

EAST ROCKAWAY UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
East Rockaway, New York
Regular Meeting of the Board of Education
7:00 P.M., September 16, 2014 – East Rockaway Jr. /Sr. High School
Preceded by Recognition of ERHS Super Masters, Tenure Recipient Jessica Howell, Introduction of
New Staff, a Presentation on Middle School Vision, and a Public Forum

MINUTES

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

1. The meeting was called to order by Kristin Ochtera at 7:04 pm and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Keith Gamache.
2. Upon motion by Patti Nicoletti, seconded by John Giannotti, Jr. the minutes of the August 26, 2014 Board of Education meeting were unanimously approved.
3. Acknowledged receipt of Financial Reports
4. Correspondence – Three
 - a. Dr. Corbin
 - b. Barbara and Robert Reill, LI High School for the Arts
 - c. Susan DuBeau

5. Action Agenda

A. Personnel

Upon motion by John Giannotti, Jr. seconded by Neil Schloth, the following items numbered 1-8 were unanimously approved:

1. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, accept, with regret, the resignation, for the purpose of retirement, of Patricia Hahn, from her position as monitor, effective August 1, 2014.
2. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, accept the following resignations:
 - a. Angela Debellis, permanent substitute teacher, effective August 28, 2014
 - b. Teresa Amalfitano, teacher aide, effective August 27, 2014

- c. Lisa Zeilberger, substitute monitor, effective September 16, 2014
 - d. Roberto De Jesus, cleaner, effective September 11, 2014
3. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, effective September 2, 2014, rescind the appointment of Laura Guggino, as a Dignity Act Coordinator, and approve the appointment of Erik Walter as a Dignity Act Coordinator.
 4. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Nicholas Maniaci to the position of cleaner, effective September 17, 2014, at the Step A annual salary set forth in the East Rockaway Custodial Unit contract for cleaners for the 2014-2015 school year.
 5. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Lisa Zeilberger to the position of monitor, effective September 17, 2014, at the Step 1 hourly salary established by the East Rockaway Food Service and Monitor Union Contract for monitors for the 2014-15 school year.
 6. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the part-time appointment of Frank Altamore to the position of Teaching Assistant (.83 FTE) at the prorated Step 1 annual salary set forth in the East Rockaway Teachers Association contract for teaching assistants for the 2014-2015 school year.
 7. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request for a child rearing leave of absence of Myriam Spadafora from her school social worker position, effective September 17, 2014 through June 30, 2015.
 8. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the following temporary assignments, effective September 17, 2014, through June 25, 2015, 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. Alyssa Shishko (nee Ali), substitute teacher
 - b. Kathleen Dwyer, substitute teacher
 - c. David Swift, substitute cleaner
 - d. Stephen Raimondi, athletic supervisor

B. Other Items

Upon motion by Keith Gamache, seconded by John Giannotti, Jr., the following items numbered 1 – 11 were unanimously approved:

1. Approve the club advisor assignments for the 2014-2015 school year as more fully set forth on the schedule of club/advisor assignments, and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the charters.
2. Approve the consultant services contract with Dr. Christopher Parker, Educational Consultant for literacy training and professional development services during the 2014-2015 school year.
3. Approve the consultant services contract with Dr. Nancy Doda, Educational Consultant for the district's middle school vision and professional development services during the 2014-2015 school year.
4. Approve the amendment to the contract with RCP Consultants for professional development services for the NCLB grant during the 2014-2015 school year.
5. Declare obsolete for the purpose of disposal and/or recycling the books more fully set forth on the Textbook Removal Forms dated September 10, 2014.
6. Approve the Location Agreement with Michael Glatze, LLC, for the use of East Rockaway Jr/Sr High School premises on August 20, 2014, in connection with its filming of a motion picture.
7. Accept the following donations:
 - a. \$186.08 from Target as part of Target's Take Charge of Education Program
 - b. School supplies valued at \$165.00 from Pathmark
8. Approve the award of the bid for transportation services to First Student, Inc. for two (2) displaced students living in Hempstead to East Rockaway High School and authorize the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations to execute the resulting contract on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
9. Approve the admission of one Long Beach UFSD, Student I.D. No. 180007592 to attend the East Rockaway Public Schools for the 2014-2015 school year and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the tuition agreement on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
10. Approve the Children's Residential Project Agreement with Maryhaven Center of Hope for residential requirements for two students, Student ID No. 180005902 and Student ID No. 180005899 for the 2014 – 2015 school year and authorize the President of the Board to Education to execute the resulting residential agreement on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.

11. Approve the Consultant Services Contract with Accessible Learning Technology Alternatives LLC for independent assistive technology evaluation services during 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.

C. Budget Transfers

1. Upon motion by Neil Schloth, seconded by Patti Nicoletti the following budget transfers were unanimously approved:
 - a. Transaction No. 15-0001
 - b. Transaction No. 15-0002

- D. Upon motion by Patti Nicoletti, seconded by Keith Gamache the CSE Recommendations were unanimously approved.

- E. Upon motion by John Giannotti, Jr., seconded by Neil Schloth, the CPSE Recommendations were unanimously approved.

6. Policy Matters:

A. For Adoption - None

B. For Review:

1. 5420.1, Allergy/Anaphylaxis Policy

C. For Review and Re-Affirmance:

1. 6240, Investment
2. 5300, Code of Conduct

7. Good and Welfare

- a. Congratulations to Laura Guggino-Hastings on her marriage to Scott Hastings on August 31, 2014
- b. Congratulations to Ashley (Cole) Donovan on her marriage to Denis Donovan on May 24, 2014
- c. Congratulations to Ann Marie Kenny-Chapur on the birth of her son, Preston Richard Chapur, born August 28, 2014
- d. Congratulations to Pam Castellano on the marriage of her daughter, Joanna, to Mr. Lee Spielman on Friday, September 5, 2015.
- e. Condolences to Jorge Salazar and his family on the passing of his brother-in-law, Ronald A. Crisci

- f. Condolences to Sue Torborg and her family on the passing of her mother, Agnes Janes
- g. Condolences to Maryann Napolitano on the passing of her father, Peter J. McCormack, Jr.
- h. Condolences to James Robinson on the passing of his sister in law, Kathi Louis.

8. Superintendent's Report

The beginning of the year is a good time to remind everyone of the district's communication protocol, *WHO DO I CALL WITH A QUESTION OR SUGGESTION*, which can be found under the Contact tab of the district's website.

The Board will also note that in this evening's packet was a report that must be reviewed annually on attendance data for each building in the district, as well as attendance for ALPSS.

Elementary Schools

At Centre Avenue, Grade 2 students worked on their writing about Patriots' Day. After reading the "America" poem, the students will be able to discuss why they love America and what makes America so special.

Mrs. Crowley, Mrs. Banducci, and Mrs. Kennedy's class, along with students from our high school attended, the Surfers Healing Program on Wednesday, September 10, at Lido Beach West. All the children were very brave and went surfing in the ocean with trained instructors. This program was created to provide a kind of therapy to students with special needs and help boost their confidence.

Our club programs began this week Rhame. The Before School Sports Program and the Walking Club are opportunities for students to participate in more structured physical activity. Other clubs starting the week of September 15th are: Art Club, Band, Chorus, Orchestra, Newscasters, Safety Patrol and Student Council.

The Rhame PTA kicked off their annual Book Fair the week of September 10. All the children were excited to visit their library. Grades K-2 enjoyed shopping with their parents.

Our elementary schools now each have 2.5 Reading teachers to help meet the needs of the students and the faculty to help improve student achievement.

We are updating our student information system and have sent home a letter for parents to update their contact information, especially email addresses so that we contact you quickly and efficiently. Please return your form as soon as possible.

Rhame Avenue's Back to School Night was a great success. There were many parents in attendance and they were able to meet with their child's teacher. Parents left with an understanding of curriculum, homework, procedures, and academic expectations for their children. Centre Avenue's Back to School Night is scheduled for this Thursday night 7:30 PM. They are hoping for a great turn-out as our parents are an extremely important factor in student growth. Teachers have honed their presentations to parents so they know what is expected of the students and how parents can help.

Students in grades 4 – 12 are participating in the Andrew Stern Essay Contest. This year's topic: Explain how you think the 9/11 Museum, which just opened this year, can be used to educate students and others about the events of that day.

Bully prevention is a top priority at all of our schools this year. October is Bullying Prevention month. We will be hosting a very important parent presentation on Bullying on October 8 – a flyer went home yesterday. Both elementary buildings are engaging in various grade appropriate activities such as the lessons in our Health Smart curriculum, social workers are leading activities and school wide announcements reinforce appropriate behavior among the students. A number of our teachers also worked on a summer curriculum project to develop curriculum embedded lessons to support the DASA – the Dignity for All Students Act and our middle school is investigating a research-based curriculum entitled, Lion's Quest, for possible implementation. A requirement of the Dignity Act is to provide instruction in civility, citizenship, and character education through social and emotional skill building, bullying and substance abuse prevention and service-learning activities.

Elementary teachers in grades K-4, reading teachers, and teaching assistants participated in professional development provided by consultant, Dr. Christopher Parker, on data driven literacy instruction and interventions.

East Rockaway Jr/Sr High School

The New York State Art Teachers Association will host an Art Exhibit at the New York State School Boards Convention. School Board members from across New York State will view the artwork and see the artistic excellence and evidence of art education in the New York State Schools. The following students' artwork will represent East Rockaway Public Schools at this exhibit:

Theresa Fusco, ERHS (Mrs. Collins)
Alisha Khan, HS (Mrs. Collins)
Allyson Lovera, Centre (Mrs. Brody)
Emily Ramos, Rhame (Mrs. Brody)

A reception will be held on Monday, October 27, 2014. The exhibit and reception will be held at the Sheraton New York at Time Square – 811 7th Ave, NYC, from 5:00 to 6:30 pm, on the 3rd Floor, New York/Carnegie Foyer. Additional artwork can be found on the lower level. Thank you to our art teachers, Ms. Collins and Ms. Brody, for supporting our students.

Middle School

The Middle School welcomed its 7th grade class with an Orientation Program in late August that introduced students to the school program and helped to ease their transition. The program was capped off by the varsity football team leading students through a series of team-building activities, followed by lunch. Thank you to the PTA for its generous donation and support.

Seventh grade students are adjusting to life in a new building. Many are being helped by a new course – College and Career Readiness – that is outlining a transition plan for students.

The Middle School Committee will soon meet to take its first steps towards fulfilling the Middle School vision. Teachers also met with Dr. Nancy Doda, a national consultant, who will provide ongoing staff development this year for our teachers and administrators.

Academics

The Advanced Placement Program is celebrating great results from last May's exam administration. Participation is at an all-time high, with 74 students taking a total of 141 exams. Also, 77% of last year's students scored a 3 or higher, also an all-time high. The 5-year trend for the program shows that participation and achievement are both on the rise.

Homecoming

Homecoming will take place this weekend, beginning with a parade down Atlantic Avenue that will lead to the Pep Rally, which is being held outside on the field. The parade will leave at 6:30 and arrive at the high school by 7:00. We hope you will join us for the parade, Pep Rally and homecoming game.

Student Council has organized Spirit Week, which is being ramped up with hallway decoration, also sponsored by the PTA.

Guidance Department

The East Rockaway High School Guidance Department is excited to announce the following college trips for October 2014 (open to juniors and seniors):

University of Connecticut: October 22, 2014

East Stroudsburg University: October 29, 2014

Thank you to Ms. Hecht for her efforts.

Advanced Placement Results

The Advanced Placement program has shown significant improvements in both participation and achievement. Over the last 5 years, the total number of students participating in the program has increased from 51 to 74, and the total number of exams from 92 to 141, while the rate of students scoring a 3 or better has improved from 43 % to 77%. In fact, last year's achievement is 10% higher than New York State, and 16% higher than the global average.

We received our NYS assessment scores for the 2014 school year. We will be providing a district data snapshot at our November Board of Education meeting which will examine various measure of achievement data across the district. We are in the process of analyzing our scores to identify patterns of strengths and areas for improvement. We are concerned about our results relative to other districts across Nassau County and New York State. Our analysis of our New York State assessment results will help to identify where we need to focus our efforts to improve these results, as well as overall student achievement, particularly as we continue to transition to the Common Core Learning Standards.

The district's mascot, The Rockman, has been involuntarily retired. We received a cease and desist letter from Marvel Comics. Therefore, the district will no longer be using the image of The Rockman in our sports program.

Mr. Robinson will share some information on our facilities:

The emergency that occurred in the high school last night was created by smoke from a defective light ballast in the small gym. The fire department was called and arrived at the building to ensure the area was safe. We also had it all cleared by an environmentalist. Everything was cleared to re-occupy the building.

There is no doubt that we had a tumultuous start with the SCOPE After School Program. Many of the obstacles have been overcome with a few outstanding items. I have spoken to parents and we understand it has been frustrating for them. The management of SCOPE had the opportunity to offer a program that met our needs. We have a firm commitment from them to see it through and overcome the rest of the obstacles and we are communicating with them on a regular basis to address every concern that has been raised. They are holding a job fair on October 7th to enable them to staff both the Rhame and Centre program completely.

Our food service management contract with Whitsons was not renewed this year. We went through the RFP process and Aramark won the bid. They were able to come in and retooled each building. The feedback has been good.

The gym floor has been replaced. There was moisture collecting under the floor and it caused buckling in various areas. It needed to be replaced and it was covered by the insurance company. We anticipate it being completed within the next week or so.

9. Privilege of the Floor

- Very impressed with the Super Masters. Also very concerned with the scores published over the summer.
- Extra help for students
- Parents should say “What can we do to help our students?”

Board Member Comments

Keith Gamache – I began sitting up here in July, but being relatively new to this community, I wanted to tell you a little bit about myself. I grew up in a small Massachusetts working-class town graduating with 46 other students in my 8th grade class. My town did not have its own high school so I attended a public school ten miles away that would accept us “Berkley Kids.” Upon graduation from high school, I left my childhood home, studied on scholarship at NYU, began teaching Art at South Side High School and, eventually, made my way here. My wife and I chose to make East Rockaway our home, in large part because of its small size. I chose to get involved with the school board because I care about the education of our children. I have a deep and personal understanding of the challenges faced by a small town but also value the uniqueness of this community. I want to help our schools maintain and ideally increase opportunities to help our children fulfill their own goals whether that means remaining here in East Rockaway, settling a few states away, across the country, or elsewhere in the world. I am honored to serve on the board and look forward to working with you.

Finally, thank you to Mr. Spero and Mrs. Reilly. I am excited about our new Middle School philosophy. You have my full support and confidence.

10. **Neil Schloth** – It is nice to see a good turnout. Thank you Mr. Spero and Mrs. Reilly. Your vision shows we are moving ahead. We have issues to deal with. This is my 7th year and I am still very passionate about it. Stay involved. Everyone have a good year.

John Giannotti, Jr. – Thank you Mr. Spero and Mrs. Reilly. Welcome new staff and congratulations to our Super Masters. See you in October.

Patti Nicoletti – Congratulations and welcome to all new staff members. I hope you have a happy and successful tenure in East Rockaway. Congratulations to the Super Masters on their tremendous successes. I look forward to seeing everyone at Homecoming!

Kristin Ochtera – I would like to conclude by sharing sentiments that I had when fortunate to welcome our teachers and staff on their first day back to school. “We are average.” That is how the New York State Education Department classifies us - as a district with average needs. However, every year we show them the extraordinary things average people can do. We are very proud of our accomplishments and we are driven to face our challenges. What we do, we do with your support. Thank you to the PTAs and the new leadership. Welcome to

our new teachers, I commend you on staying till 8:58. Congratulations to Ms. Howell on her well-deserved tenure. I'm looking forward to more extraordinary achievements this year.

11. Upon motion by John Giannotti, Jr., seconded by Neil Schloth and passed unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 8:58 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Lobascio
District Clerk