



CONFIDENTIAL EXECUTIVE SESSION – 5:30 pm
VIA TELEPHONE CONFERENCE
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING AGENDA – 7:00 pm
VIA ZOOM WEBINAR
April 27, 2021

Based on the recent attention with COVID-19, also known as Coronavirus, and the potential impact on our community, the Verona Public Schools will be conducting the Verona Board of Education meeting remotely via Zoom webinar. There will also be in-person access for the public. This meeting is scheduled to occur with public access and participation availability to ensure the continued regular operation of government and the health, safety, and well-being of our community members. **The next meeting of the Verona Board of Education will be held via zoom webinar. The public shall utilize the following instructions to call into the meeting:**

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://zoom.us/j/94326703629?pwd=dmNrYTFqZWVhRDZQS2JYemV4YklWZz09>

Passcode: 467571

Or One tap mobile :

US: +16465189805,,94326703629# or +13126266799,,94326703629#

Or Telephone:

Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

US: +1 646 518 9805 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 213 338 8477

Webinar ID: 943 2670 3629

- Anyone from the public wishing to address the Verona Board of Education on any matter, when prompted by the Verona Board of Education will be able to raise their hand using the Raise Hand button on their device or dial *9 if you called in (please [click here](#) to determine how to raise your hand using your device). When you are advised it is your turn to address the Verona Board of Education, please state your name and address for the record. You will have time to address the Verona Board of Education. At the conclusion of your comments the Verona Board of Education and/or the Superintendent of Schools may address your comments and/or questions.
- Please make sure you have the current version of Zoom updated on your device in order to have the capability to use the Raise Hand function to make public comments or ask questions.

The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs recently stated that “the Division of Local Government Services reminds local units that, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-6, et seq., (the “Open Public Meetings Act,” or “Act”), public meetings may be held in person or by means of communication equipment, N.J.S.A. 10:4-8(b), to include streaming services and other online meeting platforms. All meetings, including those held using communications equipment, must be noticed in a manner consistent with the requirements of the Act, unless the meeting is for emergent circumstances and held in a manner consistent with the requirements set forth at N.J.S.A. 10:4-9(b). Local units should also provide guidance to the public for remotely accessing and providing comment at a meeting. Local units should still have an advertised meeting place, which is connected to the meeting through communications equipment, unless otherwise directed by state or local emergency management or health officials, consistent with Executive Order 103 (Murphy 3/9/2020).”

PUBLIC MEETING

April 27, 2021

The Verona Board of Education of the Township of Verona, in the County of Essex, New Jersey, convened in regular session on April 27, 2021 via ZOOM webinar at 7:04 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Ernest Turner. A statement was made that the meeting had been properly advertised in the designated newspapers and the agendas were posted at the appropriate locations.

The following members of the Board were present: Mrs. Lisa Freschi, President, Vice President, Mr. Jim Day, Mr. Timothy Alworth, Mrs. Pamela Priscoe and Mrs. Sara Drappi. Also present was Dr. Rui Dionisio, Superintendent and Mr. Ernest Turner, Acting Board Secretary.

There were 31 members of the public present. There was 1 member of the press present.



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April 13, 2021

1. Call to order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Reading of Meeting Notice
4. Roll Call Attendance
5. Presentations - Public Hearing 2021-2022 Annual Budget Presentation
6. Superintendent Report - Dr. Rui Dionisio, Superintendent of Schools
7. Committee Reports
 - Finance
 - Community Resources
8. Public Comments on Agenda Action Items to be Approved
9. Discussion Items
10. Roll Call Vote on Resolutions
11. Public Comments

NOTE: The next scheduled Public Meeting will be held on **Tuesday, May 11, 2021** beginning with a Confidential Session at 5:30 pm and 7:00 pm Public Session.

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Reading of Meeting Notice**

This meeting is being conducted in compliance with the open meeting session that the Verona Board of Education passed a resolution at its annual reorganization meeting held on January 5, 2021. The meeting set forth the schedule of its regular meetings which resolution was within 7 days of passage. The schedule was sent to the Verona Cedar Grove Times, the Star Ledger, the Township of Verona and the VEA. Postings of this meeting setting forth the time location and agenda were posted at the Verona Board of Education Office and on the Verona Public Schools district website. The Verona Board of Education operates under a consent agenda format, any board member has the right to have an item pulled to be voted upon or discussed separately. Copies of tonight's agenda and resolutions have been made available to the public and press.

4. **Roll Call Attendance**

Mr. Alworth	<u> X </u>	Mr. Day	<u> X </u>
Mrs. Drappi	<u> X </u>	Mrs. Freschi	<u> X </u>
Mrs. Priscoe <u> X </u>			

5. **Superintendent Report** - District Calendar Resolution #6 updating the calendar to reflect 2 snow days rather than 3, as a result there are no give back snow days this year.

On Addenda Resolution # 1 This evening, we have an update on the School Business Administrator Search. Twenty six candidates applied for the School Business Administrator position in December 2020. Applications were screened and nine candidates were interviewed in January 2021 in the first round. Eight candidates were interviewed in round 2 in January 2021. Three finalist candidates were interviewed by 3 sub-committees comprised of administration and staff in February 2021. Two finalists were interviewed by the Board of Education for the Board Secretary role in February 2021. Reference checks and follow up interviews were conducted in March and April 2021.

I am pleased to announce the appointment of our new School Business Administrator, Mr. Jorge Cruz, who will be joining our team on July 1, 2021. Mr. Cruz comes to us with over 13 years of experience in school finance and operations. He prides himself on being a strategic, forward thinker and collaborative team member. Mr. Cruz demonstrated successful development of systems to support schools best utilize budgeting to maximize the instructional program. His experience includes oversight of school budgets to support more than 1,500 schools in the NYC Department of Education. In his current role, Mr. Cruz manages Community School District 6 in

Washington Heights, NYC, consisting of 39 schools (PreK - 12), 14,890 students, and an operating budget of over \$230 Million. Mr. Cruz comes with knowledge in STEM programming, where he leveraged private grants and public funds to expand district-wide implementation.

Prior to his service with the NYC Department of Education, Mr. Cruz worked as an auditor for Ernst & Young LLP, with a focus in the education and the public sector. Mr. Cruz earned his Bachelors of Business Administration Degree in Finance and Investments at Baruch College. He also completed an Executive Masters of Public Administration Degree at Baruch College.

Mr. Cruz currently resides in Teaneck, NJ, with his wife Elizabeth and two daughters, Isabella and Anabel, nine and six years old. Outside of work, Mr. Cruz can be seen coaching his daughter's soccer team and cycling with his family. He is very active in his local school community and volunteers as the treasurer for the PTO. Mr. Cruz also facilitates financial literacy workshops to empower immigrant communities with their personal finances.

Mr. Cruz is excited and optimistic about beginning his career with the Verona Public Schools. He is looking forward to meeting our staff and school administrators in the coming weeks to begin the transition. Please join me in welcoming Mr. Jorge Cruz as the new School Business Administrator of the Verona Public Schools.

6. Presentations - Public Hearing 2021-2022 Budget Presentation

7. Committee Reports - Finance - Mrs. Drappi reported

Community Resources - Mr. Day reported

Athletics - Mrs. Priscoe reported

8. Public Comments on Agenda only - Ron Mueller - 21 Linden Ave. - Questioned the Federal Grant money the district received. Mr. Turner responded.

9. Discussion Items

10. Roll Call Vote on Resolutions

11. Public Comments - None

Motion by: Mr. Day

Seconded by: Mrs. Priscoe

Be it RESOLVED the approval of Resolutions #1 - 13.

Mr. Alworth X Mr. Day X

Mrs. Drappi X Mrs. Freschi X

Mrs. Priscoe X

VERONA PUBLIC SCHOOLS – BOARD OF EDUCATION
RESOLUTIONS
April 27, 2021

The following resolutions have been recommended by the Superintendent to the Board of Education.

#1 RESOLVED that the Board approve the minutes of the following meetings:

Confidential & Regular Public Meeting April 13, 2021

PERSONNEL

#2 RESOLVED that the Board approve the following pending pre-employment paperwork:

2.1 New Hires

Name	Location	Position	Salary	Committee	Term of Employment on or about
Graciela Parma	District	Perm. Lunch Aide	\$13.50/hr.	Education	SY 20-21

2.2 Extra Pay

Name	Dates From/To	Pay rate	Total	Reason
Julia Ermitinger	Mar. 25, 2021	\$24/per hr.	\$24.00	extra time in LLD classroom

2.3 Without Pay

Name	No. of Days	Date/s
#100238	1 day	Apr. 13, 2021

2.4 Reallocation of Days

Employee #	Explanation
#105208	4 Personal Illness to 4 Paternity days Apr. 20 - Apr. 23, 2021

2.5 Leave of Absence

Name	Reason	Begin Date	Estimated Return Date on or about
#100238	Leave of Absence without pay	Apr. 20, 2021	May 10, 2021

EDUCATION

- #3 **RESOLVED** that the Board approves the Superintendent's presentation of HIB report as follows:

HIB Case
VHS 220802

- #4 **RESOLVED** that the Board approve the attached Monthly Attendance Report for March 2021.

- #5 **RESOLVED** that the Board approve the daily rate for permanent substitute teachers be increased to \$168 per diem and the daily rate for per diem substitute teachers will be increased to \$126 per diem effective March 25, 2021 - June 25, 2021 for Verona High School ONLY.

- #6 **RESOLVED** that the Board approve the attached revised 2020-2021 District School Calendar.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

- #7 **RESOLVED** that the Board approve the following:

7.1 Student Home Instruction

Student #	School	Grade	Hrs./Week/Duration	Beginning on or about
#233131	VHS	10	10 hrs./10-12 weeks	Apr. 13, 2021

CO-CURRICULAR

#8 RESOLVED that the Board approve the following for the 2020-2021 school year:

8.1 Co-Curricular

Name	Location	Position	Stipend
Jana Byrnes	VHS	Choreographer/Spring Musical	\$2,000
Paul Salierno	VHS	Music Director/Spring Musical	\$2,000
John Priori	VHS	Chief Accompanist/Spring Musical	\$2,200
Ben Weise	VHS	Pit Musician (Guitar)/Spring Musical	\$500
Josh Lopez	VHS	Pit Musician (Bass)/Spring Musical	\$500
Skylar Fortgang	VHS	Pit Musician (Keyboard)/Spring Musical	\$500
Joe Priori	VHS	Pit Musician (Drums)/Spring Musical	\$500

FINANCE

#9 RESOLVED that the Board adopt the Verona Board of Education Budget for the 2021-2022 school year.

	<u>GENERAL FUND</u>	<u>SPECIAL REVENUES</u>	<u>DEBT SERVICE</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
2021-22 Total Expenditures	\$38,148,540	\$868,390	\$5,219,633	\$44,236,563
Less: Anticipated Revenues	<u>\$ 2,514,391</u>	<u>\$868,390</u>	<u>\$1,384,151</u>	<u>\$ 4,766,932</u>
Taxes to be Raised	\$35,634,149	\$0	\$3,835,482	\$39,469,631

Travel and Related Expense Reimbursement 2021-2022

WHEREAS, the Verona Board of Education recognizes school staff and Board members will incur travel expenses related to and within the scope of their current responsibilities and for travel that promotes the delivery of instruction or furthers the efficient operation of the school district; and

WHEREAS, N.J.A.C. 6A:23B-1.1 et seq. requires Board members to receive approval of these expenses by a majority of the full voting membership of the Board and staff members to receive prior approval of these expenses by the Superintendent of Schools and a majority of the full voting membership of the Board; and

WHEREAS, a Board of Education may establish, for regular district business travel only, an annual school year threshold of \$150 per staff member where prior Board approval shall not be required unless this annual threshold for a staff member is exceeded in a given school year (July 1 through June 30); and

WHEREAS, travel and related expenses not in compliance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23B-1.1 et seq., but deemed by the Board of Education to be necessary and unavoidable as noted on the approved Board of Education Out of District Travel and Reimbursement Forms; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Education approves all travel not in compliance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23B-1.1 et seq. as being necessary and unavoidable as noted on the approved Board of Education Out of District Travel and Reimbursement Forms; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board of Education approves travel and related expense reimbursements in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23B-1.2(b), to a maximum expenditure of \$10,000 for all staff and board members.

- #10 RESOLVED** that the Board approve the enclosed checklist(s) in the following amounts:

<u>Amount</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Check Register Date</u>
\$142,201.77	Referendum Checks	April 23, 2021
\$3,842,928.99	Vendor Checks	April 23, 2021

- #11 RESOLVED** that the Board approve the Report of the Treasurer of School Monies for the following month:

March 2021

- #12 RESOLVED** that the Report of the Secretary for the period(s) as follows be approved:

March 2021

REFERENDUM

- #13 RESOLVED** that the Board approve a change order 3001 with Environmental Climate Control, Inc. for additional cost for roof work at all schools as per the following:

Original contract	\$6,200,000
Change Order #001	\$ 102,515
New contract amount	\$6,302,515

#11 Public comments

CONFIDENTIAL SESSION IF NECESSARY

RESOLUTION TO ADJOURN

#14 RESOLVED that the Board meet in private session, from which the public shall be excluded, to discuss the topics of negotiations and personnel or potential litigation which private discussion is being held pursuant to Section 7b and 8 of the Open Public Meeting Act. The matters under discussion will be disclosed to the public as soon as final decisions are made and voted upon.

Motion by: Mrs. Priscoe

Seconded by: Mrs. Drappi

Mr. Alworth	<u> X </u>	Mr. Day	<u> X </u>
Mrs. Drappi	<u> X </u>	Mrs. Freschi	<u> X </u>
Mrs. Priscoe	<u> X </u>		

All in Favor: AYE

All Opposed: NONE

This meeting is adjourned at (TIME) 8:08 P.M.

VERONA PUBLIC SCHOOLS – BOARD OF EDUCATION
ADDENDUM RESOLUTIONS
April 27, 2021

The following resolutions have been recommended by the Superintendent to the Board of Education.

Motion by: Mr. Day

Seconded by: Mrs. Priscoe

Be it RESOLVED the approval of Addenda Resolutions #1 - 6.

<u>Mr. Alworth</u> <u>X</u>	Mr. Day <u>X</u>
Mrs. Drappi <u>X</u>	Mrs. Freschi <u>X</u>
Mrs. Priscoe <u>X</u>	

PERSONNEL

- #1 **RESOLVED** that the Verona Board of Education approve **Jorge Cruz** as the School Business Administrator / Board Secretary at a salary of \$163,000 effective July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022.

1.1 Resignation

Name	Location	Position	Reason	Effective on or About
Quinn Stoeber	VHS	School Counselor	Resignation	Jun. 30, 2021

1.2 Leave of Absence

Name	Reason	Begin Date	Estimated Return Date on or about
#102074	Leave of Absence	Jun. 28, 2021	Aug. 31, 2021
#100238	Leave of Absence	Apr. 20, 2021	May 11, 2021

1.3 Reallocation of Days

Employee #	Explanation
#105493	5 Personal Illness days to 5 paternity days

EDUCATION

- #2 **RESOLVED** that the Board approve the following pending fingerprint approval:

2.1 V-SEA

Name	Location	Position	Salary	Committee	Term of Employment on or about
Larry Siegel	VHS	V-SEA Middle School STEM teacher	\$2,743.00	Education	June 29-July 27, 2021

- #3 **RESOLVED** that the Board approve an additional \$18 per hour, not to exceed 2 hours daily, for per diem substitute teachers that work beyond the daily substitute hours effective April 22, 2021 to June 25, 2021.
- #4 **RESOLVED** that the Board approve an additional \$24 per hour, not to exceed 2 hours daily, for the permanent substitute teachers that work beyond their allotted daily hours for H. B. Whitehorne Middle School and the Elementary Schools effective April 22, 2021 to June 25, 2021.

REFERENDUM

- #5 **RESOLVED** that the Board approve a change order #002 with Environmental Climate Control Inc. to include structural steel scope of work at Brookdale Avenue Elementary School, Laning Avenue Elementary School, Forest Avenue Elementary Schools and H. B. Whitehorne Middle School as per the Following:

Original Contract Amount	\$6,200,000
Previous Change Order	\$ 102,515
Change Order #002	<u>\$ 56,658</u>
New Contract Amount	\$6,359,173

FINANCE

#6 RESOLVED that the Board approve the enclosed checklist(s) in the following amounts:

<u>Amount</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Check Register Date</u>
\$1,266,452.22	Referendum Checks	April 26, 2021