

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 17**  
**BOARD OF EDUCATION – EDUCATION SESSION**  
**November 19, 2013**

*A meeting of the Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education was held on November 19, 2013 in the Haddam-Killingworth Middle School Media Center. Board of Education Chair, Karen Perry, called the meeting to order at 7:35 PM.*

**Members Present:** *Steven Banaletti, Joel D'Angelo, Chet Harris, Jeannie Young, Sue Twachtman, Susan Dean, Amy Jacques-Purdy, Becky Valenti and Karen Perry*

**Members Absent:** *Jamie Lehane, Susan Dean, and Jonathan Wintsch*

**Also Present:** *Superintendent of Schools, Howard Thiery, Student Representative Luke Ford and Board Clerk Larissa Johnson*

**Visitors:** *Approximately 13*

**Call to Order/Opening of Meeting**

*Board of Education Chair, Karen Perry called the meeting to order at 7:35 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.*

**Recognition of past and present members of the Haddam-Killingworth Middle School Building Committee**

*Board Chair Karen Perry thanked the members of the Haddam-Killingworth Middle School Building Committee for their countless hours and meetings. She noted that the building opened in 2007.*

*Superintendent Howard Thiery said that the volunteers not only spent countless hours but a lot years reviewing specifications, working on the political frame, state reimbursement, selection of firms. He said that schools are landmarks in their community and a special gift to the community.*

*Former Building Committee Chair Kjell Tollefsen also thanked members of the committee and members of the administration for their hard work. He has been working on the building since the 2000 referendum, and that he was still young at that point. He said that they had an amazing group of volunteers with many special talents. He also thanked Director of Facilities, Michael Distefano, stating that he has been loyal through the process and had to take on the building when it opened. He said that buildings come out differently each time, and that this one came out under budget, although not perfect when it opened in January 2007, it was pretty good. He also thanked the community and Mim Wagner, Haddam-Killingworth Middle School Principal.*

*Superintendent Thiery added that over the past year he has been to three different conferences, one on instruction, another on school security and a third on community. He said that at all three different conferences, architects point to this design as exemplary in all three areas, due in part to its open sight-lines and pod structure.*

*Principal Mim Wagner thanked everyone and stated that it was wonderful working with everyone.*

*Board Chair Perry and Superintendent Thiery presented certificates to the following members:*

*Kjell Tollefsen  
Mark Almeida  
Steve Bull  
Scott Chasse  
Jo Ferjak*

*They also honored the following absent members of the committee:*

*Howard Howes  
Brenda Lowther  
Richard Zygmunt  
Diane Stock  
Scott Thompson  
Rick Berzon*

### **Report from Student Representatives**

*Student Representative Luke Ford gave a report to the Board. He stated that he was actually a part of the first class to go to the new middle school all four years. He said that the building has done wonders for us in a multitude of ways.*

*Luke also announced that this year will be the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the HKTV Holiday Show, which will benefit Camp Rising Sun. Kids ages 5-17 attend Camp Rising Sun free of charge.*

*He said that HKHS teacher Jillian Feliciano appeared on Channel 8 CT Style and presented recipes for Chocolate Mice and Pumpkin Chip Cookies.*

*He reported that HKHS was also a finalist in the Michaels Cup Championship, an award which is given to a school that excels in both sports and academics.*

### **Board Liaison Reports**

#### **A. Curriculum Council Update**

*Superintendent Thiery gave the Curriculum Council Update. He reported that there were a variety of presentations. The first being a presentation on the evolving role of the Library-Media Center with the Common Core State Standards. There was also a presentation by Curriculum Coordinators Bryan Kerachsky and Sheila Ward about the updated report card standards. He said that the HKHS Science Department presented a proposal for the use of a new textbook in Chemistry. The current textbook has been in use for ten years and the new textbook would be an e-resource book with better technical integration and support materials. Bryan Kerachsky and Sheila Ward also presented on the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, which is a standing agenda item for Curriculum Council meetings and there was also a School/Special Services Roundup.*

## Old Business

### A. Bus Contract Proposal

*To be discussed in Executive Session.*

## New Business

### A. School Breakfast Program

*Sharon Shettleworth presented the proposal for the School Breakfast Program to be implemented district-wide. The breakfast might consist of a whole grain muffin with fruit and milk, cereal, graham crackers, juice and milk or a whole grain pancake, apple and juice. She proposed that breakfast would be served at snack time at the elementary schools, and there is an opportunity at the middle school and high school for students to have breakfast as they are arriving at school. The program would be partially reimbursed by the state based on the free-and-reduced lunch program. The price of breakfast would be \$1.75 for full-pay students, \$0.30 for reduced students and \$0.00 for free students.*

*Amy Jacques-Purdy **MOVED** and Sue Twachtman **SECONDED** a motion to approve the School Breakfast Program as presented with the specification that breakfast be served to the elementary school students during snack time. Motion passed 8-0-0 by the following votes:*

Amy Jacques-Purdy	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/>	Jonathan Wintsch	Absent
Becky Valenti	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/>	Sue Twachtman	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/>
Chet Harris	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/>	Steven Banaletti	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/>
Jamie Lehane	Absent	Susan Dean	Absent
Jeannie Young	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/>	Karen Perry	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"/>		

### B. Common Core Standards

*Curriculum Coordinators Bryan Kerachsky and Sheila Ward presented the Introduction to the Common Core State Standards.*

*Bryan Kerachsky explained that the Common Core State Standards outline what students know and should be able to do. He also said that the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) has much in common with Connecticut's previous standards. Connecticut and 46 other states adopted CCSS in July 2010. Connecticut adopted CCSS because it is internationally benchmarked, informed by educational standards in the top-performing countries around the world and aligned with college and career expectations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*

*For English/Language Arts, Bryan Kerachsky outlined the learning expectations:*

#### *Reading*

- *More non-fiction (informational) texts (at the fourth grade level, a 50-50 split between fiction and non-fiction texts, at the twelfth grade level, a 30-70 split between fiction and non-fiction).*
- *More complex texts within each grade level*
- *Asking and answering in-depth questions about the texts*
- *Close reading to find evidence to support answers to in-depth questions*

#### *Writing*

- *Using the following types of writing styles:*
  - o *Argumentative (shifting from 30%-40% from elementary to high school)*

- Narrative (shifting from 35% to 20%)
- Explanatory (shifting from 30%-40%)

*Speaking & Listening*

- *Researching to build knowledge and presenting that knowledge to others*

*There is an emphasis on text-dependent, close reading, and the use of primary sources. The standard is to read, write, speak, and listen at high levels in all subjects, including technical subjects and procedural knowledge.*

*For Math, Sheila Ward outlined the K-8 Content Standards:*

- *Understanding, not just procedural skills*
- *Developing Fluency*
- *Applying understanding to solve real-world problems emphasizing the use of mathematics*

*She also presented examples of how math questions under CCSS might look compared to how they may have been asked previously. She said that there are 8 practices/behaviors for students to persevere.*

*Sheila Ward also presented a timeline outlining the transition to the CCSS:*

*2011-2012 – Focus on Building Awareness of CCSS*

*2012-2015 – Alignment of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment:*

*2012-2013 – K-4 Implementation & Participation in SBAC Pilot*

*2013-2014 – 5-10 Implementation & SBAC Field Test (3-11)*

*2014-2015 – K-12 Full Implementation & Live SBAC Testing (3-8, 11)*

## **From the Superintendent**

### **A. Legislative Update**

*Superintendent Thiery stated that the Governor and State Legislature announced that it was pleased at the response to the technology grant and security reimbursement being offered. He said that the district did receive a memo that it would be receiving a technology grant representing a 40% reimbursement of funds spent on technology improvements and a that our security improvements reimbursement was approved and will be funded.*

## **From the Board Chair**

*Board Chair Karen Perry read the following departing thoughts into the record:*

*Thank you to each member of this Board for your service during my time as Chair. Not everyone is willing to serve, and it takes special individuals who understand what a community is all about, to give up their free time, without pay or any form of compensation, to sacrifice their evenings to discuss and decide what is best for the students from the towns of Killingworth and Haddam.*

*We have had a very successful time working together. Partly, this is because as a Board we have respected each other, given every Board member who would like an opportunity to speak, and have not cut each other off in our dialogue. We have been a Board that has not been afraid of having difficult conversations, and of seeing and listening to other's points of view. Among our accomplishments as a Board, together with the Superintendent are the following:*

We have improved compliance with existing policies and rules:

- \* A better understanding and improved compliance with the Board's competitive pricing policies, which has resulted in significant savings to the District, particularly in capital improvements where funding projects was historically decided without first obtaining competitive pricing.
- \* A streamlining of process, so that issues are brought to the Board in a timely and open manner, so that Board members are not forced to decide issues under the pretext of certain time pressures.
- \* Improved compliance with the Freedom of Information Act for the Board's 5 subcommittees - both in terms of public agendas and public minutes properly posted, when less than adequate compliance had existed for some time.

We increased communications within the District:

- \* Because 5 of the 11 total Board Members were new at the prior election, we decided to make sure we understood and garnered information about various aspects of our District, including its organizational structure and personnel review, professional development, and special education.
- \* We started the new initiative of Board Updates, a means for the Board to communicate directly with the community. We also supported the Superintendent's initiatives of a Facebook page, a Remodeled Website, and the establishment of minimum communication standards between teachers and parents.
- \* We provided a public forum for the community in response to the Newtown tragedy, and we were able to tighten security measures in our District.

We embraced the reader's and writer's workshop:

- \* We have fully embraced the reader's and writers workshop, in the first year supporting its introduction as proposed to us by the Superintendent, and in the second year of expanding it to more grade levels. We support it as a effective manner of improving our student's minds... which basically conforms to the old adage, you can read your way into any college you want to.

And finally, we improved fiscal oversight of taxpayers' money:

- \* We were able to identify \$80k, that the District was not aware it had, and were able to rectify this situation.
- \* We came in with the two lowest budget increases in the history of the District's \$40 million budget, which I am aware of. Our first year, the percentage increase was .052%, which is basically a \$50k increase over the prior year. And in this past year, we came in with a budget of a zero percent increase over the prior year, without impacting programming.
- \* We were able to do this because we analyzed not just the proposed budget in comparison to prior budgets, as had been historically done, but in comparison to actual historical costs over the past few years.

We oversaw a Leadership Change at KES:

- \* There was historically poor performance at KES compared to the other two grammar schools and we helped oversee a leadership change at KES that was implemented by Howard. This change will help students to reach their full potential and should help eliminate the performance discrepancies over time.

In closing, my time as Chair was supposed to be Keith Kelsey's time as Chair and his death at a young age was a loss to all of us, to the Killingworth community, and to this District. We have tried to live up to Keith's high standards and expectations, and I believe he would be proud of our accomplishments.

Thank you again for your service, your time, and your cooperation during the past 22 months. Thank you also to our outgoing members Steven Banaletti, Chet Harris, Jonathan Wintsch, and Jeannie Young.

Karen Perry

**Adjournment**

*Sue Twachtman **MOVED** and Becky Valenti **SECONDED** a motion to adjourn to executive session for the purposes of negotiations. Motion passed 8-0-0 by the following votes:*

Amy Jacques-Purdy	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/>	Jonathan Wintsch	Absent
Becky Valenti	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/>	Sue Twachtman	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/>
Chet Harris	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/>	Steven Banaletti	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/>
Jamie Lehane	Absent	Susan Dean	Absent
Jeannie Young	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/>	Karen Perry	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"/>		

*The Board went into Executive Session at 8:53 PM.*

*The Board returned from Executive Session at approximately 9:10 PM and Board Chair Karen Perry adjourned the meeting.*

*Respectfully submitted,*



Larissa B. Johnson  
Board Clerk

Approval:  Date: 12/3/2013  
Susan Dean, Secretary