

**MINUTES OF THE VERMILION LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
ORGANIZATIONAL & REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 12, 2026 at 6:00 PM
VHS COMMONS**

The Organizational meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM.

Pledge of Allegiance with the December Citizens of the Month who demonstrated that they are empathetic individuals.

BOARD BUSINESS

1.26 Treasurer Justin Klingshirn administered the Oath of Office to Board members Sarah Stepp, Jill Treece, and Willa Dunn.

ROLL CALL: Mrs. Innes, present; Mr. Benson, present, Mrs. Stepp, present; Mrs. Russell, present; Mrs. Treece, present, Miss Dodge, present; Miss Dunn, present

2.26 Mrs. Stepp motioned to the Board to appoint Mrs. Innes Board President to serve as President Pro Tem for the January 12, 2026 Organizational Meeting. Mrs. Treece seconded.

ROLL CALL: Mrs. Innes, aye; Mr. Benson, aye; Mrs. Stepp, aye; Mrs. Russell, aye; Mrs. Treece, aye; Miss Dodge, aye; Miss Dunn, aye

3.26 Mrs. Russell motioned to the Board to appoint Mr. Mark Benson as President of the Board. Mrs. Treece seconded.

ROLL CALL: Mrs. Innes, aye; Mr. Benson, aye; Mrs. Stepp, aye; Mrs. Russell, aye; Mrs. Treece, aye; Miss Dodge, aye; Miss Dunn, aye

4.26 Mrs. Russell motioned to the Board to appoint Mrs. Sara Stepp as Vice President of the Board. Mrs. Treece seconded.

ROLL CALL: Mrs. Innes, aye; Mr. Benson, aye; Mrs. Stepp, aye; Mrs. Russell, aye; Mrs. Treece, aye; Miss Dodge, aye; Miss Dunn, aye

5.26 Mrs. Innes motioned to the Board to appoint Mrs. Russell to serve as Legislative Liaison with the Ohio School Board Association for 2026. Mrs. Stepp seconded.

ROLL CALL: Mrs. Innes, aye; Mr. Benson, aye; Mrs. Stepp, aye; Mrs. Russell, aye; Mrs. Treece, aye; Miss Dodge, aye; Miss Dunn, aye

6.26 Mrs. Stepp motioned to the Board to appoint Mrs. Shelly Innes to service as Student Achievement Liaison with the Ohio School Board Association for 2026. Mrs. Russell seconded.

ROLL CALL: Mrs. Innes, aye; Mr. Benson, aye; Mrs. Stepp, aye; Mrs. Russell, aye; Mrs. Treece, aye; Miss Dodge, aye; Miss Dunn, aye

7.26 Mrs. Innes motioned to the Board to approve the following Standing Resolutions for 2026:

1. Establish the 2nd Monday of each month at 6:00 pm for the day and time of Regular Board Meetings for the year 2026.

2. Designate the Vermilion Photojournal as the Official Newspaper.

3. Direct the Treasurer to provide copies of the minutes of the last meeting two (2) days prior to the next Regular meeting, and to waive the reading of the minutes is said is don.

4. Authorize the Treasurer to:

- Pay on abstracts and invoices, monthly salaries and bills with the approved appropriations;
- Request from the Erie and Lorain County Auditor's advances on tax settlements as monies are collected;
- Invest the funds of the district as they are available;
- Establish funds as necessary when requested by law or Auditor of State;
- Approve student activity funds purpose statements and budgets;
- Open and read bids immediately after the time for filing of bids has expired;
- Establish a service fund in the amount allowed by law of \$3,500.00 for the Board of Education within the general fund for the remainder of fiscal year 2026 and fiscal year 2027;
- Authorize the Treasurer to submit the Alternative Tax Budget for fiscal year 2026 to the Budget Commission in a timely manner;
- Authorize the Treasurer to serve as the designee of the members of the Board of Education for Public Records Training as required by law;
- Authorize the Treasurer to reduce the salary of an employee for approved unpaid leave.

5. Authorize the Superintendent or his designee to:

- Act as the Purchasing Agent;
- Approve the emergency and temporary employment of personnel in compliance with policy;
- Accept resignations of personnel on behalf of the Board of Education;
- Authorize the building principals and Director of Athletics to sign contracts such as student activity contracts, student pictures, school yearbooks, athletic contests, and the like;
- Appoint the Superintendent or his designee as the Board of Education's hearing officer for appeals of suspensions of students;
- Appoint Lisa Dobinson, Teacher, to serve on the Vermilion City Parks and Recreation Board for 2026;
- Authorize the Superintendent to approve participation in state and federal programs and grants, and authorize him to appoint designees to represent Vermilion for FY27.

6. Appoint Pepple and Waggoner Ltd. as general legal counsel.

Mrs. Stepp seconded. ROLL CALL: Mrs. Innes, aye; Mr. Benson, aye; Mrs. Stepp, aye; Mrs. Russell, aye; Mrs. Treece, aye; Miss Dodge, aye; Miss Dunn, aye

REGULAR MEETING

Legislative Report - None

Student Liaison Report - None

Student Board Member Report - Miss Dodge spoke on student preparing for midterms and staying active and involved with Ski Club. There are going to New York this Friday for a ski trip.

Public Participation - None

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT AND/OR RECOMMENDATIONS

- **JANUARY IS SCHOOL BOARD RECOGNITION MONTH** in Ohio and the Vermilion Local Schools, and thus I urge all citizens to join me in recognizing the dedication and hard work of local school board members.

School Board Recognition Month - January 2026

WHEREAS, our community values a quality education as a vital step along the pathway to success for our children; and

WHEREAS, Sara Stepp, Krystal Russell, Shelly Innes, Mark Benson, Jill Treece, Paige Dodge and Willa Dunn contribute greatly to this community through their service on the Vermilion Local School Board of Education; and

WHEREAS, these local decision-makers set the policies and procedures to govern all aspects of school district operation; and

WHEREAS, the school board keeps attention focused on progress toward the school district's goals and maintains two-way communications with all segments of the community; and

WHEREAS, these school board members are serving our community with integrity, honor, and a commitment to our children's future;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Wes Weaver, do hereby declare my appreciation to the members of the Vermilion Local School Board and proclaim the month of January 2026, as **School Board Recognition Month** in Vermilion Local Schools. I hereby urge all citizens to join me in recognizing the dedication and hard work of local school board members, and in working with them to provide an education system that helps every adult help every child succeed today, tomorrow, and beyond.

- Presentation - Andrew Perry, VHS Principal presents his results from his Principal Entry Plan

8.26 Mrs. Innes motioned to the Board to approve the revisions of District Policies for the first read.

- Policy 4162 Drug and Alcohol testing of CDL license holders
- Policy 4162.01 Drug and Alcohol testing of CDL license holders who transport Students in alternate vehicles (non-DOT testing)
- Policy 8600 Transportation

- Policy 8600.04 Bus and Alternative Driver Certification
- Policy 8640 Transportation for Non-Routine Trips
- Policy 8650 Transportation by Alternative Vehicles

Mrs. Stepp seconded. ROLL CALL: Mrs. Innes, aye; Mr. Benson, aye; Mrs. Stepp, aye; Mrs. Russell, aye; Mrs. Treece, aye; Miss Dodge, aye; Miss Dunn, aye

9.26 Mr. Benson motioned to the Board to review Policy 2261.01 504/ADA Prohibition Against Discrimination Based on Disability for its annual review.

Mrs. Russell seconded. ROLL CALL: Mrs. Innes, aye; Mr. Benson, aye; Mrs. Stepp, aye; Mrs. Russell, aye; Mrs. Treece, aye; Miss Dodge, aye; Miss Dunn, aye

TREASURER'S REPORT AND/OR RECOMMENDATIONS

10.26 Mrs. Innes motioned to the Board to approve the Financial Report for December 2025. Mr. Benson seconded.

ROLL CALL: Mrs. Innes, aye; Mr. Benson, aye; Mrs. Stepp, aye; Mrs. Russell, aye; Mrs. Treece, aye; Miss Dodge, aye; Miss Dunn, aye

11.26 Mrs. Russell motioned to the Board to approve the following donations:

- \$600.00 from William and Georgia Orwig to VHS Speech and Debate
- \$176.00 from Vermilion Athletic Boosters to Peer Leadership/TLC
- \$103.00 from Vermilion Athletic Boosters to the Class of 2030
- \$400.00 from Grace United Methodist Church to eSports
- \$2,000.00 from Edward and Barbara Kobal to the Matt Kobal Scholarship

Mrs. Treece seconded. ROLL CALL: Mrs. Innes, aye; Mr. Benson, aye; Mrs. Stepp, aye; Mrs. Russell, aye; Mrs. Treece, aye; Miss Dodge, aye; Miss Dunn, aye

12.26 Mrs. Innes motioned to the Board to approve the Ritter Public Library Trustee appointment of Mary Deucher to fill the vacated term of Joseph Weeks that expires on December 31, 2030.

Mr. Benson seconded. ROLL CALL: Mrs. Innes, aye; Mr. Benson, aye; Mrs. Stepp, aye; Mrs. Russell, aye; Mrs. Treece, aye; Miss Dodge, aye; Miss Dunn, aye

13.26 Mr. Benson motioned to the Board to approve the 2026-2027 Alternative Tax Budget. Mrs. Stepp seconded.

ROLL CALL: Mrs. Innes, aye; Mr. Benson, aye; Mrs. Stepp, aye; Mrs. Russell, aye; Mrs. Treece, aye; Miss Dodge, aye; Miss Dunn, aye

CONSENT AGENDA

The Superintendent and Treasurer recommend that the Board of Education approve the Consent Agenda items. Action by the Board of Education in "Adoption of the Consent Agenda" means that all items are adopted by one vote unless a member of the Board, the Treasurer, or the Superintendent requests that any such item be removed from the Consent Agenda and voted on separately.

14.26 Mr. Benson motioned to the Board to approve the following items on the **Consent Agenda**:

- A. Approve the minutes of the Regular meeting of December 8, 2025.
- B. Approve the November 15-November 21, 2026 Vermilion Marching Band and Choir overnight trip to Orlando at a cost of approximately \$1,568-\$1,622 per student.

C. Approve the payment of \$500.00 to each of the following twice per year for the 2025-2026 school year per the VTA Negotiated Agreement for the LPDC committee:

- Nikki Fritz-Garcia
- Jennifer Higley
- Kelly Dupaski
- Heidi Riddle
- Mike Kacur
- Breanna Rebman

D. Approve the Employment Action:

Maternity Leave:

- Updated: Kristen Schon January 5, 2026-April 10, 2026
- Nicole West, April 18, 2026- May 28, 2026

Leave of Absence:

- Allison Keating, 2026-2027 school year.

E. Approve the 2025-2026 Classified Substitute Contract for Bradford Huntley, Substitute Bus Monitor.

F. Approve the Substitute Administrator Contract for John Lukasko at at per diem rate of \$400.00 per day beginning January 6, 2026 for up to six weeks.

G. Approve the One (1) year Additional Duties Contract for the 2025-2026 school year to the following:

- Olivia Eldridge, Assistant Director Major Musical, Level 11, Step 0
- Grace Robinson, Assistant Drama Director, Level 9, Step 2
- Grace Robinson, Orchestra Director Major Musical, Level 10, Step 2
- Shawna Stillman, SMS Girls Intramurals 2nd semester, Level 7, Step 6
- Kenneth Ryan, SMS Boys Intramurals 2nd semester, Level 7, Step 6

Items removed from the Consent Agenda - None

Mrs. Stepp seconded. ROLL CALL: Mrs. Innes, aye; Mr. Benson, aye; Mrs. Stepp, aye; Mrs. Russell, aye; Mrs. Treece, aye; Miss Dodge, aye; Miss Dunn, aye

Dates and location of upcoming Board meetings. Meetings will be held in the Vermilion High School Commons, 1250 Sanford St., Vermilion at 6:00 PM, unless otherwise noted.

- Regular Meeting - Monday, February 9, 2026
- Regular Meeting - Monday, March 9, 2026
- Regular Meeting - Monday, April 13, 2026

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - None

ADJOURNMENT TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

15.26 Mr. Benson motioned to the Board to move into Executive Session to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion or compensation of a public employee.

Mrs. Stepp seconded. ROLL CALL: Mrs. Innes, aye; Mr. Benson, aye; Mrs. Stepp, aye; Mrs. Russell, aye; Mrs. Treece, aye; Miss Dodge, aye; Miss Dunn, aye

Time into Executive Session: 6:44 pm Time out of Executive Session: 8:25 pm

ADJOURNMENT

16.26 Mrs. Stepp motioned to the Board for the meeting to be adjourned. Mrs. Innes seconded. 8:25 pm

ROLL CALL: Mrs. Innes, aye; Mr. Benson, aye; Mrs. Stepp, aye; Mrs. Russell, aye; Mrs. Treece, aye; Miss Dodge, aye; Miss Dunn, aye

Time adjourned 8:25 pm.

ATTEST:

Board President

Treasurer