

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 17
BOARD OF EDUCATION – EDUCATION SESSION
MEETING
January 18, 2022

A meeting of the Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education was held on January 18, 2022 in the Haddam-Killingworth Intermediate/Middle School Cafeteria and Live Streamed through the District's Website. Board of Education Chair, Suzanne Sack, called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

Members Present: *Hamish MacPhail, Brenda Buzzi, Lisa Connelly (Via Remote), Corey Roberts, Jennifer Favalora, Kathleen Zandi, Joel D'Angelo, Nelson Rivera, Peter Sonski and Suzanne Sack*

Members Absent: *Shawna Goldfarb*

Also Present: *Superintendent of Schools, Jeffrey Wihbey, Director of Operations, John Mercier, Director of Finance, Ann Adriani, Haddam-Killingworth Mentoring Program, Patty Coletti and Ray Galloway and Jamie Sciascia (Via Remote)*

In-Person Visitors: *Approximately 20*

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/19J4r0tyPIFthnLY_ACgNvEAPE3vq9xau/view?usp=sharing

Call to Order/Opening of Meeting: *Board of Education Chair, Suzanne Sack, called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.*

*Kathy Zandi **MOVED** and Brenda Buzzi **SECONDED** a motion to move up on the Agenda after Board Chair Report, Haddam-Killingworth Mentoring Program - Patty Coletti and Ray Galloway set forth under New Business.*

Motion passed unanimously by Way of Show of Hands.

*Kathy Zandi **MOVED** and Brenda Buzzi **SECONDED** a motion to move up on the Agenda after New Business, a revision to Policy 6140 - Curriculum.*

Motion passed unanimously by Way of Show of Hands.

Board Chair, Sack, spoke briefly about Suspending the Rules of First Read/Second Read of Policy 6140.

Public Comment:

Board Chair, Sack, spoke briefly on the Public Comment Process.

Kimberly Barris from Killingworth addressed the Board. She spoke about her opposition to the Covid-19 Vaccines and School Mandates and feels it strips parents' rights away.

Andrea Gaines from Killingworth addressed the Board. She spoke about her concerns with the HKMS Health Curriculum on Transgender topics and feels that parents should be notified to have the opportunity to

opt out. She also spoke about her daughter and how uncomfortable she felt with the questions she was asked regarding Gender Choice and Sexual Relationships during Health Class. She feels that this isn't the message the District should be sending to students.

Jessica Gersz from Killingworth addressed the Board. She spoke about inappropriate material provided to students regarding Gender Identification and Sexual Preference in the Middle School Health Curriculum and feels that this material is being pushed on students as a political agenda.

Shannon Johnson from Higganum addressed the Board. She spoke about how she feels there shouldn't be any LGBTQ related materials or sexual related clubs on campus and feels that the District violated policy by holding these without the parents' consent and/or knowledge. She asked the Board to look into what's in the Middle Schools Library and remove any and all Library Books containing explicit materials that are harmful to students (i.e. Ghostboys) effective immediately.

The two below Public Comments were received via email and read by the Board Secretary.

Kelly Morin from Higgnaum addressed the Board. She spoke about her opposition to the Petition that is circulating about not teaching Gender Identity and Clubs. She believes it is a danger to youths if they aren't taught those specific topics.

Torrey MacDonald from Higganum addressed the Board. She spoke about the Health Curriculum at the Middle School regarding Gender Identity and feels this should not be taught to students. Instead, Torrey stressed the importance of topics that need to be included in the Health Curriculum like mindful strategies for topics like anxiety and depression.

Superintendent's Report:

A. Cougar Pride – Noreen Granucci 50 years of service

Superintendent Whibey addressed the Board. He recognized, with the Board, Noreen Granucci after 50 years of outstanding service within the District. He spoke about her life, and career, started working in the District at Killingworth Elementary School in 1972.

B. Updates

Superintendent Wihbey updated the Board. He spoke about the Middle School holding its first Music Concert; 100% of all students at Burr Elementary demonstrated growth in the Dynamic Indicators of Early Literacy Skill "DIBEL"; KES is celebrated Gratitude throughout the Month of December, and HKIS held before the Holiday break a wonderful Town Hall Meeting and Holiday Sing-Along. The Luminaries of Hope Event is being scheduled soon and a Chorus Concert is scheduled for February 2nd.

Board Chair Report:

A. Board Liaisons

Youth & Family Services - Shawna Goldfarb

LEARN – Jennifer Favalora

Killingworth Board of Selectmen – Kathy Zandi

Haddam Board of Selectmen – Board Chair, Sack, is looking for a Board Member from Haddam to volunteer to attend these meetings.

Park & Rec – Corey Roberts

New Business:

Haddam-Killingworth Mentoring Program - Patty Coletti and Ray Galloway

Patty Coletti and Ray Galloway updated the Board. They spoke about how Youth and Family Services and the District is a Collaboration of the Mentoring Program. They also spoke on the History and Development of the Program, Current Status of Employees, Mentors and Mentees, Mentors Screening Process, Age of Mentors, Policy and Procedure, and Advisory Counsel.

Policy 6140 – Curriculum:

Nelson Rivera updated the Board. He spoke about how Policy 6140 was recently approved at the December 21st Board Meeting. The Committee reviewed and recommended a more adequate description of what the Curriculum Subcommittee work entails and also recommended striking the word “Develop” in the third paragraph. The language now reads: “the Curriculum Subcommittee that has the responsibility to recommend, renew and approve all Curriculum for the District and said Curriculum shall be the subject of the approval of the Board of Education” - essentially just striking the word “Develop” as that is more of a role of the Educators.

*Peter Sonski **MOVED** and Joel D’Angelo **SECONDED** a motion to suspend Rules 9314.*

Motion passed unanimously By Way of Show of Hands.

*Brenda Buzzi **MOVED** and Joel D’Angelo **SECONDED** a motion to approve the revisions as recommended by the Policy Committee in Policy #6140 as presented.*

Motion unanimously passed by Way of Voice Votes.

Kathleen Zandi	YES <u>√</u>	NO <u> </u>	A <u> </u>	Shawna Goldfarb	Absent
Peter Sonski	YES <u>√</u>	NO <u> </u>	A <u> </u>	Jennifer Favalora	YES <u>√</u> NO <u> </u> A <u> </u>
Lisa Connelly	YES <u>√</u>	NO <u> </u>	A <u> </u>	Nelson Rivera	YES <u>√</u> NO <u> </u> A <u> </u>
Joel D’Angelo	YES <u>√</u>	NO <u> </u>	A <u> </u>	Hamish MacPhail	YES <u>√</u> NO <u> </u> A <u> </u>
Brenda Buzzi	YES <u>√</u>	NO <u> </u>	A <u> </u>	Corey Roberts	YES <u>√</u> NO <u> </u> A <u> </u>
				Suzanne Sack	YES <u>√</u> NO <u> </u> A <u> </u>

Old Business:

A. Discussion of Confidential Attorney-Client Communication regarding the District Self-Insurance Fund (Discussion Proposed for Executive Session).*

Board Chair, Sack updated the Board. She spoke about the District Self-Insurance Fund and how it has been sitting dormant since they entered into the State plan. There has been a lot of interest as far as what the Board will do with the fund and the Board has asked the District Attorney to give some perspective tonight.

*Brenda Buzzi **MOVED** and Peter Sonski **SECONDED** a motion to go into Executive Session regarding a Legal Matter.*

Motion unanimously passed by Way of Voice Votes.

Kathleen Zandi	YES <u>√</u>	NO <u> </u>	A <u> </u>	Shawna Goldfarb	Absent
Peter Sonski	YES <u>√</u>	NO <u> </u>	A <u> </u>	Jennifer Favalora	YES <u>√</u> NO <u> </u> A <u> </u>
Lisa Connelly	YES <u>√</u>	NO <u> </u>	A <u> </u>	Dr. Nelson Rivera	YES <u>√</u> NO <u> </u> A <u> </u>
Joel D’Angelo	YES <u>√</u>	NO <u> </u>	A <u> </u>	Hamish MacPhail	YES <u>√</u> NO <u> </u> A <u> </u>
Brenda Buzzi	YES <u>√</u>	NO <u> </u>	A <u> </u>	Corey Roberts	YES <u>√</u> NO <u> </u> A <u> </u>
				Suzanne Sack	YES <u>√</u> NO <u> </u> A <u> </u>

The Board went into Executive Session at approximately 8:16 p.m.

Executive Session:

Attorney-Client Communication Regarding District Self-Insurance Fund.

The Board came out of Executive Session at approximately 9:14 p.m.

Adjournment:

Board Chair, Sack, called for the meeting to adjourn at 9:14 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jamie Sciascia

Board Clerk

Approval: _____ Date: _____
Joel D'Angelo, Secretary