

Summary of November 2023 RSD17 Board of Education Meeting

Recognition of Outgoing Members

The Board recognized Board Members Joel D'Angelo and Peter Sonski for their time, dedication, and hard work; both served multiple terms on the RSD17 Board of Education. They were each presented with a certificate and gift from the Board, and we wish them the best in their future endeavors.

Welcome New Members

The Board welcomes new RSD17 BoE members Jennifer Voegtli of Killingworth and Heather Pach of Haddam.

Cougar Pride

HKMS Choral Director Katherine Jones and students Eliza Sturges, Emma Castiglioni, and Eleanor Barry spoke to the Board about the Middle School Honors Choir. They were selected to participate in the American Choral Directors Association Eastern Division Conference. Board Chair Sack presented each student with a recognition certificate and congratulations on behalf of the Board.

Superintendent Report

Superintendent Wihbey reported to the Board on the following items:

- Burr Elementary was named a School of Distinction for the second consecutive year by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE).
- Killingworth Elementary achieved a School Performance Index (SPI) of 100 again this year.
- HKIS made significant improvements over the last year
- HKHS SAT ELA scores ranked as the 10th-highest in Connecticut.
- Superintendent Wihbey recognized HKHS senior Liza Murphy, who was identified by the College Board as a commended student on the 2022 PSAT.
- Teacher feedback is being collected through the District Wide Data Team to monitor the impact of Professional Learning on teachers' practice.
- Jenn Beermuender, Superintendent Wihbey, and Judy Nacca defended our reading waiver to the State Department of Education on 10/26 and will hear a response by December 1st.
- Food Services received a Supply Chain Assistance Grant of \$44,289.28.
- The Fiscal department reported that the annual audit is still on target for December 31st completion.

Student Representatives Report

Madison Moriarty reported to the Board on the following November happenings:

- The boys soccer and volleyball teams had semi-final state games.
- The Cougar Bowl was held on November 20th, in which senior and junior girls play against one another and the boys are their cheerleaders.
- HKYFS sponsored a school-wide assembly on leadership and character building.
- The football team traveled for the annual Principal's Cup Game on November 21st.

Continuous Improvement Plan

All RSD17 principals presented their Continuous Improvement Plans to the Board.

Field Trip Requests

HKMS Philadelphia Field Trip

Principal Ventura updated the Board about the upcoming 8th-grade Philadelphia Trip, which will bring them to many historic sites over three days and two nights in June.

HKMS Trip Request-Nature's Classroom Field Trip

Principal Ventura spoke to the Board about the Middle School's interest in a 6th-grade field trip. The first step taken was a survey of feasibility and interest. Based on the feedback, Principal Ventura would like to work with the team and the subcommittee on the best approach to offering a modified trip in the future.

HKHS Trip Request-France April 2025

Principal Hayward and Teacher Christine Kehrley presented to the Board their proposal for a trip to France in 2025 for the 10th-12th grade French students. Principal Hayward and Ms. Kehrley discussed the itinerary and travel safety and her recommendation for the students to obtain travel insurance. Superintendent Wihbey also told the Board that they would be revisiting the trip six months before for a second approval.

Finance/Facilities Subcommittee

The Board, along with Tecton and Arcadis, held the 4th Public session for the Master Plan on 11/16, including an interactive live survey asking about various priorities for future schools. Another community survey will be conducted soon as the Board continues work on the RSD17 Master Plan.

Policy Subcommittee

The Board reviewed the language updates and clarifications in Family and Medical Leave Policies 4152.6 and 4252.6. There are no substantive changes to either policy.

Curriculum Subcommittee

ELA Update - Grades K-6 have successfully implemented Wit and Wisdom, integrating weekly collaborative planning meetings.

HKHS Class Updates - Civics and Contemporary Issues and Health 1 and 2 are currently being written/updated for Fall 2024 to align with CT state standards.

Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) - The District is making the shift this year from SRBI to MTSS (Multi-Tiered Systems of Support). MTSS is a more comprehensive and up-to-date, whole-child approach to intervention, which aligns with Objectives 1, 2, and 5 of the Strategic Plan. The initial implementation included the creation of Leadership Teams at schools and fine-tuning Student Support Teams.

Appreciation for Curriculum Coordinators - The subcommittee acknowledged the dedication and hard work of Heather Rigatti and Jenn Beermuender. Because of their work, RSD17 is often ahead of state updates and requirements and has yet to see the COVID-related learning losses experienced in other districts.

On Our Website

The RSD 17 Master Plan Information is available on the website under the District Facilities menu option [RSD 17 Facilities Study and Master Planning Website](#). Email masterplan@rsd17.org with any questions regarding RSD17's Master Plan project.