Buxton

10.9 Bid Waiver-Field Irrigation System at Rockville High School (BOE Goal #3)

Mr. Meier announced that the field irrigation system at Rockville High School needs to be expanded and repaired. He is asking for the Board's consideration of a bid waiver for the purchase and installation of this system by Chellstorp Sprinkler Service.

MOTION: Dr. Buxton moved that The Vernon Board of Education agrees that it is in the best interest of the Board to waive the sealed bid requirements for costs involving the purchase and installation of a field irrigation system at Rockville High School by Chellstorp Sprinkler Service, in an amount not to exceed \$45,000.00 and further authorizes Director of Business and Finance William Meier III to execute on behalf of the Vernon Board of Education any instrument(s) to that effect.

SECOND: Ms. Colt  
VOTE: Unanimous

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

There were no liaison reports this evening.

MOTION: Ms. Wintress made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:01 PM to discuss agenda items 8.2 and 10.1, inviting Superintendent Dr. Joseph Macary and Assistant Superintendent Mr. Robert Testa. Once the discussion on these items concludes, they will then invite Mrs. Erin Houlihan, final candidate for the Assistant Principal position at Rockville High School, to discuss agenda item 8.1.

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SECOND: Mrs. Jablonecki  
VOTE: Unanimous

The Board returned from Executive Session at 8:58 PM.

8.1 Appointment of Rockville High School Assistant Principal (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3)  
(Executive Session Anticipated)

MOTION: Mr. Thrall moved to approve the Appointment of Mrs. Erin Houlihan as Assistant Principal of Rockville High School, effective July 15, 2024, as discussed and presented.

SECOND: Mrs. Jablonecki  
VOTE: Unanimous

10.1 Review of a Pending Litigation (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3) (Executive Session Anticipated)

MOTION: Mr. Thrall moved to go forward with the pending litigation as discussed and presented.

SECOND: Mrs. Jablonecki  
VOTE: Unanimous

11.0 Review and Update Board of Education Calendar

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

No updates were made. Dr. Macary reminded Board members that the RHS Graduation Ceremony takes place this Wednesday at 6:00 PM and the VCMS Evening of Excellence takes place this Thursday at 6:00 PM.

12.0 Opportunity for Questions from the Press Regarding Agenda Items

No one from the Press was in attendance.

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**13.0 Adjournment**

MOTION: Ms. Wintress made a motion to adjourn at 9:02 PM  
SECOND: Mrs. Jablonecki  
VOTE: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,



Karen Colt, Board Secretary