Regional School District 13 Board of Education November 4, 2026
Student Achievement Committee

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education Student Achievement Committee met in regular session on Wednesday, November 4, 2026 at 4:00 p.m. in the library at Coginchaug Regional High School.

Committee Members Present: Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Moore, Mr. Viens, Ms. Hamilton, Dr. Darcy, Mrs. Allen (arrived 4:25), Daphne Liss, and Will Overton
Committee Members Absent: Mr. Simmons
Faculty Present: Mr. Shoudy
Administration Present: Dr. Leggett, Superintendent of Schools, Ms. Light, Director of Teaching and Learning, Dr. Siegel, Associate Director of Learning and Innovation, Mrs. Stone, Principal CRHS, and Mrs. Trainer, Assistant Principal CRHS

Mrs. Petrella called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Approval of Agenda

Dr. Darcy made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Hamilton, to approve the agenda as presented.

All in favor of approving the agenda as presented: Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Moore, Ms. Hamilton, Mr. Viens, and Dr. Darcy. Motion passed.

Approval of Minutes – September 23, 2026

Dr. Darcy made a motion, seconded by Ms. Hamilton, to approve the September 23, 2026 meeting minutes as presented.

All in favor of approving the September 23, 2026 meeting minutes as presented: Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Moore, Ms. Hamilton, Mr. Viens, and Dr. Darcy. Motion passed.

Discussion and Action Items

Cultural Cooking - Update

Mr. Shoudy presented an overview of the Cultural Cooking class, in which students have connected geography and knowledge of Columbia with foods from Latin America. Students prepared Colombian-style patacones (also known as tostones in Puerto Rico) with an optional salsa verde made from tomatillos, garlic, cilantro, and onion, and they discussed learning about other cultures through cooking.

CRHS Proposed Courses 2027-2028

The committee reviewed 5 proposed CRHS courses: a manufacturing math elective, Backstage II, Photography II, a Futsal PE elective, and a CNA certification through Excel Academy**.**

The first proposed 2027–28 course is a semester-long manufacturing math elective for grades 10–12, developed with Goodwin University and intended to connect math with practical CTE applications. A one-time $4,500.00 fee covers teacher onboarding. Students who choose to earn three Goodwin credits typically pay $150.00, with scholarships available for those facing financial hardship.

Backstage II is a proposed elective for students who have completed Backstage I, offering more advanced, hands-on experience with theater and auditorium production, including lighting, sound, marketing, and concert or play operations. It may allow students to focus on areas of interest and take on more independent responsibilities. Depending on enrollment, it could be combined with Backstage I or offered separately and it is classified as a STEM elective.

Photography II was proposed under the same notion as Backstage II. The course would build on Photography I, align with its standards, and give students an opportunity to study photography for a full year, an option students have repeatedly requested. The course also introduces other related media skills, while students often pursue their own creative interests.

The Futsal PE elective is proposed as a quarter-long elective in indoor soccer, complementing existing options such as touch football and walk fit. Students would learn skills and also create and officiate their own games. The course could help students fill an otherwise empty quarter in their schedules. The school chooses offerings based on student interest.

CNA certification through Excel Academy is proposed as a CNA program in which Excel Academy would manage the training and required clinical arrangements. Students who pass the exam can earn certification. The committee saw it as a practical career pathway that could complement courses such as anatomy and physiology, EMT, and EMR. They also discussed supporting students with program costs, including exploring available workforce funding.

Mrs. Stone and Mrs. Trainer also highlighted other industry-recognized credentials that students are pursuing. 11 students are completing OSHA 10, four are working independently toward CompTIA A+, and eight are enrolled in EMT. It was clarified that EMT students receive first-aid and CPR certifications early in the program and may take the EMT certification exam. Passing it is required for EMT certification. EMR is a separate, shorter course, and students generally need additional coursework before attempting the EMT exam.

The committee members did not object to the proposed courses. Dr. Siegel and Ms. Light will continue developing the courses and return in the spring with detailed course information and unit documents for formal approval.

Overview of Curriculum Work

Ms. Light reviewed follow-up questions about sixth-grade ELA scores, cursive writing, and the Seal of Biliteracy, then discussed the district's curriculum work. Ms. Light reported that staff attributed lower ELA results in 2020–2023 partly to students receiving ELA instruction three times a week rather than daily, and to the consolidation of reading and writing courses. Daily instruction has since resumed, and teachers are working to align EL Education across grades and address learning gaps. There is no formal elementary cursive-writing program, and staff are working to ensure multilingual learners and their families learn about the Seal of Biliteracy early, with results tracked separately from world-language students.

The committee reviewed the district's five-year curriculum cycle: evaluation and research, revision and resources, implementation, and monitoring and adjustment. ELA K–8 is in Phase 3, but it was clarified that the district is implementing the EL Education program while still writing and aligning the curriculum. That work includes identifying gaps, priority standards, and how instruction connects across grade levels. The district is also considering supplemental early-literacy resources and staff will visit Wilton Public Schools to learn from its ELA work.

Music, PE, health, and social studies are in Phase 2, focused on curriculum documents and resources. Social studies teachers are exploring online materials to supplement older textbooks. Math 6–12 is in Phases 1 and 2 and staff are strengthening the curriculum while awaiting details of possible state changes, including a potential requirement for a comprehensive program and new math pathways. Ms. Light also reviewed the longer-term cycle for other disciplines, including CTE and technology, library and media, world language, and visual arts.

Members raised questions about the workload, consultant costs, and whether the curriculum process was sufficiently rigorous. Dr. Leggett stated that curriculum support was budgeted, with a focus on EL Education and early literacy, and described the work as substantial but carefully planned. Curriculum writing is happening through scheduled teacher work sessions and individual work supported by the teaching and learning department.

Construction Student Involvement: Update

The committee discussed ways to involve students in the construction project. Career capstone students will tour the site with engineers, design students will work with designers on building signage, and engineering, woodworking, and physics classes will take part in lessons and site visits. Planning for middle school activities will follow, while elementary activities are expected in the spring. Dr. Leggett also noted that early reading-screening data is planned for discussion at the future accountability meeting.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Adjournment

Dr. Darcy made a motion, seconded by Ms. Hamilton, to adjourn the meeting.

All in favor of adjourning the meeting: Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Allen, Ms. Hamilton, Mr. Viens, and Dr. Darcy. Motion passed and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Meghan Shortell-Fratantonio