

VSBA 2023 MINUTES

Minutes – VSBA Business Meeting
Lake Morey Resort
October 26, 2023

Voting Delegates: Addison Central SD: Suzanne Buck; Addison Northwest SD: Mark Koenig; Barre UUSD: Nancy Leclerc; Bennington-Rutland SU: Melanie Virgilio; Burlington SD: Martine Gulick; Caledonia Central SU: Mark Clough; Central Vermont Career Dev Ctr SD: Lyman Castle; Champlain Valley SD: Angela Arsenault; Essex Westford SD: Robert Carpenter; Franklin Northeast SU: Mary Niles; Franklin West SU: Tara Sweet; Grand Isle SU: Michael Inners; Greater Rutland County SU: Eric Montbriand; Hartford SD: Nancy Russell; Harwood UUSD: Kristen Rodgers; Kingdom East SD: James Peyton; Lamoille North SU: Bart Bezio; Lamoille South SU: Richard Shanley; Maple Run SD: Jack McCarthy; Milton SD: Karen Stout; Missisquoi Valley SD: Don Collins; Mt. Mansfield SD: Edye Graning; North Country SU: Gaston Bathalon; Orange East SU: Mary Chin; Orange Southwest SD: Hannah Arias; Orleans Central SU: Barbara Postman; Orleans Southwest SU: Samantha Friend; Patricia Hannaford Career Ctr SD: William Biederman; Rutland Northeast SU: Susannah Loffredo; SAU #70: Garrett Palm; Southwest Tech: Leon Johnson; Southwest Vermont SU: Leon Johnson; St. Johnsbury SD: Abigail Campbell; Washington Central SU: Ursula Stanley; Windham Central SU: Dan MacArthur; Windham Southeast SU: Deborah Stanford; Winooski SD: Robert Millar.

Others in attendance: Sonya Spaulding, Clare Wool, Ellen Cairns, Diane Clemens, Linda Smith, Tina Keshava, Douglas Heavisides, Tara Arneson, Terry Martin, Flor Diaz Smith, Steven Berbeco, Kamal Dahal.

36 voting delegates (60% = 21 needed to pass a resolution)

I. CALL TO ORDER by Neil Odell, VSBA President at 4:00pm

- a) Greeting
- b) Review of Procedures
- c) Introduction of executive committee and VSBA staff

II. MINUTES

- a) Nancy Russell motioned to approve the minutes of the 2023 annual meeting
 - i) Don Collins seconded the motion
 - ii) The motion passed unanimously

III. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

- a) Leon Johnson motioned to accept the President's Report.
 - i) Bart Bezio seconded the motion
 - ii) Neil Odell, outgoing VSBA President, gave an overview of the report
 - iii) The motion passed unanimously

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- a) Ursula Stanley motioned to accept the Executive Director's Report.
 - i) Tara Sweet seconded the motion
 - ii) Sue Ceglowski, VSBA Executive Director, gave an overview of the report
 - iii) The motion passed unanimously

V. TREASURER'S REPORT

- a) Suzanne Buck motioned to accept the Treasurer's Report.
 - i) Mark Koenig seconded the motion
 - ii) Jim Salsgiver, VSBA Treasurer, gave an overview of the report
 - iii) The motion passed unanimously

VI. BYLAWS REPORT

- a) No proposed changes this year.

VII. NEW PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

- a) **Resolution 1** - Resolution 1 was submitted by Missisquoi Valley School District. The language of Resolution 1 is "The requirement for school districts in Vermont to pay a federal grant assessment to the Vermont State Teachers Retirement System for teachers funded by federal grants shall be eliminated. We, the undersigned, hereby express our support for this resolution and call upon the Vermont State Legislature to take swift action to rectify this unjust burden on school districts and ensure the optimal utilization of federal grant funds for the benefit of Vermont students."
 - i) The VSBA Board's recommendation for Resolution 1 was DO NOT PASS.
 - ii) Don Collins motioned to approve the resolution
 - (1) Dan MacArthur seconded the motion
 - (2) The motion failed.

- b) **Resolution 2** - Resolution 2 was submitted by the North Country Union School Board. The language of Resolution 2 is: "All surplus monies in the Vermont State education fund be used to: a) help school districts defray the costs of unemployment insurance so that support staff professionals can obtain unemployment benefits during times of school breaks and vacations, thereby helping to assure said professionals have a living wage and are therefore motivated to fill employment vacancies and keep our schools fully staffed. b) Provide individual schools funds to support the arts and enrichment programs for the students of Vermont."
 - i) The VSBA Board's recommendation for Resolution 2 was DO NOT PASS.
 - ii) Gaston Bathalon motioned to approve the resolution
 - (1) Leon Johnson seconded the motion
 - (2) The motion failed.

- c) **Resolution 3** - Resolution 3 was submitted by the Addison Northwest School Board. The language of Resolution 3 is: "The VSBA enlist the support of the Vermont Superintendents Association, Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators, Vermont Business Managers Association and work with legislators by January 2025 to provide recommendations for changes to the Governor and their appointed State Board of Education and Secretary of Agency of Education so that Vermont students receive the benefits of all the VSBA current on-going resolutions (I.F,I.L, II.B(4), II.S, III.B, III.C, and V.B)"
 - i) The VSBA's recommendation for Resolution 3 is DO NOT PASS

- ii) Gaston Bathalon motioned to approve the resolution as a regular resolution
 - (1) Suzanne Buck seconded the motion
 - (2) Mark Koenig motioned to amend the motion with the following language and provided written copies to the voting delegates: “That VSBA convene a task force to assess concerns regarding and failures of the State Board of Education and/or the Agency of Education, and thereafter provide to the Governor and the legislature no later than January 2025 a list of recommended actions they should take in order to provide appropriate support toward the education of Vermont’s students. This task force may include support from groups such as the Vermont Superintendents Association, the Vermont Principals Association, the Vermont Council of Special Education Administrators, and the Vermont Business Managers Association.”
 - (a) Leon Johnson seconded the motion to amend
 - (b) The motion to amend passed
 - (3) The main motion passed as a regular resolution
 - (4) Currently coded: I.O.

- d) **Resolution 4** - Resolution 4 was submitted by the Norwich School District. The language of Resolution 4 is: “The VSBA calls upon the General Assembly to examine the impact and feasibility of raising the Non-Residential Tax Rate to the same rate as the Homestead Tax Rate in every town where the Non-Residential Tax Rate is lower than the Homestead Tax Rate.”
 - i) The VSBA Board’s recommendation for Resolution 4 is: DO NOT PASS.
 - ii) Garrett Palm motioned to approve the resolution
 - (1) Ursula Stanley seconded the motion
 - (2) The motion failed

- e) **Resolution 5** - Resolution 5 was submitted by the Winooski School District. The language of Resolution 5 is “The VSBA urges the General Assembly and Congress to champion the health and well-being of Vermont’s youth by enacting legislation that supports our youth’s mental health and protects them against intentional self-harm, and ensures adequate funding for any programs or requirements that are mandated by enacted legislation. Further, the VSBA calls upon the Governor to develop a comprehensive plan to support and protect youth mental health through meaningful collaboration among the Administration, schools, Designated Agencies, and other community partners.”
 - i) The VSBA Board’s recommendation for Resolution 5 is: PASS as a regular resolution.
 - (1) Robert Millar motioned to approve the resolution as a regular resolution
 - (2) Martine Gulick seconded the motion
 - (3) The motion passed as a regular resolution
 - (4) Currently coded: V.F.

- f) **Resolution 6** - Resolution 6 was submitted by the VSBA Resolutions Committee. The language of Resolution 6 is “The VSBA supports a ban on the sale of flavored cigarettes, flavored e cigarettes and flavored substances that contain nicotine or are otherwise intended for use in an e-cigarette.”
 - i) The VSBA Board’s recommendation for Resolution 6 is: PASS as a regular resolution.
 - ii) Ursula Stanley motioned to approve the resolution as a regular resolution
 - (1) Suzanne Buck seconded the motion
 - (2) The motion passed as a regular resolution
 - (3) Currently coded: V.G.

- g) **Resolution 7** - Resolution 7 was submitted by the Resolutions Committee. The language of Resolution 7 is “The General Assembly must act to bring Vermont tuition reimbursement policy and practice into compliance with the U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling in the Carson v. Makin without violating the Compelled Support Clause in Article III of Chapter I of the Vermont Constitution.”
- i) The VSBA Board’s recommendation for Resolution 7 is: PASS as a regular resolution.
 - ii) Martine Gulick motioned to approve the resolution as a regular resolution
 - (1) Michael Inners seconded the motion
 - (2) The motion passed as a regular resolution
 - (3) Currently coded: II.U.
- h) **Resolution 8** - Resolution 8 was submitted by the Resolutions Committee. The language of Resolution 8 is “The VSBA calls on the General Assembly to prohibit the use of restraint and seclusion in any learning environment that receives public funds from the State of Vermont, except when there is a threat of imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others, and when it occurs in a manner that protects the safety of all children. Further, the VSBA calls for thorough data reporting requirements that would provide student demographic information, and the development and implementation of statewide technical assistance to promote positive development of youth through evidence-based, developmentally-appropriate programs. Technical assistance should address consistent and accurate reporting, to include demographic information.”
- i) The VSBA Board’s recommendation for Resolution 8 is: PASS as a regular resolution.
 - ii) Angela Arsenault motioned to approve the resolution as a regular resolution
 - (1) Mary Niles seconded the motion
 - (2) The motion passed as a regular resolution
 - (3) Currently coded: V.H.
- i) **Resolution 9** - Resolution 9 was submitted by the Resolutions Committee. The language of Resolution 9 is “The General Assembly should amend Vermont’s Open Meeting Law to make fully remote meetings a permanent, voluntary option.”
- i) The VSBA Board’s recommendation for Resolution 9 is: PASS as a regular resolution.
 - ii) Ursula Stanley motioned to approve the resolution as a regular resolution
 - (1) Eric Montbriand seconded the motion
 - (2) The motion passed as a regular resolution
 - (3) Currently coded: I.P.

VIII.EXISTING RESOLUTIONS

- a) Proposed amendments to the continuing resolutions
- i) Code: I.C. – Resolution
 - (1) Resolution Name: Supervisory Unions
 - (2) Recommended change: Delete - resolution no longer needed after Act 46 requiring governance consolidation and after the overhaul of Chapter 11 in Title 16.
 - ii) Code: I.J.
 - (1) Resolution Name: Appointments to Unified Boards
 - (2) Recommended change: Delete - no longer needed because it was addressed in the Title 16, Chapter 11 rewrite that happened in 2022.
 - iii) Code: II.N.1
 - (1) Resolution Name: Cost Containment - Statewide health insurance benefit

- (2) Amend as follows: In order to ensure equity and sustainability in the health care benefits available to all school employees, the General Assembly should adopt a process for the negotiation of health care benefits at the state level by a council of school board members to apply to contracts that expire in 2019 Any legislative approach for addressing health care for school employees must demonstrate that it will reduce costs to school districts over the near and long term and should reflect the health insurance plan norms for the majority of Vermonters.
- (3) Board recommended because any legislative approach for addressing health care for school employees must demonstrate that it will reduce costs to school districts over the near and long term and should reflect the health insurance plan norms for the majority of Vermonters
- iv) Code: III.D.
 - (1) Resolution Name School Choice
 - (2) Amend as follows: Vermont needs to recognize the long history of school choice in many towns and to leave in place that status quo. VSBA is concerned that expanded school choice for all other towns could have significant unintended consequences. If this option is to be seriously considered it requires extensive study with substantial involvement by VSBA.
 - (3) Board recommended because after Carson v. Makin, the board no longer agrees with leaving in place the status quo
- v) Code: III.E.
 - (1) Resolution Name: Early Education
 - (2) Amend as follows: ~~E. EARLY EDUCATION - The VSBA encourages the General Assembly to create universal access to pre-kindergarten education, through a system that emphasizes equity, quality, and simplicity. School districts should play a central role in assuring quality and accountability in publicly funded early education programs.~~
E. PRE-KINDERGARTEN - The VSBA encourages the General Assembly to support fully-funded, full-day pre-kindergarten education through a system that emphasizes equity, high-quality and simplicity. School districts must ensure equitable access, quality and accountability in publicly funded pre-kindergarten education.
 - (3) Board recommended because the legislature considered full-day pre-K last session and there was a lot of discussion around what fully funding public pre-K; this language helps VSBA to support the work that is underway
- vi) Leon Johnson motioned to amend the continuing resolutions as recommended by the VSBA Board and as set forth in the resolutions report in the meeting packet.
 - (1) Ursula Stanley seconded the motion
 - (2) The motion passed

IX. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO REGULAR RESOLUTIONS

- a) Code: I.L.
 - (1) Resolution Name: Timely and Reliable Information & Implementation
 - (2) Amend as follows: The VSBA will prioritize and use its influence to support Vermont School Boards in ensuring that Business Managers, Superintendents, and School Boards receive required, useful and timely information from the Agency of Education and that the implementation of the statewide Chart of Accounts and Accounting System will not become a burden for its member school districts.
 - (3) Board recommended because the legislature passed a law last session that addressed this issue.
- b) Code: I.M.
 - (1) Resolution Name: Monitor Outcomes From Act 46 Goals
 - (2) Board Recommendation: Continue as a regular

- c) Code: I.O.
 - (1) Resolution Name: Monitor Governance of Career & Technical Education Schools
 - (2) Board Recommendation: Continue as a regular
- d) Code: I.P.
 - (1) Resolution Name: Monitor Governance Standards
 - (2) Board Recommendation: Continue as a regular
- e) Code: II.E.
 - (1) Resolution Name: Common Level of Appraisal
 - (2) Board Recommendation: Continue as a regular
- f) Code: II.F.
 - (1) Resolution Name: Reform the Education Tax System
 - (2) Board Recommendation: Continue as a regular
- g) Code: II.O.
 - (1) Resolution Name: Broadband Access for Education
 - (2) Board Recommendation: Continue as a regular
- h) Code: II.S.
 - (1) Resolution Name: Shared School District Financial Software System
 - (2) Board Recommendation: Delete - Board recommended because the legislature passed a law last session that addressed this issue.
- i) Code: II.T.
 - (1) Resolution Name: Education Finance
 - (2) Board Recommendation: Continue as a regular
- j) Code: III.J.
 - (1) Resolution Name: School Stabilization: Student Mobility and Resilience
 - (2) Board Recommendation: Continue as a regular
- k) Code: V.E.
 - (1) Resolution Name: Universal Meals
 - (2) Board Recommendation: Continue as a regular
- l) Edge Graning motioned to amend the regular resolutions as recommended by the VSBA Board and as set forth in the resolutions report in the meeting packet.
 - (1) Barbara Postman seconded the motion
 - (2) The motion passed

X. OTHER BUSINESS

- a) Neil Odell introduced and welcomed VSBA staff members Debbie Singiser and Cara Zimmerman
- b) Neil Odell recognized the following departing VSBA Board Members with glass apples:
 - i) Adrienne Raymond
 - ii) Colleen MacKinnon
 - iii) Marc Schaubert
 - iv) David Chandler
- c) Neil Odell introduced and welcomed Flor Diaz Smith as the new VSBA President

XI. ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 5:56pm.