

**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 17
BOARD OF EDUCATION -
MEETING MINUTES
October 10, 2023**

The Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education meeting was held on October 10, 2023, in the HK High School Community Room.

Board Member Attendance:

| Board Member | Present | Absent | Board Member | Present | Absent |
|-------------------|---------|--------|--------------------|---------|--------|
| Prem Aithal | X | | Dr. Nelson Rivera | X | |
| Lisa Connelly | X | | Corey Roberts | X | |
| Dr. Joel D'Angelo | | X | Peter Sonski | X | |
| Jennifer Favalora | X | | Dr. Kathleen Zandi | X | |
| Shawna Goldfarb | X | | Suzanne Sack | X | |
| Hamish MacPhail | X | | | | |

Also Present: Superintendent of Schools Jeffrey Wihbey, Assistant Superintendent Jennifer Miller, Board Administrator Sarah Kaiser, Director of Fiscal Operations David Solin, HKHS Principal Donna Hayward, Curriculum Coordinators Jennifer Beermuender and Heather Rigatti, and Student Representatives Madison Moriarty and Michael Perry

Visitors: 2

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

1. Call to Order/Opening of Meeting

Board of Education Chair Suzanne Sack called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. Superintendent's Report

A. Report from the Student Representatives

Principal Hayward introduced Madison Moriarty and Michael Perry as the HKHS Student Representatives to the Board of Education for the 2023-2024 school year.

Michael Perry reported to the Board on the events that took place last week for Spirit Week. He also noted that the sports teams have had a great beginning to the fall season.

Madison Moriarty spoke to the Board about the pep rally that took place last week. This was the first time the pep rally was held since the 2020 school year. Madison also reported on the upcoming trip to the All-American High School Film Festival in October. She spoke on the new course at the high school called "If you love it, teach it."

B. Monthly Summary and Updates

a. Superintendent Report

Superintendent Wihbey reported to the Board that two students will begin their internships at local businesses. He wanted to thank the businesses working with our students. He also stated that HKYFS is coordinating an HK Mentoring Program at BES, KES, and HKIMS this year.

Superintendent Wihbey gave an update to the Board on transportation. He also updated the Board that the Chromebooks that were delayed have been received and distributed to the district.

The Superintendent said that the Finance Department had begun the preliminary preparation for the FY 24-25 budget cycle, and the work is on track for our annual Federal audit.

Superintendent Wihbey acknowledged Athletic Director Flint from the High School received the 2023 National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association State Award of Merit.

On behalf of the Board of Education, Board Chair Sack also congratulated Director Flint.

The Superintendent provided follow-up responses to Board questions regarding menstrual products, gender-neutral restrooms, the policy on marijuana, chronic absenteeism, and turnover information on certified staff.

Principal Hayward, Madison Moriarty, and Michael Perry left the meeting at 6:48 pm.

b. SPED Program Review

The Superintendent provided an update and summary of the review process. As part of the process, the team will meet with various stakeholders throughout the district in areas such as individual observations, classroom observations, and focus groups. The dates currently are scheduled for November. The Superintendent will provide the Board with updates monthly and a more substantive report on the January agenda.

3. Public Comment

None

4. Discussion Items

A. District Continuous Improvement Plan 2023-2024

Superintendent Wihbey presented to the Board the District continuous improvement plan that is driven by the district strategic operating plan.

Jennifer Beermuender and Heather Rigatti left the meeting at 7:51 pm.

B. ADM-Towns of Haddam and Killingworth

Superintendent Wihbey updated the Board. He spoke about the ADM Data for the Towns of Haddam and Killingworth as reported to the State Department of Education as of October 1, 2023. The total number of students reported was 1772, with 1069 (60.33%) from Haddam and 703 from Killingworth (39.67%).

5. Action Items

A. Owner's Rep RFQ Selection

Peter Sonski provided the Board with an update on the process of obtaining an owner's representative for the pre-referendum phase of the master plan. There was a discussion on the firms that submitted proposals for the RFQ and the interview results.

Peter Sonski **MOVED**, and Shawna Goldfarb **SECONDED** a motion for Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education to award the Owner's Representative contract for the Pre-Referendum Phase of the District's Capital Plan to Arcadis U.S., Inc. effective as of October 11, 2023, not to exceed the \$35,000 threshold that the Board of Education set.

Motion unanimously passed from the following voice votes 10-0-0.

| Member | Vote | Member | Vote |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Prem Aithal | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A | Dr. Nelson Rivera | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A |
| Lisa Connelly | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A | Corey Roberts | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A |
| Dr. Joel D'Angelo | ABSENT | Peter Sonski | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A |
| Jennifer Favalora | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A | Dr. Kathleen Zandi | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A |
| Shawna Goldfarb | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A | Suzanne Sack | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A |
| Hamish MacPhail | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A | | |

B. Consent Agenda

- a. Enrollment Report
- b. Personnel Report
- c. Approval of Revised Minutes from the September 12, 2023, Board of Education Meeting
- d. Approval of Minutes from the September 21, 2023, Board of Education Special Joint Meeting
- e. Approval of Minutes from the September 26, 2023, Board of Education Special Meeting Workshop
- f. Acceptance of a donation in the amount of \$1,000.00 received from the HKIMS PTO. This donation will be deposited directly into the Student Activity Fund to be used to offset the cost of Grade 5 field trips and student events. Submitted by Eric Larson, Principal of Haddam-Killingworth Intermediate School.
- g. Acceptance of a donation in the amount of \$1,000.00 received from the HKIMS PTO. This donation will be deposited directly into the Student Activity Fund to be used to offset the cost of Grade 4 field trips and student events. Submitted by Eric Larson, Principal of Haddam-Killingworth Intermediate School.
- h. Acceptance of a donation in the amount of \$1,000.00 received from the HKIMS PTO. This donation will be deposited directly into the Student Activity Fund to be used to offset the cost of Grade 8 field trips and student events. Submitted by Dorothy Ventura, Principal of Haddam-Killingworth Middle School.

- i. Acceptance of a donation in the amount of \$1,000.00 received from the HKIMS PTO. This donation will be deposited directly into the Student Activity Fund to be used to offset the cost of Grade 7 field trips and student events. Submitted by Dorothy Ventura, Principal of Haddam-Killingworth Middle School.
- j. Acceptance of a donation in the amount of \$1,000.00 received from the HKIMS PTO. This donation will be deposited directly into the Student Activity Fund to be used to offset the cost of Grade 6 field trips and student events. Submitted by Dorothy Ventura, Principal of Haddam-Killingworth Middle School.
- k. Acceptance of a donation in the amount of \$100.00 received from The Haddam Women’s Club. This will be deposited into the Student Activity Fund. Submitted by Brienne Whidden, Principal of Burr Elementary School.
- l. Approval request for the Disposal of obsolete ELA 42 textbooks/manuals. Submitted by Jennifer Beermuender, Humanities Curriculum Coordinator.

Prem Aithal **MOVED**, and Lisa Connelly **SECONDED** a motion to accept the Consent Agenda as presented with gratitude for all the generous donations.

Motion unanimously passed from the following voice votes 10-0-0.

| Member | Vote | Member | Vote |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Prem Aithal | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A | Dr. Nelson Rivera | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A |
| Lisa Connelly | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A | Corey Roberts | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A |
| Dr. Joel D’Angelo | ABSENT | Peter Sonski | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A |
| Jennifer Favalora | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A | Dr. Kathleen Zandi | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A |
| Shawna Goldfarb | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A | Suzanne Sack | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A |
| Hamish MacPhail | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A | | |

C. Budget Transfer Request-Allocation of Substitute Lines

Peter Sonski provided information to the Board regarding the reallocation of substitute teachers and paraprofessionals lines. Currently, the budget reflected two broad categories of expenditure lines, and the request was to be individual line items for each of the schools. The request to be transferred is \$335,817.50.

Peter Sonski **MOVED**, and Prem Aithal **SECONDED** a motion for approval of all fund transfers as proposed.

Motion unanimously passed from the following voice votes 10-0-0.

| Member | Vote | Member | Vote |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Prem Aithal | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A | Dr. Nelson Rivera | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A |
| Lisa Connelly | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A | Corey Roberts | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A |
| Dr. Joel D’Angelo | ABSENT | Peter Sonski | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A |
| Jennifer Favalora | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A | Dr. Kathleen Zandi | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A |
| Shawna Goldfarb | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A | Suzanne Sack | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A |
| Hamish MacPhail | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A | | |

D. BES Solar/Security Shades Request for Approval

The Board discussed the acquisition of Solar-security shades for Burr Elementary School. The project was previously added to the capital list for the 23/24 fiscal year but was tabled due to budget concerns. The project was revisited to be included in the current budget year.

Peter Sonski **MOVED**, and Shawna Goldfarb **SECONDED** a motion for \$12,104.18 for the purchase of solar roller shades for the main office for BES, and our Kindergarten parking lot faced classrooms.

Motion unanimously passed from the following voice votes 10-0-0.

| Member | Vote | Member | Vote |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Prem Aithal | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A | Dr. Nelson Rivera | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A |
| Lisa Connelly | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A | Corey Roberts | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A |
| Dr. Joel D’Angelo | ABSENT | Peter Sonski | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A |
| Jennifer Favalora | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A | Dr. Kathleen Zandi | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A |
| Shawna Goldfarb | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A | Suzanne Sack | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A |
| Hamish MacPhail | X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A | | |

6. Committee Reports

A. Finance/Facilities Subcommittee

a. Master Plan Update

No additional update since the last subcommittee meeting to report.

b. Fiscal Department Revenue and Expenditure Reports

Committee Chair Sonski and Director Solin provided a status report to the Board as of the last meeting. The Board discussed the reports as of the end of August, and Director Solin will follow up and provide the Board with the reports for the end of September for further review.

B. Communications/Strategic Planning

Committee Co-Chair Aithal reported that the committee met at the beginning of September to review the subcommittee goals and align the goals to the Superintendent's priorities and the strategic plan. The revised subcommittee goals for 23-24 will be tabled until next month.

Committee Co-Chair Goldfarb reported that the committee met last week. The committee discussed budget communications and budget calendar, and master plan communication.

5. Board Member Reports, Announcements & Comments

A. Liaison Reports

a. LEARN

Jennifer Favalora provided the Board with information on Generation Esports.

b. HK Youth and Family Services

Jennifer Favalora reported on the following events:

- Accepting requests for the holiday gift-giving program
- October 16th, Scott Driscoll will hold internet safety presentations for grades 4-8 and then a Zoom conversation for parents.
- On October 28th, there will be a Drug Takeback Day.
- On October 29th, there will be the Pumpkin Run at 9:00 am.

c. Haddam Killingworth Recreation Department

None.

d. Haddam Board of Selectmen

None

e. Killingworth Board of Selectmen

None

6. Executive Session

A. Personnel Matter

The Board invited the Superintendent to attend the session.

Shawna Goldfarb **MOVED**, and Dr. Kathy Zandi **SECONDED** a motion to go into Executive Session for a personnel matter.

The motion was passed by a show of hands.

The Board went into Executive Session at 8:43 pm for a personnel matter.

Superintendent Wihbey left the meeting at 8:45 pm.

The Board ended Executive Session at 9:21 pm.

Board Chair Sack adjourned the meeting at 9:21 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Kaiser

Administrative Assistant to the Board of Education

Approval: _____ Date: _____

Joel D'Angelo, Secretary