

**PUBLIC MEETING**

**May 11, 2021**

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

**convened in regular session on May 11, 2021 at 7:00 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 0 members of the public present. There were 0 members of the press present.**

**Public Comment on Agenda Items - None**

**Presentation - None**

**Superintendent Report** - Good evening everyone. I would like to begin with a special thank you to our SCA in each of our schools who cared for and celebrated our teachers and staff this past week for Teacher Appreciation. Thank you to all of the parents who sent positive messages and emails to our faculty. It was greatly appreciated.

The sounds of children and energy in our elementary schools have been wonderful to hear and see over the past several weeks. This past week was also special because our VHS and HBW students returned to our classrooms every day with the update to NJDOH guidance permitting 3 feet distancing between students at the middle and high school levels based on the decline in COVID activity levels. All students PK-12 are in school every day if they choose. Elementary students are in school every day until 12:30 since April 6th with remote learning in the afternoons. HBW students have been in school every day in-person until lunch since May 5th with remote learning in the afternoons. VHS returned to school all day on April 22nd and then increased every day with open campus lunches on May 5th. VHS is currently in-person every day, all day. Thank you to our staff for making this possible and to our Verona parents for your cooperation and

support in our return. Our goal remains every child, every day, all day for September 2021. The administration has been planning for an outdoor VHS graduation & HBW promotion ceremony. Similarly we are coordinating outdoor 4th grade farewell ceremonies as well. Updates will continue to be provided to families accordingly.

Last but not least, addenda resolution # 2 this evening recommends the appointment of Mr. Joseph Higgins as the District's permanent Director of Facilities. Mr. Higgins has done a great job over the past several months in his capacity as interim director and we are looking forward to the tremendous contributions he will continue to make to our school district.

**Committees -**

- Athletic/Co-Curricular - Pamela Priscoe/Timothy Alworth - Mr. Alworth reported
- Education - Timothy Alworth/Sara Drappi - Mrs. Drappi reported
- Facilities - Pamela Priscoe/Jim Day - Mrs. Priscoe reported
- Community Resources - Lisa Freschi/Jim Day - Did not meet

**Discussion Items** - Mrs. Drappi reported on the Spotlight presentation.

Mr. Mauriello reported on the use of the ESSER Funds



CONFIDENTIAL EXECUTIVE SESSION – 5:30 pm  
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING AGENDA – 7:00 pm

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VERONA HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM

May 11, 2021

1. Call to order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Reading of Meeting Notice
4. Roll Call Attendance
5. Presentations - None
6. Superintendent Report - Dr. Rui Dionisio, Superintendent of Schools
7. Committee Reports
  - Athletic/Co-Curricular - Pamela Priscoe/Timothy Alworth
  - Education - Timothy Alworth/Sara Drappi
  - Facilities - Pamela Priscoe/Jim Day
  - Community Resources - Lisa Freschi/Jim Day
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 in-person on **Tuesday, May 25, 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**
- 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. Presentations - None**
- 6. Superintendent Report - Dr. Rui Dionisio, Superintendent of Schools**
- 7. Committee Reports**
  - Athletic/Co-Curricular - Pamela Priscoe/Timothy Alworth
  - Education - Timothy Alworth/Sara Drappi
  - Facilities - Pamela Priscoe/Jim Day
  - Community Resources - Lisa Freschi/Jim Day
- 8. Public Comments on Agenda Action Items to be Approved**
- 9. Discussion Items -**
- 10. Roll Call Vote on Resolutions**
- 11. Public Comments - None**

Motion by:   Mr. Day  

Seconded by:   Mrs. Drappi

**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**  
**May 11, 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 27, 2021

**PERSONNEL**

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

**2.1 New Hires**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Salary</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Term of Employment on or about</b>
<b>Trisha Basak</b>	VHS	English	MA/Step7/ \$60,417	Education	Sept. 1, 2021 - Jun. 30, 2022
<b>Rob Gillo</b>	HBW	Maternity Leave Replacement Physical Education	\$120/per diem	Education	May 17, 2021 - June 30, 2021
<b>Rebecca DeFrance</b>	LAN	Speech/Language Therapist	MA/Step 4/ \$58,227	Education	Sept. 1, 2021 - Jun. 30, 2022

**2.2 Leave of Absence**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Begin Date</b>	<b>Estimated Return Date on or about</b>	
<b>#102793</b>	NJFMLA	May 3, 2021	May 21, 2021	

#105055	Maternity Leave	Jun. 21, 2021	Jan. 10, 2022	
#100238	Leave of Absence without pay	May 10, 2021	June 1, 2021	
#105262	Unpaid Leave of Absence	Jan. 4, 2021	Sept. 1, 2021	RESCIND
#105262	Unpaid Leave of Absence	Jan. 4, 2021	May 11, 2021	APPROVE

**2.3 Reallocation of Days**

Employee #	Explanation
#105553	1 Family Illness day to 1 Personal Business Day

**2.4 Without Pay**

Name	Date/s	No. of Days/Reason
#105470	Apr. 27, 2021	1 day Without Pay
#105348	May 3, 2021	1/2 day without pay

**2.5 Resignation**

Name	Location	Position	Reason	Effective on or About
Claire Ma	VHS	Music Teacher	Resignation	Jun. 25, 2021

#3 **RESOLVED** that the Board approve the attached non-tenured staff renewals for the 2021-2022 school year.

**EDUCATION**

#4 **RESOLVED** that the Board approves the Superintendent’s presentation of HIB report as follows:

HIB Case
HBW-OH #221023
VHS #221075

#5 **RESOLVED** that the Board approve Garden State Audio L.L.C. to provide audio and live stream services for the 2021 VHS graduation and HBW promotion ceremony at Verona High School with an estimated cost of \$6,750.00.

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

**6.1 Attendance at Conference**

Name	School	Event/Location	Date	Cost	Notes
<b>Abigail Whelan</b>	BRK	Orton-Gillingham Training/On-line	Aug. 12, 2021	Registration \$895 Training Materials \$240 Total Cost \$1135.00	RESCIND
<b>Abigail Whelan</b>	BRK	Orton-Gillingham Training/On-line	Jul. 19-31, 2021	Registration \$1500 Training Materials \$15.00 Total \$1515.00	APPROVE

**6.2 V-SEA**

Name	Position	Stipend
Carol Lynn Moy	V-SEA Teacher	\$2,743
Anne Marie Ruggiero	V-SEA Teacher	\$2,743
Jacquelyn Carsillo	V-SEA Teacher	\$2,743
Elissa Freda	V-SEA Teacher	\$2,743
Albert Palazzo	V-SEA Teacher	\$2,743
Jennifer Kleinknecht	V-SEA Teacher	\$2,743
Melissa Hanulak	V-SEA Teacher	\$2,743
Jaime Ricci	V-SEA Teacher	\$2,743
Judith Dias	V-SEA Teacher	\$2,743

**SPECIAL EDUCATION**

#7 **RESOLVED** that the Board approve to contract with Rutgers Biomedical & Health Sciences – University Behavioral Health Care to provide the Verona Public School District a five night parent series and a four hour wellness fair to take place between 7/1/21 – 6/30/22 at the cost of \$11,716 to be paid for with ESSER funds.

- #8 **RESOLVED** that the Board approve to contract with Sage Thrive, Inc./Thrive Alliance Group to provide school based mental-wellness training, coaching and certification to the Verona School District for the 2021 – 2022 school year at the cost of \$57,000 to be funded with ESSER funds.
- #9 **RESOLVED** that the Board approve to contract with Stepping Stones Group as a vendor professional services during the 2020-2021 school year. (Paraprofessionals, OT, PT)
- #10 **RESOLVED** that the Board approve the attached list of Special Education Summer School staff for 2021.

### **FINANCE**

- #11 **RESOLVED** that the Board approve the attached part time and substitute salaries for the 2021-2022 school year.
- #12 **RESOLVED** that the Board approve John Quattrocchi for pro bono consulting services on behalf of the Verona Board of Education in contract negotiations with the VEA at an estimated value of \$15,000.
- #13 **RESOLVED** that the Board approve David Freschi for pro bono consulting services on behalf of the Verona Board of Education in contract negotiations with the VEA at an estimated value of \$15,000.

### **#11 Public comments**

### **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:**  Mr. Alworth



<b>Bryan Goldsman</b>	VHS	School Counselor	MA/Step 11/ \$67,772	Education	Sept. 1, 2021 - Jun. 30, 2022
<b>Rachel Garcia</b>	VHS	School Counselor	MA/Step 12/ \$69,790	Education	Sept. 1, 2021 - Jun. 30, 2022

## 1.2 Resignation

Name	Location	Position	Reason	Effective on
<b>Nathan Scott</b>	VHS	Chemistry Teacher	Resignation	Aug. 30, 2021

#2 **RESOLVED** that the Board approve **Joseph Higgins** as Director of Facilities at a salary of \$102,000 effective July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022.

### EDUCATION

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

P 3421.13 - Postnatal Accommodations  
P 4421.13 - Postnatal Accommodations

#4 **RESOLVED** that the Board approve the attached Director of Facilities job description.

### CONFIDENTIAL SESSION IF NECESSARY - 7:33 pm

To discuss matters of negotiations and legal matters

**Motioned by:** Mrs. Drappi

**Seconded by:** Mr. Day

**All in Favor:** AYE

**All Opposed:** None

Adjourned out of closed session 8:58 pm

Adjourned meeting 9:02 pm

**Motioned by:** Mrs. Priscoe

**Seconded by:** Mr. Alworth

**All in Favor:** AYE

**All Opposed:** None