

EAST ROCKAWAY UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
East Rockaway, New York
Regular Meeting of the Board of Education
7:00 P.M., September 20, 2016 – East Rockaway Jr. /Sr. High School
Preceded by the Introduction of New Staff, Strategic Planning/Data Presentation,
Schools of Opportunity Silver Award for East Rockaway Jr. /Sr. High School Recognition,
Caitlin Cassini, First Place Poetry Contest Winner Recognition; and a Public Forum

MINUTES

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

Absent: John Giannotti, Jr.

1. The meeting was called to order by Patti Nicoletti at 7:05 p.m. and Neil Schloth led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board President Patti Nicoletti turned the meeting over to the Superintendent. Ms. Ruiz welcomed everyone to tonight's meeting. In continuing with the tradition of past meetings, tonight Ms. Ruiz introduced all new staff members to the community and the Board. She spoke about each new staff member, gave a brief description of their background and education. She stated that this group was one of the most educated groups recently hired and wished them all a long and successful career in East Rockaway.

Ms. Ruiz then introduced Mr. Joe Spero, East Rockaway Jr. /Sr. High School principal. Mr. Spero was honored to recognize Caitlin Cassini in winning first place overall in the Long Island Arts Council Annual Poetry Contest. He spoke about her accomplishments and presented her with a certificate. Ms. Ruiz also congratulated Caitlin.

Ms. Ruiz was very proud to speak about the next recognition, the "Schools of Opportunity Silver Award for East Rockaway." Ms. Ruiz thanked Mr. Spero, Ms. Hecht, Mr. DeTommaso, and Ms. DePietro for their hard work and participation in the vigorous application process. East Rockaway was one out of twelve school districts in the Country to receive this award. Ms. Ruiz referred the audience to the website for further description of this award as well the article published in the *Washington Post*. The award banner was rolled out and shown to the audience. Ms. Ruiz thanked Mr. Spero and his administrative team and said the banner will be hung in the front of the building.

Ms. Ruiz then conducted her Power Point presentation on the Five Year Strategic Plan. She gave a brief summary of the history of the plan and spoke in detail about the accomplishments we have achieved in the first year of the plan. She stated that her presentation was posted on the website and a hand-out was also available for the audience. Ms. Ruiz then introduced Mr. John Piccarella who reported on and spoke about the “data snapshot” portion of the plan. Ms. Ruiz thanked Mr. Piccarella for his participation in tonight’s meeting and for developing the five year cycle. Ms. Ruiz spoke about the accomplishments achieved this year in alignment with the Strategic Plan and also spoke about the next steps in “Year 2.” She was very proud of all of the work that has been accomplished this year. She thanked the administration and teachers for all their hard work. Ms. Ruiz asked if there were any questions.

Ms. Nicoletti stated that Ms. Ruiz has highlighted many successes of the District; however, she told the audience to be mindful that this Strategic Plan was the brainchild of Ms. Ruiz. She organized the entire process, reached out for community involvement and was relentless in pursuing the goals of the Committee. She thanked Ms. Ruiz for establishing this Five Year Plan and for all of her hard work.

At 8:14 pm the meeting was turned over to Ms. Nicoletti who continued with the agenda. Ms. Nicoletti reminded the audience that there will be an opportunity to ask questions at the end of meeting as well as an opportunity to review tonight’s agenda.

2. Upon motion made by Kristin Ochtera, and seconded by Keith Gamache, the minutes of the August 30, 2016, meeting was unanimously approved.
3. Acknowledge Receipt of Financial Reports
4. Correspondence – None
5. Hearing of visitors on items in the Agenda - None
6. Action Agenda

Upon motion made by Neil Schloth, and seconded by Keith Gamache, the following Items 1 through 12 were unanimously approved on a consent agenda.

A. Personnel

1. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, accept the following resignation:
 - a. Kristin Rochford, Varsity Cheerleading Coach, effective September 1, 2016
 - b. Adrianna Felbinger, monitor, effective September 6, 2016

- c. Clare Marco, substitute teacher, effective September 7, 2016
 - d. Francesca DeVivo, lead monitor, effective September 30, 2016
2. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request of Jodi Neckles for a medical leave of absence from her position as monitor, effective September 1, 2016.
 3. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request of Kristen Matthews for a leave of absence from her position as monitor, effective September 19, 2016, through October 28, 2016.
 4. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request of Casey Wise for a change in the dates of her approved maternity leave of absence from her teaching assistant position to be effective September 12, 2016, through December 2, 2016, pursuant to the Family Medical Leave Act.
 5. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Meaghan Pickard to the position of short-term substitute teacher, effective September 19, 2016 through November 21, 2016, at the per diem salary established by the East Rockaway Board of Education on the Non-Contractual Salary Schedule for the 2016-2017 school year.
 6. Approve the club advisor assignments for the 2016-2017 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.
 7. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Thomas DeCrescenzo to the position of cleaner, effective upon Civil Service approval, at the Step A annual salary established by the East Rockaway Custodial Unit agreement for the 2016-2017 school year.
 8. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Kim Zaptin to the position of monitor, effective upon Civil Service approval, at the Step 1 hourly salary established by the East Rockaway Food Service and Monitors Union agreement for the 2016-2017 school year.
 9. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Amy Caradonna to the position of monitor, effective upon Civil Service approval, at the Step 1 hourly salary established by the East Rockaway Food Service and Monitors Union agreement for the 2016-2017 school year.

10. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Ivette Vertuccio to the position of Part-Time Monitor, effective upon Civil Service approval, at the Step 1 hourly salary established by the East Rockaway Food Service and Monitors Union agreement for the 2016-2017 school year.
11. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the following temporary assignment(s) at the salary approved by the East Rockaway Board of Education on the Non-Contractual Salary Schedule for substitute workers for the 2016-2017 school year:
 - a. Victoria Berman, substitute teacher, effective September 21, 2016
 - b. Dana Stuono, substitute teacher, effective September 21, 2016
12. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the continuation of the “emergency, conditional” personnel appointment for the following individual pending receipt of notification of fingerprint clearance from the State of New York, Department of Education:
 - a. Kim Zaptin
 - b. Ivette Vertuccio

B. Other Items

Upon motion made by Keith Gamache, and seconded by Neil Schloth, the following Other Items 1 through 13 were unanimously approved on a consent agenda.

1. Approve the Consultant Services Contract between the East Rockaway UFSD and The Rebecca Center for Music Therapy at Molloy College for music therapy services for the 2016-2017 school year and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the contract on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
2. Approve the Special Education Services Contract with Rockville Centre UFSD for special education services for the following parentally placed students for the 2016 – 2017 school year and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the contract on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
 - a. Student ID No. 369495391
 - b. Student ID No. 369494998
3. Approve the Collaborative Agreement, Administration of Epinephrine Auto-Injectors in East Rockaway Schools for the 2016-2017 school year with Dr. Richard Addes in accordance with New York State Public Health Law Section 3000c and authorize

Dominick Vulpis in his capacity as the Director of Physical Education, Health and Athletics to execute the agreement on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.

4. Approve the Affordable Care Act Administration Agreement between the East Rockaway Union Free School District and Seneca Consulting Group, Inc., for administrative services related to the Affordable Care Act for a one year term and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the Agreement on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
5. Approve the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the East Rockaway Union Free School District approves the terms and conditions of the Memorandum of Agreement dated June 24, 2016, between the District and the East Rockaway Teacher Aides Association regarding the terms and conditions of employment for the District's teacher aides unit employees for the period July 1, 2015, through June 30, 2019, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Superintendent of Schools is authorized to execute the resulting collective bargaining agreement on behalf of the Board of Education.

6. Approve the following resolution:

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that approval is hereby granted to enter into agreement with Hawkins Delafield & Wood, L.L.P., for bond counsel services, as indicated in the Request for Proposal published in Newsday on August 8, 9 & 10, 2016, for the 2016-2017 school year and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the agreement on behalf of the Board of Education.

7. Approve the following resolution:

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that approval is hereby granted to enter into agreement with Deans-Archer & Co., for claims auditing services, as indicated in the Request for Proposal published in Newsday on August 8, 9 & 10, 2016, for the 2016-2017 school year and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the agreement on behalf of the Board of Education.

8. Declare obsolete for the purpose of disposal and/or recycling the following books, on the attached list, from Rhame Avenue School dated September 20, 2016.
9. Approve the revised contract with First Student for summer 2016 transportation services and authorize the Superintendent and President of the Board of Education to execute the contract on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
10. Approve the Emergency Transportation Contract with Guardian Bus Company (morning run) and Logan Bus Company (afternoon run), and authorize the Superintendent and President of the East Rockaway Board of Education to execute the contract on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
11. Approve the Consultation Services contract with Richard N. Thompson for hearing officer services for the 2016-2017 school year and authorize the President of the East Rockaway Board of Education to execute the contract on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
12. Authorize the Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations to extend transportation contracts for the 2016-2017 school year at the Consumer Price Index with the following:
 - a. Acme Bus Corp.
 - b. Dell Transportation Corp.
 - c. First Student, Inc.
 - d. Independent Coach Corp.
 - e. Suburban Bus Transportation
 - f. Veterans Transportation Co.
 - g. WE Transport, Inc.
 - h. Bauman Bus Company
13. Approve the awards of the bids for transportation services to the following companies and authorize the Superintendent and President of the Board of Education to execute the resulting contract on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education:
 - a. Acme Bus Company
 - 1 Holy Trinity Late Bus
 - 2 St. Mary's Late Bus
 - 3 Our Lady of Peace
 - b. Independent Coach Corp.
 - 1 St. Mary's
 - 2 Displaced students to East Rockaway High School
 - c. WE Transport, Inc.

- 1 St. Martin De Porres and late bus
- d. Veterans Transportation
 - 1 Holy Name of Mary
 - 2 Valley Stream Christian Academy
 - 3 Emergency contract to the SEAL Program, Great Neck
- e. First Student, Inc.
 - 1 Displaced students to Centre Avenue
 - 2 Displaced students to Rhame Avenue
 - 3 Special Education student to Southside High School

C. Budget Transfers – None

D. Upon motion made by Kristin Ochtera, and seconded by Neil Schloth, the CSE Recommendations were unanimously approved.

E. Approval of CPSE Recommendations – None

7. Policy Matters

- 1. For Review
 - a. 8121.1, 8121.1-R Opioid Overdose Prevention and Regulation

8. Good and Welfare

- a. Congratulations to Casey and Jonathan Wise on the arrival of their daughter, Penelope Marie Wise, on September 15, 2016
- b. Congratulations to Cathy Corapi and family on the arrival of granddaughter, Chiara Grasso born on September 18th
- c. Congratulations to Wendy and Scott Gorman on the arrival of their son, Scott Michael, born on September 20, 2016
- d. Condolences to Mary Beth Palazzolo and family on the passing of her mother, Catherine Butler
- e. Condolences to Mary McLeod and family on the passing of her father, Frank M. DePasquale

9. Superintendent’s Report

Innovation

At Centre Avenue School all students in Grades 3-6 recently started attending STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineer, Arts, and Mathematics) sessions with Mrs. Healy. The first unit is Coding-

Introduction to Video Game Design. Mrs. Healy will be working with Centre Avenue students for the first six weeks of the trimester and then she will work with Rhame students for the next six weeks on the same Coding unit. Students and teachers alike showed enthusiasm for this unit and are looking forward to learning the principles of programming and creating their video game designs.

Our new fifth grade students are looking forward to receiving their “Tablets” this year across both Elementary Schools as we continue to move forward with the District’s 1:1 Tablet initiative. Our current sixth graders are already hard at work using their tablets from last year in their new classrooms with their new teachers. We have a number of new and exciting professional development opportunities planned for our teachers this year to help bring this new and innovative approach to teaching and learning to life in the classrooms. Parents of fifth grade students at both Elementary Schools are invited to meet with Mr. Piccarella or Mrs. Schoen on Back to School Night this week to learn more about the tablets that their children will be receiving. Important information and documents will be distributed during this meeting in order for the students to obtain their tablets and be able to bring them home. We encourage all parents to please attend.

Mr. Piccarella spoke to the parents of ninth graders this past week to offer them an overview of the 1-to-1 tablet initiative. This year, half of our high school students will be using tablets, which have a few improved features. Teachers were also trained in their use in an effort to get the initiative off the ground quickly and across content areas.

Connection

Centre Avenue School had their Kindergarten Tea to welcome both new and returning parents. Parents were presented with an overview of the kindergarten program from various staff members who work with these students. They were also given an opportunity to ask questions. The PTA graciously prepared Swag bags for all parents, which included a Centre Avenue shirt, magnet and notepad. The faculty and staff enjoyed welcoming all students back to school, especially our kindergarten class of 2016-17.

The Rhame Avenue School PTA hosted its annual “Welcome Back Picnic” for all students to enjoy at Rhame Avenue this past Friday. Students played a variety of games with the support of parents, teachers and camp counselors from Rolling River Day Camp. This is always a wonderful experience for the kids and families to get together in September and have some fun to kick-off the start of another amazing school year.

Hofstra University will be the host of the First Presidential Debates on September 26, 2016. Through Hofstra's special programs for high school students, only 100 students from Long Island schools were given an invitation to attend. Each school selected will only be allowed to bring five students and one member of teaching staff. I am happy to say that East Rockaway was one of the

schools selected to attend this prestigious event! To ensure an equitable selection process, the Social Studies Department created an essential question that all students interested in participating, could submit a response to:

If you were moderating one of the presidential debates, what question would you ask the candidates? Please explain why you believe your question is important in this presidential election? Support with evidence.

Students were selected on the following criteria: (1) A neutral question that both sides could address (2) Supportive background knowledge of the reason behind the question and (3) The use of cited sources.

The following students have been selected:

Grade 8- Sofia Bertolotti

Grade 9- Sharon Oosterwijk

Grade 10- Nico Capone

Grade 11- Brian Harellick

Grade 12- Justin Sandoval

Ms. Carol Sanders will be our faculty chaperone/advisor.

Opportunity

Many Centre Avenue sixth graders recently started their duties as Safety Patrol members. In order to be considered for this program, students had to complete an application and write an essay on why they felt they would be good candidates to be on Safety Patrol. Safety Patrol members help guide students from kindergarten through fourth grade to their classrooms during morning arrival and they also help bring the younger students back to the classrooms after recess. Throughout the year, Safety Patrol members develop connections with the younger students who look up to them as role models. By empowering the oldest students in the school to take on leadership roles, it is evident that students take these responsibilities seriously and consider this opportunity a big honor.

The students in Grades 4-6 at Rhame Avenue will begin the first ever Chess Club in the building. Mrs. Longworth will be teaching the students how to play this strategic game using a variety of approaches including the Smart Board as well as the old-fashioned chess boards that we are all used to seeing. The children were asked “Why do you want to learn now to play the game of chess? How do you think this game might help you in school and in life?” We were amazed by some of the responses when selecting the members of this year’s club and the kids are super excited to begin learning and playing.

This year East Rockaway High School has a total of 15 students participating in the BOCES Occ-

Ed program. This is the largest number of students we have ever had participating and is a direct reflection of our Strategic Plan. Through a sustained effort, the Guidance Department, along with the Pupil Support Team identified applicants based on the criteria BOCES looks for as well as their personal statements. Many students submitted heart-felt, moving essays that described their passions and the appreciation for the opportunity being given them. We look forward to their success and the continued growth of the program.

Achievement

Several Centre and Rhame Avenue teachers are looking forward to taking part in the Thinking Maps training coming up at the end of September. This is a districtwide initiative that already started in the High School last year. Thinking Maps are tools used to help students visually represent their thinking in a concrete way. Teachers are also excited to be working with a literacy consultant to help enhance the level of small group instruction that the teachers provide to all the students. The first focus of the year will be to help increase students' academic vocabulary, while reading a literary text. After teachers are trained, they will turnkey the information to the rest of the staff. The goal is to always work towards lifting the level of instruction in the classroom to help all students achieve greater success.

Students at Rhame Avenue in Grades K-6 have begun to write Personal Narratives to start off the school year, reflecting on special moments from summer vacation. Each grade level plans to share their stories with another class and certain students will be selected to read their Narratives during Newscasters on the morning announcements. We are very proud of the accomplishments of our students in writing and the teachers are picking up right where they left off in June with some phenomenal ideas for September writing pieces. Centre Avenue will be implementing the same model shortly.

We are currently administering "beginning of the year" assessments across all grade levels in reading and in math so that we can begin to create our instructional groups to meet the individual needs of every student. Our goal is to use the data to pin-point the strengths and weaknesses of our students so the classroom teachers and interventionists can streamline their instruction to help move **ALL** students forward. We are proud of the progress that our students made last year and plan to refocus some of our efforts and infuse new techniques this year to enhance best practices across the board so that our students receive the best possible education.

East Rockaway Junior-Senior High School was named a Schools of Opportunity Silver Award recipient by the National Education Policy Center. The school is one of only 12 high schools across the country to receive this coveted national recognition.

A School of Opportunity is one that serves as a model, informing and inspiring the efforts of educators and communities throughout the United States to become high schools that promote both

excellence and equity. The center identifies and acknowledges excellent public high schools that strive to close opportunity gaps by attending to practices that build on students' strengths, thereby creating engaging and supported learning for all students.

East Rockaway Junior-Senior High School was recognized for implementing a cultural shift in its education practices by providing students with the opportunities and skills needed to compete in a quickly changing college and career landscape. This approach is marked by its Honors by Achievement initiative, as well as expanding opportunities for all students to take challenging and rigorous Advanced Placement and college-level courses.

A behavioral incident involving a student occurred this past Friday in the High School which resulted in a short lockout. Due to confidentiality, Ms. Ruiz did not identify the student involved nor speak about the details of the incident. After debriefing with a safety and security expert who was in the District this morning, she was assured that Mr. Spero and his team did an excellent job in correctly handling the situation. Student safety was not jeopardized. A Connect-Ed message was sent on Friday; however some homes were not reached. An additional Connect-Ed message was sent on Monday. The glitch with Connect-Ed has since been corrected. Ms. Ruiz reiterated to the audience if there ever are any concerns, parents should email or call the District.

10. Privilege of the Floor - none

11. Board Member Comments

Mr. Schloth: Mr. Schloth wished everyone a good evening and welcomed the new teachers to the District. He wished them much success and hopes they will join us in helping our children succeed. He thanked Ms. Ruiz for the abundance of information she shared regarding the Five Year Strategic Plan. He stated that Ms. Ruiz has really helped turn around the School District and has made a profound difference in our community, something we are all proud of. Ms. Ruiz is clearly turning our School District in a positive direction. Mr. Schloth told that audience that as the new school year begins, if you are experiencing any problems with your child not succeeding, to please act upon it quickly. Do not be afraid to seek help from your child's teacher or principal. He thanked everyone for staying through the end of the meeting and wished everyone a good school year.

Ms. Ochtera: Ms. Ochtera explained a little about her new position on the Executive Board of the NSSBA. Her hope through this position is to help us connect Island-wide and across the State with issues and concerns. She is thrilled to be doing this on behalf of the school district and community and it is the next step in the process. She thanked her fellow trustees for their support in continuing their efforts outside the district by going to the NSSBA dinner to advocate for reform and improvements.

Mr. Gamache: Mr. Gamache stated that the Schools of Opportunity recognition means a lot to him and hopes it means a lot to the community. When he saw the banner, he was filled with pride. This is a huge honor because it is an external validation of our values. Unlike other recognitions that emphasize data such as test scores, the Schools of Opportunity award emphasizes school practices that are research-based to increase the likelihood of future student success.

For the application, the East Rockaway School District had to submit information about six different education-opportunity practices that have been successfully implemented. He thanked Mr. Spero and everyone else who helped put together a successful application.

While this honor recognizes the successful, educational opportunities afforded students at our high school, thanks in large part to our Strategic Plan, Mr. Gamache sees evidence of increased learning opportunities at all levels of our school system from our new middle school model to increased math and reading services and an exciting new STEAM for all at the elementary schools. He thanked the central administrative team, led by Ms. Ruiz, our building leadership teams, the teachers and support staff that turn policy and procedure into practice and members of this community for supporting ambitious initiatives and passing school budgets.

Ms. Nicoletti: Ms. Nicoletti thanked her fellow trustees for their thoughtful words. Each one of them made excellent points and she shared their sentiments. She welcomed new and veteran staff and thanked them. She emphasized that if a parent has any concerns or questions regarding their child's learning, to not hesitate and to make a telephone call as the staff is always more than available to make that connection with you. She wished everyone a happy and successful school year and hopes to see everyone at the next Board meeting.

12. Upon motion made by Neil Schloth, and seconded by Kristin Ochtera, and passed unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 8:43 p.m. to executive session to discuss matters of personnel.

Respectfully submitted,

Vitina Fazi
District Clerk