

Summary of March 2025

RSD17 Board of Education Meeting

COUGAR PRIDE

HKIS Principal Eric Larson and Music Teacher Nick Tedeschi introduced a choral video from the Connecticut Music Educators Association (CMEA) music festival, which featured selected HKIS students. Mr. Tedeschi explained that five students were chosen to participate in a statewide band and/or chorus collaboration, which involved several hours of rehearsals at Central Connecticut State University and culminated in a concert. Eleanor Holland (band), Reid Bobbie (chorus), and Connor Sperry (chorus) shared with the Board their favorite part of the experience and what they learned from it.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

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

- On April 23rd, the HK Art Show and the Honor Society Induction ceremony were held at the Westbrook Outlets.
- The high school Spring musical, The Drowsy Chaperone, was performed on May 9th and 10th.
- The Spring band and chorus concert will be on May 15th.
- During the April break, 33 French students participated in the trip to France.
- The Junior Prom was April 25th, and the theme was Under the Sea.
- On April 22nd, 8th-grade students visited the high school for a tour and information session.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Wihbey introduced State Representative Renee LaMark Muir, who spoke to the Board, providing an update and information on bills recently passed, the state budget, and education-related items.

Superintendent Wihbey reported to the Board on the following items:

- The district has engaged PowerSchool E-Enrollment and E-Forms, and the implementation process is now underway, marking a key step in streamlining our digital student registration and form workflows.
- The Community Room has been equipped with hardwired connections to ensure a strong and reliable internet connection for virtual participants, thereby enhancing the quality of hybrid meetings and events.
- The team is currently working with Orton Gillingham to increase the number of staff who are trained in the science of reading.
- RSD17 participated in the UCONN NEAG School of Education Career Fair. This recruitment effort provided an opportunity to showcase our district and attract high-quality candidates.

- HKHS's Amelia Petersen became the first HK female wrestler to win a state championship at the 2025 CIAC Girls State Wrestling Championship on March 1st. Amelia (18-0) won her fourth girls' tournament of the season by pinning Stratford's winner in 3:29 in the final match of the 138 lb. class.

HKHS GRADUATION DATE

The Board voted to set the date of graduation for June 11, 2025

8th GRADE TRIP TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

HKMS Principal Dorothy Ventura presented to the Board a proposal for the 8th grade class to visit Washington, D.C., in May of 2026. She discussed the planning details and provided some of the attractions that were expected to be part of the trip. The request was scheduled at this time to allow for preparation purposes. The trip was approved unanimously.

QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORTING

Director Pierce presented an overview of the Quarter 3 review and analysis. She reported on the FY25 estimated budget revenue amount of \$1,285,128, with 77.5% of the amount collected year-to-date. Director Pierce reviewed the expenditure budget and discussed the year-to-date balances, as well as the explanations for any overages in the series. She reviewed risks and opportunities, as well as highlighting an analysis of significant sources of revenue and expenditures. Director Pierce concluded with recommendations and action steps.

FEASIBILITY TEAM UPDATE

Superintendent Wihbey reported that the Feasibility Team met on April 21st to review the feedback from the public community forum. Dr. Nelson Rivera provided an introduction that offered an overview of the team members. Dr. Rivera addressed the team's charge, which was to select a conceptual design that met the educational specifications for the high school program. In the process, the team factored in the programming, the curriculum, and the values of HK. Other factors involved state requirements, project costs, impact on students, and consideration of value to the community. He reported that the team came to a consensus twice to recommend a conceptual design for a new build to the Board of Education. The first was prior to the public forum session, and the second was following the April 10th public forum session. He noted that the Feasibility Team had met the charge and returned the item to the Board, who engaged in a thorough discussion following the final update presented by Dr. Rivera. Members reflected on the process, lessons learned, considerations of project options, and the need for clear communication. The Board discussed the submission of the grant application in June 2025 and determining the referendum date at a later time.

BUDGET

The first budget referendum that was held on May 6th failed. The Board will meet to discuss and make potential changes for a second referendum.

ON OUR WEBSITE

RSD17 Board of Education information and past updates may be found at:
<https://www.rsd17.org/district/board-of-education>.

Information on the HKHS Feasibility Study may be found at <https://sites.google.com/view/hkhsproject>.