



State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

ESSEX COUNTY OFFICE
Leroy F. Smith Public Safety Building
60 Nelson Place, 1st Floor South
Newark, New Jersey 07102
(973) 621-2750

PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

TAHESHA L. WAY
Lt. Governor

KEVIN DEHMER
Commissioner

JOSEPH S. ZARRA
Interim Executive County Superintendent

June 17, 2025

Ms. Diane DiGiuseppe, Superintendent
Verona Public Schools
121 Fairview Avenue
Verona, New Jersey 07044

Dear Ms. DiGiuseppe:

I have reviewed the employment contract for Tania Symmons, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services of Verona, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:7-8(j) and to determine compliance with the standards adopted by the Commissioner of Education at N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-3.1. Based upon my review, I have determined that those provisions of the contract subject to my review are in compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Therefore, I approve the contract for a period commencing on July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026.

If there are any changes to the terms of this contract, you will need to submit it to me, for review and approval prior to the required public notice and hearing of such changes.

Please be reminded that the contract for this position must be submitted annually to the Executive County Superintendent for review and approval.

When the "approved" contract is fully executed, please provide a copy to the County Office with a copy of the Board Resolution approving the contract.

Sincerely,


Joseph S. Zarra
Interim Executive County Superintendent

JSZ:mm



Verona Public School District EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT

THIS EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT is made by and between the VERONA BOARD OF EDUCATION, with offices located at 121 Fairview Avenue, Verona, New Jersey 07044 (hereinafter referred to as the "Board"), and Tania Symmons, whose title shall be Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services (hereinafter referred to as the "Assistant Superintendent").

WITNESSED:

WHEREAS, the Board wishes to employ the Assistant Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent wishes to be employed by the Board subject to all of the terms and conditions of this Agreement:

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the foregoing and the mutual covenants and conditions in this Agreement and for other good and valuable consideration, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, it is hereby agreed by and among the parties hereto as follows:

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The term of the Contract shall be for the period commencing on July 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2026.

Assistant Superintendent CERTIFICATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Certification

The Assistant Superintendent Employee is a holder of a valid license, issued by the State of New Jersey and is now in full force and effect as required by law, if required for the position.

Duties

The Assistant Superintendent shall perform his/her duties in accordance with his/her job description.

Outside Activities

The Assistant Superintendent shall devote his/her time, attention and energy to the business of the school district. However, he/she may also lecture, engage in writing activities and speaking engagements, and engage in other activities which are of a short-term duration if he/she first obtains the prior written approval of the Superintendent, which approval shall not be unreasonably withheld if the activities do not interfere with the performance of his/her duties in the district.

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH OF THE Assistant Superintendent

The Board encourages the continuing professional growth of the Assistant Superintendent through his/her participation in the following:

The operations, programs and other activities conducted or sponsored by local, state and national school administrator and/or school board associations; Seminars and courses offered by public or private educational institutions; Informational meetings with other persons whose particular skills or background would serve to improve the capacity of the Assistant Superintendent to perform his/her professional responsibilities for the Board; Visits to other institutions, and Other activities promoting the professional growth of the Assistant Superintendent.

To this end, the Board will provide:

Reimbursement for conventions and conferences associated with the job duties of the Assistant Superintendent,

within budget limitations. The Assistant Superintendent shall receive permission and approval from the Superintendent of Schools to attend such conferences in advance of attendance. The Assistant Superintendent taking approved graduate or doctoral courses at an accredited college or university will be reimbursed at 100% per credit for graduate school coursework that would culminate in acquiring a graduate or doctoral degree. The rate used to determine reimbursement will be the existing graduate/doctoral credit (whichever is higher) cost established at Rutgers University for an in-state student. The tuition reimbursement shall be capped at nine graduate/doctoral credits during the Assistant Superintendent's first year (July 1- June 30). The Assistant Superintendent must notify the Superintendent by March of budget year to accrue reimbursement. The Board agrees to reimburse the Assistant Superintendent an additional nine credits per year up to two years after completion of coursework. If the Assistant Superintendent leaves the district within one year of receiving tuition reimbursement, then s/he will reimburse the district for all tuition reimbursement for the previous year. The board reserves the right to increase the number of credits on a case-by-case basis. Reimbursement will be made by June 30th of each academic year. All reimbursements will be made in accordance with current laws and regulations.

COMPENSATION

ANNUAL BASE SALARY: \$186,487.50

STIPEND(S):

TOTAL SALARY: \$186,487.50

OTHER BENEFITS

Vacation/Holidays

The Assistant Superintendent shall be granted twenty-two (22) vacation days from July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026. The Assistant Superintendent shall take his/her vacation days when he/she chooses if school is not in session. However, if he/she wishes to take vacation when school is in session, the Assistant Superintendent may take vacation only with the prior approval of the Superintendent. Only five (5) days of unused vacation days may be carried over into the following school year, where justified due to business demand, but any carried over vacation days have to be used by August 31 of the following school year.

Sick Leave

The Assistant Superintendent shall be allowed twelve (12) days of sick leave annually, from July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026. The portion of such leave unused at the end of any year shall be cumulative. The Assistant Superintendent shall be allowed three (3) personal days and five (5) family illness days from July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026. Upon his/her retirement and contemporaneous resignation from the District, the Board shall pay up to \$15,000 in supplemental compensation for unused sick days. It should be noted that sick days shall be reimbursed at a per diem rate of 1/260 of the annual salary.

Medical Benefits

The Board shall provide the Assistant Superintendent with and pay the premiums for individual and family health insurance coverage identical to that provided to all teaching staff members in the district.

Membership Fees

The Board agrees to fund membership in three professional organizations for the Assistant Superintendent, the selection of which shall be with the Superintendent's agreement.

Equipment

Mobile Telephone: District Phone or 50% reimbursement up to \$30.00 or the rate of a district-issued phone, whichever is less.

Disability

The Board shall pay \$650.00 per year premium for the Assistant Superintendent's enrollment in short-term Class E protection insurance as offered by Prudential Insurance Company of America. The Board of Education shall also pay \$96.00 per year for the Assistant Superintendent's enrollment in the NJCSA supplemental long-term Disability Plan III as offered by the Prudential Insurance Company of America. If the premiums are increased for Class E protection or for NJCSA long-term Disability Plan III, the Board shall pay up to a 15% yearly increase.

Doctorate

The Assistant Superintendent shall receive an additional \$3,500 annual stipend upon proof of conferred degree for an earned doctorate in education conferred by an accredited college or university.

SABBATICAL LEAVE

At the Board's discretion, a sabbatical leave of absence. An Assistant Superintendent employed in the Verona Public Schools for seven (7) years or more of continuous full-time service may be granted a leave of absence up to two (2) years. The salary granted to an Assistant Superintendent on sabbatical leave for study shall be seventy percent (70%) of the salary to which he/she would be entitled if not on leave. The salary granted for sabbatical leave for travel shall be fifty percent (50%) of that salary to which he/she would be entitled if not on leave. From such salary shall be deducted monthly the regular deductions for Teachers' Pension and Annuity Fund, and other deductions as required by law or authorized by the Manager. Salary payments shall be made in accordance with the general time schedule for payment of salaries in the school system. Upon completion of the sabbatical leave a written report to the Superintendent and an oral report if requested to the Board, shall be made within a period of sixty (60) days after return to service. Upon return from sabbatical leave, a Manager shall be placed on the salary schedule at the level which he/she would have achieved had he/she remained actively employed in the system during the period of his/her absence. The Assistant Superintendent will be entitled to return to the position he/she left. All benefits to which an Assistant Superintendent was entitled at the time his/her leave commenced, including unused accumulated sick leave, shall be restored to him/her upon his/her return.

EVALUATION

The Superintendent shall evaluate the performance of the Assistant Superintendent, at least according to the provisions of the applicable New Jersey statutes and regulations. Each evaluation shall be in writing, and a copy shall be provided to the Assistant Superintendent.

TERMINATION OF CONTRACT

The Assistant Superintendent may terminate this contract by providing the District with 60 days' written notice of intention to terminate it. If the administrator's certificate is revoked, this contract is null and void pursuant to Title 18A:17-15.1.

COMPLETE AGREEMENT

This contract embodies the entire agreement between the parties hereto and cannot be varied except by written agreement of the undersigned parties.

CONFLICTS

In the event of any conflict between the terms, conditions and provisions of this contract and the provisions of the Board's policies , or any permissive state or federal law, then unless otherwise prohibited by law, the terms of this contract shall take precedence over the contrary provisions of the Board's policies or any such permissive law during the term of the contract.

SAVINGS CLAUSE

If, during the term of this contract, it is found that a specific clause of the contract is illegal under federal or state law, the remainder of the contract not affected by such a law shall remain in force.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto set their hands and seals to this contract effective on the day and year first written above.

Dated:

Employee

Board President

Board Secretary