

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

November 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, November 13, 2023.

0.0 Call to Order

Dr. Joseph Macary, Superintendent of Schools, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. He invited Mrs. Karen Daigle, Vernon Town Clerk, to come forward to swear-in the newly elected Board of Education members.

1.0 Swearing in of New Board of Education Members

The following Board members were sworn in by Town Clerk Karen Daigle:

- Paul Grabowski
- Kristiana Wintress
- Karen Colt
- Anthony Bedlack
- Kriste Nucci
- Simone Sewell
- Susan Jablonecki

Dr. Macary then called for a moment of silence in honor of Frank Campanelli, Mrs. Daigle's father, who passed away last Tuesday. He thanked Mrs. Daigle for taking time away from her family to be here this evening to swear in the new Board members. Dr. Macary welcomed the new Board members to the 2023-2025 Board of Education.

2.0 Establish Quorum

Roll call was taken at 7:05 p.m.

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

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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.

3.0 Pledge of Allegiance

4.0 Election of Board of Education Officers

Dr. Macary announced that the election of the Board of Education officers will now commence and we will be following Robert's Rules of Order. By charter, we are required to vote for each officer on a paper ballot. Those ballots will be handed out once the nominations are announced for each office.

1. Dr. Macary opened nominations for Chair of the Vernon Board of Education. Mr. Bedlack nominated Mr. Thrall. Ms. Nucci nominated Mr. Grabowski. Dr. Buxton nominated Ms. Wintress. Dr. Macary asked three times if there were any other nominations. There were no more announced and nominations were then closed. Dr. Macary passed out paper ballots to each Board member to select the Board Chair from the three nominated members. After a few moments, Board Clerk Diane Ritchotte collected the ballots and handed them to Dr. Macary to tally. Once tallied, it was announced that Mr. Paul Grabowski has been elected Board Chair.
2. Dr. Macary opened nominations for Vice Chair of the Vernon Board of Education. Mr. Bedlack nominated Mr. Mason Thrall. Ms. Colt nominated Ms. Kristiana Wintress. Dr. Macary asked three times if there were any other nominations. There were no more announced and nominations were then closed. Dr. Macary passed out paper ballots to each Board member to select the Board Vice Chair from the two nominated members. After a few moments, Board Clerk Diane Ritchotte collected the ballots and handed them to Dr. Macary to tally. Once tallied, it was announced that Ms. Kristiana Wintress has been elected Board Vice Chair.
3. Dr. Macary opened nominations for Secretary of the Vernon Board of Education. Mr. Thrall nominated Dr. Buxton. Ms. Nucci nominated Ms. Colt. Dr. Macary asked three times if there were any other nominations. There were no more announced and

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nominations were then closed. Dr. Macary passed out paper ballots to each Board member to select the Board Secretary from the two nominated members. After a few moments, Board Clerk Diane Ritchotte collected the ballots and handed them to Dr. Macary to tally. Once tallied, it was announced that Ms. Karen Colt has been elected Board Secretary.

Dr. Macary welcomed everyone to the 2023-2025 Board of Education and turned the meeting over to newly elected Board Chair Paul Grabowski. Mr. Grabowski said it was an honor to be chosen as Chair and hoped that all Board members will continue to work together to do what's best for kids. He looks forward to working with everyone.

5.0 Recognitions and Presentations

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

CRS Principal Mrs. Heather Earley introduced her team, which included Assistant Principal Mrs. Lori Purcaro, 4th Grade Math teachers Mr. McNamar, Ms. Tran, Mrs. Giannelli and Ms. Caffery as well as 8-4th Grade math students. Mr. McNamar led the students in their demonstration. The students were instructed to show how they find different ways to solve math problems. They worked in groups on white boards and talked about their strategy out loud with one another. They also displayed various hand signals of communication that they use in the classroom. In conclusion, the students showed how they could use different methods to solve a given math problem and come up with the same answer.

6.0 Secretary's Report

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

Dr. Macary asked that an item be added to tonight's agenda; a Review and Update to the 2023-2024 District Calendar.

MOTION: Mr. Thrall moved to add agenda item 11.3, Review and Update to the 2023-2024 District Calendar

SECOND: Ms. Wintress

VOTE: Unanimous

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6.2 Rockville High School Student Representative Report

My-Ngoc Lai-Huyen reported on the following:

- As of November 13th, 49 Seniors have submitted college applications. This is approximately 20% of the class.
- As of November 6th, RHS has hosted 42 colleges and universities. Interested RHS students are able to meet with admissions representatives during these visits.
- On October 27th, the School Counseling Department took 52 Seniors for an informational session and tour of the UConn Storrs campus.
- RHS celebrated Veterans' Day with an assembly on Friday for veterans.
- The football team won their game last Thursday against Stafford, 35-0.

Aedan Ruddock reported on the following:

- The football team has a game on Friday, November 17th at Windsor Locks at 6:00 PM.
- The winter sports registration deadline is this Friday, November 17th.
- The football team has their Senior Night game on Wednesday, November 22nd at RHS against Ellington at 6:30 PM.
- The RHS School Store is having a sale on Friday, November 17th and Tuesday, November 21st, before school and during lunch waves. The sale is to support the Mr. RHS contest.

7.0 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.)

Mrs. Maryann Levesque, 183 Bolton Road, Vernon, came forward to congratulate the newly elected Board of Education members. She wished them much success during their terms.

Mr. Michael Winkler, 20 Gottier Drive, Vernon, congratulated the newly elected Board of Education members. He wanted to bring up a situation in 2013 where the Board presented the

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budget to the Town, asking for what they thought they would need to run the schools. The Town Council subsequently cut 1.6 million dollars from the proposed BOE budget. The tax payers voted the budget down in a referendum because they thought it didn't have enough to run the schools. The Town reconsidered and put 1 million dollars back in the budget and it subsequently passed. Mr. Winkler asked the Board to carefully consider what they think it will take to run the District next year and present that number to the Town.

8.0 Consent Agenda

8.1 Consent Agenda

(a) Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board of Education Meeting held on
October 23, 2023

MOTION: Dr. Buxton moved to approve Consent Agenda Item 7.1(a)
SECOND: Ms. Wintress
VOTE: Unanimous

9.0 Personnel

9.1 Review of Job Descriptions (BOE Goal #2)

Mr. Testa provided the Board with the following job descriptions for their review:

- Teacher
- Paraeducator
- Cafeteria Worker

He explained the format of each and noted that there are no changes to these, just information sharing. Dr. Macary said that these were created 7 years ago and there are approximately 50 job descriptions on the Vernon Public Schools website.

10.0 Teaching and Learning

10.1 Next Generation Accountability Index (BOE Goal #2)

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Mr. Testa shared the results of the 2022-2023 Next Generation Accountability Index with the Board. This report provides a more complete picture of a school or district. His presentation included three segments: a detailed PowerPoint of the results and how they compare to the State and other districts; the actual reports downloaded from the State site; a PowerPoint presentation with instruction on how to read the results. He reviewed the 12 indicators and Vernon’s results within each. For the 2022-2023 school year, Vernon Public Schools performed above the State of CT average in 18 out of 23 indicators. VPS earned 70% or better in 14 out of 23 indicators. The State earned 70% or better in 9 out of 23 indicators. One area of concern is attendance. Although Vernon Public School’s chronic absenteeism rate (percentage of students missing 10% or greater in the number of days enrolled) was lower than the State average, this remains an area of focus to improve upon. Mr. Testa also announced that two of Vernon’s schools were named “Schools of Distinction” based on overall performance, growth and change in overall performance. They are Maple Street School and Northeast School.

11.0 General Business

11.1 Approval of the Vernon Board of Education 2024/2025 Budget Calendar (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3)

Dr. Macary announced that budget season is upon us and budget workshops will begin in January. He presented the proposed Budget Meeting Calendar for the Board’s review and approval. Mr. Grabowski explained to the new Board members that this will be a very busy time where the Board will hammer out the Superintendent’s proposed budget before approving and presenting to the Mayor for his review and the Town’s approval. He said it is important for all Board members to attend each session noted on the calendar.

MOTION: Ms. Wintress moved to approve the Vernon Board of Education 2024/2025 Budget Calendar as presented and discussed
SECOND: Ms. Colt
VOTE: Unanimous

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11.2 Neighborhood School Key (BOE Goal #1, #3)

Dr. Macary announced that the previous Neighborhood School Key was last updated in 2011. Approximately 50 streets have been added to the new key and is being provided to the Board for informational purposes. No changes have been made to any of the school zones.

11.3 Review and Update of the 2023-2024 District Calendar (BOE Goal #1, #2)

Dr. Macary announced that he was notified by the Town Registrar of a Special Election that will need to take place on November 28th for the 12th Town Council seat. This is due to a tie for this seat at the November 7th election. This special election must be held at the standard polling places in town and will require use of four of our schools. This will require us to close school for that day and add a day to the end of the school calendar. Dr. Macary is proposing that Vernon Public Schools close on November 28th, resulting in the last day of school now being June 13th rather than June 12th.

MOTION: Dr. Buxton moved to approve the update to the 2023-2024 District Calendar as presented and discussed

SECOND: Mr. Bedlack

VOTE: Unanimous

12.0 Review and Update Board of Education Calendar

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

No updates were made.

13.0 Opportunity for Questions from the Press Regarding Agenda Items

No one from the Press was in attendance.

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14.0 Adjournment

MOTION: Dr. Buxton made a motion to adjourn at 8:18 PM
SECOND: Ms. Nucci
VOTE: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,



Karen Colt, Board Secretary