

Summary of September 2020 Board of Education Meetings

Cougar Pride:

The Board of Education and Superintendent Hageman recognized and thanked Amy Perry and Sharon Timek for coordinating over 50 volunteers to sew nearly 4,700 cloth face masks for the students and staff of HK. Amy began coordinating the effort in June to recruit volunteers and funding for the project and then distributed tote bags of supplies and materials to each of the community mask makers. The group created masks in both fun prints and school colors in various sizes that would fit pre-Kindergarten students through adults.

2020-2021 School Year:

School Reopening Plans: After months of planning, RSD17 was excited to welcome students back into schools for the first time since March 13th. The first four weeks in the hybrid model allowed for new systems and processes, such as distancing, technology, transportation and cleaning, to be smoothed out with minimal impact on students. On September 29th, grades K-8 returned to in-school learning five days a week with the option of remote learning still remaining a choice for families. The High School remains in the hybrid model until the completion of the Field House due to space limitations with social distance protocols in place.

Food Services: RSD17 applied for and was awarded a USDA waiver making school meals free for students until December 31 or until funds run out. Students in K-5 will receive breakfast and lunch for free and Middle and High school students will receive free lunch. This waiver includes children under the age of 18 who attend HK schools, students who are remote learning, and children who are not enrolled in the school system but reside in either Haddam and Killingworth.

Facilities:

HKHS Field House: Renovations at the HKHS Field House were delayed again when structural deficiencies were found in the original concrete subfloor that was poured when the Field House was built over 40 years ago. Expansion joints were added and numerous cracks were filled. Leveling tests identified varying point-to-point measurements to be amended in the surface. Additional spending was approved by the Board for the necessary repairs and reimbursement from the State is expected for these additional steps. The additional work has delayed the completion of the Field House until mid December.

Playground Equipment: The annual inspection of playground equipment noted safety issues with the wooden playground at KES and the preschool playground at BES. Both of these playgrounds were removed. KES still has its front playground intact and an outdoor playspace exists for the Pre-K which is now located at KES.

COVID-19 Adjustments to Facilities: Required preparations were made to each of the buildings in accordance with rules and standards for building operations during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additional cleaning staff were outsourced, protective plexiglass guards were installed, and signage for distancing and precautionary measures were installed. Tents were set up outside some of the schools to allow for outdoor mask breaks in inclement weather. Excess furniture was removed from the buildings and stored in onsite containers and HVAC systems were adjusted and filters replaced.

Finance:

The Finance Subcommittee has been keeping track of expenses and savings strictly due to COVID-19. To date 2020-2021 COVID related expenses include mid-day bus runs for Kindergarten and first grade students, technology upgrades, instructional supplies, outsourcing custodial staff, and additional PPE. Expenses from July to September are at approximately \$222,000 and COVID relief grant money will offset some expenses.

Website:

You can review communications from the Superintendent, including information on how positive COVID cases would be communicated to the school community and the High School instructional model through December on the RSD17.org website under "School Re-Opening Updates".