

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 17**  
**BOARD OF EDUCATION – EDUCATION SESSION MEETING**  
**February 27, 2018**

*A meeting of the Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education was held on February 27, 2018 in the Haddam-Killingworth Middle School Media Center. Board of Education Chair, Joanne Nesti, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.*

**Members Present:** *Maura Wallin, Peter Sonski, Eric Couture, Sue Twachtman, Kathleen Zandi, Eileen Blewett, Brenda Buzzi, Gerry Matthews, Joel D'Angelo and Joanne Nesti*

**Members Absent:** *Suzanne Sack*

**Also Present:** *Superintendent of Schools, Howard Thiery, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and Curriculum, Dr. Holly Hageman, Principal of Haddam-Killingworth Middle School, Dr. Jennifer Olsen, Principal of Burr Elementary School, Eric Larson, Principal of Haddam Elementary School, Brienne Whidden, Principal of Killingworth Elementary School, Dennis Reed, Director of Student Services, Dr. Kris Lindsay, Special Education Coordinator, Tonya Gorgone, School Nurse Supervisor of RSD17, Linda Kaufman, Executive Director of HKYFS, Heather LaCasse, Prevention Coordinator of HKYFS, Cristal DePietro and Board Clerk, Jamie Sciascia*

**Visitors:** *Approximately 5*

**Call to Order/Opening of Meeting:**

*Board of Education Chair, Joanne Nesti, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.*

**Public Comment:**

*Linda Butler of Killingworth addressed the Board. She spoke about how the Spring season for sports is upon us and asked for the Board to address the magnet school issue further so the students who attend these types of schools can play on a trial basis in the HK District.*

*Brenda Buzzi **MOVED** and Sue Twachtman **SECONDED** a motion to move up Item 5A on the Agenda set forth under New Business.*

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

Suzanne Sack	Absent	Joel D'Angelo	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Peter Sonski	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Eileen Blewett	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Maura Wallin	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Brenda Buzzi	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Eric Couture	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Gerry Matthews	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Sue Twachtman	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Kathleen Zandi	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"/>

## **New Business:**

### **A. Search Survey Grades 7-12 HKYFS**

*Cristal DePietro addressed the Board. She spoke on the Search Survey that was given by Youth and Family Services. It is an ongoing surgery, typically every 2 years and has been since 2006. This year it will be given in May, approximately 23-30 minutes in length, 150 questions for the 7-12 Grade Levels. There are different topics addressed in the survey; for example, daily life situations, things kids worry about, struggles at school etc. The Board raised questions on an opt out feature (there is), if it is taking during the school day (it is) and if the information is put out on social media.*

## **Board Liaison Reports:**

### **A. Curriculum Council**

*Kathy Zandi updated the Board. She stated that the Committee met this afternoon and spoke about the New Coding Course at the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Middle School as an elective. Linda, who is the Library Media Specialist, will be the one teaching it. There is no cost associated with the coding course; and, equipment is available. It will deal with problem solving, safety, writing and creating an app.*

### **B. Curriculum Subcommittee:**

*Kathy Zandi updated the Board. She briefly spoke about the Coding Class and stated that at the next scheduled Board of Education Meeting, Dr. Jennifer Olsen will be on the Agenda to come and speak about this great program as well as to seek Board approval regarding same.*

## **Old Business:**

### **A. High School Energy and Facilities Upgrade**

#### **a. Public Building Committee**

*No Report.*

### **B. Strategic Capital Planning Committee Report**

*Joanne Nesti updated the Board. She spoke on certain areas that the Committee looked at in terms of education, financials, what if's, use of capital assets and finally, community input. Board members were either at both or one of the public meetings. Joanne handed out an enrollment piece to the Board and thanked the SCP Committee, Superintendent Thiery and Administrative staff for their thoroughness and hard work mapping all the details out.*

*Superintendent Thiery updated the Board. He spoke about the HES Building and the possible ways it could be used. He also addressed the building will be approximately \$71,000 to maintain it until a decision has been made on what to do with it.*

*Eileen Blewett updated the Board. She spoke about the Projected Cost Salaries Sheet, 15 ½ estimated FTE reduction, salary and benefits and the school's vacancy. Eileen also stated that the implementation details are still a work in progress but we all need to see the bigger picture.*

*Peter Sonski updated the Board. He spoke briefly about how the SCP Committee evaluated the 2 existing Elementary Schools in Haddam and contributing certain factors like age, condition, maintenance, possibility of expansion, heating, etc. and further found that Burr Elementary was the better choice. Peter also gave us a brief history of the school, how it was acquired and the conditions of the deed.*

*There was further Board discussion on HES's future, on what it could be for our Community and/or possible sold for Commercial use. Further, there was many concerns about the HES building remaining vacant and how it could affect the Community.*

Board Chair, Nesti, advised that there will be further discussion and a possible vote on the Strategic Capital Planning Committee's District re-structuring proposal, including the closure of Haddam Elementary School, at the next Board meeting scheduled for March 6, 2018.

## **New Business**

### **B. School Security Committee**

Superintendent Thiery updated the Board. He spoke on tragedy in Florida, how a dialog was created and he sent a letter of thanks and appreciation to the Community. He spoke how there has been Security upgrades to the school, and how in April the teachers, parents, Board members, will gather together to do drills.

Board Member, Kathy Zandi, asked about the schools walk about policy since they are holding the March 14<sup>th</sup> event. Superintendent Thiery said that they won't be expelling or suspending the students and the students need to have a voice and wants students to feel supported.

### **C. Field House Dedication Proposal**

Superintendent Thiery updated the Board. He stated that a group of Citizens came forward, about 500 or so signatures, to rename the HK Field House to Patsy Kamercia Field House. Superintendent asked the Board how they would like to approach this in terms of holding a celebration with her husband, friends, college students, etc. Board Member, Kathy Zandi, suggested an April date for this fabulous event.

## **Public Comments:**

Superintendent Thiery spoke about a letter he received written by Dylan Brown, a student at the Haddam Elementary School.

He read the record into record as follows:

Dear Mr. Thiery,

Do you want to know who some of the hardest working employees are? The custodians! They work hard. I think that there should be a custodian appreciation day for RSD17 schools.

I think that there should be a custodian appreciation day because the custodians clean all of the school grounds until they shine! One example is when, out of their own time, they come to the schools on a snow day to clean up the snow. Another thing is how they clean and clean and clean every room in the building so much! Also, when they clean stuff, they clean it GOOD!

Another reason why there should be a custodian appreciation day is because the custodians are just so friendly! One example is when they pass anyone in the hall they nicely say "Hello!" and get a nice "Hello!" back.

Another example is how they ALWAYS smile, from when they come to work, to when they leave.

Lastly, the custodians are just plain kind. They are always as nice as possible to everybody.

My 3<sup>rd</sup>, (and last) opinion of why there should be a custodian appreciation day is because the custodians work hard, and long. One example is how custodians get to our schools at 6:00 a.m. and then they leave at 9:00 p.m. Another example is that I walk into the lunchroom, I look and I see my reflection! My last example is how the custodians pick up everything that needs to be saved. Those are my reasons.

I hope that you will consider my idea, and bring it up to the Board of Ed.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Dylan A. Brown  
Age 8  
Grade 3, Haddam Elementary School


**Adjournment:**

Board Chair, Joanne Nesti, called for the meeting to adjourn at 8:49 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Joanne Sciascia  
Board Clerk

Approval:  Date: 4/3/18  
Eileen Blewett, Secretary