



BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING AGENDA

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 limited in person seating up to ten members of the public on a first come, first serve basis. 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/94833054581>

Or iPhone one-tap :

US:+16465189805,,94833054581# or +13126266799,,94833054581#

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: 948 3305 4581

- 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

December 8, 2020

The Verona Board of Education of the Township of Verona, in the County of Essex, New Jersey, convened in regular session on December 8, 2020 via ZOOM webinar at 7:07 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Daniel Roberts. 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. Daniel Roberts, Board Attorney.

There were 96 members of the public present. There was 1 member of the press present.



BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING AGENDA

CONFIDENTIAL EXECUTIVE SESSION – 5:30 pm

VIA TELEPHONE CONFERENCE

REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING AGENDA – 7:00 pm

VIA ZOOM WEBINAR

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. Presentations - AP Highlights and Scholars Awards, Dr. Miller, Mr. Schels, Mr. Stevenson
7. Committee Reports
 - Athletics & Co-Curricular - James Day/Pamela Priscoe
 - Education - Timothy Alworth/Sara Drappi
 - Facilities - James Day/Lisa Freschi
 - Community Resources - Pamela Priscoe/Sara Drappi
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, January 5, 2021** beginning with a Confidential Session at 5:30 pm and 7:00 pm Public Session **via ZOOM webinar** pending the evolving nature of COVID-19.

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 7, 2020. 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. A message was emailed to parents and staff yesterday regarding the District shift to a full remote schedule after the December recess. In our discussions with the health department, it was recommended that the District consider shifting to remote learning after the holiday break. The purpose of a fully remote schedule in January is to mitigate the possibility of school transmission after the holidays.

We anticipate people will travel and/or gather as a family over the December recess and that our COVID numbers may climb. This decision is one that is proactive and preventative as we continue to monitor the pandemic and make efforts to mitigate the potential transmission of individuals after the December holiday season. We have discussed this decision with our Board of Education as well as our administration, faculty/staff, and parents on our school reopening committees. The purpose of this remote learning period will allow our

district to continue to monitor and evaluate the evolving number of confirmed cases and the impact on our students and staff.

Remote learning for all students and staff will be from January 4th to January 15th. Monday, January 18th is Martin Luther King Jr. day and school is closed that day in observance of the holiday. We are scheduled to return to in-person, hybrid learning on Tuesday, January 19th.

We recognize that this news is disappointing and the circumstances are not ideal, but we will continue our efforts to return to in-person instruction as soon as it is safe for students and staff. We value the importance of in-person student learning but we must also recognize that maintaining the safety and well-being of our staff and students is of the utmost importance. We also recognize that adjustments to the school schedule may pose challenges for some families. While flexibility is important for all of us to maintain during the fluid nature of this pandemic, we are providing advanced notice at this time so families and staff have ample time to plan accordingly for January 2021.

Our school reopening committees continue to meet at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. They are making progress and will continue to examine the existing strengths of the in-person, hybrid learning and will make recommendations to our building principals and administration on any revisions that may be helpful to the school schedules that will benefit our students.

Our school district continues to monitor the number of positive COVID cases as we work closely with public health officials and follow CDC, state, and local health department guidance in order to ensure the health and safety of our community. Thank you to our teachers, staff and administration for their incredible efforts in our return to in-person learning and thank you for your understanding as we navigate these challenging times together.

6. Presentations - AP Highlights and Scholars Awards, Dr. Miller, Mr. Schels, Mr. Stevenson

7. Public Comments on Agenda Action Items to be Approved:

Mike Dupree 47 Cypress Ave. - asked about the superintendent's evaluation and if that was a public document.

8. Committee Reports

Education - Mrs. Drappi and Mr. Alworth

Facilities - Conor O'Brien

9. Discussion Items -

Mrs. Freschi advised the public about the delegate assembly that she attended.

Mrs. Drappi and Mrs. Freschi also attended a webinar regarding racism and anti-racism tools

10. Roll Call Vote on Resolutions

11. Public Comments - Shannon Curtin - 25 Howell Dr. - Shoutout to her teachers. Question is about construction on the blacktop during school hours, smells, etc.

Mike Dupree - 47 Cypress Ave. - Comments on the closing of the schools and the state of the state in general. Wants to know what data we used to support the decisions to close. Strain on students in the households. Elementary reopening committees are encouraged by what is going on and the administratives and parents. We need to get to action. We have not received a cogent plan to react to or evaluate. Dr. Dionisio provided answers.

Regina French - 44 Brookside Terr. - Supports the shutdown until January. Safety needs to be our primary concern.

Christia Ford - 50 East Reid Pl. - Kudos to the teachers. Hybrid model is working for her kids. Want more answers from what Mike said, point of frustration

for people on the committee. Commented on the Director of Facilities position. Mrs. Freschi provided a response.

Ian Mackenzie - 151 Park Ave. - Committee involvement issues, What are we trying to get to improve in person learning for kids. What is the long term goal here. Dr. Dionisio provided a response.

Kristen Donohue - 31 South Prospect St. - HBW committee was a fantastic experience.

Joanna Breitenbach - 14 Woodland Ave. - Commented on the two week closure. Happy that we are doing it. Committee members are heard and that we need to

have a give and take.

Laura Siligato - 31 Grove Ave. - Lack of transparency to specific questions they are asking. Frustrated about the committee process. Dr. Dionisio responded.

Liam Holland - 109 So. Prospect St. - Following up on if the Director of Facilities will result in program cuts. Mrs. Freschi responded.

Megan Pasqualichio 275 Linden Ave. - Thanked everyone for their efforts but is not pleased at the amount of time her first grader is in school. Mrs. Freschi responded.

Michelle Bernardino - 34 Elk Rd. - Supports the committee process. Congrats to Joe Higgins.

Ralph Iansito - 2- E. Lincoln St. - Wrote a letter to the Board about his concerns. About his sons and how they are on computers all day long.

Dana Demars - 9 Witherspoon Rd. - Commented on the two weeks after holiday break.

Jackie Fricke 65 Grove Ave. - Talked about her kids and their teachers and the hybrid model. Not happy about the school closure.

Laura Siligato - 31 Grove Ave. - Follow up from earlier comment, what is the deadline for committee action. Dr. Dionisio responded.

Erin Dean - 17 Hathaway Lane - Two kids at Brookdale and she's on a committee. Social and mental health of the kids. Asked about staff member restrictions on in person meetings.

Michelle Bernardino - 34 Elk Rd. - Talked about community involvement.

Motion by: Mr. Day

Seconded by: Mrs. Alworth

Be it RESOLVED the approval of Resolutions #1 - 11.

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

Mrs. Priscoe X

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

#1 **RESOLVED** that the Board approves the minutes of the following meetings:

Confidential & Regular Public Meeting November 24, 2020

PERSONNEL

#2 **RESOLVED** that the Board approve the following for the

2.1 New Hire

Name	Location	Position	Salary	Committee	Term of Employment on or about	Notes
Douglas Bolton	HBW	Permanent Sub Teacher	\$120/per diem	Education	SY 20-21	
Gabriela Mustica	LAN	Paraprofessional	\$13,020.70	Education	SY 20-21	RESCIND
Gabriela Mustica	LAN	Paraprofessional	\$12,645.95	Education	Dec. 7, 2020 - Jun. 25, 2021	APPROVE
Eric Ambrose	FOR	Part Time Custodian	\$18/per hr.	B&G	SY 20-21	
Elizabeth Kane	HBW	Extension of MLOA - Math	\$275/per diem	Education	Sept. 22, 2020 - Jun. 25, 2021	

2.2 Resignation

Name	Location	Position	Reason	Effective on or About
Mary McGuire	VHS	MLOA Choral Teacher	Resignation	Jan. 8, 2021

2.3 Leave of Absence

Name	Reason	Begin Date	Estimated Return Date on or about
#102948	Maternity Leave of Absence Extension	Sept. 22, 2020	Sept. 1, 2021
#105262	Leave of Absence without pay	Jan. 4, 2021	Sept. 1, 2021

EDUCATION

#3 **RESOLVED** that the Board approve the second reading of the following regulation:

R 6220 Budget Preparation

#4 **RESOLVED** that the Board approve the Standard 9 has been updated in the entire ELA and Social Studies Curricula.

#5 **RESOLVED** that the Board approve the Verona Public Schools ELL Plan for 2020-2023 school years.

#6 **RESOLVED** that the Board approve the attached 2020-2021 QSAC Statement of Assurance.

ATHLETICS/CO-CURRICULAR

#7 **RESOLVED** that the Board approve the attached Nursing Services Plan for the 2020-2021 school year.

FINANCE

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

<u>Amount</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Check Register Date</u>
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\$316,954.60	Vendor Checks	December 4, 2020
\$568,402.64	Referendum Checks	December 4, 2020

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

October, 2020

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

October, 2020

#11 **RESOLVED** that the Board approve the attached list of individual transfers of line items in the 2019-2020 budget for:

October, 2020

11. Public Comments

CONFIDENTIAL SESSION IF NECESSARY

RESOLUTION TO ADJOURN

#12 **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. Priscoe

All in Favor: AYE

All Opposed: None

This meeting is adjourned at (TIME) 9:33 P.M.

NOTE: The next scheduled Public Meeting will be held on Tuesday, **January 5, 2021** beginning with a Confidential Session at 5:30 pm and 7:00 pm Public Session **via ZOOM webinar** pending the evolving nature of COVID-19.

VERONA PUBLIC SCHOOLS – BOARD OF EDUCATION
ADDENDUM RESOLUTIONS
December 8, 2020

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

Motion by: Mrs. Drappi

Seconded by: Mr. Day

Be it RESOLVED the approval of Addenda Resolutions #1 - 5.

Mr. Alworth X Mr. Day X

Mrs. Drappi X Mrs. Freschi X

Mrs. Priscoe X

PERSONNEL

#1 RESOLVED that the Board approve the following:

1.1 New Hires

Name	Location	Position	Salary	Committee	Term of Employment on or about
Amanda Weil	FNB	Administrative Assistant	Step 10 \$45,791 Stipend \$1,104	Education	Jan. 4 - Jun. 30, 2021
Kaysee Hill	FOR	Permanent Sub	\$120/per diem	Education	Jan. 4 - Jun. 25,

		Teacher			2021
Tricia Davis	LAN	Extension of Leave of Absence position	\$250 per diem	Education	Dec. 4, 2020 - Jun. 25, 2021
Judith Dias	LAN	Extension of Leave of Absence position	\$250 per diem	Education	Dec. 7, 2020 - Feb. 4, 2021

1.2 Stipend

Name	School	Stipend	Position	Committee	Employment Date
Charles Miller	Brookdale	Interim Principal	\$100/per diem	Education	Jan. 19, 2021 - May 25, 2021

1.3 Leave of Absence

Name	Reason	Begin Date	Estimated Return Date on or about	Notes
#105201	Unpaid Leave of Absence	Jan. 4, 2021	Sept. 1, 2021	
#100647	Leave of Absence Without Pay	Dec. 7, 2020	Sept. 1, 2021	RESCIND
#100647	Leave of Absence Without Pay	Nov. 27, 2020	Sept. 1, 2021	APPROVE

- #2 RESOLVED** that the Board approve **Joseph Higgins** as the Interim Director of Facilities at an annual prorated salary of \$89,218 for a term commencing on December 15, 2020 and ending on June 30, 2021 and that the Board rescind Dr. Dionisio as the Director of Facilities effective December 15, 2020.
- #3 RESOLVED** that the Board approve the 2019-2020 evaluation of **Dr. Rui Dionisio** Superintendent of Schools.
- #4 RESOLVED** that the Board approved **Robert Merkler** as the School District Liaison to

Law Enforcement Authorities.

FINANCE

#5 RESOLVED that the Board approve the submission of the school security grant in the amount of \$125, 290 for the installation of an emergency notification system in all school buildings within the district.

Further, upon approval by the Department of Education, the Verona Board of Education accepts the school security grant in the amount of \$125, 290.