



**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 17
BOARD OF EDUCATION
MEETING MINUTES
January 21, 2025**

A meeting of the Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education was held on January 21, 2025, 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 (remote)	X	
Jennifer Favalora	X		Suzanne Sack (remote)	X	
Shawna Goldfarb	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, Board Administrator Sarah Kaiser, Principal Dorothy Ventura, Principal Donna Hayward, David Ferris from Antinozzi Associates, Michele Loso from Seward and Monde

Visitors: 1 arrived at 6:57 pm

Call to Order/Opening of Meeting

Board Vice Chair Jennifer Favalora called the meeting to order at 6:33 PM.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Jennifer Voegtli **MOVED** and Lisa Connelly **SECONDED** a motion to move item 6.A. and 6.B. after item 5.A.

The motion was carried unanimously by a show of hands vote of 10-0-0.

Cougar Pride

Principal Hayward shared with the Board about the 36th Annual Holiday Telethon. The event raised over \$10,000, with all proceeds supporting Haddam Killingworth Youth and Family Services. The event is a student-run initiative, and Principal Hayward noted that its success is a testament to the students' exceptional leadership, dedication, and commitment. She showed the [news](#) video segment that appeared on NBC.

Student Representative Report

Student representative Michael Perry reported to the Board on the following items:

- On January 7th, the Student Equity Advisory Board was introduced to the facility
- January 8th was Alumni Day, and it was a huge success.
- January 17th and 18th was the Southern Regional Festival, where 15 choral students and 1 band student participated.
- January 27th will be 8th Grade Parent Night
- HK will host on January 31st the Shoreline Leadership Conference

The student representative left the meeting at 6:45 pm.

Superintendent's Report

The Superintendent reported to the Board on the following items:

- The Indoor Air Quality reports for all school facilities were completed and submitted to the State for review.
- Dual communication systems for fire alarm monitoring were installed at all schools for enhanced safety and reliability.
- The National School Lunch Program grant-funded equipment has been successfully delivered and installed at KES, BES, and HKHS.
- The CT State Department of Education notified RSD17 that our Increasing Educator Diversity Plan had been approved.

Public Comment

None

HKHS Feasibility Study Team Update

The Board discussed that there was a meeting of the Study Team on January 9th and the Board was given an update at the January 11th workshop. The Board was provided a summary of the January 9th meeting for review. The Study Team will meet next on January 23rd.

David Ferris left the meeting at 6:55 pm.

High School Opportunities Book-2nd Read

Superintendent Wihbey and Principal Hayward presented the Opportunities Book for a second read to the Board for approval.

Dr. Kathy Zandi **MOVED** and Shawna Goldfarb **SECONDED** a motion to approve the presented High School Opportunities Book for 2025-26.

The motion was carried unanimously by a show of hands vote of 10-0-0.

Curriculum Textbooks for Second Read

The curriculum textbooks for the High School Wellness and Fine Arts departments were presented for the second read.

Heather Pach **MOVED** and Jennifer Voegtli **SECONDED** a motion to approve the textbooks for Wellness and Fine Arts as proposed and discussed.

The motion was carried unanimously by a show of hands vote of 10-0-0.

Principal Hayward left the meeting at 6:57 pm.

FY24 Audit Presentation

Michele Loso from Seward and Monde presented an overview of the FY24 Financial Audit Report presentation, which was presented and discussed in detail with the Finance & Facilities committee.

The Board discussed the details of the non-lapsing account transfer. The full 2% was not allocated to the non-lapsing account in the FY24 budget. To meet the threshold, an additional \$52,500 was available to be transferred into the non-recurring/non-lapsing account.

Vice Chair Favalora recommended that the conversation on the FY24 audit be tabled.

Shawna Goldfarb **MOVED** and Jennifer Voegtli **SECONDED** a motion to move item 6.E. to after 5.B.

The motion was carried unanimously by a show of hands vote of 10-0-0.

FY24 Transfer to Non-Lapsing Account

Director Pierce presented a request for the Board to approve a transfer request to move \$52,400.42 from FY24 to the non-lapsing account.

Shawna Goldfarb reported that the Finance & Facilities committee reviewed the information during the audit presentation, and the committee came to a consensus to recommend that the Board approve the transfer to bring the fund up to 2%.

Jennifer Voegtli **MOVED** and Dr. Kathy Zandi **SECONDED** a motion to move the remaining funds from FY24 to the non-lapsing account.

The motion was carried unanimously by a show of hands vote of 10-0-0.

Acceptance of the FY24 Audit Report

Suzanne Sack **MOVED** Lisa Connelly **SECONDED** a motion to accept the FY24 audit with the amendment made at the Board meeting in the amount of \$52,500.42 being transferred into the non-lapsing account.

The motion was carried unanimously by a show of hands vote of 10-0-0.

Michele Loso left the meeting at 7:22 pm.

Quarterly Financial Reporting-Q2

Director Pierce presented an overview of the Quarter 2 review and analysis. She reported on the following areas of revenue and expenditure:

- Revenue Review
 - Pre-K Tuition
 - Classroom Rental
 - Webster Investment Interest
- Expenditure Analysis
 - Salaries
 - Employee Benefits
 - Maintenance & Operations

Director Pierce answered questions from the Board regarding the presented review. The Board thanked Director Pierce for the thorough presentation.

Board Workshop Review

Vice Chair Favalora reported that the Board met for a planning workshop on January 11th. They reviewed the HS study plan and reviewed student data. The members discussed Board development, where they talked about how to improve on internal and external communications. The topic will be further talked about in the Communications subcommittee. The topic of strategic plan item 2.1 Board Development was discussed, and priorities were identified. This will also be further reviewed by the Executive Committee, and members interested can be part of the conversation.

Board Subcommittee Discussion

Board Chair Sack updated the Board that there are a few open positions that need to be filled on subcommittees due to members who have left. She announced that Joe Centofanti will be assigned to the role of Co-Chair of the Finance & Facilities Subcommittee responsible for Finance. The position of Policy chair was in the process of being filled, and a member is needed on the Policy and the Curriculum committees.

Second Read of Policies for Review

The Board discussed the policies presented for the second read.

- 5118.1-Homeless Children and Youth
- 5131-Student Discipline
- 5131.911-Bullying
- 5145.10-Policy Regarding Students and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
- 5145.5-Suicide Prevention and Intervention
- 5152-Policy and Administrative Regulations Regarding Non-Discrimination (Students)
- 5163-Policy and Administrative Regulations to Improve Completion Rates of the Free Application For Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

Items of Information:

- 5118.1 R-Administrative Regulations Regarding Homeless Children and Youth
- 5131 R-Administrative Regulations Regarding Alternative Educational Opportunities For Expelled Students
- 5145.10 R-Administrative Regulations Regarding Students and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
- 5141.5 R-Administrative Regulations Regarding Suicide Prevention and Intervention
- 5152 R-Administrative Regulations Regarding Discrimination Complaints (Students)
- 5163 R-Administrative Regulations Addressing Improving the Completion Rates of FAFSA

Dr. Nelson Rivera **MOVED** Shawna Goldfarb **SECONDED** a motion to approve the presented policies reviewed for the second read.

The motion was carried unanimously by a show of hands vote of 10-0-0.

Consent Agenda

- a. Enrollment Report
- b. Personnel Report
- c. Approval to accept a donation in the amount of \$1,719.61 received from Steady

Photography to be deposited directly into the BES student activity fund.

- d. Approval of Minutes from the November 19, 2024, Board of Education Meeting
- e. Approval of Minutes from the December 17, 2024, Board of Education Meeting
- f. Approval of Minutes from the January 11, 2025, Board of Education Strategic Planning Workshop
- g. Middle School Program of Studies Book First Read

Shawna Goldfarb **MOVED** Lisa Connelly **SECONDED** a motion to approve the consent agenda presented with appreciation.

The motion was carried unanimously by a show of hands vote of 10-0-0.

Principal Ventura left the meeting at 7:54 pm.

Personnel & Evaluation Subcommittee

Corey Roberts reported that the committee met on January 13th, to discuss the follow-up on the December personnel report. The committee reviewed the 2024-25 staffing plan, a follow-up of the unaffiliated budget with the comptroller detail included, and two years of previous financials. The committee was also presented with the final version of the unaffiliated banding format.

Curriculum Subcommittee

Dr. Kathy Zandi reported that the committee met on January 14th. The committee reviewed the Middle School Program of Studies Book, which was included for the first read. Dr. Zandi reviewed key areas of the program. The committee was also presented with mid-year data regarding student attendance.

Finance & Facilities Subcommittee

Shawna Goldfarb reported that the committee met on January 14th. The committee reviewed and discussed the audit report presented by Michele Loso from Seward and Monde for FY24. The committee received an update on the HKHS Study Plan Project. The committee received information from Director Pierce on the annual inspections of the HVAC systems. The committee reviewed and discussed the quarter 2 financial reporting based on Director Pierce's presentation and an update on the fiscal year budget with possible budget drivers.

Communications Subcommittee

Lisa Connelly Reported that the committee met before the Board meeting.

The representative from Antinozzi provided a preliminary list of FAQs to be reviewed and then added to the website. The committee discussed various methods of communication, including

the website, social media, email, and direct mailing. She reported that a CABA update was provided. The committee also discussed the board workshop.

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Jennifer Favalora reported that they discussed the legislative session and have already introduced bills for education and special education.

HK Youth and Family Services

Heather Pach reported that HKYFS had expanded their team by adding a second part-time clinician Ashlyn Elliott.

on the following events:

- HKYFS is participating in the HKHS Internship Program along with HK Rec
- January 27th HK Coalition Meeting
- January 30th free viewing ScreenAgers
- February 8th HK Family Hikers
- February 12th: The Great Rewiring of Childhood

She wanted to add that HKYFS was thankful for the generous support through the HK TV telethon.

Haddam Killingworth Recreation Department

No report

Haddam Board of Selectmen

Heather Pach reported that on January 22nd, the Town will be voting to fill the vacancy on the Board of Education.

Killingworth Board of Selectmen

Lisa Connelly reported that they would like a date for the High School referendum as soon as it is confirmed. There was also a conversation about PFAS and the government being responsible for the financial burden.

Announcements/Comments

Shawna Goldfarb and Superintendent Wihbey updated the Board on the status of the request for quotes for a Financial Advisor for the High School project.

Heather Pach commented on the traffic circle in Haddam and asked if it has become an issue for buses as it has for trucks. Superintendent Wihbey will update the Board after inquiring with STA.

Adjournment

Board Chair Sack adjourned the meeting at 8:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Kaiser

Administrative Assistant to the Board of Education

Approval: _____ Date: _____

Dr. Kathleen Zandi, Board Secretary