



An informational update from the Superintendent to the RSD 17 Board.

May 2024

Superintendent's Report, Jeffrey S. Wihbey, Superintendent of Schools

We would like to recognize our teachers of the year from each school: Rebecca Aithal, BES Jennifer Esposito, KES Michael Czarkowski, HKHS Kerry Geoghegan, HKMS and Jessica Spearrin, HKIS.

Department Updates

Finance

- New policies and procedures for conferences/travel and credit card usage and management rolled out to Admin Council. Corresponding forms and resources streamline both processes from concept inception through bill payment.
- Built out a Health Insurance tracking tool to aid in monthly membership evaluation, cost trends vs. budget, and YE forecasting. Revised insurance PO procedure for greater visibility.
- Onboarded USI as the new commercial insurance brokerage firm and began the marketing process for FY25 renewals.

Operations

- The design progressed throughout the month on the Air Conditioner Condenser Replacement project at HKHS. The target start of construction is September.
- New vinyl composition tile flooring installed in the lower level of the 1989 wind at KES, replacing 30+ year old carpeting- unbelievable refresh!
- Solid Waste and Recycling Services ITB 24-1114 developed, reviewed, and published. Bid opening 5/30.

Student Services

- Work has begun with stakeholders across the district to implement recommendations from the New Solutions program review.

Food Services

- Completed Healthy Foods Certification Program application.
- Celebrated School Lunch Hero Day on Friday, May 3.

Talent, Accountability, & Human Resources



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- HR is preparing to launch Open Enrollment in May using the Employee Navigator platform to increase the process's efficiency and accuracy.
- Supervisors/administrators are preparing to complete end-of-year evaluations. This is the first time they are being done on the Frontline Central *Professional Growth* module. Forms are sent electronically between evaluatees and evaluators. The department is assisting with this process.

Curriculum Office

- Curriculum Coordinators are coordinating spring assessment schedules across grades K-8 that include benchmarks, screeners, and state testing.
- Curriculum Coordinators have been collaborating with building principals in the recruitment and interview process for hiring new educators.

Schools

HKHS

- HKHS is delighted to announce that four of HKTV students were honored by the Connecticut DMV for the Teen Safe Driving Video Contest their submissions last week. Damen Ridgeway, David Sargent, Christopher Palmieri, and Mason Mazzotta won two awards for their Public Service Announcement about safe teen driving. Part of the award is a monetary prize to use toward safe driving programming for the teens of HK.
- In late April, six Haddam Killingworth High School families hosted exchange students from France. Our French guests shadowed their host students for five school days. The High School welcomed them in true HK style with French music in the hallways during passing time and luncheons hosted by both the French Honor Society and the International Culture Club.
- Throughout the year, Peer Advocates has been working with the ADL Organization- No Place For Hate to support our school community. At the beginning of the year, students signed "The Pledge" and showed their commitment to challenging bias and bullying. Our pledge is proudly displayed in the main hallway.
- HKHS' Josh Hagewood has been named as the winner of the 2024 Connecticut Council for the Social Studies John H. Stedman Passion for the Social Studies Teaching Award. The John H. Stedman Passion for the Social Studies Teaching Award is an annual award given by the Connecticut Council for Social Studies (CCSS) in honor of the late John H. Stedman. This award is unique in that nominations may come only from students.

HKMS

- The 6th and 7th graders recently participated in enriching field trips that complemented their curriculum. The 6th graders attended a performance of 'Haddestown' at the Shubert Theater, while the 7th graders traveled to New York to see the Broadway musical 'Outsiders.' These trips not only enhanced



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their cultural awareness but also aligned seamlessly with their educational objectives. The students' exemplary behavior and engagement were a highlight of these experiences.

- Our 8th graders are preparing for their three-day trip to Philadelphia. This trip is not only rich in historical significance, and closely tied to their curriculum, but it also marks the first time some students will be away from their parents for an extended period. This experience is invaluable in fostering independence as they transition from middle school to their high school years.

HKIS

- Recently at school, we've had some exciting events that brought everyone together. We hosted a trivia night, complete with themed questions across a variety of categories, which made for a fun and engaging evening.
- The 4th and 5th-grade Unified Sports team had a memorable trip to the Hartford Yard Goats stadium, where they joined other teams for a parade on the field and stayed to watch a thrilling baseball game. The Unified athletes had an exciting moment when they saw themselves on the big screen at the Hartford Yard Goats stadium. It was a special highlight that made the day even more memorable for everyone involved.
- Fourth-grade classes also went on a field trip to the science center in Hartford, where they explored exhibits about the layers of the Earth, and how sound and light travel, and enjoyed a beautiful rooftop garden. It was a great mix of learning and fun for everyone involved
- Julie Wessinger, the school psychologist at HKIS, organized a prom dress collection and hosted an event where girls could "shop" for dresses. This unique event allowed the girls to take home a prom dress for free giving the girls the opportunity to find the dress of their dreams. <https://www.fox61.com/article/news/local/outreach/student-news/free-prom-dress-event-makes-dreams-come-true/520-a96f8070-fa13-47dd-894e-ec26dc5e71d4>

BES

- Burr students recently participated in their Obstacle Course fundraiser organized in collaboration with Booster and the PTO. Students had a blast raising money for cultural arts events and activities by completing as many laps of the obstacle course as possible with their classmates.
- BackTrack Vocals, an acapella group from New York City, visited Burr for a performance assembly and workshop. Students were so impressed with the group's performance and ability to make so many sounds using only their mouths. The third-grade students participated in a workshop following the performance and even learned how to be a box!



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KES

- The 27th Annual Festival of Arts and Sciences was held on May 10th! This was an action-packed day filled with talented presenters and engaging performances. There were a variety of workshops ranging from circuitry with Medtronic to Sheep Shearing with the Dudleys.
- Our third graders enjoyed a sneak peek into the life of an HK intermediate school student presented by Mr. Larson and Mrs. Scoppa. They are now gearing up for their first visit to HKIS next week.

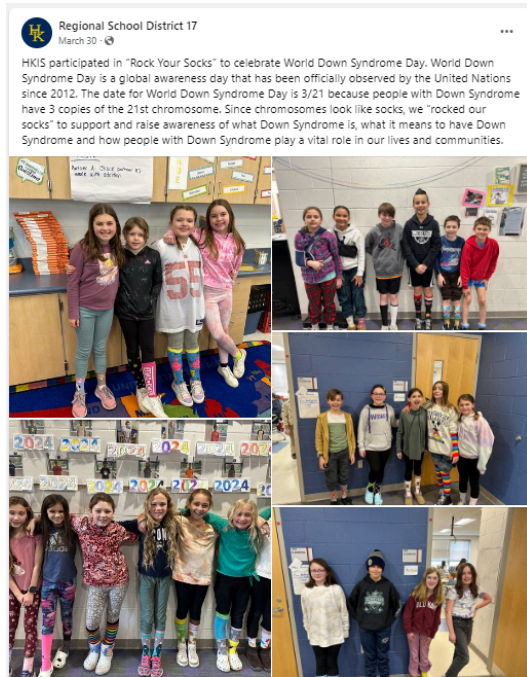
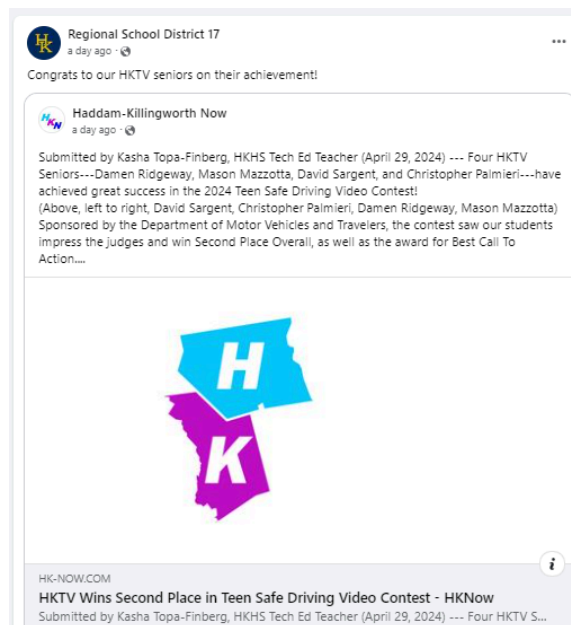
Board Requests Follow-Up:

1. Participation in HK Sports Teams follow-up presentation will be at the June Board meeting.
2. Food Services Donation - BOE Policy 3280 states that the "Superintendent of Schools must accept gifts that are valued over \$500 and meet with criteria established by the administrative regulations established in accordance with this policy." The policy further states "The Superintendent shall inform the Board of Education of any gift valued at more than \$500 accepted by the District." The anonymous donation to pay off ~ \$3,500 of student food services debt was accepted by the Superintendent, as it met the criteria outlined in the regulation (3280R) who then informed the Board at the 4/16 meeting, satisfying the policy. It is important to note that there is a paragraph in the Administrative Regulation that appears to conflict with the policy, as it states "Any gift presented to the school district must be accompanied by a letter from the donor identifying the subject and purpose of the gift and any restrictions that may apply for official action and recognition by the Board of Education." This phrase infers that BOE action would be necessary to accept a gift, when the actual policy, which takes precedence, allows the Superintendent to accept, as long as the regulation criteria were met, which in this case they were.
3. Payment for Unused Sick Leave - Per the HKEA contract, retiring teachers may be eligible for a payout of accumulated sick leave time based on their hire date. The payout occurs in a future fiscal year but is recorded as an expense in the current fiscal year. In accordance with accrual-based accounting practices, expenses are booked to the year in which they are attributable.
4. [Class Size Guidelines Executive Summary](#)



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Social Media Posts:





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