

EAST ROCKAWAY UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
East Rockaway, New York
Regular Meeting of the Board of Education
7:00 P.M., February 26, 2019, East Rockaway Jr. / Sr. High School
Preceded by Recognition of PTA Reflections Contest Winners,
Retirements of Marilyn Brekke and Kathy Keating,
a Science 21 (Grades K-2) Presentation, and a Public Forum

MINUTES

Present: Members of the Board of Education: Keith Gamache, Kristin Ochtera, Neil Schloth, Patti Nicoletti, Dominick Vulpis, Superintendent Lisa J. Ruiz, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations, Jacqueline A. Scerio; Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, Mona Hecht; District Clerk, Vitina Fazi

1. The meeting was called to order by Keith Gamache at 7:10 p.m. in the auditorium of the East Rockaway Jr./Sr. High School.
2. Dom Vulpis introduced Camila Lemus, from Centre Avenue School, who led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Ruiz welcomed everyone to the meeting. She stated that there were a number of presentations taking place. The first presentation was the PTA Reflections Contest Winners. She introduced Mr. Erik Walter, Rhame Avenue School Principal. Mr. Walter said this was one of his favorite events of the year. He was presenting student participation awards. Mr. Walter thanked the parents and teachers involved in helping the students to bring their artwork to life. A brief history of the contest and contest rules was given. This year's theme was "Heroes Around Me." Mr. Walter also thanked Claire Maini who created a slideshow and video presentation of the Rhame Avenue School and Centre Avenue school student artwork. Mr. Walter thanked Michaelene Cooper, Dr. Meagher, Ms. Massa, and Councilman D'Esposito who were this year's judges. The judges were called to the podium and presented with certificates. Mr. Walter also thanked Mrs. Elias, Mrs. Gamache, and Mrs. Petraro, the PTA committee members, for allowing our students to express themselves in creative ways. Thirty-nine Rhame Avenue School students participated; eight student pieces moved onto the Nassau County level; and one piece moved onto the State level. Mr. Walter called all the students to the stage and they were presented with certificates.

Ms. Sherry Ma, Centre Avenue School Principal, spoke on behalf of the Centre Avenue students who participated. The students were called to the stage and they were presented with certificates. All of their pieces moved onto the Nassau County level. Ms. Ma also thanked Mrs. Maini and presented her with flowers. Ms. Ruiz thanked all of the students and encouraged them to take advantage of the art courses when they attend the high school. She also thanked the judges, parents, and PTA for making this possible.

Ms. Ruiz then introduced Ms. Mona Hecht who spoke about retiree Kathy Keating. Ms. Keating retired at the end of last year as a senior typist clerk in the Facilities Office. She thanked her for her many years of service in the District, wished her well on her retirement, and presented her with a recognition award.

Ms. Hecht then spoke about Marilyn Brekke. Ms. Brekke also retired at the end of last year as a Principal Typist Clerk in the attendance office of the high school. She thanked her for her many years of service in the District, wished her well on her retirement, and presented her with a recognition award.

Ms. Ruiz invited Ms. Hecht back to the podium to present the new Science 21 program for Grades K-2. Ms. Hecht spoke about the new science standards that will be implemented over the years. Grade 3 will be added to the program next year. A thorough slide show presentation was shown. She invited kindergarten teacher Caroline Drummy and first grade teacher Heather Loughran to share their classroom experiences of the new science program with the audience. She asked if there were any questions. Ms. Ruiz thanked Ms. Hecht for her leadership in implementing this program and the new math program which was discussed at a prior board meeting. She also thanked the teachers for their hard work in learning the program.

At 8:02 pm Mr. Gamache continued with the public portion of the agenda.

3. Public Comments on Agenda Items – None
4. Approval of Minutes

Upon motion made by Kristin Ochtera, and seconded by Neil Schloth, and unanimously passed, the following minutes were approved:

A. January 22, 2019, Regular Meeting of the Board of Education

5. Acknowledgment of Monthly Reports and Correspondence
 - A. Receipt of Monthly Financial Reports: December, 2018
 - B. Correspondence – Five (5)
6. Recommendations of the Superintendent of Schools

Upon motion made by Patricia Nicoletti, and seconded by Dominick Vulpis, the following Items A through K were unanimously approved on a consent agenda.

- A. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, accept the following resignations:
 1. Kristina T. Barbari from the position of leave replacement science teacher, effective February 6, 2019

2. Cynthia Bernard, per diem substitute teacher, effective January 23, 2019
 3. Kristen Matthews, monitor, effective February 22, 2019
- B. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request of Susan Glickman for a continuation of a leave of absence for personal medical reasons through February 22, 2019.
 - C. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request of Kristi Boyce for a leave of absence for personal medical reasons, effective December 18, 2018 through March 15, 2019.
 - D. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request of Marissa Diamond for a 12 week FMLA leave of absence, effective April 15, 2019.
 - E. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request of Cheri Nelson Poland for a leave of absence for personal medical reasons, effective January 31, 2019, through March 8, 2019.
 - F. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve an administrative leave of absence for Julia Garvey, from her probationary teaching assistant position, effective March 18, 2019, through June 20, 2019.
 - G. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Heidi Kelly-Strawgate to the position of leave replacement science teacher, effective February 6, 2019, through June 30, 2019, at the prorated MA, Step Entry, annual salary set forth in the East Rockaway Teacher's Association contract for the 2018-2019 school year.
 - H. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the continuation of Ann Kerner as a short-term substitute teacher, effective February 4, 2019 through February 15, 2019.
 - I. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the 2019 Spring Coaching Schedule dated February 26, 2019.
 - J. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Gina Tricarico-Manos to the position of Part-Time Monitor, effective upon Civil Service approval, at the Step 1 hourly rate set forth in the East Rockaway Food Service & Monitors Unit Agreement for the 2018-2019 school.
 - K. 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 2018-2019 school year:
 1. Jessica Risso, per diem substitute teacher, effective February 27, 2019
 2. Barbara Lyons, substitute monitor, effective upon Civil Service approval

7. Other Items

Upon motion made by Neil Schloth, and seconded by Kristin Ochtera, the following Items A and B were unanimously approved on a consent agenda.

A. Approve the following resolution:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Education of the East Rockaway Union Free School District, Nassau County, New York, as follows:

Section 1. The following qualified voters of the East Rockaway Union Free School District, Nassau County, New York, are hereby appointed to constitute the Board of Registration of said school district to attend for the purpose of the preparation of the registers for all school-related elections of said school district pursuant to Section 2014 of the Education Law and to serve until the 30th day following the next annual meeting of the district:

1. Vitina Fazi (District Clerk)
2. Theresa Garcia
3. Leira Serrano
4. Barbara Winters

Section 2. In addition to the District's continuous registration previously approved by the Board of Education conducted in the District Clerk's Office on days that school is in session, special registration shall be conducted, and shall take place, at: Rhame Avenue Elementary School and Centre Avenue Elementary School, on March 11-15, 2019, between the hours of 8:00 am and 4:00 pm.

Section 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

B. Approve the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the following service providers for Tax Shelter Annuities are approved by the Board of Education:

Plan Administrator	Contact (if any)	Number	Plan Type
MET Life	Antonio Cunha acunha@financialguide.com	(631) 851-5939	403b
AXA Equitable Life Insurance Company	Daniel Toepfer daniel.toepfer@axa-advisors.com	(516) 312-6629	403b
Brighthouse Life Insurance	Douglas Okin Dokin@blueocean.us.com	(516) 686-7175	403b
Foresters Financial (First Investors)	Rory Pinsky rorypinsky@foresters.com	(516) 338-4888 x130 (516) 732-5665	403b 457
Lincoln Investment Planning	Dan Safranick Dsafranek@lincolninvestment.com	(631) 366-2237	403b
Mutual, Inc./ Plan Member Services	William Devine bdevine@planmembersec.com	(631) 467-2211 Ext. 220	403b
The Legend Group/ ADSERV	Louis Ferrara, Jr. lferrara@legendequities.com	(516) 650-3405	403b
VOYA Financial (Natl. NY)	James Davis james.davis@voyafa.com T. Ben Balkaran benbalkaran@voyafa.com	(631) 755-0832 (631) 755-0805	403b 403b
NYS Deferred Compensation		1-800-422-8463	457
*Fidelity Management Trust Co. *Mutual, Inc. *T. Rowe Price Trust Company *Union Central Life			
*Existing employees who have an annuity with one of these plans will continue to have their contributions deducted from their payroll checks and sent to the company. No new participants permitted.			

BE IT RESOLVED, all employees who are eligible, may make contributions to a tax deferred annuity under IRS Code 403B or 457.

Upon motion made by Dominick Vulpis, and seconded by Patricia Nicoletti, the following Items C through K were unanimously approved on a consent agenda.

C. Approve the 2019-2020 school district calendar.

D. Approve the Special Education Services Contract with Rockville Centre UFSD for special education services for one (1) parentally placed student [Student ID No.

369495391] for the 2018-2019 school year and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the contract on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.

- E. Approve the terms of the Consultant Services Contract between the East Rockaway UFSD and RCP Consultants, and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the agreement on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
- F. Approve the terms of the Consultant Services Contract with Eli Maniscalco for the district musical *Bye Bye Birdie* leading up to and including the public performances, and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the contract on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
- G. Approve the terms of the Consultant Services Contract with Karen Yelaney for the district musical *Bye Bye Birdie* leading up to and including the public performances, and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the contract on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
- H. Approve the purchase of the following workbooks:

Great Minds, Eureka Math K-5 Workbooks
- I. Declare obsolete for the purpose of disposal and/or recycling, the following items as set forth on the Change of Disposition forms dated January 28, 2019:
 - 1. For disposal, a Nikon D3000 camera
 - 2. For disposal, a Nautilus Press Machine and Lat Pulldown Machine
 - 3. For disposal, the items listed on the Textbook Removal Form dated February 11, 2019
- J. Accept the following donations:
 - 1. From the Centre Avenue PTA, a curriculum enhancement grant in the amount of \$500
 - 2. From Club Rock, \$500 to offset the cost of the Kevin Alter presentation
 - 3. From the Italian-American Committee on Education, LTD:
 - a. A check in the sum of \$3,000 for the District's Italian program
 - b. A check in the sum of \$470 to cover AP Italian fees
 - c. A check in the sum of \$4,000 for teacher salaries for the Italian Program
 - 4. From an anonymous donor for the Athletic Department:
 - a. A squat press machine valued at \$1,000
 - b. Various weight plates valued at \$500
- K. Approve the following resolution:

RESOLVED that the Board of Education nominate Robert “B. A.” Schoen as a candidate for re-election to the Nassau BOCES Board of Trustees to fill one of three seats on the Nassau BOCES Board which will expire on June 30, 2019, for a term commencing on July 1, 2019, and expiring on June 30, 2022.

8. Upon motion made by Kristin Ochtera, and seconded by Neil Schloth, and unanimously passed, the CSE and CPSE Recommendations were approved.
9. Budget Transfers – None
10. Policy Matters

Ms. Ochtera stated that many of the policies being adopted and under review have recommended changes due to new NYSED guidelines or policy updates. Some policies need to be cross-referenced while others have to do with new updates due to changes in the law.

Upon motion made by Keith Gamache, and unanimously approved, the following polices were for approved for adoption.

A. For Adoption

1. 1050, Annual District Election and Budget Vote
2. 2120, School Board Elections
3. 5420, Student Health
4. 5460, Child Abuse
5. 8414.5 - Alcohol and Drug Testing of Drivers

B. For Review

1. 0110, Sexual Harassment
2. 2120.1, Candidates and Campaigning
3. 5150, 5150-R - School Admission
4. 4710, Grading
5. 4750, Promotion and Retention of Students
6. 4770, 4770-R - Graduation Requirements
7. 4772, Graduation Ceremonies
8. 4773, Diploma and Credential Options for Students with Disabilities
9. 1120, School District Records
10. 1230, Public Participation at Board Meetings
11. 1400, Public Complaints
12. 1530, Smoking and Other Tobacco Use on School Premises
13. 1741, Home Schooled Students
14. 2340, Notice of Meetings
15. 4311.1, Display of the Flag
16. 4526.1, Internet Safety
17. 4531, Field Trip and Excursions

18. 5205, Eligibility for Extra Curricular Activities
19. 5225, Student Personal Expression
20. 6900, Disposal of District Property
21. 8630, Computer Resource and Data Management

11. Reports

A. Board President's Report

Mr. Gamache did not have a report on the February 12, 2019, work session since it was cancelled due to inclement weather. The work session took place the day before this meeting, on February 25, 2019. Principal Richard Schaffer reported on a 6-day cycle for the high school which has advantages and he would like to hear more about that. The Facilities Committee will be conducting its first tour of the facilities on March 2, 2019, at 9:30 am. All the information, as well as sign-up for the tour, is posted on our website. The district bus will be available to transport residents to all the buildings. The Facilities Forum report is also on the website.

B. Superintendent's Report

Achievement:

Teachers from both Rhame and Centre Avenue schools recently engaged in continued professional learning with our educational consultants around Teachers College Writer's Workshop and Eureka Math. Grade level teams from both schools focused their attention on putting the finishing touches on our Narrative Writing Units of Study and further enhanced their teaching practices in alignment with our new math program. We are continuing to work hard in all areas to provide our students with rich, rigorous and engaging learning opportunities to raise student achievement.

Senior Chris Levins was named News12 Scholar Athlete. He was one of 30 student athletes across Long Island who will receive this award.

Brooke DeGiulio scored her 1,000 career point in basketball. She is the fifth athlete to do so in East Rockaway history.

Students in many subjects are beginning their research journeys in the expanded 7-12 Research Initiative.

Our Regents Review Academies proved to be a huge success, with more than 20 students that had previously failed a Regents exam, earning a passing grade in January.

Opportunity:

Mr. Cracolici from the Jr/Sr High School will be visiting both elementary schools to speak to our sixth grade students about foreign language opportunities as we move closer to the end of the year. Our soon to be elementary graduates will engage in an interactive presentation and learn about the languages of both Spanish and Italian. We look forward to setting our students up for success as they move closer to middle school where there will be more opportunities to learn and grow in different ways.

For the first time, students who needed the opportunity to retake or make-up Checkpoint A Examinations in Spanish and Italian were afforded the chance to do so during January testing week. Review academies were held for both subjects. Students who took this opportunity did very well, and now have a graduation requirement under their belts and can focus on other requirements.

The Mock Trial Team competed at the Nassau County Supreme Court on February 13, 2019, and will return on February 27th. They debated the New York State Bar Association case for 2019.

On February 6, 2019, the high school hosted its Curriculum Fair as an opportunity to highlight all the different course offerings that are available in the high school.

Connection:

Kindness Week was celebrated across both elementary schools during the week of February 11, 2019. Our school social workers, psychologists, and guidance counselors put together a fun-filled week of social-emotional learning opportunities for our students. Each building engaged in “The Great Kindness Challenge” that was devoted to performing as many acts of kindness possible. Through these acts of kindness, our collective goal was and will continue to be growing schools filled with empathy, acceptance and respect.

“Career Week 2019” took place February 11-15, 2019. Community members and alumni from a variety of fields volunteered to speak with our students about their career paths. Speakers included professionals in the fields of education, medicine, law, theater, health and wellness, marketing and advertising, photojournalism, interior design, law enforcement and fire prevention, business, and many others. Ms. Ma, Mr. Araoz, and Ms. Hecht also joined in the fun. As part of this week, the high school hosted Kevin Alter for students in Grades 9-12 who heard his story and the dangers of addiction and John Budion, writer/director of Rockaway the Film for our middle school students.

Innovation:

Mrs. Schoen, our Library Media Teacher and Technology Specialist, recently began working with teachers and students in Grades 5 and 6 to elevate the use of technology in the classrooms. She will also be using her skillset to help transform instruction across all content areas using a multitude of digital tools and work to enhance research and presentation skills with our students. We are excited about this new approach to co-teaching in order to maximize the innovative instructional practices that are taking place within our classrooms with 1:1 devices.

Middle School Math and English AIS teachers will implement iReady, a diagnostic and assessment tool designed to improve student achievement in both subject areas.

“The Teen Formula,” community book talk, will take place on March 6, 2019. There are a few books left if anyone is interested in joining. Information is available on our website. Dinner will be served and babysitting will be available. This event will be led by Kristen Mednick and David Barth.

Mr. Araoz will be presenting an interactive Parent Google Workshop on March 12, 2019, 7:00 pm in the Centre Avenue School library.

C. Communications Sub-Committee Report

Mr. Vulpis reported that the second meeting of the Committee was held on January 29, 2019. Impetus was to take recommendations from their first meeting and work from there. Three areas of concern were: (1) opportunities for communication; (2) how to better engage all families; and (3) traditions the community would like to see continued/re-established. Other ideas were a newsletter and community announcement email for those without children; a better balance between parent and teacher communication; and using the local library to advertise school and community events.

Mr. Schloth added that the members of the committee are working collaboratively and cooperatively on various items to try to band together and give suggestions. He was pleased with the workings of the Committee thus far.

12. Good and Welfare

- A. Congratulations to Brianne Allgier and family on the arrival of her daughter, Eileen Margaret Jude Allgier, born on February 24, 2019
- B. Condolences to Rebeca Rodriguez and family on the passing of her mother-in-law, Juliet Margaret Rodriguez, on January 17, 2019
- C. Condolences to TJ Terranova and family on the passing of her father, Frank Terranova, on February 9, 2019
- D. Condolences to Pamela Murano and family on the passing of her grandfather, Harold W.

Messerschmitt on February 24, 2019

13. Public Comments – Mr. Gamache stated that next on our agenda is the public comment period. Please note that anyone wishing to speak at this time should fill out a card and comply with all provisions of board policy. Please keep your comments to three minutes, refrain from addressing topics related to personnel matters or individual students. Such concerns should be discussed privately with an administrator or the superintendent at an appropriate time. The board is here to listen and cannot provide immediate feedback or engage in open dialogue. Any necessary follow up will be noted and provided at a later date

Jimmy Lores: Mr. Lores shared a news report about a car driving onto a sidewalk while children were walking into their school. There is talk on the city and state level of cameras being installed in school buses. As the District's bus driver, he encourages the District to get on board and have cameras installed on the District's buses for the safety of our students. He left a copy of the article with the Board.

Dr. Richard Meagher: Dr. Meagher commended the Board for establishing its Communications Sub-Committee and was pleased to hear the report from Trustees Vulpis and Schloth. He applauds what they have done and what they continue to do.

14. Board Member Comments

Kristin Ochtera: Ms. Ochtera acknowledged the retirements of Kathy Keating and Marilyn Brekke, both of whom were exemplary of school spirit. Tonight's presentations were wonderful. The PTA Reflections contest is very dear to her heart. Collaboration with the PTA is very important and she thanked both PTA's for the opportunities they have provided to our students. She recently had an opportunity to visit schools and colleges to see what is available to our students. She is very proud of the fact that programs we are offering here does put our students on par with the national scale.

Patti Nicoletti: Ms. Nicoletti shared Ms. Ochtera's sentiments regarding the retirees and thanked them for their service to the District. She also thanked the PTA for their hard work in coordinating the Reflections program. Ms. Nicoletti stressed the importance for residents to come out on Saturday for the facilities tour and on March 23rd. The Committee has identified many projects throughout the District. However, the projects centered on student safety and enhancing programs are very important. Input is needed to see the facilities and understand why these projects need to be done. She asked the audience to spread the word around and try to get people to come out on March 2nd and March 23, 2019.

Neil Schloth: Mr. Schloth echoed the comments of his colleagues. He was very happy with

the new science program. As a student, he enjoyed science and is impressed with the methods used to entice students to also like science. Mr. Schloth recently attended “Lobby Day” in Albany. Unfortunately, the District is not getting the foundation aide that we were hoping for. The concern for this year is with the Senate being taken over by the Democrats; Long Island will not get its cut. It appears New York City would get more. He thanked everyone for attending tonight’s meeting.

Dom Vulpis: Mr. Vulpis thanked Mr. Lores for his comments. He had seen the news report regarding the incident as well. Mr. Vulpis thanked Ms. Hecht for bringing the new math and science programs into the District. He also thanked the teachers for learning the new programs and implementing them in their classrooms.

Keith Gamache: Mr. Gamache thanked Mr. Schloth for attending “Lobby Day” in Albany to represent the District. He spoke about an article he read where 30,000 teachers have left the teaching profession over the past six years in the state of Oklahoma. Oklahoma is one of the states that have experienced a teacher strike during the past year. In a state that employed 50,598 teachers in 2017-2018, that is a significant loss. As a teacher, school board member, and supporter of public education, often when he reads about national news affecting public education, it's hard not to internalize it as his own. During these times, he tries especially hard to focus on what's positive in his own circumstances.

Despite all of the challenges we face in New York and here in East Rockaway, our schools remain strong, successful, vital fixtures in our community. He considers himself fortunate to live, work, and serve in a state and community dedicated to high quality and high standards. The funding of our schools falls significantly on local property tax revenue. New York's tax cap put in place in 2011, was designed to slow down tax increases and reign in school district spending. It's changed the way we've done our budgeting. It provides planning challenges, and he still has concerns about its potential long term negative effects. He is proud of what we've been able to achieve in the time he has been on the board working within these constraints.

Due to smart and strategic fiscal planning, we have increased opportunities for students, increased staffing to better meet our students' educational and emotional needs, put learning technology in the hands of our students and teachers, made structural and safety improvements to our facilities, and added security personnel to augment these physical improvements. These are significant accomplishments during a time of limited funding resources and strict budgeting guidelines. As we are in the process of creating our 2019-2020 budget, he thanked Mrs. Scio, Mrs. Ruiz and the rest of the staff in their help and cooperation in preparing continued responsible and sustainable budgets ensuring a quality, and rich educational program for our children. He wished everyone a great evening and thanked the audience for attending.

15. Upon motion made by Neil Schloth, and seconded by Kristin Ochtera, and passed unanimously, the public meeting was adjourned at 8:42 p.m. and the Board convened into Executive Session to discuss a PPS personnel issue.

Respectfully submitted,

Vitina Fazi
District Clerk