

**PUBLIC MEETING**

**December 13, 2022**

**The Verona Board of Education of the Township of Verona, in the County of Essex, New Jersey, convened in regular session on December 13, 2022 at 7:04 p.m.**

**The meeting was called to order by Jorge Cruz, Board Secretary.**

**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, Mrs. Pamela Priscoe, Vice President, Mr. Christopher Wacha, Mrs. Sara Drappi, and Mr. Jim Day. Also present was Diane DiGiuseppe, Superintendent and Mr. Jorge Cruz, School Business Administrator.**

**There were 53 members of the public present. There were 0 members of the press present.**

CONFIDENTIAL EXECUTIVE SESSION –6:00 pm  
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING AGENDA – 7:00 pm  
VERONA HIGH SCHOOL LEARNING COMMONS  
December 13, 2022

1. Call to order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Reading of Meeting Notice
4. Roll Call Attendance
5. Presentation - Laura Palmerezzi - Athletic Director - Fall Recap  
Facilities Assessment Report - Ronald Kramps from Alpha Facilities
6. Superintendent Report - Diane DiGiuseppe
7. Board Secretary Report - Jorge Cruz
8. Student Representative Report - Daniel Fremklakh
9. Committee Reports -
  - Education/Special Education
  - Athletics
  - Finance
10. Public Comments on Agenda Action Items
11. Discussion Items
12. Roll Call Vote on Resolutions
13. Public Comments

Live streaming link: <https://youtu.be/4oGihuPAosA>

The next scheduled Public Meeting will be held on **Tuesday, January 3, 2023** beginning with a Confidential Session at 6:00 pm and 7:00 pm Public Session in the Verona High School Learning Commons.

- 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 4, 2022. 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. Copies of tonight's agenda and resolutions have been made available to the public and press.

**4. Roll Call Attendance**

|             |              |              |              |
|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Mr. Wacha   | <u>  X  </u> | Mr. Day      | <u>  X  </u> |
| Mrs. Drappi | <u>  X  </u> | Mrs. Priscoe | <u>  X  </u> |
|             |              | Mrs. Freschi | <u>  X  </u> |

- 5. Presentation** - Laura Palmerezzi - Athletic Director - Fall Recap  
Facilities Assessment Report - Ronald Kramps from Alpha Facilities

Mr. Day thanked Mr. Kramps for the presentation and clarified that the LED Energy Savings ESIP took place in 2015.

Mr. Wacha asked questions about the FCI calculation and how should the district use it to prioritize the repairs and upgrades needed.

Mrs. Drappi Thanked Mr. Kramps for the comprehensive presentation and asked about the outdoor stormwater assessment.

- 6. Superintendent Report** - Diane DiGiuseppe [Superintendent Presentation 12/13/2022](#)

Mr. Wacha congratulated Mrs. DiGiuseppe, for a great 100-day transition in our district and thanked Mr. Cruz for his support in welcoming our new Superintendent.

Ms. DiGiuseppe presented a slide deck that reviewed her 100-day Transition/Entry Plan and the Final Report. These can be found on the District Website on the Superintendent's page.

The Board charged Ms. DiGiuseppe to search for a Strategic Planning Consultant.

Four consulting firms were researched

- Hazard, Young, and Attea
- OnStrategy
- Education Elements
- New Jersey School Boards

Costs and services varied, with the most expensive being Education Elements at \$94,000 and the least expensive NJ School Boards Association at \$4000. Hazard, Young, and Attea, and OnStrategy were approximately \$30,000 each plus available add-on services.

The Board charged Ms. DiGiuseppe to search for a Demographer to produce a demographic study to determine the effects of new housing complexes on school crowding and distribution.

Two demographic firms were researched

- Statistical Forecasting
- Ross Haber Associates

Costs and services vary, Statistical Forecasting provided a more robust product, and starting costs were approximately \$11,000 with additional add-ons. Ross Haber Associates' initial report would be less robust than Statistical Forecasting, and the cost is approximately \$3,500, but the range with add-on services would be from \$3500-\$10,000.

## **7. Board Secretary Report - Jorge Cruz**

Good evening everyone. I have two updates for my report tonight.

In finance, we have our October 2022 Board Secretary, Treasurer's, and Budget Transfers Report, and they're all in agreement.

Lastly, resolution #6 and #7 is the proposal to pursue a HVAC grant being offered by NJ Clean Energy. The grant requires a HVAC assessment. If awarded, it would cover 75% of the project cost. Mr. Naturile and I are working closely with our architects on this project which will allow us to replace units that weren't included in our 2019 Referendum.

This concludes my report for tonight. I wish everyone and warm and safe holiday as we bring 2022 to a close. Thank you.

## **8. Student Representative Report - Daniel Fremklakh, VHS Sophomore**

### **I. Student Report**

A. Reese is organizing a presentation on Board policies to VHS's gay-straight alliance in the New Year

1. Going over existing Board policies regarding LGBTQ students to ensure students know what areas are covered in existing policy and ask about student concerns

- B. Reese published the meeting summary of November's meeting on the high school newspaper's website
- C. Reese and Ava Vega (junior at VHS) collaborating with the environmental club to start a native plants garden on campus. Will use the greenhouse in winter before transplanting seedlings in spring.
- D. The Student Council is running its annual toy drive for Hawkins Elementary School in Newark. Toys have been collected in the main lobby for the past few weeks and will be delivered to the elementary school before winter break.(Wednesday+Thursday wrapping)
- E. The Student Council has also begun planning for a winter formal, most likely taking place in February. Will be hosted at the school. (Possibly the gym, hopefully we can include snacks and drinks)(Possibly a rose fundraiser)
- F. The Student Council will have a spirit week to be hosted in January or Late February. An example day would include winter whiteout or holiday colors, this was approved by the participating sophomore students 75% Yes vs. 25% No, showing a clear desire for spirit by the student body.

## 9. Committee Reports

- Education
  - Mrs. Drappi share the committee report for Education regarding action items for approval tonight along with staffing updates. Mr. Wacha shared his updates as well.
- Athletics
  - Mrs. Priscoe provided an update on athletics, game speaker system in the VHS gym and field. The building usage process that will be reviewed to ensure request.
- Finance
  - Mr. Day provided an update on the sale of the old school bus. The 2021-22 audit presentation will take place next month. Verify Residence is a new organization that will assist the district to verify our student residence to ensure everyone in VPS lives in Verona.

## 10. Public Comments on Agenda Action Items

**Larry Iannuzi - 89 Pease Ave** - requested that the original request to rename a facility using the original Policy 7250 at the time that the request was submitted to rename the HBW Auditorium to Patrick S. Curcio.

## 11. Discussion Items

Mrs. Freschi congratulated Mrs. Priscoe for becoming a Certified Board Member with NJSBA. Mrs. Priscoe also congratulated Mrs. Freschi for her completion of the Certified School Board Leader program with NJSBA.

Mr. Wacha asked about the school board reorganization and the committee selection. Mrs. Freschi and Mrs. Priscoe thanked Mr. Day and Mrs. Drappi for their dedication to the Verona Board of Education and their community.

Mrs. DiGiuseppe read a proclamation on behalf of the Board of Education to

## 12. Roll Call Vote on Resolutions

## 13. Public Comments

**George Kosachk - Verona, NJ** - thanked the outgoing board members for their work

Please note that the public participation portion of the meeting affords an opportunity for the public to share thoughts and comments about school related topics. By law, administrators and Board of Education members are not permitted to publicly discuss personnel matters, student discipline, or other issues requiring confidentiality. While we may not respond to comments during the meeting, all input that is shared with the Board of Education is taken very seriously, and helps inform future deliberations and work by the Board and its committees. Answers appear in many forms including, but not limited to: email, Superintendent/ Committee reports, Board statements, FAQs on website, or after public comment is closed. We appreciate and thank all members of the public for your input.

### **VERONA PUBLIC SCHOOLS – BOARD OF EDUCATION** **RESOLUTIONS** **December 13, 2022**

#### **I. ROUTINE MATTERS**

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

- #1 **RESOLVED** that the Board, upon on the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the minutes of the following meeting:

Regular Public Meeting      November 22, 2022

**Motion by:**          Mrs. Drappi    

**Seconded by:**     Mrs. Priscoe

**Be it RESOLVED the approval of Resolutions #1**

Mr. Wacha      X                        Mr. Day          X    
 Mrs. Drappi     X                        Mrs. Priscoe     X    
 Mrs. Freschi     X  

**II. PERSONNEL**

**#1 RESOLVED** that the Board, upon on the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the following:

**1.1 New Hires** -pending successful completion of pre-employment paperwork.

| <b>Name</b>               | <b>Location</b> | <b>Position</b>  | <b>Salary</b>      | <b>Committee</b> | <b>Term of Employment on or about</b> |
|---------------------------|-----------------|--|--------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Gabrielle Montagna</b> | District        | Sub Teacher  | \$110/<br>per diem | Education        | SY 22-23                              |
| <b>Sara Every</b>         | FNB/<br>BRK     | Extension of MLOA<br>Replacement - School<br>Social Worker | \$275/<br>per diem | Education        | Jan. 3 - Jun.<br>23, 2023             |

**1.2 Resignation**

| <b>Name</b>              | <b>Location</b> | <b>Position</b>              | <b>Reason</b> | <b>Effective on or About</b> |
|--------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|---------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Nicholas Naturile</b> | District        | Director of Facilities       | Resignation   | Jan. 20, 2023                |
| <b>Jalisa Figueroa</b>   | Board<br>Office | Human Resource<br>Specialist | Resignation   | Jan. 2, 2023                 |

**1.3 Permanent Subs**

| <b>Name</b>         | <b>Location</b> | <b>Position</b>                           | <b>Salary</b>  | <b>Committee</b> | <b>Term of Employment on or about</b> |
|---------------------|-----------------|---|----------------|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Kaitlyn Heun</b> | HBW             | Permanent Sub<br>Teacher                  | \$125/per diem | Education        | Dec. 7, 2022 -<br>Jan. 31. 2023       |
| <b>Jamie Capra</b>  | BRK             | Permanent Sub<br>Teacher Mon. &<br>Thurs. | \$125/per diem | Education        | Jan. 3 - Jun. 22,<br>2023             |

**1.4 Leave of Absence**

| <b>Name</b> | <b>Reason</b>                 | <b>Begin Date</b> | <b>Estimated Return Date on or about</b> |
|-------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|--|
| #103274     | Maternity Leave of Absence    | Mar. 13, 2023     | Jan. 2, 2024                             |
| #105239     | Extension of Leave of Absence | Dec. 9, 2022      | Dec. 12, 2022                            |

**1.5 Stipends**

| <b>Name</b>                | <b>School</b> | <b>Stipend</b>  | <b>Position</b>                   | <b>Committee</b> | <b>Employment Date</b>        | <b>Notes</b> |
|----------------------------|---------------|---|-----------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Judy Brown</b>          | VHS           | Degree/ \$1,160 pro-rated<br>VHS Head Admin.<br>Asst./\$1,160 pro-rated | Administrative Assistant          | Education        | Dec. 5, 2022 - June 30, 2023  | Pensionable  |
| <b>Jacqueline Santiago</b> | Bd. Ofc.      | \$6,241 pro-rated   | VHS Finance Committee Chairperson | Education        | Dec. 16, 2022 - Jun. 30, 2023 |              |

**1.6 Board Member Service Proclamations**

| <b>Name</b>             | <b>Years on the Board</b>           |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Mr. James Day</b>    | January 8, 2013, to January 3, 2023 |
| <b>Mrs. Sara Drappi</b> | January 7, 2020, to January 3, 2023 |

Motion by:     Mrs. Drappi    

Seconded by:     Mr. Day    

**Be it RESOLVED the approval of Resolutions #1 - 1.6.**

Mr. Wacha     X    

Mr. Day     X    

Mrs. Drappi     X    

Mrs. Priscoe     X    

Mrs. Freschi     X

**III. EDUCATION**

#1 **RESOLVED** that the Board, upon on the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the attached District Nursing Plan for the 2022-2023 school year.

#2 **RESOLVED** that the Board, upon on the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the following:

**2.1 Recommendation for Video Adoption**

| <b>Name</b>       | <b>Location</b> | <b>Course</b> | <b>Grade</b> |
|-------------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|
| Life is Beautiful | HBW             | English       | 8            |

**2.2 Student Observer**

| <b>Name</b>   | <b>School</b>    | <b>School/Teacher/ Grade</b>     | <b>Duration</b>        | <b>Assignment</b> |
|---------------|------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| Ashley Cooper | Seton Hall Univ. | FOR/BRK/R.<br>Tully/Speech OT/PT | Jan. 23 - Jun. 9, 2023 | Student Observer  |
| Emily Moya    | Kean Univ.       | HBW/Asmar/School<br>Psychology   | Jan 9 - Jun. 2023      | Practicum         |

**2.3 Home Instructors**

| <b>Name</b>   |
|---------------|
| Steven Cannon |
| Matthew Cross |
| Janice Tufaro |

**2.4 Attendance at Conference**

| <b>Name</b>             | <b>School</b> | <b>Event/Location</b>   | <b>Date</b>   | <b>Cost</b> |
|-------------------------|---------------|---|---------------|-------------|
| <b>Alyssa Boldurian</b> | VHS           | Helping Your Unmotivated and Underperform Writers Succeed/Virtual | Jan. 18, 2023 | \$279.00    |
| <b>Andrew Herschman</b> | VHS           | Work Based Learning for Capstone                                  | Feb. 15, 2023 | \$759.00    |
| <b>Robert Orr</b>       | VHS           | Work Based Learning for Capstone                                  | Feb. 15, 2023 | \$759.00    |

#3 **RESOLVED** that the Board, upon on the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve **Judith Brown** to issue working papers during the 2022-2023 school year.

#4 **RESOLVED** that the Board, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve to accept the HIB report for November, 2022.

#5 **RESOLVED** that the Board, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the following:

**5.1 Curriculum**

- Personal Finance <https://www.veronaschools.org/Page/2116>

#6 **RESOLVED** that the Board, upon on the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the following:

**Request for Classroom & Library Materials Reconsideration**

#7 **RESOLVED** that the Board, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve VerifyResidence.com proposal to conduct Student Residence Verification and provide a Residence Database Audit Report.

#8 **RESOLVED** that the Board, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the attached Monthly Statistical Report for November 2022.

Motion by:     Mrs. Drappi    

Seconded by:     Mr. Day    

**Be it RESOLVED the approval of Resolutions #1 -5, 7-8 (Exclude #6)**

Mr. Wacha     X                          Mr. Day     X    

Mrs. Drappi     X                          Mrs. Priscoe     X    

Mrs. Freschi     X    

**IV. POLICY**

#1 **RESOLVED** that the Board, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the second reading of the following policies:

|      |                          |
|------|--------------------------|
| 0144 | BOARD MEMBER ORIENTATION |
|------|--------------------------|

|      |                           |
|------|---------------------------|
| 0155 | BOARD COMMITTEES          |
| 0164 | CONDUCT OF BOARD MEETINGS |
| 2312 | CLASS SIZE                |
| 2330 | HOMEWORK                  |
| 5120 | ASSIGNMENT OF STUDENTS    |
| 7250 | SCHOOL AND FACILITY NAMES |

#2 **RESOLVED** that the Board, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the first reading of the following policies:

|        |                   |
|--------|-------------------|
| P 3232 | TUTORING SERVICES |
| R 3232 | TUTORING SERVICES |

Motion by:       Mrs. Drappi      

Seconded by:       Mr. Day      

Be it **RESOLVED** the approval of Resolutions #1. **(Exclude #2)**

Mr. Wacha    X   

Mr. Day    X   

Mrs. Drappi    X   

Mrs. Priscoe    X   

Mrs. Freschi    X   

V. **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

#1 **RESOLVED** that the Board, upon on the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the following:

1.1 **Student Home Instruction**

| Student # | School | Grade | Hrs./Week/Duration   | Beginning on or about |
|-----------|--------|-------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| #261363   | VHS    | 9     | 10 hrs.wk./ 6-8 wks. | Nov. 14, 2022         |

Motion by:       Mrs. Priscoe      

Seconded by:       Mr. Day



- #2 **RESOLVED** that the Board, upon on the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the enclosed checklist(s) in the following amounts based on the recommendation of the Superintendent:

| <u>Amount</u> | <u>Description</u> | <u>Check Register Date</u> |
|---------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| \$ 758.00     | HBW                | December 9, 2022           |
| \$ 3,306.50   | VHS                | December 9, 2022           |
| \$ 28,200.00  | Referendum         | December 9, 2022           |
| \$ 579.51     | Food Service       | December 9, 2022           |
| \$896,102.23  | General            | December 9, 2022           |

- #3 **RESOLVED** that the Board, upon on the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the Report of the Secretary for the period(s) as follows be approved:

October 2022

- #4 **RESOLVED** that the Board, upon on the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the Report of the Treasurer of School Monies for the following month:

October 2022

- #5 **RESOLVED** that the Board, upon on the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the attached list of individual transfers of line items in the 2022-2023 budget for:

October 2022

- #6 **RESOLVED** that the Board, upon on the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve DiCara Rubino Architects' proposal to complete the NJ Clean Energy HVAC grant application (SSB-VEEVR) and the required HVAC Assessment Report for the district at a cost of \$10,000, funded with ARP ESSER III.

- #7 **RESOLVED** that the Board, upon on the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve DiCara Rubino Architects' proposal for additional HVAC Upgrades at Verona HS, Brookdale ES, F.N. Brown ES, Laning ES, and Forest ES, which will be capped at \$1.3 Million, funded by the NJ Clean Energy Grant and ARP ESSER III.

**Motion by:**       Mrs. Drappi      

**Seconded by:**       Mrs. Priscoe

**Be it RESOLVED the approval of Resolutions #1 - 7.**

Mr. Wacha   X  

Mr. Day   X  

Mrs. Drappi   X  

Mrs. Priscoe   X  

Mrs. Freschi   X  

**VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Please note that the public participation portion of the meeting affords an opportunity for the public to share thoughts and comments about school related topics. By law, administrators and Board of Education members are not permitted to publicly discuss personnel matters, student discipline, or other issues requiring confidentiality. While we may not respond to comments during the meeting, all input that is shared with the Board of Education is taken very seriously, and helps inform future deliberations and work by the Board and its committees. Answers appear in many forms including, but not limited to: email, Superintendent/ Committee reports, Board statements, FAQs on website, or after public comment is closed. We appreciate and thank all members of the public for your input.

**CONFIDENTIAL SESSION IF NECESSARY**

**IX. RESOLUTION TO ADJOURN**

**#1 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 to adjourn the meeting:**

**Motion by:**   Mr. Day  

**Second by:**   Mrs. Drappi  

**All in Favor:**   AYE  

**All Opposed:**   NONE

This meeting is adjourned at (TIME) 9:11 P.M.

**VERONA PUBLIC SCHOOLS – BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**ADDENDUM RESOLUTIONS**  
**December 13 2022**

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

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

**I. PERSONNEL**

**#1 RESOLVED** that the Board, upon on the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the following:

**1.1 Stipends**

| <b>Name</b>         | <b>School</b> | <b>Stipend</b>                   | <b>Position</b>           | <b>Committee</b> | <b>Employment Date</b>    | <b>Notes</b> |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Eloy Luna</b>    | District      | \$11,647<br>\$5,823.50 pro-rated | Custodial<br>Coordinator  | Facilities       | Jan. 1 - Jun.<br>30, 2023 | Pensionable  |
| <b>Dennis James</b> | District      | \$11,647<br>\$5,823.50 pro-rated | Facilities<br>Coordinator | Facilities       | Jan. 1 - Jun.<br>30, 2023 | Pensionable  |

**1.2 Staff Changes**

| <b>Name</b>          | <b>Current Location/<br/>Position/Salary</b> | <b>New Location/ Position/<br/>Salary</b>       | <b>Effective Date on<br/>or about</b> |
|----------------------|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Barbara Wertz</b> | FOR/Part Time Nurse/<br>\$40.00 hr.          | FOR/LAN/School Nurse/<br>BA+60/Step 10 \$76,544 | Jan. 3, 2023                          |

**Motion by:**       Mrs. Drappi      

**Seconded by:**       Mr. Day

**Be it RESOLVED the approval of Addenda Resolution #1 - 1.2.**

Mr. Wacha      X                        Mr. Day      X    
Mrs. Drappi     X                        Mrs. Priscoe   X    
Mrs. Freschi   X  

**II. EDUCATION**

- 1. RESOLVED** that the Board, upon on the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the following:

**1.1 Professional Development Presenter**

| <b>Presenter</b>    | <b>Date</b>      | <b>Hrs./Stipend</b>  | <b>Total</b> | <b>Presentation</b> |
|---------------------|------------------|----------------------|--------------|---------------------|
| <b>Claire Duffy</b> | Nov. 29-30, 2022 | 15 hrs./\$60 per hr. | \$900.00     | LETRS Training      |

**Motion by:**   Mr. Day  

**Seconded by:**   Mrs. Drappi  

**Be it RESOLVED the approval of Addenda Resolution #1**

Mr. Wacha      X                        Mr. Day      X    
Mrs. Drappi     X                        Mrs. Priscoe   X    
Mrs. Freschi   X