

# 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

August 23, 2010

## REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

A regular meeting of the Vernon Board of Education was held at the Administration Building on Monday, August 23, 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, Mr. Kemp, Mrs. Norlie-Hesnan, Mr. Percy, Mrs. Rispoli and Mr. Stansel. Also present were Dr. Conway, Mr. Karasinski, and Mrs. Murasso.

### 1.0 Secretary's Report

#### 1.1 Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on June 28, 2010 and the Special Meeting held on August 10, 2010

Mr. Apel moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on June 28, 2010 and the Special Meeting held on August 10, 2010. The motion was seconded by Mr. Percy and passed unanimously.

#### 1.2 Communications

Mrs. Rispoli welcomed Dr. Mary Conway as the new Superintendent of Vernon Public Schools.

Mrs. Fischer asked the Board to keep RHS student Katie Rizner in their prayers.

#### 1.3 Opportunity for Board of Education to Add/Delete Agenda Items

Mr. Percy moved to add Item 5.13, Request for Grant Approval, and Item 5.14, Strategy in Regard to Pending Litigation, to the Agenda. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kemp and passed unanimously.

### 2.0 Community Forum

Kelly Everett, 26 Berkley Drive, and 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at Skinner Road School addressed the Board. Ms. Everett explained that in November of 2004 she decided to pursue an international adoption and will be traveling to China in two weeks to adopt her daughter. She noted her

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understanding that she is eligible for unpaid leave through FMLA but asked the Board to consider the possibility of using sick time to defray her time at home.

## 2.1 Report from RHS Student Representative

The student representative was not in attendance at the meeting.

## 3.0 Personnel

### 3.1 Appointments to Staff

Mr. Stansel moved to ratify the appointments of the following teachers, effective August 30, 2010:

Katrina Gross, RHS Mathematics  
Ryan Previti, RHS Earth Science  
Linda Schubert, VCMS .5 FTE ESL  
Melissa Fabuien, VCMS Language Arts Grade 6  
Melissa Rebai, LSS Special Education Gr. 4, 5  
Erin Reagan, LSS Special Education Gr. K, 1  
Monica Dallahan, RHS Special Education  
Rebecca Torres-Russell, VCMS Science Gr. 6  
Sara Belanger, MSS Grade 1  
Alexis Cavanaugh, VCMS Social Studies Gr. 7  
Laura Waterman, NES Literacy Reading Teacher  
Timothy Gardiner, CRS Physical Education  
Sarah Dagon, RHS Social Studies  
Blanca Reyes, RHS Special Education  
Meena Aithal, NES .5 Kindergarten  
Nicholas Willette, CRS .5 Kindergarten  
Open Position, SRS Remedial Reading/LA

The motion was seconded by Mrs. Bush and passed unanimously.

### 3.2 Resignations

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August 23, 2010

Mr. Percy moved to accept the resignation of Colleen Papagianneris, RHS Social Studies Teacher, effective July 19, 2010, and the resignation of Jennifer Sansoucy, VCMS Remedial Reading Specialist, effective July 22, 2010. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Rispoli and passed unanimously.

## 4.0 Curriculum and Instruction

### 4.1 New Textbook Adoption

Consistent with the 2010-11 Textbook Acquisition Plan, Science & Math Coordinator Chris Ozmun submitted a new textbook adoption proposal for grade 7 science. Mr. Ozmun provided an overview of the proposal for the Board.

The newly proposed science textbooks will be on display in the Administration Building for two weeks.

### 4.2 Status of AYP for the Vernon Schools

Dr. Conway and Mrs. Murasso reported that the Connecticut State Department of Education released Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) reports for the 2009-10 School Year. According to federal legislation, approximately 8 in 10 students and subgroups of 40 or more students are required to achieve the proficiency targets of No Child Left Behind. Based on these high academic achievement targets, four Vernon schools achieved AYP. Lake Street met the ambitious targets where approximately 8 in 10 students scored at/above proficient in reading and math. Maple Street School, Center Road School, and Rockville High School achieved AYP through the “Safe Harbor” provision by reducing by 10% the number of students who achieved at/below basic from 2008-09 to 2009-10. Northeast School, Skinner Road School, and Vernon Center Middle School did not achieve AYP.

Copies of Commissioner Mark McQuillan’s press release as well as detailed AYP reports from the State were provided to the Board.

Mrs. Murasso noted that Administration was encouraged by the progress the school system has made but noted that there is still a long way to go.

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August 23, 2010

Board members discussed the future AYP targets, the penalties for schools identified as “In Need of Improvement”, and the impact Public School Choice.

#### 4.3 Public School Choice Transfers

Consistent with the regulations of No Child Left Behind, Public School Choice transfers were approved for an additional 18 students attending Maple Street (13) and Northeast Elementary Schools (5). This brings to 67 the total number of students participating in Public School Choice. Mrs. Murasso provided the breakdown by grade and school of the Public School Choice transfers and also provided the Board with copies of correspondence documenting the district’s efforts.

Dr. Conway explained that Skinner Road School students were not eligible to participate in Public School Choice.

#### 4.4 Field Trip Request: Germany

RHS teacher John Christopher Lewis requested Board approval for an international field trip to Germany as part of the German American Partnership Program (GAPP). Mr. Lewis addressed the Board and provided an overview of the trip.

Mr. Houle moved to approve the field trip request to Germany from April 15, 2011, to May 7, 2011. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Bush and passed unanimously.

#### 5.0 General Business

##### 5.1 2010-11 Board of Education Meeting Schedule

Mrs. Norlie-Hesnan moved to approve the regular meeting schedule for the 2010-11 school year. The motion was seconded by Mr. Apel.

Board members discussed the option of holding an awards night in the spring instead of presenting the awards at a regular Board of Education meeting.

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August 23, 2010

Mr. Stansel moved to amend the meeting schedule and hold the November 8, 2010 meeting in the Board Meeting Room, Third Floor of the Administration building. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Rispoli and passed unanimously.

The original motion was voted on, as amended, and passed unanimously.

## 5.2 Donation of Computer Equipment

Director of Technology Barry Grant requested Board approval to accept with gratitude the donation of computer equipment from Board of Education member David Kemp. The donation includes 1 Dell Dimension 2350 computer (Windows XP home edition, Intel Pentium 4), 1 Dell flat screen monitor, and 1 Harman three piece sound system.

Mr. Apel moved to approve and accept with gratitude the donation of computer equipment by Mr. David Kemp. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Rispoli and passed with Mr. Kemp abstaining.

## 5.3 Request for Waiver of Rental Fee

The Town of Vernon Fire Department requested an ‘on-file waiver’ of rental fees for the use of the Vernon Center Middle School or Rockville High School auditorium approximately 4 to 6 times per year for lecture style training classes for its members. The waiver would remain in effect until it is revoked by the Board of Education. The Fire Department will be responsible for the application and permit process for each time it requests use of a Board of Education facility.

Mr. Houle moved to grant the fire department an ‘on-file waiver’ of rental fees for use of the Vernon Center Middle School or Rockville High School auditorium. The fire department must submit the proper paperwork through the normal channels within the Business Office. The motion was seconded by Mr. Percy and passed unanimously.

## 5.4 DPH Health Surveillance Program

Dr. Conway reported that the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health requested that kindergarten and grade 3 children at SRS and MSS participate in the “Every Smile Counts” dental health survey. The survey consists of a brief two minute

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August 23, 2010

examination during which the screener will gather data of height, weight, and dental health. Parents will be provided with an information form about the survey; they may also use this form to opt their child out of the survey.

Mrs. Norlie-Hesnan moved to approve the participation of kindergarten and grade 3 students at SRS and MSS in the Every Smile Counts Department of Public Health Survey. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Bush and passed unanimously.

## 5.5 Group Prescription Insurance Program

Dr. Conway informed the Board of a request from the Town of Vernon to ask the Board to consider a change from Medco, the Board's current prescription drug program, to Maxor, the Town's new provider of prescription services. The Town indicates that there may be a significant savings for the Board in moving to Maxor (estimated at \$180,000). Dr. Conway suggested the Board determine if there is interest in exploring this change and, if so, refer the matter to the Budget Steering Committee for investigation and discussion.

Mr. Stansel moved to refer the investigation of a change in prescription drug insurance provider to the Budget Steering Committee to be brought back to the Board with a recommendation. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Rispoli.

Mr. Apel moved to amend the motion and direct the Budget Steering Committee to return to the Board with a recommendation by the second regular meeting in September. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Norlie-Hesnan and passed unanimously.

The original motion was voted on, as amended, and passed unanimously.

## 5.6 Request to Town for Approval of Funding for BOE Parking Lot

Mr. Houle reported that the Facilities Committee met prior to tonight's BOE meeting. He distributed an estimate for services from the Town of Vernon Department of Public Works to grind and pave the BOE Central Administration Parking Lot. Mr. Houle reviewed the estimate from Public Works and Mr. Apel clarified that the quote includes work by subcontractors.

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August 23, 2010

Mr. Houle reported that the Facilities Committee recommends that the Board request the Town of Vernon Department of Public Works perform the work based on the quote received and that the Town fund the project utilizing the Capital Non-Recurring fund.

Mrs. Rispoli moved to request that the Town expend funding from the Capital Non-Recurring fund to cover the expense of improving the Board of Education parking lot and accept the proposal from the Department of Public Works. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Norlie-Hesnan and passed unanimously.

## 5.7 Request for Approval of Funding for Northeast School Repairs

Mr. Houle reported that the Facilities Committee also discussed the necessity of some outside work at Northeast School. Specifically, the paint on many of the support beams on the outside of the building is flaking and has tested positive for lead. The paint needs to be professionally cleaned and re-painted. The repairs are necessary in order for the YMCA to utilize the facility.

Mr. Houle moved to authorize the Business Office to expend up to \$9,999 from the Universal Services fund to address the painting needs at Northeast School. The motion was seconded by Mr. Stansel and passed unanimously.

## 5.8 Tuition Rates for Non-Resident Students

The proposed 2010-2011 Tuition Rates for Non-Resident Students was provided to the Board for review. The revised rates reflect a 1% increase over the 2008-2009 rates as there was no rate increase last year.

Mr. Houle moved to approve the Tuition Rates for Non-Resident Students for the 2010-2011 school year with the corrected name of the TALC Program at RHS. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Rispoli and passed unanimously.

## 5.9 Magnet School/Open Choice School Enrollments

Mrs. Murasso reported that based on information received in the Superintendent's Office as of August 13, 2010, a total of 55 Vernon students will be attending Magnet Schools at a total projected cost of \$191,886. A total of 26 Hartford students will be

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August 23, 2010

attending Vernon schools for which grant funds will be received totaling at least \$65,000. Mrs. Murasso provided the Board with details of the projected Magnet School/Open Choice enrollments by location and noted that the actual projections are within what was budgeted.

Board members discussed the disparity of outgoing magnet school tuition versus incoming Open Choice grant funds and the fact that the district is not required to pay the student transportation costs. Mrs. Rispoli also asked for trend data on magnet school tuition costs.

## 5.10 Report from School Building Advisory Commission

Mr. Apel provided an update on the status of the ongoing construction projects at Rockville High School. The Vo Ag projects are ongoing with inspections scheduled. Work will continue during 2<sup>nd</sup> shift and Saturdays and the projects are expected to be completed by October 22, 2010.

The RHS roof project is just about complete and the area will be re-inspected on Tuesday.

Mr. Apel noted that as of now all looks encouraging for the opening of school next week.

## 5.11 Reports from BOE Liaisons Regarding Attendance at Organization/Committee Meetings

Mrs. Fischer reported on the following items discussed by the School Wellness Council:

- Skinner Road School won the Mayor's Cup Challenge and Lake Street School came in a close second.
- The first Mayor's Cup Challenge event for the new school year will be the Northeast School Fall Dash on Saturday, September 25<sup>th</sup> at 10:00.
- Northeast School won the Vernon Gets Moving challenge.
- Director of Food Services Monica Pacheco will be contacting PTOs to set up supermarket tours to educate parents on reading food and nutrition labels.
- Skinner Road School will once again participate in the Hartford Marathon.

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- SRS Parent Charlie Chatterton and Director of Athletic Steve Phelps will run the Vernon Schools marathon in either September or October.

## 5.12 Revisions to Board of Education Policies

Mr. Kemp reported that the Policy Committee has revised BOE Policies 1110.1, 4111, 4115, 4215, and 5114. He provided an overview of each policy revision and requested approval from the Board.

Mr. Houle moved to approve revised Policy 1110.1, Parent/Guardian Participation, as recommended by the Policy Committee. The motion was seconded by Mr. Percy and passed unanimously.

Mr. Stansel moved to approve revised Policies 4115, Certified Personnel, Supervision and Evaluation, and 4215, Non-Certified Personnel, Supervision and Evaluation. The motion was seconded by Mr. Percy and passed unanimously.

Mr. Houle moved to approve revised Policy 4111, Certified Personnel, Staff Planning/Creation of Positions/Recruitment, Screening, & Selection, as recommended by the Policy Committee. The motion was seconded by Mr. Apel and passed unanimously.

Mr. Percy moved to approve revised Policy 5114, Suspension, Expulsion, and Due Process, as recommended by the Policy Committee. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Bush and passed unanimously.

## 5.13 Request for Grant Approval

Dr. Lois Possell, Principal of Maple Street School, requested approval of two grants – the Primary Mental Health Program Grant and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC) Grant Program for Grades K-12. Dr. Possell provided an overview of the purpose and key components of each of the grants.

Mrs. Bush moved to approve the submission of the Primary Mental Health Program Grant and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC) Grant Program for Grades K-12. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Rispoli and passed unanimously.

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August 23, 2010

## 5.14 Strategy in Regard to Pending Litigation

Mr. Houle moved to enter Executive Session after Item 7.0 for the purpose of discussion pending litigation, inviting the Superintendent and Skinner Road School Principal Matthew Wlodarczyk to attend. The motion was seconded by Mr. Percy and passed unanimously.

## 6.0 To Review and Update Board of Education Calendar

Mrs. Bush noted that a number of school PTO meetings are not included on the calendar.

## 7.0 Opportunity for Questions from the Press Relative to Agenda Items

There were no questions from the press.

## 8.0 Executive Session

The Board entered Executive Session at 9:10 p.m.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 9:25 p.m.

Mr. Houle moved to adjourn at 9:26 p.m. The motion was seconded by Mr. Percy and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary