

PUBLIC MEETING

September 14, 2021

The Verona Board of Education of the Township of Verona, in the County of Essex, New Jersey,

convened in regular session on September 14, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Jorge Cruz. 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. Timothy Alworth, Mrs. Pamela Priscoe and Mrs. Sara Drappi, and Mr. Day. Also present was Dr. Rui Dionisio, Superintendent and Mr. Jorge Cruz, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary

There were 9 members of the public present. There were 0 members of the press present.



CONFIDENTIAL EXECUTIVE SESSION – 5:30 pm
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING AGENDA – 7:00 pm
VERONA HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM
September 14, 2021

1. Call to order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Reading of Meeting Notice
4. Roll Call Attendance
5. Superintendent Report - Dr. Rui Dionisio, Superintendent of Schools
6. Business Secretary Report - Mr. Jorge Cruz, Board Secretary
7. Committee Reports
 - Athletic/Co-Curricular - Pamela Priscoe/Timothy Alworth
 - Education Committee - Sara Drappi/Timothy Alworth
8. Public Comments on Agenda Action Items -
9. Discussion Items
10. Roll Call Vote on Resolutions
11. Public Comments

NOTE: The next scheduled Public Meeting will be held on **Tuesday, September 28, 2021** beginning with a Confidential Session at 5:30 pm and 7:00 pm Public Session in the Verona High School Auditorium.

- 1. Call to Order: 7:11 PM**
- 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 X

Mr. Day X

Mrs. Drappi X

Mrs. Freschi X

Mrs. Priscoe X

5. Superintendent Report - Dr. Rui Dionisio, Superintendent of Schools -

Good evening everyone. Welcome back to school! It has been wonderful to see smiling student faces and our faculty and staff back in-person in school. Congratulations on the first few days of our return to school this year.

Coming up in early October is International Walk to School Day on October 6, 2021 that we will participate in as a district

Walk to School Day events work to create safer routes for walking and bicycling and emphasize the importance of issues such as increasing physical activity among children, pedestrian safety, traffic congestion, concern for the environment and building connections between families, schools, and the broader community.

We encourage your individual schools to support efforts to continue a healthy practice of walking to school on a more regular basis.

There will be updates and reminders in the coming weeks from our building principals.

Referendum Construction & HVAC Units

Legacy Construction Management presented the HVAC project reached the goal of heating and ventilation as 100% complete and operational prior to the start of school. The air conditioning project is ongoing and will continue during second shift work by our contractors after school hours with expected completion in Fall 2021. The same cleaning procedures used in Spring 2021 will be followed during second shift work, which includes the coordination between the HVAC company and custodians. As a result, each room contractors work in at night will be cleaned and ready for use the next day.

Legacy Construction Management who oversees the project on behalf of the District shared that the F.N. Brown scope of PSEG work is 100% complete. The focus for September 7th & 8th was focused on getting classrooms ready for the start of school. Exterior gas piping for rooftop units was completed at Laning and Brookdale on September 9th and 10th. Legacy reported that new air conditioning units are now operational in portions of HBW and the plan is to continue with that progress in all schools. Areas of the air conditioning project will be turned on as each portion of specific schools is completed.

Utilization & Operation of Facilities

The District monitors weather conditions on a daily basis. Windows will be left open overnight where possible to maintain cooler temperatures. Principals will work with staff to coordinate the use of cooler learning spaces on warm days to maintain as much comfort as possible. Teachers will be encouraged to take classes outside when feasible and will be invited to air-conditioned and cooler spaces during free periods. In cases of extreme heat, early dismissal may be considered as a last resort. Fans may only be used at this time when staff members are alone in classrooms. Masks must be worn indoors unless eating/drinking or an exemption is permitted.

Staff Vaccinations

The District is collecting vaccination records for staff and students. For the purpose of this executive order 253, covered workers include, but is not limited to, administrators, teachers, educational support professionals, individuals providing food, custodial, and administrative support services, substitute teachers, whether employed directly by a covered setting or otherwise contracted, contractors, providers, and any other individuals performing work in covered settings whose job duties require them to make regular visits to such covered settings, including volunteers.

Testing

As previously stated, the District will require COVID testing for unvaccinated staff. Details and available testing sites will be provided in the future as the District develops and approves Board policy on this matter and procedures for staff. This protocol applies to all covered workers described above and in the executive order. Completion and submission of testing will be the responsibility of the individual employee for staff who are unvaccinated. Test results will be submitted and managed by the school nurse.

The Verona Public Schools registered for end-to-end screening [testing program](#) through the NJDOH to be provided on-site at schools by state-contracted vendors at no cost to a local education agency and non-public schools until federal funds are expended. This comprehensive service solution will include, at a minimum, the implementation, management, staffing, equipment, and daily operations needed to operate school testing clinics, including all required reporting. The District will provide further details in the coming weeks as we receive more information from the State. In the meantime, parents, staff, and students may access free Covid testing at the [locations](#) shared in weekly district update emails.

Congratulations are in order for Frank Mauriello, our Director of Special Services, this evening. Today was a monumental day for him as he successfully defended his dissertation in his doctoral studies at Saint Peter's University. Congratulations Dr. Mauriello on this amazing milestone. We understand the dedication and commitment that is required and we commend you for your efforts and accomplishments as it serves as a wonderful example for our students and faculty. Congratulations again Dr. Mauriello. A well-deserved accomplishment.

6. **BA Report** - Mr. Cruz presented an overview of the National School Lunch Program, providing details on why the Board currently does not participate in the program and the implications on what it means for the district if we do participate in program. Mr. Cruz also covered details on how free/reduced lunch students are served.

7. **Committee Reports**

- Athletic/Co-Curricular - Pamela Priscoe/Timothy Alworth: Discussed bussing shortage may require families to carpool for athletic events
- Education Committee - Sara Drappi/Timothy Alworth: Discussed a live streaming option for public meetings going forward, in addition to in-person. A Google Form will be shared to collect public comments for meeting minutes.

8. **Public Comments on Agenda Action Items - none**

9. **Discussion Items**

Mrs. Freschi provided an update on the Interim Superintendent interviews.

Mrs. Priscoe reminded the community to attend the mental health series on September 30 at 7 PM titled *Supporting Your Children After a Pandemic*.

Mrs. Freschi requested a correction to the end time on the 9/9 minutes to reflect the correct end time at 9:05 PM and correction in the 8/31 minutes to remove “Acting” from the Board Secretary title.

Mrs. Drappi applauded the update to Dress and Grooming policy P551.

10. Roll Call Vote on Resolutions

11. Public Comments

Rita Scelfo - 25 Church St. - Thanked the Board for the transition back to school. Expressed concern about meals, recess, and remaining in one classroom for most of the day.

Kristen Donohue - 31 S. Prospect St. - Thanked teachers and administrators for all their hard work. Shared that a live steam meeting is not enough and requested online participation as well. Also expressed concern about fans in schools.

Denise Verzella - 130 Personette Ave. - Shared stats of food insecurity in NJ. Requested that the Board should participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Also asked for non-confidential items in the Superintendent’s search to be discussed in public.

Lisa Freedman - 54 Woodland Ave. - Requested that Board should apply for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).

Motion by: Day

Seconded by: Drappi

Be it RESOLVED the approval of Resolutions # 1 - 8.

Mr. Alworth No to P0167 (Reso#4) Mr. Day X

Mrs. Drappi X Mrs. Freschi X

Mrs. Priscoe X

VERONA PUBLIC SCHOOLS – BOARD OF EDUCATION
RESOLUTIONS
September 14, 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 August 31, 2021
Confidential & Special Meeting September 9, 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
Susan Conlon	District	Sub Teacher	\$100/per diem	Education	SY 21-22
Christine Boyd	LAN	Paraprofessional	\$16,899.96	Education	Sept. 8, 2021 - Jun. 23, 2022
Christine Boyd	LAN	Sub Teacher	\$100/per diem	Education	SY 21-22
Rachel Alessandro-Cordasco	HBW	Paraprofessional	\$16,899.96	Education	Sept. 8, 2021 - Jun. 23, 2022
Rachel Alessandro-Cordasco	HBW	Sub Teacher	\$100/per diem	Education	SY 21-22
Kendra Lanzo	District	Sub Lunch Aide	\$14.50/hr.	Education	SY 21-22
Stefanie Shapiro	District	Sub Lunch Aide	\$14.50/hr.	Education	SY 21-22

2.2 Leave of Absence

Name	Reason	Begin Date	Estimated Return Date on or about
#102152	Medical Leave of Absence	Oct. 19, 2021	Nov. 29, 2021

2.3 Termination

Name	Position	Location	Reason	Effective Date
#105546	Paraprofessional	VHS	Termination	Sept. 8, 2021

2.4 Retro Pay

Name	Base Salary	Total Prorated Retro Pay for July and August 2021
Thomas Lancaster	\$125,538	\$669.54
Robert Merkler	\$122,656	\$654.17

EDUCATION

#3 RESOLVED that the Board approve the first reading of the following policies:

- Policies 1648.13 - School Employee Vaccination Requirements (M) (New)

#4 RESOLVED that the Board approve the second reading of the following policies:

- Policies 2415.81 through 2415.84 - School Wide Parental Involvement (New)
- P0167 Public Participation in Board Meetings (Updated)
- P5511 Dress and Grooming (Updated)

#5 RESOLVED that the Board approve the second reading of the following policies/
regulations:

- P0131 Bylaws, Policies, and Regulations (Revised)
- P3134 Assignment of Extra Duties (Revised)
- P&R 3142 Nonrenewal on Non Tenured Teaching Staff Member (Revised)
- P&R 3221 Evaluation of Teachers (M) (Revised)
- P&R 3222 Evaluation of Teaching Staff Member, Excluding Teachers and Administrators (M) (Revised)
- P&R 3223 Evaluation of Administrators, Excluding Principals, Vice Principals, and Assistant Principals (M) (Revised)
- P&R 3224 Evaluation of Principals, Vice Principals, and Assistant Principals (M) (Revised)
- P&R 4146 Nonrenewal of Nontenured Support Staff Member (Revised)
- P&R 5460.02 Bridge Year Pilot Program (M) (New)
- P&R 6471 School District Travel (M) (Revised)
- P8561 Procurement Procedures for School Nutrition Programs (M) (Revised)
- General Policy and Regulation Guides:
 - P 2422 Comprehensive Health and Physical Education (M) (Revised)
 - P 2467 Surrogate Parents and Resource Family Parents (M) (Revised)
 - P 5111 Eligibility of Resident/Nonresident Students (M) (Revised)

- P 5116 Education of Homeless Children (Revised)
- P & R 7432 Eye Protection (M) (Revised)
- P 8420 Emergency and Crisis Situations (M) (Revised)
- R 8420.1 Fire and Fire Drills (M) (Revised)
- P 8540 School Nutrition Programs (M) (Revised)
- P 8550 Meal Charges/Outstanding Food Service Bill (M) (Revised)
- P 8600 Student Transportation (M) (Revised)
- New Jersey Department of Education – Office of Fiscal Accountability and Compliance Audit – New and Revised Policy Guides:
 - P 6115.01 Federal Awards/Funds Internal Controls – Allowability of Costs (M) (New)
 - P 6115.02 Federal Awards/Funds Internal Controls – Mandatory Disclosures (M) (New)
 - P 6115.03 Federal Awards/Funds Internal Controls – Conflict of Interest (M) (New)
 - P 6311 Contracts for Goods or Services Funded by Federal Grants (M) (Revised)

#6 RESOLVED that the Board approve the attached job description for District Mental Health Coordinator.

#7 RESOLVED that the Board approve the following:

7.1 Attendance at Conference

Name	School	Event/Location	Date	Cost
Christopher Haines	HBW	Introduction to Reading Like a Historian Curriculum and Beyond the Bubble History Assessments/Virtual	Aug. 16-18, 2021	\$375.00

7.2 Student Teacher/Observer

Name	School	School/Teacher/ Grade	Duration	Assignment
Stephanie Verdi	Caldwell University	HBW/Albretson/Lang. Arts	Sept. 15 - Dec. 10, 2021/ 175 hours	Observer
Stephanie Verdi	Caldwell University	HBW/Albretson/Lang. Arts	Jan. 10, 2022 - May 16, 2022	Student Teacher

7.3 Mentors

Novice Teacher	Location	Mentor	Stipend	# of mentoring weeks
Trisha Basak	VHS	Marie Meyer	Waived	30 weeks
Zacharg Wroblewski	VHS	Erik Lynch	Waived	30 weeks
Christine Nevil	VHS	Erik Lynch	Waived	30 weeks

SPECIAL EDUCATION

#8 **RESOLVED** that the Board accept agreement between parties settlement regarding a special education matter for student #302432 in the amount of \$4,000.

#11 **Public Comments**

CONFIDENTIAL SESSION IF NECESSARY

RESOLUTION TO ADJOURN

#9 **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. Drappi

Seconded by: Mr. Day

Mr. Alworth X Mr. Day X

Mrs. Drappi X Mrs. Freschi X

Mrs. Priscoe X

All in Favor: AYE

All Opposed: None

This meeting is adjourned at 8:22 P.M.

VERONA PUBLIC SCHOOLS – BOARD OF EDUCATION
ADDENDUM RESOLUTIONS
September 14, 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 Resolution #1 - 6 .

Mr. Alworth X Mr. Day X

Mrs. Drappi X Mrs. Freschi X

Mrs. Priscoe X

PERSONNEL

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

1.1 New Hire

Name	Location	Position	Salary	Committee	Term of Employment on or about
Nicole Tierney	FNB	Paraprofessional	\$16,899.96	Education	Sept. 20, 2021 - Jun. 23, 2022
Daniela Dimitrioska	HBW	Lunch Aide	\$14.50/hr.	Education	SY 21-22

EDUCATION

#2 RESOLVED that the Board approve the following:

2.1 Curriculum Writing

Name	No. of Hours	Amount per hour	Total
Luisa Hirsch	20	\$45.00	\$900.00

SPECIAL EDUCATION

#3 **RESOLVED** that the Board approve for Catherine King (hourly rate is \$41.73) and Dana Lustig (hourly rate is \$73.23) to provide transition services for elementary school students prior to the opening of school. These funds, not to exceed \$5,000, will be paid from the ESSER II account.

#4 **RESOLVED** that the Board approve the following:

4.1 Attendance at Conference

Name	School	Event/Location	Date	Cost
Brooke Raskin	District	Handle with Care/Hamilton, NJ	Sept. 17, 2021	\$450.00

#5 **RESOLVED** that the Board approve to contract with John Foley, MT-BC, to provide Music Therapy for the 2021-2022 school year for two and one half hours per week for a total not to exceed \$6,300.

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>
\$27,727.00	Vendor Checks	September 14, 2021