

The Board of Education Town of Vernon

Anne Fischer, Chairperson
Dean Houle, Vice Chairperson
Vicky Rispoli, Secretary
George Apel, Treasurer
Laura Bush
David Kemp
Susan Norlie-Hesnan
Kyle Percy
Paul Stansel

30 Park Street – PO Box 600
Vernon, Connecticut 06066

June 14, 2010

REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

A regular meeting of the Vernon Board of Education was held at the Administration Building on Monday, June 14, 2010.

Chairperson Fischer called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Present when the meeting was called to order were Mr. Apel, Mrs. Bush, Mr. Houle, Mrs. Norlie-Hesnan, Mr. Percy, Mrs. Rispoli and Mr. Stansel. Also present were Mrs. Murasso, Mr. Paskiewicz, and Student Representative Erika Tyler.

1.0 Student Performance

To honor Flag Day 2010 and to showcase the talents of our student musicians, fifth grade Skinner Road School student Ryan Moreau performed the Star Spangled Banner on his saxophone following the Pledge of Allegiance.

2.0 Vernon Recycles

Members of the Vernon Recycles committee Diana Gagne, Peggy Wilde, Anne Marie Schragger, and Lisa Bonadies addressed the Board. Mrs. Gagne noted that two additional members of the committee, Kelly Mathes and Amy Patterson, were not able to attend tonight's meeting. She also provided an overview of the Vernon Recycles program highlighting the benefits and importance of the program. Mrs. Gagne informed the Board that Center Road School has been the pilot school for the program and the committee hopes to replicate this successful initiative at other Vernon Schools with the Board's support.

Mayor Jason McCoy addressed the Board and discussed the importance and benefits of recycling. Mayor McCoy also recognized Center Road School for its involvement and participation in Vernon's effort to reduce solid waste through effective recycling via a Mayoral Proclamation. The Board of Education also recognized CRS for their recycling efforts.

Mr. Karasinski joined the meeting at 8:13 p.m.

3.0 Agriculture Education Student Awards

Gordon Gibson, member of the RHS Agriculture Education Consulting Committee, gave a brief summary of the 2009-2010 Agriculture Education program at RHS as well as presented

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certificates of achievement to the following graduating seniors: Alanna Bellefleur, Sarah Dewey, Amber Heft, Jennifer Johnson, and Heather Jordan. Mr. Gibson noted that the program will now be called the Agriculture Science and Technology program.

Karen Fitzpatrick, Agriculture Education Department Chair, was pleased to announce that Ag Ed Teacher Tera Harlow was named the NFA Advisor of the Year for the State of Connecticut. The Board of Education recognized Ms. Harlow's achievement with a certificate.

4.0 RHS English Department Student Awards

RHS English Department Chair Victoria Nordlund recognized this year's 2010 Creative Writing Award Winners. A detailed list of the awards and winners is attached.

5.0 CTAHPERD Recognitions

The Connecticut Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (CTAHPERD) annually recognizes individuals for their outstanding contributions. CTAHPERD Executive Director Connie Kapral introduced two members of our Vernon school community who have been so recognized: Eric Uthgenannt, Elementary Physical Education Teacher of the Year, and Anne Fischer, Honorary Layman Award.

The Board presented a certificate to Mr. Uthgenannt to recognize his accomplishment.

6.0 Secretary's Report

6.1 Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on May 24, 2010

Mrs. Norlie-Hesnan moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on May 24, 2010. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Bush. Mrs. Fischer noted that the last sentence of the first paragraph on page 10 should read, "Mr. Stansel suggested the wording of section B2a (Staff Development/Discipline) be clarified as follows:

Staff members shall not deny a student's participation in recess or other physical activity as a form of discipline, unless the safety of students is in question. Each student is entitled to some portion of recess."

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The minutes were approved, as amended, unanimously.

6.2 Communications

Mrs. Norlie-Hesnan noted that she accompanied a group of RHS students to New York City to see the Adam's Family on Broadway and that the students were a fine representation of RHS and the Vernon community.

Mrs. Fischer informed the Board of her attendance at the following events:

- The Ag Ed banquet
- The Top 10 Scholar Luncheon at RHS
- The Lake Street School 50th anniversary celebration
- The RHS Lacrosse banquet

Mrs. Fischer was pleased to inform the Board that former RHS student Brendan Kracke received a prestigious J. William Fulbright grant to teach English to high school aged students in Germany.

6.3 Opportunity for Board of Education to Add/Delete Agenda Items

There were no changes to the Agenda.

7.0 Community Forum

VEA President Catherine Earley addressed the Board. Ms. Earley announced that this is her last BOE meeting as VEA President and Mary Beth Mickewicz's last meeting as VEA Vice President. Ms. Earley thanked the Board for their dedicated service to the children of Vernon and also thanked them for their time and energy.

Ms. Earley announced that former VCMS Computer Education teacher and current RHS Business Education teacher David Jedidian will be the new president of the Vernon Education Association.

Mrs. Fischer thanked Ms. Earley and Ms. Mickewicz for their service to the Vernon Public Schools.

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7.1 Report from RHS Student Representative

Student representative Erika Tyler reported on the following activities at Rockville High School:

- Final exams begin Thursday, June 17.
- RHS student Austin West was named to the Connecticut All-Star team. Ms. Tyler noted that Mr. Baim, RHS Principal, played in the All-Star game in 1992.
- RHS graduation will be held on Thursday, June 24.

Mrs. Fischer thanked Ms. Tyler for serving as the student representative for the past two years, wished her luck in college and presented her with a gift from the Board.

8.0 Curriculum and Instruction

8.1 Textbook Adoption Proposals

As per Board policy, each year at this time new textbooks are recommended for adoption for use in the school district. Mrs. Murasso presented three specific textbook adoption proposals (Algebra 1A, Algebra 1B, and Honors Geometry) that have been approved in committee or by department and endorsed by the Instructional Council. Chris Ozmun, Coordinator of Math and Science, provided an overview of the adoption proposals and addressed Board questions.

The texts reflected in the proposals will be on display in the Administration Building for two weeks.

Mrs. Murasso noted that additional textbook adoption proposals will be brought to the Board as soon as possible.

9.0 General Business

9.1 Donation to Rockville High School

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Maureen Donahue, Project Graduation, requested Board approval to accept a monetary donation of \$500 from the Savings Bank of Manchester made payable to Rockville High School to support Project Graduation.

Mrs. Rispoli moved to accept with gratitude the monetary donation of \$500 from the Savings Bank of Manchester to support Project Graduation. The motion was seconded by Mr. Percy and passed unanimously.

9.2 Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Grant

Acting Supervisor of Assessment, Grants, and Career Education Jerry Griffin submitted a request for Board approval to apply for the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Grant. The grant application is for \$46,549 and will be utilized to build on the district's efforts to develop challenging academic and technical standards, to assist students in meeting standards, and to link secondary and postsecondary education. Specifically, this grant will provide monies to support our career and technical education programs at RHS.

Mrs. Bush moved to approve the request to apply for the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Grant. The motion was seconded by Mr. Stansel.

Mr. Griffin elaborated on the new Connecticut Career and Technical Education 2008-2013: Crosswalk to 16 Federal Clusters, 34 Career Pathways and 21 Areas of Concentration and Assessment.

The above noted motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

9.3 Research Involving Students

Jerry Griffin, Acting Supervisor of Assessment, Grants, and Career Education, requested Board approval to participate with researchers at Yale University's Child Study Center and State of Connecticut Court Support Services Division (CSSD) in a project funded by the Institute of Educational Sciences entitled "Alliance for Education." The project's aim is to develop a model for providing uninterrupted educational services to court-involved-youth (CIY).

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Mrs. Norlie-Hesnan moved to approve Vernon’s participation with researchers at Yale University’s Child Study Center and State of Connecticut Court Support Services Division in a project funded by the Institute of Educational Sciences entitled “Alliance for Education.” The motion was seconded by Mrs. Rispoli.

Mr. Griffin addressed Board questions and clarified that a number of districts will participate in the study, the study may involve students from both RHS and VCMS, and the Board will have an opportunity to review the results once the study is completed.

The above noted motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

9.4 Year-end Cafeteria Budget

Food Service Director Monica Pacheco presented the year-to-date cafeteria budget for the Vernon Public Schools. Details of the cafeteria expenditures and projections were provided to the Board; including, new charges to the cafeteria budget, the impact of the delayed openings of the cafeterias at NES and MSS, the impact of the power outage at VCMS, and the impact of the School Choice Program. Overall, Mrs. Pacheco requested an additional \$25,000 in funds to subsidize the cafeteria department.

Mr. Apel moved to subsidize the cafeteria budget in the amount of \$25,000. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Bush.

Mr. Karasinski noted that due to the mild winter and energy efficiency from the construction projects, the oil and natural gas accounts have an estimated surplus of \$113,000. The shortfall in the cafeteria budget can be offset via a transfer from the oil and natural gas accounts.

Mr. Stansel requested details of the year end budget figures at the next BOE meeting.

Mrs. Pacheco noted that she will have an idea about the impact on next year’s cafeteria budget within the next month.

The above noted motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

9.5 2008 Farm Bill Grant

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Food Service Director Monica Pacheco requested Board approval to apply for funding offered through the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill). The funding would allow Vernon Public Schools to offer all students at Maple Street School a fresh fruit or vegetable snack 3-5 times per week. It would also support health and nutrition education through the year.

Mr. Houle moved to approve the submission of the 2008 Farm Bill Grant application. The motion was seconded by Mr. Percy and passed unanimously.

9.6 Present Enrollment as of June 1, 2010

Mr. Paskiewicz provided the Board with enrollment figures. As of June 1, 2010, enrollment was 3,686, a decrease of 4 students from May 3, 2010.

Mr. Paskiewicz also provided the 2010-2011 “Bump-Up” Projected Enrollment for all elementary school grade levels. The spreadsheet detailed current elementary class sizes and two options for projected class size for next school year. Mr. Paskiewicz stressed that the scenarios will change due to changes in enrollment and the impact of the No Child Left Behind School Choice program.

Mrs. Bush asked Administration to ensure class size is relatively consistent among the schools and remains low in the schools being watched under NCLB.

9.7 Discussion of Staffing Needs for 2010-2011

Mr. Paskiewicz informed the Board that Acting Supervisor of Assessment, Grants, and Career Education Jerry Griffin is retiring leaving a critical position open for the Vernon Schools. He noted that the 2010-2011 budget includes this .7 position but does not include a budget for benefits and requested Administration be authorized to fill the position including benefits.

Board members discussed whether a viable candidate will be found for this part-time critical position.

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Mr. Apel moved to provide Administration with the flexibility to fill the Supervisor of Assessment, Grants, and Career Education position as presently budgeted plus benefits with the option of coming back to the Board, if necessary. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Norlie-Hesnan and passed unanimously.

9.8 RHS Advisory Program 2010-2011

As a follow-up to the NEASC recommendation to ensure that each student has an adult, in addition to the guidance counselor, who will serve to personalize that student's educational experience, RHS Principal Eric Baim provided an overview of the Advisory Program planned for the 2010-11 school year.

Mr. Baim explained the State guidelines and informed the Board that he has been working with the teacher's union for some time on this program. Teachers and the union are on board with the program. This new baseline program provides a simple starting point from which changes can be made.

Mr. Baim provided an overview of the program; including, the number of students assigned to each staff member, how often and how long the program will run, and the impact on block scheduling. A listing of potential topics to be discussed in the advisory sessions will be emailed to each Board member.

9.9 In-School Suspension

Effective July 1, 2010, Connecticut law requires suspensions to be in-school suspensions, unless the administration determines that the pupil being suspended poses such a danger to persons or property or such a disruption of the educational process that the pupil shall be excluded from school during the period of suspension. Following a year-long committee review of research and successful practice, RHS Principal Eric Baim presented information on the 2010-11 In-School Suspension Program.

Mr. Baim provided Board members with a flyer explaining the In-School Suspension (ISS) Program, the Student Reflection Packet, the ISS Daily Schedule, Work Completion Log Ticket, and a job description for the In-School Suspension coordinator position. He highlighted the benefits of the program and explained that funding for this

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program and position were not included in the 2010-2011 budget. The approximate cost is estimated at \$40,000.

Mrs. Rispoli, who was a member of the ISS committee, noted that the success of this new program is dependant on the coordinator hired. She stressed how critical it is to hire the appropriate person for the job. The goal of the position is to look at the student's behavior and work to change it.

Board members and Mr. Baim discussed the Student Reflection Packet and coordination with various RHS staff (teachers, social worker, and psychologist).

Mr. Houle moved to approve the RHS In-School Suspension Program and authorize administration to forward a recommendation for hiring an In-School Suspension Coordinator to the BOE. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Rispoli and passed unanimously.

9.10 VCMS Make-up Day

Mr. Paskiewicz explained that VCMS experienced a one day school closure in March, 2010 as a result of a power outage. He recommended that the school not make up the day at the end of the school year.

Mr. Percy moved to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to not make-up the one day school closure at VCMS at the end of the school year. The motion was seconded by Mr. Stansel and passed with Mr. Apel voting no.

9.11 Restructuring of BOE Sub-Committees

Mrs. Fischer noted that after a review of the BOE by-laws and talking with Vernon's legal representatives, it has been determined that the Board of Education's committees must be separate and distinct, as follows:

- Budget Steering Committee
- Policy Committee
- Personnel & Grievance Committee
- Curriculum Committee

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- Facilities Committee
- Negotiations Committee
- Superintendent Evaluation Committee
- Technology Committee

Mrs. Fischer noted that the above noted modification will not change the current committee members. Additionally, no action is necessary as the change is based on the current by-laws.

Mr. Apel moved to dissolve the ad-hoc committee developed to discuss management of facilities and have the negotiations committee handle the matters and report to the BOE when complete. The motion was seconded by Mr. Percy and passed unanimously.

9.12 Reports form BOE Liaisons to Organizations/Committees

Mr. Percy reported that last Saturday Skinner Road School installed a rock with the school mascot, a unicorn, sand-blasted on it. A number of changes to the front of SRS have been made and offer a more welcoming effect to the school.

Mr. Houle reported that the School Building Advisory Commission is addressing changes needed to the Agriculture Education Center and will come back to the Board with details in the future.

Mrs. Rispoli noted that the Drug & Alcohol Prevention Council will meet over the summer to decide on the allocation of grant monies and she will report back to the Board in September.

Mrs. Norlie-Hesnan attended the first meeting of the Dropout Prevention Committee on June 10, 2010. The meeting included a meet and greet, the determination of meeting dates, and a discussion of the issues.

10.0 To Review and Update Board of Education Calendar

Mrs. Fischer announced that the Policy Committee meeting scheduled for Wednesday, June 16, 2010 has been cancelled. Additionally, Adult Education Graduation will be held in the RHS

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auditorium on Wednesday, June 23, 2010 at 6:30 p.m., and RHS Commencement will be held on Thursday, June 24, 2010 at 6:00 p.m.

11.0 Opportunity for Questions from the Press Relative to Agenda Items

There were no questions from the press.

12.0 Executive Session - Negotiations

Mr. Percy moved to enter Executive Session at 9:50 p.m., inviting Mr. Paskiewicz, to attend. The motion was seconded by Mr. Houle and passed unanimously.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 9:54 p.m.

Mr. Houle moved to amend the contract with the librarians to include an H.S.A. option. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Norlie-Hesnan and passed unanimously.

Mr. Percy moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:56 p.m. The motion was seconded by Mr. Stansel and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary

Rockville High School 2010 Creative Writing Winners

Mikaela Adams

IMPAC Connecticut Young Writers Finalist – *The Patriot*

Steven Apicello

New England Young Writers Conference at Middlebury College Breadloaf Campus –
December's Modesty

Dylan Arcelli

IMPAC Connecticut Young Writer Finalist
RHS Poetry Slam Champion
Poetry Out Loud State Runner-up
Brave New Voices Connecticut Slam Team Champion

Allison Burg

It's All Write International Short Story Contest 1st Place – *Cappuccino Girl*
IMPAC Connecticut Young Writers Finalist – *Open Palms*
Gold Key Scholastic Art and Writing Competition – *Open Palms*

Patrick Crane

Gold Key Scholastic Art and Writing Competition—Writing Portfolio
Published in Aerie International Magazine – *Branches*
IMPAC Connecticut Young Writers Finalist -- *Branches*

Gabrielle Cohen

IMPAC Connecticut Young Writers Finalist – *In a Line*
It's All Write International Short Story Competition—*In a Line*

Chelsea Epes

Gold Key Scholastic Art and Writing Competition--*Butterflies*

Kelly Falkowski

It's All Write International Short Story Contest Finalist – *Card Tricks*
Gold Key Scholastic Art and Writing Competition – *Card Tricks*
Young Connecticut Playwrights Festival Champion – *What You Can Do For Your Country*

Rose Goldich

Two Gold Keys Scholastic Art and Writing Competition – *Déjà vu, Laughter*

Maxwell Hamlin

IMPAC Connecticut Young Writers Finalist – *Dock*

Elizabeth Johndrow

Sunken Garden Fresh Voices Finalist
IMPAC Connecticut Young Writers Finalist – *Postcards from a Place Unknown*
Gold Key Scholastic Art and Writing Competition – *Discord*

Jennifer Johnson

Gold Key Scholastic Art and Writing Competition – *The Do-Gooders Society*
Connecticut Student Writer Magazine – *You Made Me Love My Eyes*
Drexel National Playwriting Competition Honorable Mention-- *The Do-Gooders Society*

Jessica Kalinauskas

Gold Key Scholastic Art and Writing Competition—*Popularity is Overrated*

Lauren Kidd

Two Gold Keys Scholastic Art and Writing Competition – *Weeding, Forever With Me*

Kyle Kneeland

IMPAC Connecticut Young Writers Champion – *Colors of a Dream*

Nathan Lannan

It's All Write International Short Story Finalist -- *Damaged*
IMPAC Connecticut Young Writers Finalist—*Survivor*
Connecticut Student Writer Magazine Honorable Mention— *Survivor*

Logan LeDuc

IMPAC Connecticut Young Writers Finalist – *Goldilocks*

Ian MacDonald

It's All Write International Short Story Finalist -- *My Hero*

Emily Martinez

IMPAC Connecticut Young Writers Finalist – *You Can't Lie in Truth or Dare*

Jacob Micelli

IMPAC Connecticut Young Writers Finalist – *I Never Really Liked Taylor Swift*

Aminah Muhammad

It's All Write International Short Story Finalist – *Liar*
Connecticut Student Writer Magazine--*Liar*
IMPAC Connecticut Young Writers Finalist – *Mommy's Girl*

Amber Murphy

Creative Communications – *Soul Galleries*
Creative Communications – *Everlasting Minds*

Elizabeth Nutt

Sunken Garden Fresh Voices Winner
Connecticut Student Writer Magazine Honorable Mention—*Fireflies or Faeries?*
Gold Key Scholastic Art and Writing Competition--*Threadbare*

Lindsey Pellino

Lynn Decaro Poetry Contest 1st Place—*Rome*
IMPAC Connecticut Young Writers Finalist— *Damn It Feels Good to Be a Wizard*
Sunken Garden Fresh Voices Finalist
Connecticut Student Writer Magazine-- *Damn It Feels Good to Be a Wizard*

Dominic Pescosolido

1st place Drexel Playwriting Contest - *Red*
New England Young Writers Conference at Middlebury College at the Breadloaf Campus-*Face*

Kyle Provost

Connecticut Student Writer Magazine-- *End Game*

Katie Scibelli

Published in Long River Review – *Child of Shallot*
Gold Key Scholastic Art and Writing Competition - *Keeper*

Erin Selavka

3rd place Drexel National Playwriting Contest – *Stereotypes*

Shayna Shattleroe

IMPAC Connecticut Young Writers Finalist – *Kitchen Denial*

Danielle Skoglund

Published in Celebration of Poets

Michael Stankiewicz

Three Gold Keys Scholastic Art and Writing Competition – *Deadweight, Nonni, All Saint's Eve*
Sunken Garden Fresh Voices Winner

Alison Steed

IMPAC Connecticut Young Writers Finalist – *Freefall*

Lynn DeCaro Poetry Contest Honorable Mention– *Freefall*

Lizzi Ta

Connecticut Student Writer Magazine – *Airplane*

Michelle Tedford

3rd Place Drexel Playwriting Competition--*Carpool*

Austin West

IMPAC Connecticut Young Writers Tolland County Champion – *In Homage to MC Escher*

Three Gold Keys Scholastic Art and Writing Competition—*Emergency, Interstate, On the Eve of Apocalypse*

Lynn DeCaro Poetry Contest Honorable Mention—*In Hommage to MC Escher*

Anne Whitehead

IMPAC Connecticut Young Writers Tolland County Finalist –*Healing Stone*

Jordyn Woodtke

Write On! Hartford Stage Champion

Six Gold Keys Scholastic Art and Writing Competition – *Cheeseless Macaroni, Wrinkled But Not Worn, Surrendered, Blue Teapots, Clumsy Napkins, Smoked*, National Gold Medal

Scholastic Art and Writing Competition-- *Finding Her Wave Home*

IMPAC Connecticut Young Writers – *Finding Her Wave Home*