

**Superintendent/PTO Presidents**  
**Meetings Notes**  
**10/6/2011**

1. David Engelson--Hockanum Valley Community Council; the council has a significant need for food donations for the holiday season. Last year they fed 1,327 families for Christmas and Thanksgiving and ran out of food. This year they expect to feed at least 1,700 families. The council is asking for Vernon residents to step up to help feed the hungry in their community. A flyer will be going home soon or you can call 860-872-9825 if you would like to sponsor a family for the holidays. Other communities are also supporting Vernon residents including South Windsor.
2. Dr. Conway is currently running the superintendent's challenge; it is a walking challenge; the school with the most "Steps taken" will win the challenge.
3. After School Program for Lake Street School-Why does the town have programs in all schools but Lake Street School? LSS will have to follow-up with Parks and Recs, this is not a program run by the BOE.
4. Meet and Greet—Working parents have voiced some concern about the meet and greet being held in the afternoon during working hours; many working parents are unable to take their kids to this event. The meet and greet has to be held during working hours in order for teachers to attend. The open house will continue to be held in the evening, for all parents to attend. The Meet and Greet will be offered again next year; changing the time to morning was discussed but a decision was not made. Also, it was suggested that parents should be given more notice for the event, to ensure they have plenty of time to re-arrange their work schedule. The topic of last minute school supply lists and teacher notification was also discussed. Parents feel they are scrambling for supplies the week before school starts.
5. Automated Emergency Alert System: Dr. Conway is close to signing a contract for a new emergency alert system for all Vernon Schools. The system will provide emergency notifications via text, phone and email for school closing and early dismissals. Dr. Conway believes the system will be up and running by the end of October.
6. Bus Routes to Rockville High School (Merline Road walkers must walk on Route 83 which is very dangerous): The walking distances for students is not going to change. It is the same for all schools across the state (1 mile, elementary; 1.5 mile, middle; 2 mile, high school) but if a parent feels a route is unsafe a complaint can be filed with the Superintendent's office. Once filed, the superintendent will investigate and will make a recommendation to the BOE; parents have a right to appeal her recommendation to the BOE.
7. School Bus Routes: School bus routes have not been evaluated in many years. This distribution of kids throughout the town has changed. Dr. Conway feels the bus routes should be reviewed yearly. The contract with the bus company is up at the end of the year, and Dr. Conway would like to review bus routes and use software to make it easier to determine appropriate routes and bus stops (Versatrans). Behavior on the Bus and at Bus stops was discussed. Some bus stops are out of control with inappropriate language and behavior. Any behavior issues at the bus stops and on the bus should be brought to the principal's attention; it is their responsibility to address these issues.

8. Intramural Sports: Do all schools offer intramural sports? No, it is based on how the school decides to use their individual budgets; some schools get volunteers to run the programs. These programs are a lot of fun for kids and parents feel they should be offered in every school.
9. High School Athletics: Are Coaches Paid? Yes, they are paid and they must have a coaching permit and be certified. For the first three years of their contact they are on probation after that they become tenured employees. Parents are concerned about how hard students are pushed.
10. Smart Boards: Will more be added? No not this year but maybe in future budgets. Parents are concerned that teachers are not trained and are not using the smart boards with students when they are in the classroom. Dr. Conway wants to be notified if there are smart boards in schools that aren't being utilized. Teachers should be trained, there is a training program offered. Dr. Conway noted that each grade should have a smart board, and should be using it.
11. Custodians: Why can't custodian's spray for bees? The town has a pest management system that has to be followed. A trained individual must do all the spraying.
12. Waiver from Physical Education- If sports requires proactive exercise 5 or 6 days a week after school, why can't students get waivers? There is a BOE approved curriculum which includes a wide variety of physical activities, not just one sport. It is important for students to participate in all types of physical activities.
13. Vernon Schools Web site: Can an events area be added? The new IT Director is in the process of re-designing the BOE Web site and would like to make all school Web sites similar and consistent. A committee has been formed with representatives from each school to work on this initiative.
14. School Pictures: Why is it more expensive at the High School? Individual schools decide what company to use and pricing. The BOE is not involved in this process.
15. Lunch Menu Concern: Prepared food vs. Precooked foods? Food should be cooked fresh daily.