

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 17**  
**BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING**  
**January 5, 2021**

*A meeting of the Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education was held on January 5, 2021 in the Haddam-Killingworth Intermediate/Middle School Cafeteria and via Google Hangouts Meet Video Conference (Live Stream) for public viewing. Board of Education Chair, Suzanne Sack, called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM.*

**Members Present:** *Brenda Buzzi, Peter Sonski, Nelson Rivera, Jennifer Favolora, Eileen Blewett, Prem Aithal, Joanne Nesti, Joel D'Angelo (Via Remote), Kathleen Zandi and Suzanne Sack*

**Members Absent:** *Shawna Goldfarb*

**Also Present:** *Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Holly Hageman, Director of Operations, John Mercier, Principal of Haddam-Killingworth High School, Donna Hayward, Student Representative, Matthew Jennings, and Interim Board Clerk, Pamela Hensel*

**The Board meetings are videotaped and posted on the RSD17 Website under Board of Education, BOE Meeting Schedules & Minutes for public viewing.**

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gi8xd6Fczc1pDihhZJhOwRt0Y2552yM3/view>

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1TnsvzuVMYAqxF-evW-0E7e4xyi151pwO/view>

**Call to Order/Opening of Meeting:** *Board of Education Chair, Suzanne Sack, called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.*

**Report from Chairman about new BOE Meeting Format and Process Under the Governor's Order:**

*Board Chair, Sack, updated the Board. She briefly went over the BOE Meeting Format under the Governor's Order which are now being held in-person and remotely.*

**Public Comment:** *None.*

**Report from Student Representatives**

*Matthew Jennings updated the Board on the success of the Holiday Show which raised \$17,469.73 to benefit the Nathaniel Field Memorial Foundation. The show was produced in a hybrid fashion both live and virtual. A majority of the interviews were pre-recorded to adhere to COVID protocols. All schools continued to show their support by submitting taped musical performances. The holiday show was noted on WTNH Channel 8. Matthew extended special thanks to the Class of 2016, HK Community Relations Club, HK Girls Tennis Team, HKTU and the HK World Language Departments for their generous donations. Matthew further expressed gratitude to the entire community for their continued support.*

*Board member, Brenda Buzzi mentioned that Matthew has been accepted to Yale University. The board extended their congratulations.*

*Student Representative, Matthews Jennings left the meeting at approximately 7:11 p.m. Principal Donna Hayward left the meeting at 7:11 p.m.*

*Brenda Buzzi **MOVED** and Kathy Zandi **SECONDED** a motion to add item 6 A. Superintendent Update on Schools by the Superintendent to the agenda.*

*There was unanimous Consent from all Board Members*

## **Board Committee Reports**

**A. Facilities Subcommittee** – *Peter Sonski updated the Board on the completion of the Field House. The floor is done, the bleachers restored and the inspections performed. Only a few small items remain outstanding. Suzanne suggested the Board invite the Public Building Committee members to attend a future board meeting so the Board can express their appreciation. The next Facilities meeting is scheduled for January 7th.*

**B. Finance Subcommittee** – *No Report, Eileen Blewett stated the committee is meeting on Thursday, January 7<sup>th</sup>.*

**C. Policy Subcommittee** – *Joanne Nesti reported the committee met on December 15th and continued the discussion of the Tuition policy and the Electronic Participation Policy. At the next BOE meeting on 1/19/21 the committee would like to distribute the Conflict of Interest form for board members to complete. Joanne added that she would like to finalize the BOE handbook. She noted that the committee had removed some attorney language from the handbook that was noted in the Board Bylaws and believes the language should be added back in.*

**D. Communications Subcommittee** – *Jennifer Favalora reported there was no meeting in December.*

### **E. Personnel and Evaluation Subcommittee**

*Board Chair, Sack, updated the Board. She noted the committee is busy with union negotiations for two unions.*

### **F. Strategic Planning Subcommittee**

*Prem Aithal reported he had no update. The Vision of the Graduate (VOG) steering committee meets tomorrow.*

## **Board Liaison Reports**

### **A. Healthy Communities – Healthy Kids Council**

*Jennifer Favalora reported the group is working on the HKYFS budget,*

### **B. LEARN**

*Jennifer Favalora updated the Board. Jennifer reported that Patrice McCarthy, Deputy Director and General Council from CAFE came to speak about the legislative session. Meetings will be held virtually which means there can be more public awareness and input. The Bi-Annual budget is on the docket, and CAFE's priorities are: school funding efforts, removing the cap on ECS grants and supporting diversity, equity and inclusion. LEARN's priorities are to increase Magnet School funding and teacher recruitment efforts. In addition, CAFE noted that there are efforts to have the religious exemption removed from vaccination requirements.*

### **C. Park & Recreation**

*No Report.*

#### **D. Haddam Board of Selectmen**

*Jennifer Favolora noted that the Swing Bridge between Haddam and East Haddam will undergo a 2-year construction project beginning in the spring of 2022. This will likely affect transportation for our students. The town is keeping a close eye on January taxes and lastly they are requesting all departments submit their budgets with zero increases.*

#### **E. Killingworth Board of Selectmen**

*Kathy Zandi reported Killingworth rescheduled their meeting the day before and Kathy was unable to attend.*

#### **6 A. Update on School Model/Operations During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

*Superintendent Hageman updated the Board. She noted that we continue to maintain our K-8 in person operations with a couple of brief closures due to quarantining. The High School remains in the current hybrid mode and has had no closures.*

*Superintendent Hageman noted that we are among a small number of districts in the state operating full in person classes. The community continues to report to us any COVID cases appropriately.*

*Vaccine distribution update – Superintendent Hageman stated there was a meeting today with the CT advisory group to consider the national recommendation that educators be in group 1B. It is unknown at this time if that will be adopted or when those vaccines will be available to that group. Hageman noted that she believes that this is still many months away.*

*Proposal – Superintendent Hageman reported that these first four months of school have been exceptionally challenging for both teaching and learning. We have relied heavily on technology and have not made any major adjustments for our educators during this time. Hageman proposed adding 6 early release days to this year's school calendar, one in February, two in March, one in April and two in May. On these days<sup>2</sup> students would be released on a regular early dismissal schedule and teachers and paraprofessionals would use the time to plan and collaborate. During this pandemic staff continues to adapt to challenging circumstances and we must consider the best ways to support and sustain their efforts. This investment in sustainability is in the best interest of our students.*

*Board members shared their gratitude to teachers, students, parents and the Superintendent for getting us this far in person with love and care.*

*Peter Sonski **MOVED** and Eileen Blewett **SECONDED** a motion to add to the agenda item 6 B. A revision to the 2020-2021 School Calendar adding 6 early release days.*

*Motion passed unanimously by a show of hands from all Board Members.*

*Brenda Buzzi **MOVED** and Eileen Blewett **SECONDED** a motion to approve adding 6 six early release days to the 2020-2021 School Calendar.*

*Motion passed unanimously 10-0-0 by the following Votes:*

Kathleen Zandi	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Shawna Goldfarb	Absent
Peter Sonski	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Jennifer Favalora	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/>
Dr. Nelson Rivera	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"/>
Eileen Blewett	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Brenda Buzzi	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/>
Joanne Nesti	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Prem Aithal	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/>
				Suzanne Sack	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/>

Joanne Nesti **MOVED** and Prem Aithal **SECONDED** a motion to move agenda item 7A. to after Consent agenda item 8.

Motion passed unanimously by a show of hands from all Board Members.

**Old Business:**

**7 B. Second Read School Calendars 2021-2022 and 2022-2023**

Prem Aithal **MOVED** and Nelson Rivera **SECONDED** a motion to accept the changes to the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 school calendars as recommended.

Motion passed unanimously 10-0-0 by the following Votes:

Kathleen Zandi	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Shawna Goldfarb	Absent
Peter Sonski	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Jennifer Favalora	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/>
Dr. Nelson Rivera	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"/>
Eileen Blewett	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Brenda Buzzi	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/>
Joanne Nesti	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Prem Aithal	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/>
				Suzanne Sack	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/>

**8. Consent Agenda** - Chairman Sack reminded Board members that the consent agenda has been expanded to include minutes, statute driven policies and the personnel and enrollment reports.

- A. Approval of Minutes from the December 1, 2020, Board of Education Meeting
- B. Approval of Minutes from the December 15, 2020, Board of Education – Education Session Meeting
- C. Personnel Report
- D. Enrollment Report
- E. 5000 Policy Series (first read)

Items B. and E. were removed from the consent agenda for further discussion and clarification.

Joanne Nesti **MOVED** and Kathy Zandi **SECONDED** a motion to accept Items A, C, & D on the Consent Agenda as amended.

*Motion passed unanimously by a show of hands. Joel D'Angelo left the meeting at 8:22 p.m.*

*Item 8 B. the minutes of December 15, 2020 will be resubmitted for approval at the second meeting in January.*

*Joel rejoined the meeting at 8:26 p.m.*

*Joanne Nesti **MOVED** and Eileen Blewett **SECONDED** a motion to accept Item E, the 5000 Series policies as a first read.*

*Motion passed unanimously 10-0-0 by the following Votes:*

Kathleen Zandi	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Shawna Goldfarb	Absent		
Peter Sonski	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Jennifer Favalora	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Dr. Nelson Rivera	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"/>
Eileen Blewett	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Brenda Buzzi	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
Joanne Nesti	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>	Prem Aithal	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>
				Suzanne Sack	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	A <input type="checkbox"/>

#### **7 A. HKEA Contract Approval\***

*Board Chair, Sack, went through a summary of the HKEA agreement that was being proposed to the Board and answered questions from the Board.*

*Eileen Blewett **MOVED** and Jennifer Favalora **SECONDED** a motion to go into executive session. Joel D'Angelo and Pamela Hensel left the meeting at 8:45 p.m.*

*Executive Session began at 8:46 p.m.*

*The Board discussed the 2021-2024 HKEA Settlement Agreement*

*Executive Session ended at 9:20 p.m. Joel D'Angelo rejoined the meeting at 9:20 p.m.*

*Board Chair, Sack, shared the differences in the proposed contract compared to the previous contract in terms of step movements and wage increases over the three years.*

*Nelson Rivera **MOVED** and Jennifer Favalora **SECONDED** a motion to approve the tentative HKEA settlement agreement as presented in the summary memo.*

*Motion passed unanimously 7-0-3 by the following Votes:*

Kathleen Zandi YES  NO  A   
Peter Sonski YES  NO  A   
Nelson Rivera YES  NO  A   
Eileen Blewett YES  NO  A   
Joanne Nesti YES  NO  A

Shawna Goldfarb Absent  
Jennifer Favalora YES  NO  A   
Joel D'Angelo YES  NO  A   
Brenda Buzzi YES  NO  A   
Prem Aithal YES  NO  A   
Suzanne Sack YES  NO  A

***Board Discussion/ News/ Suggestions - None***

*Board Chair, Suzanne Sack, called for the meeting to adjourn at 9:28 PM.*

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Pamela Hensel  
Interim Board Clerk*

Approval: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Jennifer Favalora, Secretary*