

## **EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT FOR SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

It is hereby agreed by and between the Board of Education of Regional School District 17 (hereinafter called the "Board") and Dr. Patricia Sullivan-Kowalski (hereinafter called the "Superintendent") that the said Board in accordance with its action on October 28, 2025, by election pursuant to section 10-157 of the Connecticut General Statutes, does hereby employ the said Dr. Patricia Sullivan-Kowalski as Superintendent of Schools and that Dr. Patricia Sullivan-Kowalski hereby accepts employment as Superintendent of Schools upon the terms and conditions hereinafter set forth.

### **1. CERTIFICATION:**

As a condition precedent to this Agreement taking full force and effect, the Superintendent shall hold and present to the Board a valid certificate issued by the State of Connecticut enabling her to serve as Superintendent. Failure to provide said certificate shall make this Agreement null and void. Should any such certification terminate and the Superintendent not otherwise hold valid certification or be otherwise permitted by law to serve as Superintendent of Schools, this Agreement shall terminate immediately by its terms.

### **2. DUTIES:**

- A. The Superintendent is the chief executive officer of the board. In harmony with the policies of the Board of Education and state law, the Superintendent has executive authority over the school system and the responsibility for its supervision. She has the general authority to act at her discretion, subject to later approval by the Board of Education, upon all emergency matters and those as to which her powers and duties are not expressly limited or are not particularly set forth. She advises the Board on policies and plans that the Board takes under consideration, and she takes the initiative in presenting to the Board policy and planning issues for such consideration.
- B. The Superintendent or her designee as approved by the Board of Education shall attend all meetings of the Board of Education and shall participate in all Board deliberations, except by Board invitation only when matters relating to her own employment are under consideration. The Superintendent shall receive notice of all Board Committee meetings.

### **3. TERM:**

The term of said employment is from December 1, 2025, to June 30, 2028. The Superintendent and the Board of Education agree they shall adhere to the following procedures to extend the Superintendent's employment under this contract for an additional period not to exceed three (3) years at any time:

- A. Prior to the end of the first year of a three-year agreement, the Board of Education, at the request of the Superintendent, may vote for a new agreement.
- B. Prior to the end of the second year of a three-year agreement (or prior to the last year of this Agreement), the Board of Education shall vote on whether to enter into a new agreement. At least three months prior to that time, the Superintendent shall notify the Board that her contract is about to expire and shall provide the Board this contract clause.
- C. Anything in this paragraph to the contrary notwithstanding, the provisions of section 8 shall take precedence and the Superintendent's employment may be terminated under the provisions of said section.

**4. BASE SALARY:**

- A. The annual base salary of the Superintendent for the period December 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026 shall be the sum of (a) Two Hundred Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$220,000) in periodic payments in accordance with the established pay dates for the school district (prorated for the partial year), and (b) an additional amount of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) (not prorated), to be paid to the Superintendent in substantially equal installments during the period from December 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026, as to which amount the Superintendent will arrange to have an elective deferral deducted from her salary on a pre-tax basis as permitted under Section 403(b)(12)(A)(ii) of the Internal Revenue Code, as amended, including the applicable catch-up limit of Section 414(v) of the Internal Revenue Code, and then contributed toward the purchase of a 403(b) annuity with a tax sheltered annuity company she chooses from the Board's list of approved 403(b) vendors pursuant to the Board's 403(b) plan available to Board employees in accordance with Section 403(b) of the Internal Revenue Code, as amended,
- B. The annual base salary of the Superintendent for the period July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027 shall be the sum of (a) Two Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$225,000) in periodic payments in accordance with the established pay dates for the school district, and (b) an additional amount of Eleven Thousand Dollars (\$11,000), to be paid to the Superintendent in substantially equal installments during the contract year as to which amount the Superintendent will arrange to have an elective deferral deducted from her salary on a pre-tax basis as permitted under Section 403(b)(12)(A)(ii) of the Internal Revenue Code, as amended, including the applicable catch-up limit of Section 414(v) of the Internal Revenue Code, and then contributed toward the purchase of a 403(b) annuity with a tax sheltered annuity company she chooses from the Board's list of approved 403(b) vendors pursuant to the Board's 403(b) plan available to Board employees in accordance with Section 403(b) of the Internal Revenue Code, as amended,
- C. The annual base salary of the Superintendent for the period July 1, 2027 through June 30, 2028 shall be the sum of (a) Two Hundred Thirty Two Thousand Dollars

(\$232,000) in periodic payments in accordance with the established pay dates for the school district, and (b) an additional amount of Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$15,000), to be paid to the Superintendent in substantially equal installments during the contract year as to which amount the Superintendent will arrange to have an elective deferral deducted from her salary on a pre-tax basis as permitted under Section 403(b)(12)(A)(ii) of the Internal Revenue Code, as amended, including the applicable catch-up limit of Section 414(v) of the Internal Revenue Code, and then contributed toward the purchase of a 403(b) annuity with a tax sheltered annuity company she chooses from the Board's list of approved 403(b) vendors pursuant to the Board's 403(b) plan available to Board employees in accordance with Section 403(b) of the Internal Revenue Code, as amended,

**5. FRINGE BENEFITS:**

- A. The Board of Education shall provide the Superintendent with seventeen (17) sick days annually cumulative to one hundred eighty (180) days. The Board agrees that the Superintendent begins this contract with an advance of sixty sick days if needed, and accrual of sick days shall begin after sixty (60) sick days are earned. Unused sick days shall not be compensated when employment terminates.
- B. The Board of Education shall provide the Superintendent with twenty-five (25) vacation days annually, with such days to be taken during the year in which they are earned (with vacation prorated for the period December 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026). With prior written notification to the Board, the Superintendent may carry over up to five (5) vacation days, which shall be taken in the following year, provided that the Superintendent may not accumulate more than five (5) days in addition to the annual vacation entitlement. The Superintendent shall notify the Board Chairperson by email if she will be traveling out of state on vacation. Vacation for a partial year of service shall be prorated. Subject to limitations above, upon termination of employment the Superintendent will be paid for unused vacation days at the daily rate of 1/260 of annual salary times the number of accumulated days. In the event of death, unused and accrued vacation pay will be paid to the Superintendent's estate.
- C. The Board shall provide the Superintendent five (5) days of bereavement leave in the case of death in the immediate family of the Superintendent or her spouse.
- D. The Board of Education shall provide the Superintendent annually with up to five (5) personal absence days to be used for pressing personal business that cannot be conducted outside of school hours.
- E. The Superintendent shall have the holidays on which the Board offices are closed.

- F. The Board of Education shall provide the Superintendent and her dependents with the same health insurance coverage as is provided to a majority of school district administrators at the time this contract is signed. The Superintendent shall pay the same premium cost share as such other administrators. Should said health insurance coverage for such other administrators change, the Board and the Superintendent shall negotiate over changes to this provision.
- G. The Board shall provide the Superintendent with term life insurance during the term of this Agreement in an amount equal to two and one-half times annual base salary as defined in Section 4 above.
- H. The Board shall pay the premium for a long-term disability insurance policy to provide coverage equivalent to that provided to other district administrators.
- I. The Superintendent shall be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses reasonably incurred in the performance of her professional duties, and the Superintendent shall be reimbursed at the IRS mileage rate for travel outside of Haddam and Killingworth in her personal automobile on district business.
- J. For the first year of the Superintendent's employment, the Board shall pay for the services of an executive coach as the Board Chairperson and the Superintendent may agree upon in advance.

**6. OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES:**

- A. It is understood that the Superintendent will be active in local, state, regional, and national educational and professional activities as the leader and representative of the Regional School District 17 Public Schools. Out-of-pocket expenses, as provided for in the district budget, for such activities will be borne by the Board, and the Board will expect periodic reports on these activities.
- B. The Board shall pay the full cost of the Superintendent's professional association memberships in the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (including the related area superintendents group), and the American Association of School Administrators. In addition, the Board shall pay for other professional and civic group memberships which the Superintendent feels are appropriate to maintain and improve professional skills and community obligations, provided that these memberships are approved in writing in advance by the Chairperson of the Board.
- C. The Superintendent may undertake consultative work, speaking engagements, writing, lecturing or other professional duties and obligations provided such activities do not interfere with the meeting of her responsibilities as Superintendent. When such activities provide remuneration to the Superintendent, she shall provide the Chairperson written notice of such activities.

## 7. EVALUATION:

- A. The Board shall evaluate and assess in writing the performance of the Superintendent at least annually during the term of this agreement in accordance with guidelines and criteria as may be mutually agreed between the Board and the Superintendent. The Superintendent's performance criteria shall include: (1) Whether the Superintendent has met the goals set for her by the Board; (2) Whether her relationship with the Board is in good standing, including whether she has kept the Board informed on issues, needs and operations, whether she has offered professional advice to the Board on items requiring Board action, and whether she has sought and accepted constructive analysis of her work; (3) Her relationship with the HK (RSD17) communities; (4) Her relationship with staff including whether she executes sound personnel procedures and practices including performance evaluation and professional development and recruits the highest quality available personnel; (5) Her educational leadership including all aspects of the instructional program and a planned methodology assessing programs and student achievement, and her involvement in local, state, and national groups advocating for and informing public education; (6) Her leadership in business and finance including whether she has effectively evaluated financial needs as part of the budget development process and ensured that funds are wisely spent; (7) Her personal qualities including maintenance of high standards of ethics and integrity. The evaluation format, developed mutually by the Board and the Superintendent, shall be aligned to these criteria.
- B. The Board shall evaluate the Superintendent prior to the expiration of each year during the term of this Agreement. Prior to preparing a written evaluation, the Board shall discuss the Superintendent's performance with her in executive session unless the Superintendent requires that such discussion be held in open session. A copy of any written evaluation shall be delivered to the Superintendent within ten (10) days of its completion, and the Superintendent shall have the right to submit a written response to the evaluation which shall become a permanent attachment to the Superintendent's personnel file.
- C. In the event that the Board determines that the performance of the Superintendent is deficient in any respect, it may describe any performance concerns in writing in reasonable detail, indicating specific instances where appropriate. In addition, the Chairperson of the Board may appoint a committee of not fewer than two (2) members of the Board to meet in executive session with the Superintendent and endeavor to assist the Superintendent in improving her performance as to such matters. Said committee may report to the full Board on its activities and the results thereof, either verbally or in writing, and a copy of any written report shall be provided to the Superintendent.

**8. TERMINATION:**

- A. The parties may, by mutual consent, terminate the contract at any time.
- B. The Superintendent shall be entitled to terminate the contract voluntarily upon written notice of ninety (90) days, except that the ninety-day notice is not required if termination is part of an action to implement a new contract in which case verbal notice by the Superintendent, duly witnessed and recorded in the minutes, is acceptable.
- C. The Board may terminate the contract of employment during its term for one or more of the following reasons:
- (1) Inefficiency or incompetence;
  - (2) Insubordination against reasonable rules of the Board of Education;
  - (3) Moral misconduct;
  - (4) Disability as shown by competent medical evidence;
  - (5) Other due and sufficient cause.
- D. Prior to initiating any termination proceedings as set forth below, the Board may offer to engage a mediator to assist the parties in resolving any dispute over the Superintendent's employment, upon such terms as the parties may agree or otherwise as the Board may offer.
- E. In the event the Board seeks to terminate the contract for one of the above reasons, it shall serve on the Superintendent written notice that termination of her contract is under consideration. Such notice shall be accompanied by a written statement of reasons. Within fifteen (15) days after receipt from the Board of written notice that contract termination is under consideration, the Superintendent may file with the Board a written request for a hearing before the Board which shall be held within thirty (30) days after receipt of such request. The Board shall render its decision within fifteen (15) days of such hearing and shall send a copy of its decision setting forth the reasons and evidence relied on to the Superintendent. The Board's decision shall be based on the evidence presented at the hearing. Such hearing may be in executive or public session, at the option of the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall have the right to her own counsel, at her own expense. Any time limits established herein may be waived by mutual agreement of the parties.
- F. Nothing herein contained shall deprive the Board of the power to suspend the Superintendent from duty immediately when serious misconduct is alleged without prejudice to the rights of the Superintendent as otherwise provided in this Agreement.

G. If the Superintendent is terminated on account of disability as shown by competent medical evidence, the Board shall pay the accumulated sick leave and accrued vacation benefits provided in this Agreement.

**9. GENERAL PROVISIONS:**

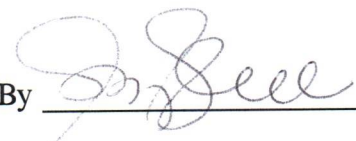
A. If any part of this agreement is invalid, it shall not affect the remainder of said agreement, but said remainder shall be binding and effective against all parties.

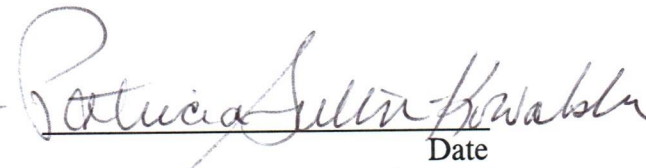
B. This contract contains the entire agreement between the parties. It may not be amended orally but may be amended only by an agreement in writing signed by both parties. Upon signing, it supersedes all prior agreements between the parties.

C. This Agreement shall be governed and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Connecticut, and the parties consent to the exclusive jurisdiction of the appropriate state or federal court in Connecticut.

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT 17  
BOARD OF EDUCATION

SUPERINTENDENT

By  10/28/25  
Date

 10/28/25  
Date