

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 17
BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING
March 1, 2016

A special meeting of the Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education was held on March 1, 2016 in the Haddam-Killingworth High School Lower Media Center. Board of Education Chair, Joel D'Angelo, called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM.

Members Present: *Sue Twachtman, Maura Cawley, Eric Couture, Joanne Nesti, Neal Perron, Suzanne Sack, Jeannie Young (arrived at 6:33), Dan Chase (arrived at 6:39 PM), and Joel D'Angelo*

Members Absent: *Kathy Brown and Susan Dean*

Also Present: *Superintendent of Schools, Howard Thiery, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Holly Hageman, Director of Finance Martha Vaughn, and Board Clerk Larissa Johnson*

Visitors: *Approximately 17*

Call to Order/Opening of Meeting

Board of Education Chair, Joel D'Angelo called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Presentation of the Superintendent's Proposed Budget 2016-2017

Superintendent Howard Thiery presented the Regional School District No. 17 2016-2017 Superintendent's Proposed Budget. He reviewed the District's mission statement as well as the budget timeline and process. He then presented a summary of the 2016-2017 Total Request, a proposed Net Budget Request of \$41,331,557.44, representing a 2.39% increase over the approved 2015-2016 budget. He explained that the district is anticipating a 6.18% decrease in revenue based on the Governor's proposed budget which reflects a decrease in funding to local school districts. He presented information on the Town Assessments. Haddam represents 58.45% of the student population with a projected assessment of \$24,160,086 at an increase of 1.75% over last year's budget, and Killingworth represents 41.55% of the student population, with an assessment of \$17,171,471 at an increase of 3.30% over last year's budget.

Superintendent Thiery presented a Revenue Comparison showing a projected decrease in revenue of \$68,050.29 due to a decrease in state funding in Adult Education, Transportation, and the Excess Cost Grant based on the Governor's proposed budget as of February 4, 2016.

He also presented a chart demonstrating the total dollar and percent changes for each budget category, which Salary and Benefits showing the largest percentage increases as well as Buildings & Grounds, based on funding the Capital Account at .5%, in the amount of \$151,008.74.

Superintendent Thiery also presented a pie-chart to demonstrate the break-down of different areas of the budget, including Salary, Benefits, Debt, Tuition, Support Programs, Learning Programs, Technology, Administrative Fees, Buildings & Grounds, and Transportation. He also presented a pie-chart of costs by location and an Annual Enrollment History from 2005-2015.

For the Fiscal Conservation portion of his presentation, Superintendent Thiery provided a Budget Summary Narrative, which explained that the total salaries proposed in the 2016-2017 budget are \$21,957,813, representing an increase of \$480,261 (2.2%) over the 2015-2016 budget. Benefits increase by \$236,859 (3.0%), which combined represent at 2.44% increase over the 2015-2016 Gross Operating Budget. He said that he is proposing that allocations for Professional Development remain steady at a rate of \$140 per certified teaching FTE at each building, which has been the rate since 2012-2013. Student

transportation costs have decreased by \$94,702 (-2.7%), as a result of savings obtained through an RFP process for student transportation. Tuition costs for special education are projected to decrease by \$38,563, based on current known student needs. He is proposing that Instructional and Other Supply funding levels remain the same as the previous year and that the district continue its investment in library books and he has allocated \$450 per classroom towards classroom library books at the elementary and middle school levels and \$5000 for each school library at the elementary, middle and high school levels for a total investment of \$25,000. He also explained that there is a decrease in electricity costs of \$14,915 realized by removing the portable classrooms at Killingworth Elementary and Haddam Elementary, as well as a decrease of \$205,792 for Oil, Diesel and Gasoline based upon projected fuel prices. The investment in technology will remain flat as the district will continue its annual financing for the purchase of technology equipment. The Superintendent is also proposing that the district fund the Capital Account (Fund 06) at .5% in the proposed 2016-2017 budget for an allocation of \$207,340. This account has not been funded in the operating budget in several years. The superintendent also explained that the district is realizing a decrease in debt service of \$66,250 for 2016-2017 as the result of bond refinancing that will save the district \$863,355.52 over the life of the bonds.

Superintendent Thiery then reviewed the themes for the proposed budget's Fiscal Conservation, including a reduction in daily transportation, the reduction of staff based on enrollment by 2.0 FTE elementary teachers and 7.0 FTE Kindergarten paraeducators, based upon specifications made by the Board during the 2015-2016 budget process. He restated that the Professional Development, Instructional Supply, and General Supply Lines remain frozen as they have been over the past five years, and that there is a projected decrease in Special Education Outplacements, and projected decreases in Electricity and Fuel costs.

For the Program Innovation portion of his presentation, the Superintendent summarized several proposals including the hiring of a 1.0 FTE Elementary Library Media Specialist, a 1.0 FTE (non-certified) HKHS Mentored Study Skills Program, and assistant coaches for Track, Cross Country, and Wrestling at the middle school based upon high rates of participation. He is also proposing the incorporation of more K-8 STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) Programs, including an 8th Grade Elective Project Lead the Way Engineering Course and Project Lead the Way Elementary Science program. He also said that the district is continuing its implementation of a New World Language Program where students in Grade 5 will begin taking Level 1 of a World Language so that they may progress to Level 3 in their first year of high school. He also said that the district is continuing its program for Targeted Instruction Service Delivery Model for Special Education at the high school, and purchasing additional iPads for the elementary schools to support student-centered project-based learning in all disciplines, as well as for use in Maker Spaces.

He also explained that certain aspects of the innovations were shifted to the Capital Account as priorities this year, such as renovation of the HKHS metal shop to develop a Project Lead the Way Engineering Lab, upgrade the of the Computer Assisted Design Lab at HKMS, an upgrade of equipment in the HKHS TV Studio, and replacement of the HKMS and HKHS Auditorium Sound Boards.

In conclusion, the Superintendent presented his budget goal to, "Support high standards for all students and instructional programs that support their success, while increasing opportunities for students in strategic areas such as STEM, world languages, media literacy, and research skills."

Adjournment


Board Chair Joel D'Angelo called for the meeting to adjourn at 7:09 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Larissa Johnson

Board Clerk

Approval:  Date: 4/5/16
Kathy Brown, Secretary