

Summary of August 2020 Board of Education Meetings

2020-2021 School Year:

The last month before RSD17 schools reopened was spent fine tuning the details. In August, after local districts were granted flexibility on how to best open schools, the RSD17 Reopening Committee decided to open in a hybrid model for the first four weeks of school, with the option for full remote learning for any family. The district surveyed families to identify how many students would opt to learn remotely, who would ride the buses, and those that would purchase school lunch. Laptops and masks were distributed to every student, and curriculum was modified to ensure continuity, whether at home or in school, with all students participating in synchronous learning throughout the day. As school begins, the District will continue to re-evaluate the circumstances and will communicate with families in September on future steps.

Policy Committee:

The Policy Committee recommended temporary COVID-19 related amendments to existing policy for the 2020-21 school year. These temporary policies, such as limiting visitors in the schools, technology procedures, and internet safety were approved by the Board and emailed to parents by the Superintendent.

Out-of-District Tuition Students at RSD 17:

The Board received a request for out-of-district students to transfer into RSD17. The Board had a discussion and decided to defer the item to the Policy Committee for further exploration.

New Board Member:

The Board welcomed Prem Aithal of Haddam as the eleventh member of the Board of Education. Prem was voted in by Haddam residents to fill the remainder of the term left behind by Gerry Mathews. He will serve on the Finance Committee and chair the Strategic Planning Committee.

Diversity Committee:

A Diversity Committee of district teachers and staff was established this summer with the purpose to review and enhance the school district's efforts to address topics of multiculturalism in the curriculum. The committee worked on reviewing and updating the Language Arts and Social Studies Curriculums, including incorporating new reading materials for the coming year.

Capital Improvements:

Oil tanks for both BES and KES will be installed in September. A temporary oil tank was placed at Burr Elementary to produce hot water until the permanent tank can be installed. The Field House has progressed over the summer with the installation of the voice evacuation system, wiring for lighting and the pole vault box, and painting the walls and ceilings. Patches and repairs to the cement were identified and will be filled and a laser leveling analysis was completed to ensure the floor will pour evenly. Crews are working weekends, but delays due to COVID-19 and other minor complications have delayed the projected completion to October.

On our RSD17.org Website:

You can view the schedules and read the minutes from each of the BoE Subcommittee meetings by going to the "BOE Meeting Schedules and Minutes" and clicking on the subcommittee links at the top.