



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

A meeting of the Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education was held on September 17, 2024, in the Central Office Board Room.

Board Member Attendance:

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

Also Present: Superintendent Jeffrey Wihbey, Assistant Superintendent Jennifer Miller, Director of Finance and Operations Alison Pierce, Student Services Director Dr. Aaron Puzarne, Principal Donna Hayward, Board Administrator Sarah Kaiser

Visitors: 3

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.

Shawna Goldfarb **MOVED** and Lisa Connelly **SECONDED** a motion to move item 5.A.I. out of the consent agenda, transfer 5.C. into the consent agenda, and item 5.F. to be moved after item 7.A.e.

The motion passed unanimously by a show of hands vote.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Wihbey reported that they just received the final clean air test regarding the high school areas in the contained area. By the end of the week, students can return safely to all the classroom spaces.

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

- The Student Services department is in the process of training an Orton Gillingham Fellow so that the district can provide comprehensive reading interventions and train staff in Orton Gillingham methodologies.
- The district was 100% staffed in certified positions at the beginning of the school year.
- CSDE has approved the 2024-2025 HFC (Healthy Food Certification) Application.
- The HK Drama Club will produce "Our Town" on November 15th and 16th with a cross-curricular connection to the English Department, which will teach the play in certain courses, which culminates in students attending the show for an in-school performance. Auditions will be held on September 9th.
- The Middle School has fully implemented the Wit & Wisdom curriculum in grades 6-8.

Superintendent Wihbey also provided a follow-up on a Board member's question regarding FAFSA that there was a legislative update that delayed section 9 of the Act by two years, but at HK, we already implemented the FAFSA requirement starting with the Class of 2025.

Summer Projects Update

Superintendent Wihbey presented the Board with a current status schedule for the capital plan priority list. A final summary update will be presented at the October Finance/Facilities meeting and include related budget information.

Cougar Pride-High School Graduation Presentation

Principal Hayward presented an outcome analysis for the Class of 2024.

She noted trends for this year include a steady percentage of students choosing to continue their formal education after HKHS. The rate of acceptance overall increased alongside an increase in the number of applications submitted to highly competitive schools. The most popular majors shifted this year to a "close race" between STEM-related fields, business, and humanities. She also noted that the percentage of students pursuing a career in education doubled this year.

Public Comment

Clark Gardner of Higganum spoke to the Board regarding the High School Master Plan project and consideration of cost implications.

Neal Perron of Haddam spoke to the Board regarding assistance with community facility use.

Principal Hayward and two visitors left the meeting at 7:06 pm.

Master Plan Update

Director Pierce updated the Board on the master plan timeline. She reported that, currently, the process is on target for the potential dates and noted the next items needed before an anticipated spring 2025 referendum.

Superintendent Wihbey advised that the Communication subcommittee started work on the Master Plan Vision and messaging at their meeting prior to the Board meeting.

Consent Agenda

- a. Enrollment Report
- b. Personnel Report
- c. Approval to accept a donation in the amount of \$1,000.00 received from the HKIMS PTO to be deposited directly into the student activity fund to offset grade 4 field trips and student events.
- d. Approval to accept a donation in the amount of \$1,000.00 received from the HKIMS PTO to be deposited directly into the student activity fund to offset grade 5 field trips and student events.
- e. Approval to accept a donation in the amount of \$1,000.00 received from the HKIMS PTO to be deposited directly into the student activity fund to offset grade 6 field trips and student events.
- f. Approval to accept a donation in the amount of \$1,000.00 received from the HKIMS PTO to be deposited directly into the student activity fund to offset grade 7 field trips and student events.
- g. Approval to accept a donation in the amount of \$1,000.00 received from the HKIMS PTO to be deposited directly into the student activity fund to offset grade 8 field trips and student events.
- h. Approval request for the inventory disposal of 208 obsolete ELA and Reading Support books and materials. Submitted by Jennifer Beermuender, Humanities Curriculum Coordinator.
- i. Approval of Minutes from the August 20, 2024, Board of Education Meeting
- j. 2024 Education Legislative Updates
- k. First Read of two (2) policies for Review:
 - 4118.113/4218.113 Prohibition of Sex Discrimination, Including Sex-Based Harassment
 - 5145.5 P Prohibition of Sex Discrimination, Including Sex-Based Harassment

First Read of two (2) Items of Information:

- 4118.113 R/ 4218.113 R Administrative Regulations regarding the prohibition of sex discrimination, including sex-based harassment

- 5145.5 R Administrative Regulations Prohibition of Sex Discrimination, Including Sex-Based Harassment
- I. Correction to 8/20/24 BOE Budget Transfer Request

Shawna Goldfarb **MOVED** and Heather Pach **SECONDED** a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented.

The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Member	Vote	Member	Vote
Lisa Connelly	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A	Dr. Nelson Rivera	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A
Jennifer Favalora	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A	Corey Roberts	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A
Shawna Goldfarb	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A	Suzanne Sack	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A
Hamish MacPhail	ABSENT	Jennifer Voegtli	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A
Heather Pach	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A	Dr. Kathleen Zandi	ABSENT
		VACANT	

Budget Transfer Request 2025-4

Director Pierce presented the Board with a budget transfer request per policy 3110.

- 2025-4 Transfer 2025-4: Transfer from Software, Admin, to Professional Dev., Admin \$5,005.00

Jennifer Voegtli **MOVED** and Shawna Goldfarb **SECONDED** a motion to approve the budget transfer request as presented.

The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Member	Vote	Member	Vote
Lisa Connelly	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A	Dr. Nelson Rivera	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A
Jennifer Favalora	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A	Corey Roberts	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A
Shawna Goldfarb	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A	Suzanne Sack	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A
Hamish MacPhail	ABSENT	Jennifer Voegtli	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A
Heather Pach	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A	Dr. Kathleen Zandi	ABSENT
		VACANT	

Architectural Consultant RFP Selection

Superintendent Wihbey and Director Pierce provided a summary of the RFP process protocol.

Jennifer Favalora, the selection committee spokesperson, provided the Board with a summary of the Board's selection process and noted the recommendation rationale:

- Referendum Support-They understand the needs of our community and what they need to make an informed decision.
- They highlighted the need to include all voices in the ED spec development and feasibility study.
- They translated their presentation and the needs it will cover to include an understanding of how they will impact the learning environment of the students of RSD17.
- We were comfortable with how they would walk us through the decision to determine new or renovate as new.

Heather Pach **MOVED** and Lisa Connelly **SECONDED** a motion for the Regional School No. 17 Board of Education to award RFP #24971 - Educational Specifications, Feasibility Study, and Pre-Referendum Services to Antinozzi Architecture and Interiors in the amount of \$98,700.

The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Member	Vote	Member	Vote
Lisa Connelly	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A	Dr. Nelson Rivera	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A
Jennifer Favalora	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A	Corey Roberts	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A
Shawna Goldfarb	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A	Suzanne Sack	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A
Hamish MacPhail	ABSENT	Jennifer Voegtli	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A
Heather Pach	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A	Dr. Kathleen Zandi	ABSENT
		VACANT	

CABE Liaison

The Board discussed appointing an individual to report to the Board monthly on information that CABE has to offer. The role will be assigned within the Communications subcommittee and reported to the Board as part of the subcommittee reporting.

Corey Roberts **MOVED** and Heather Pach **SECONDED** a motion to move item 5.E. to before item 5.F., after item 7.A.e.

The motion passed unanimously by a show of hands vote.

Policy Subcommittee

Lisa Connelly reported that the committee met and received a presentation from Principal Hayward and Director Flint regarding “playback” which is the practice of sports access and participation by in-district students attending magnet schools. After asking the Administration questions and discussing the issue, the committee did not have a recommendation to create a BOE policy at this time.

The committee also further discussed an updated Board code of ethics.

The committee discussed the policies on the agenda for First Read and recommended approving them as presented.

Communications Subcommittee

Lisa Connelly reported that the committee met this evening. The committee discussed the 2025 annual committee calendar and work plan. The committee also reviewed the proposed 2025 BOE calendar. The committee discussed the HKHS plan and worked on the vision statement.

Personnel & Evaluation Subcommittee

Corey Roberts reported that the committee met on September 9th. Superintendent Wihbey discussed with the committee ideas to get a pulse on the work climate. The committee reviewed the annual committee calendar and discussed the Superintendent’s goals and development plan.

Finance and Facilities Subcommittee

Shawna Goldfarb reported that the committee met on September 10th. The following items were discussed:

- Committee annual calendar
- HKHS RFP
- Master Plan Timeline update
- Summer Plan Update will be presented in October with budget figures
- Discussion regarding Burr Elementary Air Conditioning Units
- Updated report on the HKHS mitigation status
- Updated on the beginning of the year transportation status
- EV Grant Project status
- Facility Property Insurance Review
- Final FY24 yearend report update
- Budget Transfer Information

LEARN

Jennifer Favalora reported that LEARN has made its own teacher evaluation app and has a cyber security contract to work with districts that use technology with it. The Early Childhood Office

contacted LEARN to start a program for early childcare. The program would split the cost of the childcare from a third from a sponsoring business, a third from the state, and then the parents would pay the remaining third. The LEARN schools will now have infant/toddler rooms.

HK Youth and Family Services

Heather Pach reported on the following upcoming events:

- Girls With A Purpose
- HK Community Coalition
- Spark & Ignite
- QPR Suicide Prevention & Narcan Training
- Creative Connections
- October 27th Pumpkin Run
- November 13th Screenagers Next Chapter-Panel Discussion

Haddam Killingworth Recreation Department

No report.

Haddam Board of Selectmen

Heather Pach reported that there will not be any further 63-hour bridge closures. There will be construction work on two roundabouts on Route 154. There were discussions on two apartment complexes that were recently built, and construction on HES will begin soon. There is a new Resident Trooper, Trooper Vargas. And there will be a meeting on Thursday regarding the BOE member.

Killingworth Board of Selectmen

No report.

Nelson Rivera **MOVED** and Lisa Connelly **SECONDED** a motion to enter into an executive session for personnel and negotiation purposes, including the Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent, to discuss items 5.E. and following that, stay in executive session for item 5.F. including the Superintendent.

The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Member	Vote	Member	Vote
Lisa Connelly	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A	Dr. Nelson Rivera	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A
Jennifer Favalora	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A	Corey Roberts	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A
Shawna Goldfarb	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A	Suzanne Sack	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A

Hamish MacPhail	ABSENT	Jennifer Voegtli	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A
Heather Pach	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A	Dr. Kathleen Zandi	ABSENT
		VACANT	

Director Puzarne, Director Pierce, and Board Administrator Kaiser left the meeting at 8:01 pm.

The Board entered the Executive session at 8:02 pm.

Assistant Superintendent left the meeting at 8:16 pm.

Superintendent Wihbey left the meeting at 8:20 pm.

The Board exited the Executive session at 8:55 pm.

Shawna Goldfarb **MOVED** and Lisa Connelly **SECONDED** a motion to approve the contract agreement between the RSD17 Board of Education and the Region 17 Registered Professional Nurses & Licensed Practical Nurses Connecticut Health Care Associates District 1199 covering the period between July 2024 through June 2027.

The motion passed unanimously by a voice vote.

Board Chair Sack thanked the Nurses for their consideration and collaboration throughout the negotiation process and thanked them for everything they do for our students and hopes that the contract reflects our appreciation.

Lisa Connelly **MOVED** and Nelson Rivera **SECONDED** a motion to approve the Superintendent's Goals for 2024/25.

The Chair mentioned that the Board is grateful for the fruitful conversation with the Superintendent and looks forward to another great year.

Board Chair Sack adjourned the meeting at 9:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Kaiser

Administrative Assistant to the Board of Education

Approval: _____ Date: _____

Dr. Kathleen Zandi, Board Secretary