



**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 17  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
MEETING MINUTES  
April 16, 2024**

A meeting of the Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education was held on April 16, 2024, in the Haddam-Killingworth High School Community Room.

**Board Member Attendance:**

Board Member	Present	Absent	Board Member	Present	Absent
Prem Aithal	X		Dr. Nelson Rivera (Remote)	X	
Lisa Connelly	X		Corey Roberts	X	
Jennifer Favalora	X		Suzanne Sack	X	
Shawna Goldfarb		X	Jennifer Voegtli	X	
Hamish MacPhail	X		Dr. Kathleen Zandi		X
Heather Pach	X				

**Also Present:** Superintendent Jeffrey Wihbey, Assistant Superintendent Jennifer Miller, Director Ben Whittaker, Director Dr. Aaron Puzarne, Board Administrator Sarah Kaiser, Principal Donna Hayward, Principal Dorothy Ventura, Mike Baklik, Matt Thomas, Student Representative Madison Moriarty

**Visitors:** 8

**Call to Order/Opening of Meeting**

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Cougar Pride**

Principal Ventura introduced teachers Mike Baklik and Matt Thomas, along with students Alexa Lopez, Alex Stahl, and Annie Webster. The students discussed the Leadership Conference they attended in March, discussing the event's activities and what they learned.

Principal Ventura, the students, parents, and teachers left the meeting.

## Public Comment

None

## Student Representative Report

Madison Moriarty reported on the end-of-the-year event at the High School. The National Spanish and French Honor Society Induction Ceremony occurred on April 15th.

Upcoming events:

- April 17th is the National Honor Society Induction Ceremony.
- April 23rd Eight-grade Visit
- April 25th Art Show at the Westbrook Outlets
- April 26th Junior Prom
- May 3rd-4th Bye, Bye Birdie High School Musical
- May 31st Senior Prom

## Superintendent's Report

The Superintendent reported to the Board on the following new items:

- The Finance department rebuilt the Superintendent's budget book into a fully linked version containing three years of actuals.
- A preliminary PEGPETIA grant award was received for \$22,263, which will fund 16 viewboards. The funding is anticipated to be received in June.
- An anonymous donor paid off all food services delinquent balances in the district, totaling \$3,500. This same donor has extended this generosity in the past but never to this degree. Messages were sent to the families who had past-due balances.
- Our employee exit survey was updated to meet new legislative requirements. The exit survey includes questions about why the certified educator is ceasing employment, whether or not the certified educator is leaving the profession, the certified educator's demographics, and the areas in which the certified educator taught or served.

## High School Graduation Date

Lisa Connelly **MOVED** and Heather Pach **SECONDED** a motion to have the Class of 2024 Graduation date set as June 14, 2024.

The vote passed unanimously by voice vote.

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
Jennifer Favalora	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A	Suzanne Sack	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A

Shawna Goldfarb	ABSENT	Jennifer Voegtli	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A
Hamish MacPhail	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A	Dr. Kathleen Zandi	ABSENT
Heather Pach	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A		

Principal Hayward and Madison Moriarty left the meeting.

**Insurance Brokerage Services RFP**

Director Whittaker reviewed the RFP evaluation process with the Board. Committee Chair Prem Aithal reported that the committee recommended that USI be awarded the contract after review at the subcommittee meeting.

Prem Aithal **MOVED** and Corey Roberts **SECONDED** a motion to award RFP 24-1110 to USI and authorize the Director of Finance and Operations to execute a contract on behalf of the Board of Education based on the terms of RFP 1110.

The vote passed unanimously by voice vote.

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
Jennifer Favalora	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A	Suzanne Sack	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A
Shawna Goldfarb	ABSENT	Jennifer Voegtli	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A
Hamish MacPhail	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A	Dr. Kathleen Zandi	ABSENT
Heather Pach	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A		

**Financial Auditor Contract Services**

Superintendent Wihbey and Director Whittaker requested that the Board approve a contract for Seward and Monde to conduct the Fiscal year 2024 audit. They provided the Board with detailed reasoning for the request. Committee Chair Aithal noted that the committee discussed the request at the committee level and recommended bringing the motion for the exception to the Board for approval.

Prem Aithal **MOVED** and Corey Roberts **SECONDED** a motion to award a contract to Seward and Monde to conduct the FY24 financial audit process and for the Director of Finance and Operations to execute the contract on behalf of the Board of Education.

The vote passed unanimously by voice vote.

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
Jennifer Favalora	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A	Suzanne Sack	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A
Shawna Goldfarb	ABSENT	Jennifer Voegtli	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A
Hamish MacPhail	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A	Dr. Kathleen Zandi	ABSENT
Heather Pach	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A		

### Increasing Educator Diversity Plan Template

Assistant Superintendent Miller reported to the Board on the process update and reviewed the template for implementing the approved policy. The District will submit the plan template to the state as required and revise it as needed per the feedback from the CT State Department of Education. Committee Chair MacPhail reported to the Board that the committee reviewed the template and recommended bringing it to the full Board.

Hamish MacPhail **MOVED** and Lisa Connelly **SECONDED** a motion that the Board of Education approve the Increasing Educator Diversity Plan pursuant to Public Act 23-167 and move further that the Board delegate authority to the Superintendent of Schools to update and revise the Increasing Educator Diversity Plan, as needed, including in accordance with any feedback provided by the Connecticut State Department of Education.

The vote passed unanimously by voice vote.

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
Jennifer Favalora	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A	Suzanne Sack	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A
Shawna Goldfarb	ABSENT	Jennifer Voegtli	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A
Hamish MacPhail	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A	Dr. Kathleen Zandi	ABSENT
Heather Pach	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A		

**Consent Agenda**

- Enrollment Report
- Personnel Report
- Approval of Minutes from the March 19, 2024, Board of Education Community Input Meeting
- Approval of Minutes from the March 19, 2024, Board of Education Meeting
- Approval of Minutes from the March 26, 2024, Board of Education Workshop Meeting
- Approval of Minutes from the April 2, 2024, Board of Education Annual Hearing Meeting
- Approval of Minutes from the April 2, 2024, Board of Education Special Meeting
- First Read (6) Policies and (4) Items of Information
  - 3323 Purchasing
  - 4118.5 Policy Regarding Employee Use of the District’s Computer Systems and Electronic Communications (Certified)
  - 4218.5 Policy Regarding Employee Use of the District’s Computer Systems and Electronic Communications (Non-Certified)
  - 5131 Student Discipline
  - 5158 Meal Charging
  - 6146 High School Graduation Requirements

Items of Information

- 4118.5 R Administrative Regulations Regarding Employee Use of the District’s Computer Systems and Electronic Communications (Certified)
- 4218.5 R Administrative Regulations Regarding Employee Use of the District’s Computer Systems and Electronic Communications (Non-Certified)
- 5115 R Administrative Regulations Regarding Admission to the Public Schools at or Before Age Five
- 5131 R Administrative Regulations Regarding Student Discipline

A request was made to remove policy 6149 for further discussion.

Hamish MacPhail **MOVED** and Lisa Connelly **SECONDED** a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented removing policy 6149 for discussion.

The vote passed unanimously by voice vote.

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
Jennifer Favalora	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A	Suzanne Sack	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A
Shawna Goldfarb	ABSENT	Jennifer Voegtli	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A
Hamish MacPhail	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A	Dr. Kathleen Zandi	ABSENT
Heather Pach	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A		

**Policy 6149 Class Size Policy First Read**

The Board discussed the policy further.

Prem Aithal **MOVED** and Hamish MacPhail **SECONDED** a motion to approve 6149 as a first read.

The vote passed unanimously by voice vote.

<b>Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>
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
Jennifer Favalora	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A	Suzanne Sack	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A
Shawna Goldfarb	ABSENT	Jennifer Voegtli	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A
Hamish MacPhail	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A	Dr. Kathleen Zandi	ABSENT
Heather Pach	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A		

**Personnel Report-Non-Renewal of Non-Tenure Teachers**

Jennifer Favalora **MOVED** and Corey Roberts **SECONDED** a motion that the contract of employment:

- Andrea Beltran
- Chloe Mulberry
- Kendall Castro
- Julia MacKinnon
- Julie Wessinger
- Audrey Boutaugh

not be renewed for the following year upon its expiration at the end of the 2024 school year, and that the Superintendent of Schools is directed to advise such persons in writing of this action.

The vote passed unanimously by voice vote.

<b>Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>
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
Jennifer Favalora	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A	Suzanne Sack	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A
Shawna Goldfarb	ABSENT	Jennifer Voegtli	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A
Hamish MacPhail	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A	Dr. Kathleen Zandi	ABSENT
Heather Pach	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A		

### **Quarter 3 FY24 Financial Report**

Director Whittaker provided the Board with a full forecast at the object level.

### **Strategic Plan Objective 2.1 Update**

Jennifer Favalora provided the Board with an update on Objective 2.1 of the Strategic Plan.

### **Security Audit Report**

Superintendent Wihbey reported to the Board that Director Whittaker received the final security audit report, and many of the recommendations have been included in the proposed budget. The report will be made available for Board members to review during scheduled office hours.

### **Personnel & Evaluation Subcommittee**

Corey Roberts reported that the committee discussed PDEC teacher evaluation, staff attendance update, end-of-year Superintendent review, and the controller staff position.

### **Curriculum Subcommittee**

Superintendent Wihbey updated the Board on the Special Education audit results report from New Solutions that was presented to the Curriculum Committee at the April meeting. He is scheduled to present to the full Board in May or June.

### **Finance and Facilities Subcommittee**

Prem Aithal reported that the committee discussed the monthly and quarterly financial reports, auditor contract, bond premium, insurance brokerage, budget debrief, and a master plan update. He also reported that the board will hold a special meeting on May 23rd to discuss the Master Plan.

**Policy Subcommittee**

Hamish MacPhail reported that the committee reviewed the policies presented for the first reading. The committee also discussed exploring a code of conduct and a timeline for a policy refresh cycle.

**Communications Subcommittee**

Lisa Connelly reported that the committee met tonight and talked about the budget. They reviewed the FAQs and the article for HK Now. At the May meeting, a representative from CABA is scheduled to be present, and the meeting will start at 5:00 pm. The committee discussed staff recognition messages.

**HK Youth and Family Services**

Heather Pach reported that HKYFS will be hosting an event on youth substance use and mental health on Thursday. She reported on other upcoming events: April 24th-Narcan training session, April 27th-Drug Take Back Day, May 2nd-online QPR training, May is Mental Health Awareness Month, May 8th-Meet the cast of Bye Bye Birdie, and May 15th-Food and Mood.

**Haddam Board of Selectmen**

Heather Pach reported that the main topic discussed construction projects occurring.

**Discussion Concerning the Performance of the Chair and Vice Chair**

Corey Robert **MOVED** and Lisa Connelly **SECONDED** a motion to enter into an Executive session to discuss the performance of the Chair and the Vice Chair.

The vote passed unanimously by voice vote.

<b>Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>Vote</b>
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
Jennifer Favalora	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A	Suzanne Sack	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A
Shawna Goldfarb	ABSENT	Jennifer Voegtli	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A
Hamish MacPhail	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A	Dr. Kathleen Zandi	ABSENT
Heather Pach	X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> A		



The Board entered the executive session at 8:21 pm.

The Board ended the Executive at 9:09 pm.

**Adjournment**

Board Chair Sack adjourned the meeting at 9:09 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Kaiser  
Administrative Assistant to the Board of Education

Approval: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Kathleen Zandi, Board Secretary