

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
Karen Colt
Kevin Brown
Mark Kalina
Stephen Linton
Deborah Rodriguez
Kristiana Wintress

October 11, 2022

APPROVED MINUTES

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

A meeting of the Vernon Board of Education was held via Zoom Webinar and in-person at the Administration Building on Tuesday, October 11, 2022.

1.0 Establish Quorum

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

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

Student Representatives present: Anaya Tolton 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

Chairperson Fischer called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

3.0 Pledge of Allegiance

4.0 Recognitions and Presentations

4.1 Presentation by Lake Street School Students (BOE Goal #1, #2)

Mrs. Terese (Tracy) Duenzl, Principal of Lake Street School, introduced the 5th Grade students and their teachers, Stephanie Schipper and Hayley Andros. The students introduced a reading lesson to the Board, focusing on the question “How is reading more than just words on a page?” They handed out a document to each Board member and asked them to take a moment to read the story on it and jot down in a few words what they read. They were then asked to read aloud what they wrote. Everyone noted that the story was very confusing, with the words being jumbled throughout the page, but they did agree that it was a story about war and sadness. The students

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then asked everyone to turn over the document and read the story on the other side. The story was much easier to read because the words were in order, which allowed each reader to better comprehend the entire story. Everyone enjoyed the presentation and thanked the students for a job well done.

5.0 Secretary's Report

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

No agenda items were added or deleted.

5.2 Rockville High School Student Representative Report

Aedan Ruddock announced that PSAT tests are being administered to Grades 9-11 tomorrow. Seniors will be competing in mock interviews tomorrow as well. RHS has been selected by the State to participate in the FAFSA Challenge. The School Counseling Dept. is meeting with seniors and their families to discuss post-RHS plans. RHS will be hosting a Financial Aid Night on October 25th. They also hosted a Parent/Student Night for the Class of 2023 on October 4th. Tickets for Homecoming are on sale this week and the Girls' Volleyball team had their annual dig pink game on October 7th. They raised \$550.00.

Anaya Tolton announced that Girls' Volleyball Senior Night is October 17th. Cross Country Senior Night is tomorrow at 3:45 PM. The Girls' Soccer Pink Game is October 14th and their Senior Night is October 26th. The Boys' Soccer Pink Game is October 18th and their Senior Night is October 24th. Homecoming Spirit week is next week; many activities are planned. The week ends with Class Day & the Homecoming football game on Friday. Homecoming will take place on Saturday from 7:00 PM to 10:00 PM.

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.)

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No one addressed the Board.

7.0 Consent Agenda

7.1 Consent Agenda

- (a) Approval of the Minutes of the BOE Curriculum Committee Meeting held on September 21, 2022
- (b) Approval of the Minutes of the Board of Education Meeting held on September 27, 2022.
- (c) Approval of the Minutes of the BOE Communications Committee Meeting held on September 28, 2022

MOTION: Mr. Thrall moved to approve Consent Agenda Items #7.1 (a), (b) and (c)
SECOND: Mr. Linton
VOTE: Unanimous

8.0 Personnel

8.1 Superintendent of Schools Employment Agreement (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3) (Executive Session Anticipated)

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

9.0 Teaching and Learning

9.1 Department Improvement Plan: Teaching & Learning (BOE Goal #2)

Mrs. Dominique Fox, Director of Teaching & Learning - Secondary and Mrs. Melissa Trantolo, Director of Teaching & Learning - Elementary, presented their Department Improvement Plan to the Board. They provided a one-page handout that summarized the key points of their plan. There are three key areas in their plan:

- Priority Area 1: Student Success
- Priority Area 2: Family and Community Partnership
- Priority Area 3: System Excellence

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These areas align with the District's Strategic Plan. They discussed their strategic actions for each area and their action plans to accomplish their goals. They spoke of professional development for new teachers and New Teacher Academy; they want new teachers to be successful and have developed several strategies and resources to support them. Mrs. Fischer requested to see the results of any surveys conducted and also asked that they share their newsletter with the Board.

9.2 Department Improvement Plan: Family, School and Community Partnerships (BOE Goal #1, #2)

Mrs. Cynthia Zingler, Director of Family, School and Community Partnerships, presented her Department Improvement Plan to the Board. She said that her plan is connected to the District's Strategic Plan and provided a one-page handout that summarized the 3 goals of the plan:

- Goal 1: Create and implement innovative and culturally responsive student, family and community engagement strategies that (a) cultivate trusting, strong relationships and (b) center family voice
- Goal 2: Coordinate across district teams to nurture a culture that promotes student, family and teacher wellness, diversity, belonging and inclusion.
- Goal 3: Coordinate with staff and community partners to implement a variety of strategies at the district and school level to (a) support student development of skills outlined in the Vision of the Graduate and (b) improve student daily attendance and wellbeing.

She spoke of the strategies she has implemented to accomplish these goals, including school open house events with family dinners, home visits, mentoring programs, school walkthroughs and virtual parent conferences. Home visits are going well and the families seem to be very receptive and look forward to the visits. She stressed the importance of relationships with families to support our students.

9.3 Department Improvement Plan: Pupil Services (BOE Goal #1, #2)

Mrs. Melissa Iles, Director of Pupil Services, presented her Department Improvement Plan to the Board. She provided a one-page handout that summarized the key points of her plan. She noted that her plan aligns with the District Strategic Plan and intertwines with other School and Department Improvement Plans. Her plan also focuses on three key

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areas: Student Success, Family and Community Partnership and System Excellence. She reviewed the strategic actions for each area and the action plans to accomplish her goals. She did express her concern with the new CT-SEDS system. It has been very difficult to work with and many districts are experiencing the same issues. We're trying to fit a student's IEP into the new system and it has been not been easy to do. Dr. Macary noted that this has been a topic of conversation with his colleagues as well. Mrs. Fischer asked that the Pupil Services Newsletter is shared with Board members when published.

10.0 General Business

10.1 Board of Education Business and Finance Report (BOE Goal #1, #2, #3) (a) Asset Disposal Request

Mr. William Meier, Director of Business and Finance, gave the Board an updated report including the Year-to-Date Budget. He also announced that Dr. Macary will attend the next Town Council meeting on October 18th to request that the Vernon Town Council transfer the amount of \$425,000.00, which represents the remaining funds from the Board's 2021-2022 budget as of June 30th, 2022, to the Capital and Non-Recurring Account. This request for transfer of funds was approved by the Vernon Board of Education at the June 13, 2022 Board of Education meeting. Mr. Meier also noted that the BOE Ad Hoc Scholarship Committee met this week and has made a great deal of progress.

The Board was asked to approve one action item on the report.

MOTION: Mr. Linton moved that the Board approve the Asset Disposal Request as presented.

SECOND: Mr. Brown

VOTE: Unanimous

10.2 Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan (BOE Goal #2, #3)

Mr. Testa reviewed the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity Plan. Although we have been holding in-person learning for some time, we are required to update our plan in order to comply with grant funding requirements. The plan highlights self-assessment, staying home if sick, getting tested if experiencing any symptoms and

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encouraging all students and staff to be vaccinated. We will continue to follow common practices such as proper hand washing, respiratory etiquette, cleaning of facilities and improving ventilation in our buildings. This plan will need to be updated every six months and will be posted to our website. He asked that the Board email him with any feedback they may have.

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.

MOTION: Mr. Linton moved to go into Executive Session at 8:15 PM to discuss the Superintendent's Employment Agreement.
SECOND: Mrs. Rodriguez
VOTE: Unanimous

The Board came out of Executive Session at 8:22 PM.

MOTION: Mr. Thrall moved that the Board approve the Superintendent's Evaluation and Employment Agreement as discussed in Executive Session.
SECOND: Mrs. Rodriguez
VOTE: Unanimous

13.0 Adjournment

MOTION: Mr. Linton made a motion to adjourn at 8:24 PM
SECOND: Mr. Brown
VOTE: Unanimous

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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patricia Buxton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Patricia Buxton, Board Secretary