



**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 17
BOARD OF EDUCATION
MEETING MINUTES
November 19, 2024**

A meeting of the Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education was held on November 19, 2024, in the Haddam-Killingworth High School Community Room.

Board Member Attendance:

Board Member	Present	Absent	Board Member	Present	Absent
Joseph Centofanti	X		Dr. Nelson Rivera	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, Student Services Director Dr. Aaron Puzarne, Board Administrator Sarah Kaiser, Principal Dorothy Ventura, Michael Ayles from Antinozzi Associates, Jack Butkus from Arcadis, Assistant Principal Adam Apicella

Visitors: 17

Call to Order/Opening of Meeting

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

The Chair called for a moment of silence in memory of Burr Elementary student Jaxon Podbielski.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Cougar Pride

Principal Ventura introduced 8th-grade student Alyssa Behnke, who read her Patriot Pen competition essay. Then Principal Ventura introduced Ben Bayley, Olivia Gait, Isla Barry, and Austin Sierota, who spoke on the school's new American flag retirement initiative. Flags are collected at the school on the first Wednesday of each month.

The parents and students left the meeting at 6:38 pm.

Student Representative Report

Student representatives Michael Perry and Emma Giaccone reported to the Board on the following items:

- November 23rd is the Southern Regional Musical Festival for the band and chorus students
- November 25th is the Junior/Senior Cougar Bowl
- The newly formed Math Honor Society
- November 26th will be the Annual Principal's Cup Football Game held at HK
- December 5th is the chorus concert
- December 12th is the band and jazz band concert
- December 13th is the 5th annual K-4 concert

The student representatives left the meeting at 6:42 pm.

Superintendent's Report

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

- The Superintendent was pleased to announce that both Burr Elementary and Killingworth Elementary have achieved School of Distinction honors from the CT Department of Education.
- The boys and girls Cross Country teams at HKHS have won the Class SS State Championship this year.
- The District was awarded a National School Lunch Program Equipment Assistance Competitive Grant.
- The District was awarded a Paraeducator subsidy grant.
- Sixteen new buses have been introduced in the district route rotation.
- Student services worked with support staff to develop new measures to increase behavioral interventions within the district.
- The Superintendent acknowledged Food Services employee Chris Judd is retiring in December after 28 years of service.
- Updated forms for the Educator and Leader Professional Growth Plan were completed and are live on the evaluation platform.
- HKHS changed the format of the 8th Grade Parent Preview after exploring how to meet the changing needs of families and surveying parents as to the preferred format of informational events.

Public Comment

None

HKHS Study / Master Plan Update

Michael Ayles from Antinozzi provided the Board with an update on the feasibility study and pre-referendum services. He reported that Antinozzi has collected and reviewed facility information over the past few weeks and assessed the campus. The team began interviews with HK staff and obtained input on the educational programming and space needs of the high school. Two community workshops were scheduled, one already held on November 7th and the other to be held on November 20th in the HKHS Auditorium. The workshop was to engage the community and inform them about the decision-making process for the high school project. The team discussed the potential of renovation vs rebuild, the current building challenges, and exploring future possibilities. They also actively encouraged community participation and input.

Mr. Ayles and Mr. Butkus discussed the HKHS Feasibility Study Committee (HKHS-FSC) with the Board. They discussed the meeting dates that will take place from mid-December through February, agenda topics, and group membership.

Michael Ayles, Jack Butkus, and Adam Apicella left the meeting at 7:14 pm.

2025 BOE Meeting and Subcommittee Calendars for Second Read

The Board reviewed the calendars for the Board of Education and subcommittee meetings for 2025. They discussed including an additional meeting on February 20th that will be added to the calendar.

Jennifer Favalora **MOVED** and Heather Pach **SECONDED** a motion to approve the calendar, including February 20th as an amendment to the first read of the calendar.

The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote. 9-0-0

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

2025-2026 School Calendar for Second Read

The Board discussed 2025-2026 school calendar.

Dr. Kathy Zandi **MOVED** and Lisa Connelly **SECONDED** a motion to approve the calendar as presented.

The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote. 9-0-0

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

Budget Transfer

Director Pierce presented one transfer to the Finance and Facilities committee for \$44.00, and the committee recommended the transfer to the full Board for approval.

Jennifer Voegtli **MOVED** and Heather Pach **SECONDED** a motion to approve the budget transfer as presented.

The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote. 9-0-0

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

Consent Agenda

- a. Enrollment Report
- b. Personnel Report
- c. Approval of Minutes from the October 15, 2024, Board of Education Meeting

d. Curriculum Textbooks First Read

e. First Read of Policies for Review:

- 1101-Policy and Administrative Regulations Regarding Non-Discrimination (Community)
- 3110-Board Budget Procedures and Line Item Transfers
- 4112.5/4212.5-Employment and Student Teacher Background Checks
- 4118.12/4218.12-Policy Regarding Employees and Sections 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
- 4152.6/4252.6-Family and Medical Leave
- 5113-Student Attendance, Truancy, and Chronic Absenteeism
- 5115 Admission to Public Schools at or Before Age Five
- 5141.21-Administration of Student Medications in the School

First Read of Items of Information:

- 1101 R -Administrative Regulations Regarding Discrimination Complaints (Community Members)
- 4118.12 R/4218.12 R-Administrative Regulations Regarding Employees and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
- 5113 R-Administrative Regulations Regarding Attendance, Truancy, Chronic Absenteeism
- 5115 R-Administrative Regulations Regarding Early Admission to Kindergarten at or Before Age Five

Jennifer Favalora **MOVED** and Dr. Kathy Zandi **SECONDED** a motion to approve the consent agenda removing item 3110 Board Budget Procedures and Line Item Transfers.

The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote. 9-0-0

Member	Vote	Member	Vote
Joseph Centofanti	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A	Dr. Nelson Rivera	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A
Lisa Connelly	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A	Corey Roberts	ABSENT
Shawna Goldfarb	ABSENT	Suzanne Sack	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A
Hamish MacPhail	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A	Jennifer Voegtli	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A

Heather Pach	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A	Dr. Kathleen Zandi	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A
Jennifer Favalora	X YES ☐ NO ☐ A		

The Board discussed potential concerns on policy 3110. Joe Centofanti will provide the Superintendent with questions and best practices recommendation information for further review. The Superintendent will review with the Board attorney and provide answers to the full Board. The Board discussed moving forward with the policy for a first read, with the condition that any technical issues would be corrected by the next meeting and any changes to best practices would go back through the committee.

Jennifer Favalora **MOVED** and Lisa Connelly **SECONDED** a motion to approve for first read 3110 Board Budget Procedures

The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote. 9-0-0

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

Policy Subcommittee

Hamish MacPhail reported that the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent presented some administrative letters of process for informational purposes. The committee also reviewed the policies offered to the Board for the first read.

Curriculum Subcommittee

Dr. Kathy Zandi reported that the committee met on November 12th. Principal Ventura provided an update on the Middle School task Force. Principal Ventura primarily focused on the positive status of the block scheduling. She briefly discussed the other topics of the task force. Director Puzarne presented an update on the New Solutions Findings. Director Puzarne discussed the professional development provided to math teachers through the SPDG math grant. The second topic discussed with the committee was that special education students need to be held to grade-level standards by aligning their skills learned to the standards. The third topic presented was regarding social-emotional learning. Lastly, the committee reviewed the textbook proposals presented for the first read.

Finance & Facilities Subcommittee

Suzanne Sack reported that the committee met on November 12th and reviewed the monthly financial reports. Director Pierce presented an updated presentation on the capital priority list and the master plan. The committee reviewed the quarterly special education financial reports.

LEARN

Jennifer Favalora reported that Patrice McCarthy from CAFE came and spoke about the upcoming legislative session. Tim Shriver spoke at the CAFE/CAPPS convention on the Dignity Index. LEARN will be applying for a state grant called the Regional Performance Incentives Program regarding back office functions, and RSD17 was part of the voice behind the grant.

HK Youth and Family Services

Heather Pach reported on the following events:

- The Pumpkin Run was a tremendous success.
- Participation in the DEA Drug Take-Back Day.
- The HKYFS Community Survey has gone live on the website.
- The Holiday Giving Program is underway.
- Stuff-A Cruiser on December 1st and December 7th
- Screenagers on December 4th
- HK Craft Fair on December 7th

HKYFS is honored to have been chosen as this year's HK Telethon recipient.

Haddam Killingworth Recreation Department

Jennifer Voegtli reported that they met on October 23rd, and they went over the program review. They held Hip Hop Heat at KES and will continue at BES in the next session, with adult sewing and wreath decoration. The soccer season has ended, and they are now into the basketball season. The afterschool program has grown to over 140 students.

Haddam Board of Selectmen

No report.

Killingworth Board of Selectmen

No report.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Announcements

Hamish MacPhail announced that he would be resigning from the Board effective as of mid-December. The Board chair thanked Hamish for his service and commitment to the Board and the District.

Board Chair Sack

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Kaiser

Administrative Assistant to the Board of Education

Approval: _____ Date: _____

Dr. Kathleen Zandi, Board Secretary