

Summary of October 2025

RSD17 Board of Education Meeting

COUGAR PRIDE

HKIS Principal Eric Larson introduced the *Marzano High Reliability Schools* certification program, celebrating HKIS's achievement of Level 1 Certification. Lead Teacher Heather Barse and 4th-grade teacher Kathleen Egan shared highlights of the work that led to this milestone and outlined next steps toward Level 2 certification. The Board also recognized HKHS Principal Donna Hayward for her election to the *National Association of Secondary School Principals* Board of Directors and presented her with a Certificate of Excellence.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

The Board welcomed back senior Emma Giaccone and new student representative, junior Evan Berardino to the meeting.

Emma and Evan reported to the Board on the following items:

- The New Leadership Academy began late October
- The Drama Club presented the fall play *Arsenic and Old Lace* on October 6th & 8th
- PSAT testing on October 22nd
- The A-Team is meeting with Principal Hayward to discuss topics such as college plan and prep, field trips, and recycling within the school
- Homecoming was a success, with about 80% of the student body in attendance

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Interim Superintendent Smith attended a portion of the swim team's only home meet of the season and commended the team for adapting well to not having starting blocks at the moment.

The Interim Superintendent recognized Director Chance Davis and CSS Consultant Emily McLaughlin for their outstanding contributions in resolving the issues that had impacted District Operations. He commended their efforts and the long hours they worked, alongside the Technology team, for successfully restoring the District to full operational status.

Technology Information Discussion

Director of Technology Chance Davis and CSS Consultant Emily McLaughlin presented a comprehensive four-year technology infrastructure budgeting plan to the Board. The presentation included an in-depth analysis of the district's current technology systems, identifying existing challenges and limitations. Director Davis outlined detailed recommendations to address these issues, emphasizing upgrades that will support both current and future instructional and operational needs across the district. Each recommendation was accompanied by projected costs by fiscal year to help the Board assess the long-term financial impact.

ADM-Towns of Haddam and Killingworth

Superintendent Smith presented the Board with the ADM data for the Towns of Haddam and Killingworth as of October 1, 2025, that will be reported to the State Department of Education. The October 1st numbers will be used for the 2026-27 budget.

2025 ADM is as follows:

Haddam Total: 1000 (59.74%)
Killingworth Total: 674 (40.26%)

Student Total: 1674

Last year's (2024) ADM was as follows:

Haddam Total: 1017 (59.16%)
Killingworth Total: 702 (40.84%)

Student Total: 1719

Fiscal Quarterly Update

Director Asetta provided an update on the District's financial position, reviewing insurance, outplacement, transportation, paraeducator, and staffing accounts. She noted that the District will soon issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for transportation services to ensure competitive pricing.

ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES AND OWNER'S REPRESENTATIVE CONTRACT PROPOSALS - HIGH SCHOOL

The Board reviewed a proposal from Arcadis for architectural services and an extension of Owner's Representative services related to the High School project. Jack Butkus presented the proposal, outlining the scope of work, range of services, and anticipated responsibilities throughout the project.

Board members discussed the proposal in detail, including next steps and related district initiatives. The Board approved the Architectural and Owner's Representative contracts as presented, for a total of \$94,350, to be funded from the High School Capital Fund.

COMMUNICATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

The committee met and further reviewed the Board's handbook. It should be ready for early November. The committee discussed the High School project communications, CABE updates, and talked about District website updates.

CURRICULUM SUBCOMMITTEE

The committee reviewed the draft of the school calendar approved for first read at tonight's meeting.

FACILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE

The committee discussed the following items:

- High School Project
- New FY Capital Projects Status
- New Fire Door at HKIMS update
- BES Phone update
- White Barn status update
- Google related security topics

FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE

The committee reviewed and discussed the FY2025 reporting, and the FY2026 projections will be revisited.

LEADERSHIP ANNOUNCEMENT

At its October 28th special meeting, the Board unanimously voted to appoint Patricia Sullivan Kowalski as the new RSD17 Superintendent of Schools, effective December 1, 2025.

The Board also announced the hiring of Jennifer McCurdy as RSD17's next Assistant Superintendent. Both Interim-Superintendent Smith and new Superintendent Sullivan-Kowalski participated in the interview and hiring process.

ON OUR WEBSITE

RSD17 Board of Education information and past updates may be found at:

<https://www.rsd17.org/district/board-of-education>.