

EAST ROCKAWAY UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
East Rockaway, New York
Regular Meeting of the Board of Education
7:00 P.M., January 20, 2015 – East Rockaway Jr. /Sr. High School
Including Recognition of the Reflections Contest Winners,
a Strategic Planning Initiative Presentation, and a Public Forum

MINUTES

Present: Members of the Board of Education: Kristin Ochtera, Patricia Nicoletti, Neil Schloth, Keith Gamache; Superintendent, Lisa J. Ruiz; Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations, James P. Robinson; Director of Curriculum & Technology, John Piccarella; and District Clerk, Denise Lobascio, staff and members of the community.

Absent: John Giannotti, Jr.

1. The meeting was called to order by Kristin Ochtera at 7:10 pm and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Patti Nicoletti.
2. Upon motion by Patti Nicoletti, seconded by Keith Gamache the minutes of the December 16, 2014 Board of Education meeting were unanimously approved.
3. Acknowledged Receipt of Financial Reports
4. Correspondence - None
5. Action Agenda

A. Personnel

Upon motion by Neil Schloth, seconded by Patti Nicoletti, the following items #1 – 6 were unanimously approved:

1. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve a child rearing leave of absence for Jennifer Moore, from her English teacher position, effective March 12, 2015, through June 30, 2015.
2. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve a leave of absence for medical reasons for Scott Gerken from his science teacher position, effective February 2, 2015.
3. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Bethany Kinkaid to the position of part-time (.8 FTE) speech/language teacher, effective

February 1, 2015, through June 30, 2015, at the prorated MA, Step 1, annual salary set forth in the East Rockaway Teachers Association contract for the 2014-2015 school year.

4. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Alissa Nunes to the position of part-time (.2 FTE) school psychologist, effective February 1, 2015, through June 30, 2015, at the prorated Ph.D., Step 1, annual salary set forth in the East Rockaway Teachers Association contract for the 2014-2015 school year.
5. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Alissa Nunes, as a Chairperson for CSE and CPSE meetings for the 2014-2015 school year.
6. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the following temporary assignments at the salary approved by the East Rockaway Board of Education on the Non-Contractual Salary Schedule for substitute workers for the 2014-2015 school year:
 - a. Elisa Cheung, substitute nurse, effective January 21, 2015

B. Other Items

Upon motion by Keith Gamache, seconded by Patti Nicoletti, the following items #1 – 6 were unanimously approved:

1. Approve the terms of the Letter Agreement dated December 12, 2014, between the Board of Education of the East Rockaway UFSD, and the East Rockaway Teachers Association for the employment of a tenured school psychologist currently on a child rearing leave of absence to return to work for the period February 2, 2015, through June 30, 2015, on a part-time, per diem basis; and authorize the Superintendent to execute the Letter Agreement on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
2. Approve the Non-Contractual Salary Schedule for the 2014-2015 school year to reflect an increase in the New York State Minimum Wage effective January 1, 2015.
3. Accept a donation from Kari M. Jarmuz and Chris A. Jarmuz in the sum of \$1,000, for the East Rockaway Jr./Sr. High School baseball program.
4. Approve the contract with School Aid Specialists, for state aid support review services for the 2014-2015 school year and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the contract on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
5. Approve the award of the bid for transportation services to First Student Inc. for one displaced student living in Inwood to Rhame Avenue School and authorize the President

of the Board of Education to execute the contract on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.

6. Approve the terms of the Letter of Engagement with Capital Markets Advisors, LLC, for financial services relative to the New York State interest rate recalibration and authorize the President to execute the Letter of Engagement on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
- C. Budget Transfers - None
- D. Upon motion by Patti Nicoletti, seconded by Neil Schloth, the CSE Recommendations were unanimously approved.
- E. Approval of CPSE Recommendations - None
6. Policy Matters:
 1. Upon motion by Neil Schloth, seconded by Keith Gamache, the following policies marked a & b were unanimously adopted:
 - a. 5220, School-Sponsored Student Expression
 - b. 5225, Student Personal Expression
- B. For Review
- a. 2220, Board Officers
7. Good and Welfare
 - a. Condolences to the Lawson family on the passing of the ALPSS monitor, Michael Lawson, on December 27, 2014
 - b. Condolences to Diane Rafferty and family on the passing of her mother, Audrey Walsh on December 31, 2014
 - c. Condolences to Monica O’Kane on the passing of her sister-in-law, Veronica Wissemann, on November 26, 2014
 - d. Congratulations to Maryann Napolitano on the marriage of her brother, John McCormack to Randy Jarislowsky on January 9, 2015
8. Superintendent’s Report
 - After school ELA and Math Academies have begun to provide additional instruction and reinforcement to our students in preparation for the upcoming NYS assessments.
 - Rhame Avenue and Centre Avenue (to the best of my knowledge) have started a “morning enrichment” program in ELA and Math to provide additional instruction and support for students as well.

- At the Elementary level - January music classes are concentrating on the subject of freedom, equality, and brotherhood in honor of Martin Luther King Day. Songs from folk, pop, rap and spirituals are being studied for social issues, historical settings and the elements of music such as form, melody, rhythm, beat and harmony.
- The Community Service Action Team will be sponsoring an event at Rhame Avenue for students and parents on January 29th at 6:30 pm. Called “Kids Night Out – Story Time and Crafts.” The Rhame Avenue staff will be reading fun stories to the children and then creating a craft or art work inspired by the theme of each story. To participate, students are being asked to donate a new or gently used book to a school-wide collection during the week of January 23rd. The books will be donated to other schools in need across the country that have been recently affected by natural disasters.
- Centre Avenue School is participating in the National Geographic Geography Bee during the month of January with grades 5 and 6 students. The Championship round will be held on Friday, January 23 in the All Purpose Room. Good luck to all students.
- Centre Avenue School recognized the teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. over the last few weeks. For example grade 3 students produced a Silhouette of Dr. Martin Luther King with a timeline of special events. The projects are displayed outside the grade 3 classrooms.
- Grade 2 students are learning about weathering and erosion by pouring water on skittles and pouring water on soil and recording their observations. Grade 2 students also have state reports and their projects displayed in the main hallway.
- All students grades K-6 are taking the middle of the year NWEA assessments in the computer lab. Shortly, reports will be assembled to gauge how much progress students have made in ELA and Math since the beginning of the year administration.
- Grades 3-6 Enterprise students took a field trip on January 12th to the Cradle of Aviation STEM conference for kids and learned about Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.
- Thank you to our high school administrators, guidance counselors, and teachers for coordinating the Curriculum Fair on Wednesday, January 14th. Students and teachers did a wonderful job showcasing our many elective offerings. I was impressed by the knowledge, poise, and articulate manner of our students.

- This past December the General Music students in Ms. Silver’s class worked to design and create their own instruments out of recycled materials.
- The Senior Orchestra is currently working in the Mac Lab writing their own songs and recording them in the studio.
- The Senior Band has begun preparing their music for their trip and clinic at Disney.
- Willy Wonka rehearsals are going well. This year the musical has engaged students from all three buildings. The show opens on Feb 6th and tickets can be purchased through the Music Department.
- Vocal and Instrumental students selected to perform in the Nassau Music Educators All County Concert Chorus performed this past weekend at the Tilles Center at CW Post College. We will be honoring those students who were selected to participate at a future board meeting.
- On Sunday, January 18, Mr. Howard and Mr. Cimorelli accompanied 5 East Rockaway students (Michael Reichelson, Marc Morgenbesser, Brian Murphy, Kevin Howard, and Aaron McCurdy) to represent East Rockaway High School at a Robotics Tournament at Vaughn College in Queens, New York. Michael Reichelson advanced to the semi-finals, but was eliminated in the “two out of three” round. Kevin Howard represented East Rockaway in the first round of playoffs.

Two teams at the tournament were having issues with construction and programming their robots. The East Rockaway boys stepped up and helped out in a tremendous way. One of the teams they assisted, Freeport, wound up winning the entire tournament!

- Thank you Meridyth Hansen and the entire Science Department on the success of the recent Middle School Science Fair which took place on Tuesday, January 13. Over 180 student exhibits were presented throughout the evening. We had a great turnout and students and parents alike seemed to enjoy the evening. The following students will advance to the Long Island Science Congress in March:

7th Grade Life Science:

1st: Caroline Dolan

2nd: Madison Cipriano

3rd: Leanne Wright

7th Grade Life Science Accelerated:

1st: Anthony Prelesnick
2nd: Jake Wooding
3rd: Sharon Oosterwijk

8th Grade Physical Science:
1st: Brandon Frantzen
2nd: Emily Chelius
3rd: Alec Rovner

8th Grade Earth Science Accelerated:
1st: Michael Arena
2nd: Emma Neary
3rd: Matthew Miller

Spelman Award: Brandon Frantzen

- Detective Stark from the Nassau County Police Department presented an assembly to grades 6, 7 and 8 and then again to grades 9, 10, 11 and 12 on Thursday, January 8. A powerful presentation addressed the dangers of narcotics and addiction to our students. Thank you to the ERHS PTA for sponsoring this assembly.
- **Physical Education** – continues to implement technology into the gymnasium through the use of the polar heart rate monitors, iPad, and smart boards. The Fitnessgram reports will be sent home to the Middle School/High School students the 2nd week in February. This assessment will enable parents to see a snapshot of their child's fitness.
- **Athletics**- The streaming of basketball/JH volleyball games through the use of the HS Cube has been a big success with parents and families. A parent can view the game live or watch it at a later date!
- **Family and Consumer Arts**- Mrs. Corapi has been working along with Mrs. Reilly to have a MS event called Chopped Competition in which food dishes will be created by students and live streamed sometime in April.

In 2013, NYS Comptroller DiNapoli implemented a statewide fiscal stress monitoring system to identify local governments and school districts experiencing fiscal stress. Soon the Office of the Comptroller will be issuing this report publically. Mr. Robinson will provide more information on this topic. In addition, he will provide an update on the budget process to date.

James Robinson – We have received the Fiscal Stress Monitoring reports from the State Comptroller’s Office which analyzes data from our previous years financials. There are four tiers in which our status can be categorized. For the year end 2013 we were categorized as “No Designation”. For the year end 2014, the comptrollers report will show East Rockaway in a “moderate fiscal stress” category. I am not overly alarmed. On the balance sheet, we are in better shape than we were the previous year. This designation is based on much of the district’s cash being classified as “Restricted” according to GASB 54 guidelines. The district repaid a \$6.2 million revenue anticipation note which was originally borrowed to cover hurricane restoration costs. The district is still waiting for approximately \$4 million in FEMA reimbursements for costs associated with storm restorations.

Budget process – The Department of Labor has set the CPI for this year at 1.62%. As a preliminary calculation, our tax levy cap should be in the same ballpark as last year. This will prove to create challenges in our budget development, however, we are working diligently on it and all the initial budget meetings will be done by next Tuesday.

9. Privilege of the Floor

- **Bill Barton** – What is the school district doing regarding the drug problem in the community.

10. Board Member Comments

Neil Schloth – Mr. Barton, The Grant Avenue Fire Department is hosting a Narcon training at 7:00 pm on January 28th. It is very informative and gives you a lot of background information regarding this problem. Please come.

Thank you Mrs. Elias and Mr. Walter for the Reflections presentation. It was both uplifting and motivating and it makes the students want to succeed. It is time again for the Governor to decide what money goes to which schools; please write to your leaders. We will go up to Albany again in March to try to bring some more money into the district. Thank you for coming and have a good month.

Keith Gamache – Thank you Mrs. Ruiz for the Strategic Planning presentation. For those of you who are here, please reach out to your friends who ask questions to get involved. It is good to have different ideas to move the district forward.

Patti Nicoletti – I would like to congratulate the winners of the Reflections Contest and thank them for reminding me what’s important; being kind to each other and taking care of the environment. Thank you for everyone who came out tonight.

Kristin Ochtera – I’d like to thank Mrs. Maini for putting together the visuals for tonight’s recognition. The entire staff at Rhame Avenue School was supportive of the PTA in coordinating the Reflections program this year. I would particularly like to thank Tina Fazi, Toni Keene and the custodial staff for their support. Reflections is another example of our school community working together to provide opportunities for the success of our children. That was clearly evident tonight as we witnessed the excitement the girls had on stage for Sophia as Mr. Walter announced that her submission was sent to the state level

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competition. I'm so proud of our students. Thank you to Tara Elias for giving me the opportunity to work with you on this program and thank you all for coming out tonight.

11. Upon motion by Neil Schloth, seconded by Patti Nicoletti and unanimously passed, the meeting was adjourned at 8:48 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Lobascio
District Clerk