

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 17
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
October 1, 2013

A meeting of the Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education was held on October 1, 2013 in the Central Office Board Room. Board of Education Chair, Karen Perry, called the meeting to order at 7:37 PM.

***Members Present:** Amy Jacques-Purdy, Chet Harris, Jeannie Young, Susan Dean, Becky Valenti, Sue Twachtman, Jamie Lehane and Karen Perry*

***Members Absent:** Joel D'Angelo, Steven Banaletti, and Jonathan Wintsch*

***Also Present:** Superintendent of Schools, Howard Thiery and Director of Fiscal Operations, Martha Vaughn, and Board Clerk Larissa Johnson*

***Visitors:** 7*

Call to Order/Opening of Meeting

Board of Education Chair, Karen Perry called the meeting to order at 7:37 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Audience of Citizens

Barbara Fernandez of Haddam addressed the Board regarding a bus transportation concern. She stated that she had contact^{ed} Michael Distefano because the bus stop which was formerly located at the end of her driveway, when her children attended school, had been moved to the end of Church Hill Road. She stated that she had received no notification of the change and that she was given no choice in the matter. She stated that she felt that this current stop at the end of the road is dangerous for elementary school students and that the parents become transportation.

Diane Stock of Haddam addressed the Board regarding the wifi infrastructure at HKHS. She stated that she is thrilled with the use of technology in the student's curriculum, and cited many examples of how technology is used in the classroom and for homework. She stated that students cannot access the wifi system at the school and that sometimes students also have difficulty in class accessing the internet. She stated that parents really like the new use of technology, but that she and some other parents are contemplating purchasing devices with data plans so that their children can make better use of the technology. She asked if the Board could look into improving the wireless access at school.

Approval of Minutes

- A. **Approval of Minutes for the September 3, 2013 Board of Education**
- B. **Approval of Minutes for the September 17, 2013 Board of Education – Education Subcommittee Meeting**

*Susan Dean **MOVED** and Becky Valenti **SECONDED** a motion to approve the minutes for the September 3, 2013 Board of Education meeting and the minutes for the September 17, 2013 Board of Education – Education Subcommittee meeting. 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 | Absent |
| Jamie Lehane | YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> | Susan Dean | YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 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 | Absent | | |

Report from Student Representatives

Board Chair Karen Perry welcomed Gwendolyn Plum and Luke Ford, Jr. to the Board. The students introduced themselves and gave their reports.

Luke Ford of Killingworth said that it is an honor and privilege to serve as a liaison. He said that he is a class officer and Captain of the Boys' Basketball team and that he hopes to implement techniques he learns by sitting as a liaison into student council.

Gwendolyn Plum of Killingworth is a senior and plans on pursuing a degree specializing in Special Education. She is a Captain of the Girls' Soccer team, a member of Spanish Honors and participates in HKTV news.

Luke reported that on September 12, HKHS hosted an Open House. He said there was an impressive turn out, however the passing time between events was difficult for student ambassadors to escort parents. He also stated that the CAPT Scholarship Breakfast was held on September 25. Gwendolyn added that Senior Parent night went well. Luke reported that "Security Steve," a security guard at HKHS gave him some feedback on the security upgrades at the school. Luke said that the security officer wishes he had additional video panels on his screen, so that he could see more activity at one time and that since now one of his primary responsibilities is buzzing in visitors, he is missing his day-to-day security rounds and relationship with students. Luke added that he felt that there have been a lot of great improvements to the security at the school. Luke also reported that the students very much appreciate the extended media hours and that they are being utilized. He said that it will be mandatory for the boys' basketball team to report to the media center prior to games. Gwendolyn added that the girls' soccer team is already using the media center before games. Luke also stated that the new "Bring Your Own Device" policy is great and that Power School has changed the game for communication with teachers, and that students can also use devices in chorus for small group or individual practice, before returning to the whole group.

Board Committee Reports and Future Meetings

A. **Facilities and Transportation Subcommittee**

Jamie Lehane updated the Board. The next meeting will be November 5, 2013 at 6:30 PM. He reported that the subcommittee is ready to request letters of intent from all ten energy performance contractors. He stated that volunteers from the community will develop a formal RFP, and that the state will offset cost. He also mentioned that there was damage to a field after a rainstorm when a youth football team proceeded to play after being advised not to. Facilities

will be working to clarify procedures for such incidents. He also provided an update on the Irrigation project at the Middle School. He said that the piping is in, and expects a hook up to CL&P before a hard frost. He also reported that the lightning arresting project needs more engineering. The subcommittee is also looking at bids for carpeting and Sue Twachtman and Becky Valenti are going to look at more areas that need paint and carpet. He also gave a security update and stated that the IT work is still being done. He added that the diving board at HKHS needs to be replaced and a different size board is required due to the changes in

B. Building Subcommittee (HKMS)

Amy Jacques-Purdy had no report.

C. Finance Subcommittee

Martha Vaughn updated the Board. The next meeting will be November 5, 2013 at 6:30 PM. She reported that the subcommittee discussed the general fund year-to-date, budget transfers and reviewed and discussed the insurance broker RFP. They also discussed the Student Activity Accounts and the donations policy. A Student Activity Accounting Manual will be circulated and detail how scholarships should be separated into their own accounts so that donations can be tracked better.

D. Policy Subcommittee

Amy Jacques-Purdy reported that the subcommittee did not meet. Next meeting date is to be determined.

E. Communications Subcommittee

Karen Perry reported that the subcommittee did not meet. The next meeting will be October 15, 2013.

F. Personnel and Evaluation Subcommittee

Karen Perry updated the Board. The subcommittee meet on September 25, 2013 and October 8, 2013 and discussed Howard Thiery's evaluation.

Board Liaison Reports

A. Healthy Communities – Healthy Kids Council

Susan Dean updated the Board. She reported that the council hosted a fundraiser at the Gelston House on September 15, 2013. Wayne Leopard of Haddam won the Harley Davidson motorcycle that was raffled off at the fundraiser. She reported that Family Dinner night was September 23, 2013. She also stated that the Pumpkin Run will be October 27, 2013 and Drug Take-Back Day will be on October 26, 2013 in Killingworth. She then mentioned that October is Domestic Violence month and that the council would also be providing a service message about texting and driving. The next meeting will be October 10, 2013 at the Lower Media Center in the High School at 8:00 AM.

B. LEARN

Sue Twachtman updated the Board. LEARN met on September 12, 2013. Bridget Gordon, director of Special Education. She helps coordinate with 275 students and 135 teachers. She is working towards trying to get professionals to provide evaluation services for less and tuition programs for students with complex needs. The next meeting will be October 10, 2013.

C. Parks & Recreation

Amy Jacques-Purdy had no report.

D. Haddam Board of Selectmen

No report.

E. Killingworth Board of Selectmen

Susan Dean had no report. The meeting scheduled for September 23, 2013 was cancelled.

*Amy Jacques-Purdy **MOVED** and Susan Dean **SECONDED** a motion to move Item 8.A – HKMS Washington, DC Trip – April 22, 2015 to the current position in the agenda. 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 | Absent |
| Jamie Lehane | YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> | Susan Dean | YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 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 | Absent | | |

New Business

A. HKMS Washington, DC Trip – April 22, 2015

Neil English presented the HKMS trip to Washington DC for April 22, 2015. HE stated that it's the same trip, at the same cost over the same weekend. By booking the trip early, there is a savings to kids and parents and parents can utilize an online billing system and can spread out the payments for the trip. Because of the payment plan, there is less of a need for students to utilize scholarships for the trip.

*Sue Twachtman **MOVED** and Amy Jacques-Purdy **SECONDED** a motion to approve the Haddam-Killingworth Middle School Washington, DC Trip on April 22, 2013. 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 | Absent |
| Jamie Lehane | YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> | Susan Dean | YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 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 | Absent | | |

Old Business

A. 2014-2015 Calendar

Superintendent Thiery re-introduced the calendar options, and presented Alternate E, where make-up snow days can be taken from the April vacation, rather than the February vacation.

Amy Jacques-Purdy **MOVED** and Susan Dean **SECONDED** a motion to approve Calendar E as presented.

Amy Jacques-Purdy amended the motion to change the wording on the bottom of the calendar to read as follows: "make up days beyond June 22 will be deducted from Spring recess Friday to Monday (up to 5 days)." 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 | Absent |
| Jamie Lehane | YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> | Susan Dean | YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 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 | Absent | | |

B. Bus Contract Proposal

To be discussed in Executive Session.

Consent Agenda

- A. Acceptance of a donation from the Target- Take Charge of Education in the amount of \$154.00 to be deposited into our Student Activity Account. Submitted by Eric Larson, Principal of Burr Elementary School.**
- B. Acceptance of a donation from the Target- Take Charge of Education in the amount of \$143.76 to be deposited into our Student Activity Account. Submitted by Dennis Reed, Principal of Killingworth Elementary School.**
- C. Acceptance of a donation from the Target- Take Charge of Education in the amount of \$65.66 to be deposited into our Student Activity Account. Submitted by Charles Macunas, Principal of Haddam-Killingworth High School.**
- D. Acceptance of a donation from an anonymous donor, totaling \$30.00 to be applied to HKHS Athletic programs.**
- E. Acceptance of a donation from Special Olympics of Connecticut in the amount of \$500.00 to be used by the HKMS Unified Sports program. Submitted by Miriam Wagner, Principal of Haddam-Killingworth Middle School.**
- F. Acceptance of a donation from an anonymous donor in the amount of \$5,000.00 for funding of the DARE program. Submitted by Miriam Wagner, Principal of Haddam-Killingworth Middle School**

Amy Jacques-Purdy **MOVED** and Becky Valenti **SECONDED** a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. 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 | Absent |
| Jamie Lehane | YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> | Susan Dean | YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 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 | Absent | | |

Board Chair Karen Perry said thank you for the donations, especially the large donation to the DARE program.

New Business - Continued

B. Middle School Building Committee – Structure and Membership

Board Chair Karen Perry stated that the Middle School Building Committee is a subcommittee of the Board of Education. At this point, there are no current Board members serving on the committee. The Board will be subsuming it back into the Board of Education. She thanked them for their years of hard work in the coordination of the building of the middle school and would like to have the members of the committee in for a celebration. The Board briefly discussed the Middle School Building Committee.

From the Superintendent

A. Legislative Update

Superintendent Thiery updated the Board. He stated that a lot of the information has been presented to the Board previously. He briefly discussed the Education Cost Sharing (ECS) Formula, and stated that the District had applied for the grant. He also briefly discussed the Minimum Budget Requirement, which requires that each town's base minimum budget requirement for fiscal year '14 is the amount budgeted in education in fiscal year '13 plus any ECS aid increased received for fiscal year '14. He also discussed an which establishes a 19-member task force to develop guidelines for each RESC to use in developing regional school calendars. RESCs must develop a calendar for each school board in its service area by April 1, 2014. The regional calendar must be adopted for the 2015-16 school year.

B. Personnel Report

Superintendent Thiery presented the Personnel Report. He read Mr. Macunas's resignation letter dated September 20, 2013 into the record:

Dear Members of the Board of Education:

I want to take the opportunity to inform you that I intend to retire as an employee of Regional School District #17, and Principal of Haddam-Killingworth High School, at the end of the 2013-2014 school year.

It has truly been my honor and privilege to serve this wonderful community over the last 34 years. I came to HK in 1980 with ten years of teaching experience in Pennsylvania; and fell in love with Connecticut, the communities of Haddam and Killingworth, and the school system. So much so, that I moved to town in 1987 so my sons could reap the benefits of an HK education.

I can never thank you enough and I am profoundly humbled by the support I have received from the BOE over what spans four decades (80s, 90s, 2000s and 2010s) as a teacher, coach, administrative assistant, assistant principal, and principal. You showed faith in me by allowing me to professionally grow and advance without ever having to leave Region #17. I hope I have lived up to your expectations.

I am not sure what retirement holds in store for me. I only know that whatever it is, and wherever I go, I will be accompanied by a lifetime's worth of wonderful memories of HK. My heart will always be here.

With ten months left, I am committed to continue the important work at hand; which includes remaining focused on our shared mission, values, and goals. I will savor the time I have left.

Sincerely and eternally grateful,

Charlie Macunas
Principal HKHS

Superintendent Thiery stated that it has been his profound privilege to work with Charlie. He described him as very ethical and student-centered with bottomless integrity. Another educator of 45 years said of Mr. Macunas, "He has his hand on the wheel, and his hand is calm and his hand is steady." Mr. Thiery said that he is pleased that he got to work with Charlie. Board Chair Karen Perry added that the Board is extremely grateful for his service to the District. Amy Jacques-Purdy added that seeing the District transform under his leadership is really satisfying and that she is really grateful for his service.

C. Enrollment Report

Superintendent Thiery presented the September enrollment report.

From the Director of Fiscal Operations

A. Budget Transfers

*Amy Jacques-Purdy **MOVED** and Becky Valenti **SECONDED** a motion to approve the budget transfers as presented. 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 | Absent |
| Jamie Lehane | YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> | Susan Dean | YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 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 | Absent | | |

From the Board Chair

A. Board of Education Self-Evaluation

Board Chair Karen Perry presented the Board of Education Self-Evaluation rubric, and the Board discussed the evaluation at length. With regard to the category of "Vision," Board consensus was that the Board has a strong vision but should work on the discourse with the community. Under the category of "Board Operations," the consensus was that the Board is operating efficiently and is well-organized. Under "Board Ethics" the consensus was that overall, the Board operates ethically, keeping confidentiality and honors non-unanimous decisions. However, there was some concern that party-politics might play too heavily into the District's business, as well as attendance on the part of some

members. Under "Board Superintendent Team," there was a consensus that this is a strong area for the Board, however there was some concern that the Superintendent is not always given the discretion and opportunity to fully utilize exercise his leadership. The Board discussed this aspect at some length.

Board Discussion – Areas of Opportunities for District Improvement

None

Adjournment

*Amy Jacques-Purdy **MOVED** and Susan Dean **SECONDED** a motion to go into Executive Session for the purposes of negotiations. The motion passed unanimously.*

The Board went into Executive Session at 9:57 PM.

The Board returned from Executive Session at 10:18 PM and Board Chair Karen Perry adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,



Larissa B. Johnson
Board Clerk

Approval:  Date: 11/6/2013
Susan Dean, Secretary