

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 17
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
February 4, 2020

A meeting of the Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education was held on February 4, 2020 in the Central Office Board Room. Board of Education Vice-Chair, Peter Sonski, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Members Present: *Joanne Nesti, Shawna Goldfarb, Joel D'Angelo, Dr. Nelson Rivera, Jennifer Favalora, Eileen Blewett (Arrived at 7:17 PM), Kathleen Zandi, Brenda Buzzi (Arrived at 7:01 PM), Gerry Matthews and Peter Sonski*

Members Absent: *Suzanne Sack*

Also Present: *Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Holly Hageman, Director of Operations for RSD 17, John Mercier, Director of Finance, Ann Adriani, Principal of Haddam-Killingworth High School, Donna Hayward, Director of Athletics, Lynne Flint, President of Education Association, Robin Duffield, Behavior Task Force Chairwoman and 7th Grade Language Arts Teacher, Ruth Masci, 8th Grade English Teacher, Lynne Landry, HKIS 5th Grade Teacher, Marsha Sturges, 8th Grade English Teacher, Gretchen Schwanfelder, Principal of Killingworth Elementary School, Dennis Reed, Hibbard & Rosa Architects, LLC, Tom Hibbard, Student Representatives, Lauren Miller and Matthew Jennings, and Board Clerk, Jamie Sciascia*

Visitors: *None.*

Call to Order/Opening of Meeting:

Board of Education Vice-Chair, Peter Sonski, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Public Comment: *Robin Duffield addressed the Board. She read the following into the record:*

"Dear Ladies and Gentlemen of the Board, Superintendent Dr. Hageman, Members of the Community at home watching and those present:

My name is Robin Duffield and I am the President of the Haddam-Killingworth Education Association, otherwise known as your Teacher's Union. I am here tonight to introduce you to a wonderful group of teachers who, for two years, have been working hard to represent all of the teachers in the Middle School, in order to address serious concerns about meeting the needs of all of our students.

You have been made aware of some of our concerns that were shared subtly and not so subtly during public Board meetings last year. Many comments about student behavior were made by past teachers, parents and retired teachers. You also heard parent and Board frustrations that current teachers were under a "gag" order not to speak, this is not accurate. I am here tonight to tell you that your teachers have never worked harder to meet the needs of our students and follow the chain

of command to maintain Student and Family Privacy, as well as maintain the trust and respect of the Community.

This is the HKEA Behavior Task Force that was instituted in the Spring of 2019, as a result of increased disruptive behaviors impacting instruction at the Middle School. After two years of failed attempts, to improve Student Behavioral Support within existing Committees and Leadership Teams with previous Administration, teachers sought Union support to promote more productive solutions.

The Task Force, supported by our Connecticut Education Association University Representative, Gloria Dimon, and two CEA Specialists, created a Teacher Survey that asked Middle School teachers to share their experiences. The responses clearly demonstrated the need for increased behavioral support. The results were shared with the former Superintendent, the then Assistant Superintendent Dr. Hageman and the former Middle School Building Principal, outlining the impact of the behaviors observed on the learning environment of the other students. The Task Force in conjunction with Administration worked throughout the early parts of the summer to prioritize focus areas.

Administration changes brought forth a positive energy to begin anew. We continued to work in collaboration with Dr. Hageman, Delores Bates, the new Middle School Principal, and Dr. Kris Lindsay, our Special Education Director, to promote communication between Administration and teachers and to establish best practices to meet the needs of some of our most challenging students.

The first half of this has proven that together we can change the climate of a building and work together to support the difficult work that we do every day. Teachers and Administrators working together to communicate a clear message of expectations centered around "Being your best selves" and actively encouraging and supporting all of our movement in that direction, students and staff. The majority of our students are responding to the positive energy and support as evidenced by these two notebooks. The first is my paper copies of the discipline write ups for last year and this second notebook is the record for the first half of this year. While I acknowledge that it is a different group of students, I would argue, the difference our collaborative work is having on our school is dramatic for the majority of our students.

Teachers continue to examine behaviors that impact a loss of instruction for students. We recognize a growing number of at-risk students requiring a level of clinical support beyond the scope of the professionals currently employed in our District. The number of students requiring individual behavior management plans, and crisis intervention plans, continue to rise.

These students and families are in need of specialized clinical experts, to provide individual, group, and family therapies, immediate crisis intervention, and parent support programs. Most of these services are only currently available to our students and families through outplacement or extended day programs in alternative school settings. Our most at-risk students could remain part of our school Community, in a least restrictive setting, while receiving the level of support required to be ready to learn. The reduction in disruptive behavior would improve our school culture and climate for students and staff, as well as increase academic achievement.

This group is here to remind you that your District is filled with caring professionals who want the best for students, both academically and emotionally. We are working every day to improve

the education of the whole child and every child. We were not vocal in the midst of so much community turmoil because we were focused on our students and our school. The needs and privacy of these students and families had no place in those structural decisions.

Now we are asking you to help us move forward. As advocates for all of our students, we sincerely hope serious consideration can be directed to providing the appropriate support that students and families need in our District.”

Respectfully submitted,

*Robin Duffield - HKEA President - Grade 8 Science Teacher
Ruth Masci - Behavior Task Force Chairwoman - Grade 7 Language Arts Teacher
Lynne Landry - Grade 8 English Teacher
Marsha Sturges - Former HKMS and current HKIS grade 5 Teacher
Michele Ouellete - HKIS / HKMS Lead Teacher for Student Life
Jenn Leavitt - Grade 7 Math Teacher
Gretchen Schwanfelder - Grade 8 English Teacher*

Approval of Minutes:

Approval of Minutes for the following Board Meetings:

- A. Approval of Minutes for the January 7, 2020 Board of Education Meeting
- B. Approval of Minutes for the January 21, 2020 Board of Education – Education Session Meeting

*Shawna Goldfarb **MOVED** and Kathy Zandi **SECONDED** a motion to approve the minutes as presented.*

Motion passed unanimously 9-0-0 by the following Show of Hands:

Kathleen Zandi	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Shawna Goldfarb	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Peter Sonski	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Jennifer Favalora	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Gerry Matthews	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Dr. Nelson Rivera	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Joel D’Angelo	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Eileen Blewett	Absent		
Brenda Buzzi	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Joanne Nesti	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
				Suzanne Sack	Absent		

Report from Student Representatives:

Lauren Miller and Matthew Jennings updated the Board. The Mr. HK Competition is scheduled for this Friday, February 7, 2020 in the HK Auditorium at 7:00 p.m. and you will be able to purchase a ticket at the door. On February 20th and 21st, the Seniors in Drama Department will be doing their One Act Plays.

The National Honor Society is doing a new Activity for School Culture and have placed Stars with all the Freshmen names around the High School. The students will then have to find their names, and they will receive candy prizes. They are doing it for all Grade Levels to increase school spirit. The girls Softball Coach, Jeff Talbot, has been named Softball Coach of Year. He started in 1999 and will be honored in May at a Banquet. The Boys Swim Team has gone undefeated this year.

Student Representatives, Lauren Miller and Matthew Jennings, left the meeting at approximately 7:12 p.m.

Board Committee Reports and Future Meetings

- A. Facilities Subcommittee

Board Vice-Chair, Sonski, updated the Board. He stated that the Committee met last evening at KES; the Committee will be meeting at all school campuses so they can become familiar with each building. They looked at the building structure and the space that is available. There are some issues that KES is having and Board Vice-Chair, Sonski, will discuss those later on in the meeting.

B. Finance Subcommittee

Eileen Blewett updated the Board. (This item was revisited after the Board Liaison Reports). She spoke about the objectives of Committee and doing a cost-benefit-analysis of many areas of District. They first looked at the HK Cubs, and the Committee wanted to understand it a little more since it isn't talked about much. The Audit is complete; The Audit Books are coming to the Board soon and a representative will be coming in March to go over it. Further, Eileen spoke about how the Operating Budget is over budget and there is now a temporary freeze on spending at this point in time. The major drivers are Special Education, Out-of-District Placements and other things related to Special Education. The Committee is in the process with Superintendent Dr. Hageman and Administration Team to identify key areas that can be a save or temporary hold in the interim. She stated that the Board wasn't aware of this at referendum time last year. Superintendent Dr. Hageman and Administration Team are also working on a better way to update the Board on a more timely basis when these excessive expenditures come about.

Superintendent Dr. Hageman spoke about how the number of Special Education Outplacements increased dramatically since this time last year, and have become a significant cost. She spoke about how Jason Lathrop, Ann Adriani, herself, and the Administrative Team are looking at ways to reduce expenditures and other line item transfers to offset the over expenditures.

The Board had discussions about Out-of-District placements that took place and what drove the budget over. There were 6 outplacements that weren't incorporated into the Budget development process last year. Superintendent Dr. Hageman stated that during the transition of Superintendents, Business Managers and other things, they did not fully realize this until after it happened. Board Member, Eileen Blewett, spoke briefly on how we have a cushion by way of health insurance. There were brief discussions about what an actual "freeze" meant and what is getting purchased and what is not. Superintendent Dr. Hageman is looking at places like not filling a resignation position for a potential cost savings, reducing professional development, looking at instructional supplies that do not directly interfere with the delivery of instruction, club stipends that are not slated to run this year, and coaching positions for Spring sports. Board Member, Joel D'Angelo, suggested that we keep track of what is being frozen.

Superintendent Dr. Hageman is going to look into other Budget Management Strategies.

C. Policy Subcommittee

Joanne Nesti updated the Board. She stated how the Committee met two weeks ago, and agreed to examine all polices and bylaws over next several months. The Committee will start with Section 5000 and is hoping to get a first read to the Board at the February 25th meeting. Dr. Nelson Rivera, Joel D'Angelo and Joanne will be looking at Section 9000 on Board Bylaws in collaboration with Shipman and Goodwin who is the attorney for Board Policies.

D. Communications Subcommittee

Jen Favalora updated the Board. She spoke about how she contacted more newspapers to have their first article appear in it. Gerry is writing the piece on the HKHS Energy Project.

E. Personnel and Evaluation Subcommittee

No Report.

Board Liaison Reports

A. Healthy Communities – Healthy Kids Council

No Report. Superintendent Dr. Hageman spoke about the HKY&FS Grant. Principals at Elementary schools and HKIS approved a partnership of the grant to approve a Community Based Mentoring Program. Laurie Ruderfer the Director of HKY&FS will be meeting with Principal Whidden and Principal Reed in the coming weeks to talk about the implementation of that mentoring program. Superintendent Dr. Hageman spoke about how the adults would come from the Community, vetting mechanism, students who would participate would be from a recommendation of a School based team with parents' permission. The details still are coming about and the program will take place during school. This will have an adult/buddy type of support.

Board Member, Gerry Matthews, extended a huge Thank You to the grantor and believes if this had some publicity it may encourage others to get involved.

Board Member, Eileen Blewett, arrived at approximately 7:17 p.m.

B. LEARN

Jen Favolora updated the Board. She spoke about the fiscal state of LEARN and the grants they received and did not receive. Jen stated that they didn't receive the Birth to 3 which went out to a private firm, and stated that a lot more private firms are being awarded funding for these types of programs. She spoke about the Legislative sessions coming up in February, one of things on the docket is that Middle and High School later start times at the State Level. Jen briefly touched about opportunities for LEARN to help us out, find ways to make Regional cooperation with other schools by having these meetings at LEARN.

C. Park & Recreation

No Report.

D. Haddam Board of Selectmen

No Report.

E. Killingworth Board of Selectmen

No Report.

Old Business:

B. Report from the Public Building Committee: Presentation on Fieldhouse Project Options

Board Vice-Chair, Sonski, updated the Board. He spoke about how the Committee met on January 29th, and they have a Sophomore student that joined the Committee. He stated that Principal Hayward, Lynne Flint, Superintendent Dr. Hageman and Tom Hibbard reviewed potential advancements that could be done at the same time as replacing the gym floor. The PBC voted to support a renovation of the space that would be concurrent with the floor replacement starting in April and finishing before the start of the 2020 Academic year. Board Vice-Chair, Sonski, spoke about the important scope of this project and the costs associated with it. The Field House is eligible for State reimbursement at just under 50%. All the other enhancements will be at a 100% cost to the District.

Tom Hibbard updated the Board. He went through the enhancements and estimated costs with the Board. He spoke on estimated costs, permits and fees, mobilization fees, safety, dumpsters, removal

of gymnasium floors, disposal of items, removal and storage of bleachers, banners, etc., demolition of the sound system, site restoration fees. Further, Tom spoke about improvements to the bleachers, interior painting, new basketball backboards, new scoreboard with shot clock, folding partitions, drop curtains, drop down practice cage for batting, replacement of 2 water fountains, emergency voice evacuation system, upgraded sound system (used for games, pep rallies), tinting of windows on the south and west sides (opaque film on it) with an estimated total of \$1,218,561. Tom put in \$50,000 as a placeholder for the sound system and approximately \$600,000 would be out-of-pocket for the District.

Board Member, Eileen Blewett, said the water fountains are already installed so please take \$3,000 off the estimated cost list.

There were discussions about the shock clock, caulking of windows that leak in the gymnasium, lighting replacement and if there will be a manager on site to monitor things. Tom Hibbard will be there doing a weekly visit and Fuss and O'Neill will be there for all the abatement process. Tom Hibbard also went over the installation, painting and floor process. He believes the timeline for the project is reasonable; however, it is getting it approved by the State that could be harder since there is a backlog there for projects. He also stated that they have started working on drawings.

Tim Hibbard left the meeting at approximately 8:13 p.m.

Principal Donna Hayward and Lynne Flint left the meeting at approximately 8:15 p.m.

C. Superintendent's Mid-Year Review*

Joanne Nesti **MOVED** and Dr. Nelson Rivera **SECONDED** a motion to **TABLE** this item.

Motion passed unanimously 10-0-0 by the following Show of Hands:

Kathleen Zandi	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Shawna Goldfarb	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Peter Sonski	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Jennifer Favolora	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Gerry Matthews	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Dr. Nelson Rivera	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Joel D'Angelo	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Eileen Blewett	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Brenda Buzzi	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Joanne Nesti	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
				Suzanne Sack	Absent		

Consent Agenda:

The donations on the Consent Agenda are made to the school system as a whole, and the Superintendent may direct any monies to specific schools or programs at her discretion.

- A. Acceptance of a donation in the amount of \$502.50 from Box Tops for Education to be deposited into the Student Activity Fund. Submitted by Brienne Whidden, Principal of Burr District Elementary School.
- B. Acceptance of a donation in the amount of \$386.92 from the Burr PTO for Transportation of the Kindergarten's Field Trip to be deposited into the Student Activity Field Trip Fund. Submitted by Brienne Whidden, Principal of Burr District Elementary School.
- C. Acceptance of a donation in the amount of \$100.00 from the Haddam Junior Women's Club to be deposited into the Student Activity Fund. Submitted by Brienne Whidden, Principal of Burr District Elementary School.
- D. Acceptance of a donation in the amount \$42.38 from Lathrop Vending to be deposited into the

Principal's Account. Submitted by Donna Hayward, Principal of Haddam-Killingworth High School.

Gerry Matthews **MOVED** and Kathy Zandi **SECONDED** a motion to approve Consent Items A-D as presented with gratitude.

Motion passed unanimously 10-0-0 by the following Show of Hands:

Kathleen Zandi	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Shawna Goldfarb	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Peter Sonski	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Jennifer Favalora	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Gerry Matthews	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Dr. Nelson Rivera	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Joel D'Angelo	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Eileen Blewett	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Brenda Buzzi	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Joanne Nesti	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
				Suzanne Sack	Absent		

New Business:

A. KES Roof

Board Vice-Chair, Sonski, updated the Board. He spoke about how during the Facilities tour yesterday at KES, they learned the effects of a leak over the kitchen in the school. Board Vice-Chair, Sonski, spoke about how the roof was repaired within the last 2 years, but unfortunately the repairs didn't hold up well and the leak reoccurred and made damage. John Mercier and staff made contact with some Contractors and the Committee evaluated their options and are making a recommendation for a full replacement of the kitchen portion of the roof. Board Vice-Chair, Sonski, spoke on how this was on the Capital Tier plan, and this project is being paid for out of the Capital Project Fund.

John Mercier updated the Board. He spoke about how the roof has been on the Capital List for some time and it is approximately \$115,000 in costs to have it replaced over the weekend which is higher in price. John briefly spoke about how the roof is not a state reimbursable project.

Brief discussions took place about the Roof Leaking in the Gymnasium which is actually a heating element, Capital Projects Inventory at Tier 1, 2 and 3 Levels and how long the warranty will last.

Joel D'Angelo **MOVED** and Gerry Matthews **SECONDED** a motion to approve the replacement of roofing over the kitchen section at Killingworth Elementary School not to exceed \$115,000 out of the Capital Fund Account.

Motion passed unanimously 10-0-0 by the following votes:

Kathleen Zandi	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Shawna Goldfarb	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Peter Sonski	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Jennifer Favalora	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Gerry Matthews	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Dr. Nelson Rivera	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Joel D'Angelo	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Eileen Blewett	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Brenda Buzzi	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Joanne Nesti	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
				Suzanne Sack	Absent		

From the Superintendent:

A. Legislative Update

Superintendent Dr. Hageman updated the Board. She stated how there is no major update. Legislation is back in session and involves tolls. She briefly spoke about how she attended a breakfast last Friday, held at John Winthrop Middle school in Deep River, topics included how excess cost grant is funded. Superintendent Dr. Hageman also spoke about how Municipal School Districts can now set aside up to 2%, and there is some lobbying going on for Regional School Districts Funding Capital Accounts.

B. Personnel Report

Dr. Holly Hageman advised that the Personnel Report has been provided in the BOE Packet. She stated if anyone had any questions on the report, please feel free to contact her.

C. Enrollment Report

Dr. Holly Hageman advised that the Enrollment Report has been provided in the BOE Packet. She stated if anyone had any questions on the report, please feel free to contact her. She also spoke briefly on Kindergarten enrollment for BES and KES.

From the Director of Fiscal Operations:

A. Budget Transfers

No Report.

Board Discussion/News/Suggestions: *Board Vice-Chair, Sonski, spoke about the possibility of rescheduling the Strategic Planning Session set for Thursday, February 6th due to Board Chair, Sack's, possible absence. The Board had discussions about alternative dates.*

Public Comments: *None.*

Adjournment:

Board Vice-Chair, Peter Sonski, called for the meeting to adjourn at 8:38 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jamie Sciascia

Board Clerk

Approval: _____ Date: _____
Jennifer Favalora, Secretary