

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 17

BOARD OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 568, LITTLE CITY ROAD
HIGGANUM, CONNECTICUT 06441
TEL. (860) 345-4534 / FAX (860) 345-2817

November 2014

The Board of Education is pleased to provide you with the following District and Board News.

District News:

- RSD 17 and Haddam Killingworth High School have been named to the 2014 National Advanced Placement Honor Roll. This recognition is given to School Districts that have increased access to Advanced Placement courses while increasing the achievement levels in those courses. Only 547 school Districts in the US and Canada were recognized this year. This is the third time in the last four years that RSD 17 has received this recognition.
- On Monday 11/24 the Board of Education appointed Dr. Jennifer Olsen as the next Principal of Haddam Killingworth Middle School. Dr. Olsen began her teaching career at HKMS where she taught social studies and served as the eighth grade team leader. Dr. Olsen has also served as K-12 Social Studies Curriculum Coordinator in Tolland and Middle School Assistant Principal in Colchester.
- Congratulations to the HKHS Boys Cross Country team and the HKHS Girls Volleyball team for winning state championships this fall. Girls Volleyball coach Rich Langer capped off his final season in an esteemed 40 year career with an impressive run through the State Tournament finishing with a straight game 3-0 victory over number two ranked Seymour.
- HKHKS was honored by the State of Connecticut for outstanding achievement on the Connecticut Technical Education Exam where they were second in the state for overall scores and #1 in state for Video Production.
- Columbia University: Teacher's College staff developers are working with teachers in grades K-5 this year on further developing Reader's and Writer's Workshop. Staff Developers meet with grade level teachers and model lesson strategies and designs.
- Veteran's Day this year was celebrated throughout RSD 17 with various ceremonies and lessons in our schools. Over 100 local veterans were honored in ceremonies in our schools. It is a privilege to host the veterans and have them share with our students their experience and service to our country.
- The annual HKHS Holiday Telethon will once again be held on the last day before the December Vacation, 12/23. This year the telethon will be fundraising for Amanda Lisitano and her family. Amanda is an HK alumna and Higganum resident. In August of this year she was diagnosed with Stage 4 Colon Cancer. The doctors told her she needed to take the year off from teaching to focus on her health. Our Mission is to help her family with medical expenses not covered by insurance, and also ease the burden of mortgage payments and other staple necessities.
Please consider supporting this year's 26th annual Holiday Show which will broadcast live on December 23rd from 8am -11:30am.

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Board News:

- The Regional District 17 Board of Education wishes to extend to school employees, students, parents, and district residents the warmest regards for the Thanksgiving holiday season.
- The Board wishes to express its gratitude to Mim Wagner, the retiring principal of the Haddam-Killingworth Middle School. The school under her leadership has received many honors including being recognized for several years as one of the most distinguished middle schools in Connecticut. Congratulations on a well-earned retirement. She will be greatly missed by her staff and the community.
- Congratulations to Board members Sue Twachtman and Karen Perry (and their families) for their participation in the HKYFS Pumpkin Run on Sunday, October 26th! Their pictures can be seen on the District Facebook page. Other Board members attended to cheer them on and to participate in the activities on the Higganum Green. Members of the Burr School and Haddam Elementary School Running Clubs, along with members of the Haddam-Killingworth Middle School Cross-Country Team, participated in the event. Many of our students from Haddam and Killingworth ran in the Children's Fun Run and later, in the 5k run.
- Your Board of Education members continue to show dedication to their elected positions. Many attend from one to three meetings in a single week, along with preparation time, and many workshops during budget season. There are the two regular Board meetings-the business one on the first Tuesday of the month and the education meeting on the third Tuesday of each month. Some Board members have to hire babysitters for these meetings, the subcommittee meetings, their liaison committee meetings, and special meetings. There are additional school events at which Board members feel the need to be present. The Board has always been generous with many of its individual personal contributions associated with schools and personnel and liaison committee activities. Transportation costs to attend all these meetings and events throughout the year do add up.
- The BOE is currently very busy on the personnel front. We recently had seven administrative positions turn over which we replaced with six new hires (representing a reduction to the District of one administrator). In the past year the BOE has been involved in negotiating with four unions. Two of these are still in the process of being settled.
- The Board is very sensitive to the issue of going into Executive Session. By law, the BOE can only enter into executive session for personnel matters, student matters, legal matters or contract negotiations. Many of the Board's Executive Session discussions could jeopardize students, contract negotiations, personnel hiring, and legal issues if the information was openly discussed and publicized. No motions or decisions can be made in Executive Session. The Board must come out of Executive Session, back into a regular public meeting, to make a motion and take decisive action.
- Board members attended the annual convention of CABE (Connecticut Association of Boards of Education)/CAPSS (Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents) this month in Groton. Sharing with other school board members throughout the state, going to

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education related workshops, getting the latest legislative news from Hartford, learning of the latest legal issues related to education, listening to education leaders from Connecticut and beyond are all important to the ongoing improvement of the Board and our school district. This event provides important information for all Board members.