REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 17
BOARD OF EDUCATION
MEETING MINUTES
March 18, 2025

A meeting of the Regional School District No. 17 Board of Education was held on March 18, 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	
Sonja Charpentier	X		Corey Roberts	X	
Lisa Connelly	X		Suzanne Sack	X	
Jennifer Favalora	X		Jennifer Voegtli	X	
Shawna Goldfarb		X	Dr. Kathleen Zandi	X	
Heather Pach (6:51 pm)	X				

Also Present- Superintendent Jeffrey Wihbey, Assistant Superintendent Jennifer Miller, Director of Finance and Operations Alison Pierce, Director of Student Services Aaron Puzarne, Board Administrator Sarah Kaiser, Principal Brienne Whidden, Principal Donna Hayward, Michael Ayles from Antinozzi Associates, David Ferris from Antinozzi Associates (6:57 pm) Jack Butkus from Arcadis (6:37 pm)

Visitors: 14

Call to Order/Opening of Meeting

Board Chair Suzanne Sack called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Cougar Pride

Principal Whidden and teachers Aidrenne Foret and Anna Wilcox introduced the CAS artist and musician of the year to the Board. Cayden Carlson performed a musical piece by video and Fiona Dalton shared two pieces of artwork.

Student Representative Report

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

- On March 19th, the Middle School will visit the High School to watch the Band perform.
- The High School Band will perform in Boston at a music competition and watch the Blue Man Group perform.
- Students are in the application process for the National Honor Society and the World Language Honor Society. The induction ceremony for both societies will take place in April.
- March 26th is SAT day and Senior Portfolio Day.
- April 3rd is the College and Career Fair.

The Cougar Pride attendees left the meeting at 6:42 pm.

Superintendent's Report

The Superintendent reported to the Board on the following items:

- The Facilities Manager met with the Killingworth First Selectman and engineers regarding the PFAS project in collaboration with the Town. The First Selectman is contacting the state and approved contractors regarding the next steps.
- The winter assessments for reading and math have been completed across K-8 and analyzed by the District Wide Data Team.
- On March 6th, the Math Honor Society will travel to NYC to visit the MoMath National Math Museum.
- At the Middle school, the ELA benchmarks reached the highest scores in five years, and the 7th-grade accelerated math class had 56 of the 60 students achieve mastery or above.
- Both BES and KES celebrated Reading Across America.

The student representatives and Principal Hayward left the meeting at 6:47 pm.

Public Comment

None

HKHS Feasibility Study Team Update

Michael Ayles and Jack Butkus from Arcadis presented the Board with a summary of the information provided and discussed from February 11th to date regarding the High School project. They provided detailed explanations and updates on the following areas:

- Educational Specifications & Space Programming Recap
- New Construction vs Renovation February 6th

- Site Plan Options Summary-February 6th
- Cost Estimate -February 20th and the Revision of March 4th
- Project Budget Draft Estimate for New Construction and Renovation
- Cost/Bonding Analysis-March 6, 2025
- Financial Bonding Analysis for New Construction and with Additional School Debt
- Financial Bonding Analysis for Renovation and with Additional School Debt
- Project Referendum Cost of New Construction and Renovation
- Timeline Schedule Options for Consideration

The presentation included a thorough review of key project aspects, and the Board engaged in a discussion following the update to assess the next steps. After careful consideration, the Board determined that the Feasibility Study Team should continue refining the project details. The team will continue to identify areas for potential savings before returning to the Board with a recommendation.

Public Comment-Related to the High School Project

Eileen Blewett of Killingworth addressed the Board regarding the high school project, including project costs and the rationale for their inclusion, project comparisons to other town projects, and further district resource information.

Michael Ayles, Jack Butkus, and David Ferris left the meeting at 8:14 pm.

Healthy Food Certification

Superintendent Wihbey requested a vote for the annual participation in the Healthy Food Certification. Director Pierce read the following motions to the Board for a vote.

Motion #1: Required vote for participation in the healthy food option of HFC

Regional School District 17 BOE will participate in the healthy food option of C.G.S. Section 10-215f and follow the Connecticut Nutrition Standards (CNS). Pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, and certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, culinary programs, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or non-school organizations and groups.

Jennifer Voegtli **MOVED** and Dr. Nelson Rivera **SECONDED** a motion to approve as expressed by the Director of Finance and Operations.

The motion was carried unanimously by a voice vote of 10-0-0. The motion passed unanimously.

Board Member	Present	Absent	Board Member	Present	Absent
Joseph Centofanti	X		Dr. Nelson Rivera	X	
Sonja Charpentier	X		Corey Roberts	X	
Lisa Connelly	X		Suzanne Sack	X	
Jennifer Favalora	X		Jennifer Voegtli	X	
Shawna Goldfarb		X	Dr. Kathleen Zandi	X	
Heather Pach	X				

Motion #2: Required vote to allow food exemptions

Regional School District 17 will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the food items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An “event” is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The “regular school day” is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. “Location” means where the event is being held and must be the same place as the food sales.

Lisa Connelly **MOVED** and Jennifer Voegtli **SECONDED** a motion to approve as presented by the Director of Finance and Operations.

The motion was carried unanimously by a voice vote of 10-0-0. The motion passed unanimously.

Board Member	Present	Absent	Board Member	Present	Absent
Joseph Centofanti	X		Dr. Nelson Rivera	X	
Sonja Charpentier	X		Corey Roberts	X	
Lisa Connelly	X		Suzanne Sack	X	
Jennifer Favalora	X		Jennifer Voegtli	X	

Shawna Goldfarb		X	Dr. Kathleen Zandi	X	
Heather Pach	X				

Motion #3: Required Vote to allow beverage exemptions

Regional School District 17 will allow the sale to students of beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the beverages are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. The "school day" is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. "Location" means where the event is being held and must be the same place as the beverage sales.

Corey Roberts **MOVED** and Heather Pach **SECONDED** a motion to approve as presented by the Director of Finance and Operations.

The motion was carried unanimously by a voice vote of 10-0-0. The motion passed unanimously.

Board Member	Present	Absent	Board Member	Present	Absent
Joseph Centofanti	X		Dr. Nelson Rivera	X	
Sonja Charpentier	X		Corey Roberts	X	
Lisa Connelly	X		Suzanne Sack	X	
Jennifer Favalora	X		Jennifer Voegtli	X	
Shawna Goldfarb		X	Dr. Kathleen Zandi	X	
Heather Pach	X				

Budget Transfer 2025-9

The transfer was brought before the Finance Subcommittee, and it was determined that it was not ready to come before the Board this month for approval.

Transfer of Policy 4113.3-Increasing Educator Diversity Plan to State Policy-2nd Read

Superintendent Wihbey and Assistant Superintendent Miller discussed that the State Department of Education has taken on its own Diversity plan, superseding Policy 4113.3. The District will follow the State policy and template.

Heather Pach **MOVED** and Sonja Charpentier **SECONDED** a motion to approve the elimination of Policy 4113.3.

Board Chair Sack noted that the policy was eliminated due to being replaced by another function constructed by the State for the District to comply with.

The motion was carried unanimously by a voice vote of 10-0-0. The motion passed unanimously.

Board Member	Present	Absent	Board Member	Present	Absent
Joseph Centofanti	X		Dr. Nelson Rivera	X	
Sonja Charpentier	X		Corey Roberts	X	
Lisa Connelly	X		Suzanne Sack	X	
Jennifer Favalora	X		Jennifer Voegtli	X	
Shawna Goldfarb		X	Dr. Kathleen Zandi	X	
Heather Pach	X				

Policies for Review-2nd Read

Corey Roberts **MOVED** and Jennifer Favalora **SECONDED** a motion to approve policies for a second read as listed on the agenda.

The motion was carried unanimously by a voice vote of 10-0-0. The motion passed unanimously.

Board Member	Present	Absent	Board Member	Present	Absent
Joseph Centofanti	X		Dr. Nelson Rivera	X	
Sonja Charpentier	X		Corey Roberts	X	
Lisa Connelly	X		Suzanne Sack	X	
Jennifer Favalora	X		Jennifer Voegtli	X	
Shawna Goldfarb		X	Dr. Kathleen Zandi	X	

Heather Pach	X				

Consent Agenda

a. Enrollment Report
b. Personnel Report
c. Approval of Minutes from the February 11, 2025, Board of Education Meeting
d. Approval of Minutes from the February 25, 2025, Board of Education Meeting (Superintendent's Presentation)
e. Approval of Minutes from the February 25, 2025, Board of Education Meeting (Budget Workshop)
f. Approval of Minutes from the March 4, 2025, Board of Education Meeting (Joint)
g. Approval of Minutes from the March 4, 2025, Board of Education Meeting (Budget Workshop)
h. Approval of Minutes from the March 11, 2025, Board of Education Meeting (Budget Workshop)
i. Approval of the inventory/asset disposal request for a donated vehicle. Submitted by Donna Hayward, Principal of Haddam-Killingworth High School.

Dr. Nelson Rivera **MOVED** Dr. Kathy Zandi **SECONDED** a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented, removing the enrollment report.

The motion was carried unanimously by a voice vote of 10-0-0. The motion passed unanimously.

Board Member	**Present**	**Absent**	**Board Member**	**Present**	**Absent**
Joseph Centofanti	X		Dr. Nelson Rivera	X	
Sonja Charpentier	X		Corey Roberts	X	
Lisa Connelly	X		Suzanne Sack	X	
Jennifer Favalora	X		Jennifer Voegtli	X	
Shawna Goldfarb		X	Dr. Kathleen Zandi	X	
Heather Pach	X				

The Board discussed clarifying information from last month's enrollment report to confirm the information presented for this report.

Corey Roberts **MOVED** Heather Pach **SECONDED** a motion to approve the enrollment report.

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

Policy Subcommittee

Heather Pach reported that the committee had not met since the last meeting but mentioned that she asked Board members for feedback on potential discussion items or items related to the strategic plan. One item of interest was to discuss a potential policy pertaining to the reserve fund for educational expenditures account. This will require coordination between the finance, facilities, and policy committees.

Curriculum Subcommittee

Dr. Kathy Zandi reported that the committee met in March and Assistant Principal Apicella spoke to the Board about the senior portfolio process and shared information on the senior portfolio website. Assistant Principal Apicella also gave a career counseling and advisory update.

Finance & Facilities Subcommittee

Joe Centofanti reported that the committee discussed the monthly financials, including the cafe fund, daycare fund and the insurance line. They also discussed a request for a single capital plan document. There was an initial conversation regarding the technical section of the audit RFP document.

LEARN

Jenifer Favalora reported on a project, 51 Daniels Ave, a new early childhood birth-second grade school. She will also attend with the Executive Board of LEARN at the National School Board Association Conference.

HK Youth and Family Services

Heather Pach reported on the following items and events:

- Ignite Club is launching a daily newspaper called the "Daily Flush"
- PSAs regarding social host laws
- Substance-free Athletics is in place again for the spring
- Working with HKMS staff on the inaugural sessions of Empowered for middle school girls Lifted for middle school boys to support personal growth and development.

- An event for 5th-grade students to prepare for the transition to middle school.

Haddam Killingworth Recreation Department

Jennifer Favalora reported that there was a discussion about the building project.

Haddam Board of Selectmen

None

Killingworth Board of Selectmen

None

Announcements/Comments

Lisa Connelly mentioned that Communications met earlier this evening to discuss budget communications.

Adjournment

Board Chair Sack adjourned the meeting at 10:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Kaiser
Administrative Assistant to the Board of Education

Approval: _____Date:_____
Dr. Kathleen Zandi, Board Secretary