

EAST ROCKAWAY UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
East Rockaway, New York  
Regular Meeting of the Board of Education  
7:00 P.M., October 17, 2017, East Rockaway Jr. / Sr. High School  
Preceded by a Salute to the Board of Education,  
Recognition of Advance Placement Scholars and Super Masters,  
and a Public Forum

MINUTES

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

1. The meeting was called to order by Patti Nicoletti at 7:08 p.m. Kristin Ochtera led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board President Patti Nicoletti welcomed everyone to the meeting. She stated that tonight there were a few things planned before the public meeting: recognition of the Board of Education, Advance Placement Scholars and Super Masters. She turned the meeting over to Ms. Ruiz who thanked everyone for coming out tonight. She said that this evening is special because we get to recognize our Board of Education trustees for all that they do. The week of October 23-27, 2017, is observed as Board Recognition Week, and she is truly honored to work with such dedicated individuals. She reminded the audience that this is a volunteer position and there is no monetary compensation.

Ms. Ruiz then introduced Mr. Walter. Mr. Walter spoke on behalf of the Rhame Avenue School community and thanked the Board of Education for their hard work and dedication. He stated that tonight's recognition celebration is hosted by the Rhame Avenue School PTA. Mr. Walter was excited to announce that Rhame Avenue School first grade students were present. He invited the first graders on stage to perform a song for the Board of Education. Mr. Ceglie was also present and told the audience that the name of the song was "Who Do We Appreciate?" Mr. Ceglie thanked Ms. Lalama (who was not present due to illness), Ms. Ferrato, Ms. Hiller, Ms. Banducci, Ms. Beufve, Ms. Silver, and Ms. Brody for working with the students and preparing them for this performance. Mr. Walter announced that refreshments, hosted by the Rhame Avenue School PTA, will be served and invited the audience to stay.

Mr. Walter introduced Mr. James DeTommaso, President of the East Rockaway Administrators' Association. Mr. DeTommaso applauded all the efforts of the Board of Education and thanked them for their dedication and support.

Ms. Ruiz then introduced Mr. Neil Lederer. Mr. Lederer described the requirements for the Super

Masters, Advance Placement Scholars, Advance Placement Scholars with Honors, and Advance Placement Scholars with Distinction. Mr. Lederer announced the student names with their individual distinctions. Mr. DeTommaso and Ms. Terranova joined Mr. Lederer in distributing the certificates to the students. Mr. Lederer stated that these students are truly academically gifted and congratulated all of them for an outstanding job.

Ms. Ruiz congratulated all the students as well. She then announced at 7:34 pm that there will be a short recess and invited the audience to the Cafeteria for refreshments in honor of the Board of Education.

At 8:04 pm Ms. Nicoletti resumed the public portion of the agenda.

2. Upon motion made by Kristin Ochtera, and seconded by John Giannotti, Jr., the following minutes were unanimously approved:
  - a. September 19, 2017
  - b. October 3, 2017
3. Acknowledge Receipt of Financial Reports – August 2017
4. Correspondence – One
5. Hearing of visitors on items in the Agenda - None
6. Action Agenda

Upon motion made by John Giannotti, Jr., and seconded by Neil Schloth, the following Items 1 through 10 were unanimously approved on a consent agenda.

A. Personnel

1. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, accept, with regret, the resignation, for the purpose of retirement, of Linda Jarmel, from her position as senior typist clerk, effective December 30, 2017.
2. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, accept, with regret, the resignation, for the purpose of retirement, of Pamela Castellano, from her position as teacher aide, effective October 20, 2017.
3. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Ariana Arnone to the position of short-term substitute ENL teacher, effective September 26, 2017, through November 17, 2017, at the per diem salary established by the East Rockaway Board of Education on the Non-Contractual

Salary Schedule for the 2017-2018 school year.

4. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Jennifer Weston to the position of short term substitute English teacher, effective October 2, 2017, through January 26, 2018, at the per diem salary established by the East Rockaway Board of Education on the Non-Contractual Salary Schedule for the 2017-2018 school year.
5. Approve the revised club advisor assignments for the 2017-2018 school year as more fully set forth on the schedule of club/advisor assignments at the stipend salaries established by the East Rockaway Teachers Association contract for the 2017-2018 school year and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the charters.
6. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the winter sports coaching schedule dated October 17, 2017.
7. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the four-year probationary appointment of Michele Nastasi to the position of teaching assistant, effective October 12, 2017, through October 11, 2021, (tenure area: teaching assistant; certification status: Permanent), at the Step 4 annual salary set forth in the East Rockaway Teachers Association contract for teaching assistants for the 2017-2018 school year.
8. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Randi Kilcommons to the position of home tutor, effective October 18, 2017, at the hourly salary established by the East Rockaway Teachers Association contract, Appendix B, Other Educational Assignments, A, Home and Summer Instructional Programs.
9. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request of Gus Baco for a FMLA leave of absence effective October 16, 2017.
10. 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 2017-2018 school year:
  - a. Jennifer Weston, substitute teacher, effective October 2, 2017
  - b. Mindi Weinstein, per diem substitute teacher, effective September 20, 2017
  - c. Venesia Heyward, per diem substitute teacher, effective October 18, 2017

B. Other Items

Upon motion made by Keith Gamache, and seconded by John Giannotti, Jr., the following Items 1 through 17 were unanimously approved on a consent agenda.

1. Approve the following resolution:

**BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED** that the Board of Education of the East Rockaway Union Free School District gratefully accepts a grant from the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York (“DASNY”) in the amount of \$125,000, awarded to it under the Community Capital Assistance Program (“CCAP”), to be used towards the purchase and installation of security enhancements, renovations and purchase of furniture and equipment at the District’s schools (“Project”); and be further

**RESOLVED**, that the Board establishes itself as lead agency for the purposes of State Environment Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”) determinations regarding the proposed Project; and that, upon the review and recommendation of the District’s Architect, the proposed Project is hereby determined to be a Type II action, as defined by 6 NYCRR §617.5[c], which will have no significant impact on the environment, and which does not require any other determination or procedure under SEQRA regulations; and, therefore, be it further

**RESOLVED** that the Board hereby approves the execution of the Grant Disbursement Agreement (“GDA”) between the District and DASNY in connection with said CCAP grant, and authorizes the Superintendent of Schools to execute said GDA on behalf of the Board.

2. Approve the following resolution:

**RESOLVED THAT** pursuant to the provisions of New York Civil Service Law Section 204, the Board of Education of the East Rockaway Union Free School District hereby recognizes the United Public Service Employees Union (“Union”) as the exclusive bargaining representative for the District’s security aides; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the security aides be accreted into the existing bargaining unit comprised of cooks, assistant cooks, food service workers and monitors.

3. Approve the employment agreement with Mary Volino, Secretary to the Superintendent of Schools and Board of Education for the 2017-2018 school year and authorize the Superintendent of Schools to execute the agreement on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.

4. Adopt the East Rockaway UFSD Comprehensive District-Wide School Safety Plan for the 2017-2018 school year.

5. Approve the tuition agreement with John A. Coleman School for special education services for one (1) student, Student ID No. 180008151, for the 2017-2018 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.
6. 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 2017-2018 school year and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the contract on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
7. Approve the admission of one Port Washington UFSD, Student I.D. No. 10001069, to attend the East Rockaway Public Schools for the 2017-2018 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.
8. Approve the tuition agreement with Great Neck UFSD, for special education services for one (1) student, Student I.D. No. 180006249 for the 2017-2018 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.
9. Approve the Enterprise Program Services Agreement between the East Rockaway UFSD and Lynbrook UFSD for Enterprise Program services for the 2017-2018 school year, and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the Agreement on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
10. Approve the Enterprise Program Services Agreement between the East Rockaway UFSD and Malverne UFSD for Enterprise Program services for the 2017-2018 school year, and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the Agreement on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
11. Approve the terms of the Letter of Intent with Nassau BOCES for a five-year lease for two Xerox multi-task copy machines and authorize the Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations to execute the Letter of Intent on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
12. Approve the Consultant Services Contract between the East Rockaway UFSD and Sergio Argueta, LMSW, for speaker and assembly services, (“Embracing Diversity – Respect Day”), on September 29, 2017, and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the contract on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
13. Approve the Consultant Services Contract between the East Rockaway UFSD and RCP Consultants for professional development services for the period November 1, 2017,

through November 30, 2017, and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the contract on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.

14. Authorize the Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations to be the back-up signatory to sign checks in the absence of the District Treasurer.

15. Declare obsolete for the purpose of disposal and/or recycling, the items listed on the attached Equipment for Disposal dated October 17, 2017.

16. Accept the following donation:

- a. From the Town of Hempstead, Lido Golf Course, approximately 1,000 used golf balls for the Jr. and Sr. High School Physical Education Program, valued at approximately \$250.

17. Approve the members of the Professional Development Team pursuant to policy 9700,

Staff Development:

Mona Hecht, Chairperson	Melinda Best
Caitlin Castellano	James DeTommaso
ToniAnn Donald	Annette Dubiel
Alex Goldberg	Pam Murano
Danielle Schaetzle	Ashley Tener
James Zervas	

#### C. Budget Transfers

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

1. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education approves the following budget transfers:
  - a. Transaction No. 18-0004
  - b. Transaction No. 18-0005

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

E. Approval of CPSE Recommendations - None

7. Policy Matters – None

8. Good and Welfare

- a. Congratulations to Sara and Steve Perrone on the birth of their son, Stephen John Perrone, born on October 10, 2017
- b. Congratulations to Briar Falvo on her engagement to Shqipron Mashkuli

## 9. Superintendent's Report

Ms. Ruiz thanked Mr. Walter, the first grade students, teachers, Mr. Ceglie, and the Rhame Avenue School PTA for hosting this lovely evening to honor our Board of Education trustees. Special thanks also to Senator Kaminsky for his assistance in securing the \$125,000 grant which was one of the resolutions passed this evening.

### Achievement

Both Rhame and Center Avenue Schools recently finished the beginning of the year assessments and conducted grade level data meetings to analyze the information, enter or graduate students from services based on the data, and use the information to inform teachers' instruction. Teachers recently met with building principals to set specific academic goals for the year, which included an action plan on how to achieve their goals.

Three teachers from each building will receive extensive training in Thinking Maps, as the official 12-week launch of Thinking Maps will take place later in the year. A separate group of teachers in each building have also received professional development on text structure and how to help students better comprehend text by understanding how a text is organized. This information will be turn-keyed to the rest of the staff in the coming month.

Second grade students at Rhame Avenue have been developing their science inquiry skills by making observations and predictions about the world around them. The children participated in a sensory walk where they had to describe items on the playground using words related to the senses of sight, touch and hearing. The students worked with a partner to create a list of adjectives to describe each item and then presented the findings to their peers across both classrooms.

Our third and fourth grade students in Mrs. Donovan's Special Education Class are reading their first novel of the year titled, Because of Winn Dixie. This is exciting because the students are reading the same novel together as a class through a shared reading approach for the very first time. Students previewed a number of grade appropriate texts together, created Thinking Maps to compare and contrast their "likes and dislikes," and ultimately came to a consensus when deciding on this novel in particular.

On October 11, 2017, students in Grades 10 and 11 sat for the PSAT and National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.

Students in Grades 7, 8, 9 and 12 participated in presentations on Autism and the misuse of social media.

The school finalized NWEA testing in Math and English Language Arts.

### Connection

At the end of September, both Rhame and Centre Avenue Schools had their Back to School Nights. Teachers provided an overview of the upcoming year in terms of curriculum and expectations. Both Mr. Walter and Mrs. Ma discussed this year's new initiative with Thinking Maps as well as the new East Rockaway app, which is available on smart phones. New staff members were also introduced to the community. The night was informative and one of the ways the school partners with families to help students achieve academic success.

Mrs. Drummy's kindergarteners had a visit with their fifth grade buddies from Ms. DeVarso's class. The children got together for apple tasting and worked together to discover which type of apple was their favorite. The students also worked together to create a large graph of the results. Granny Smith apples won by a landslide! It was a great opportunity for these two groups of students to collaborate and get to know one another. The fifth grade students were able to become teachers and will continue to act as role models for their "buddies" throughout the year.

On October 5, 2017, the Jr./Sr. High School conducted its annual Back to School Night.

Planning: Meetings have been held between school staff and Club Rock on Homecoming activities on October 20 and 21, 2017:

#### October 20, 2017:

Parade: 6:30 pm start at Centre Avenue School proceeding to the High School

Pep Rally: 7:00 pm on the High School Field (weather permitting)

#### October 21, 2017:

Junior Varsity football game at 9:15 am v. Valley Stream South Rams

Varsity football game at 2:00 pm v. Friends Academy Quakers

First Quarter Progress Reports were posted on October 13, 2017.

Additional telephones have been added for teachers to further connect with parents; privacy booths are forthcoming.

Family Engagement Committees will be forming in each building. If you are interested in participating please contact your principal.

### Innovation

In the STEAM program, Centre Avenue students will be finishing up their coding module this



month. Various coding skills are being emphasized in each of the grades. In third grade, students are learning about loops; in fourth grade students are learning about conditionals; and in fifth and sixth grade, they are learning about nested loops. The students are enjoying the engaging activities during STEAM.

Fifth grade students at Rhame Avenue have been using their new 1:1 tablets to complete “web quests” in alignment with the Science Curriculum to learn more about rock and minerals. The students are quickly becoming experts on how to use their devices to navigate various websites that correlate with the Science Curriculum and work collaboratively to gather data, formulate hypothesis and conduct follow-up experiments with their classroom teachers.

Students in Grade 6 recently worked on a STEAM project titled “The Marshmallow Challenge.” Students had to work collaboratively to build the tallest free standing tower using 20 pieces of spaghetti, one marshmallow, one yard of string and one yard of masking tape. They used their 1:1 tablets to videotape their projects to share with others and with family members at home. The areas of mathematics, science, technology, art and engineering were all part of this challenge.

Laptops were distributed to students in Grades 7, 9, 10, and 11 and all faculty members. Using technology to further student learning is an emphasis in our Jr./Sr. High School.

Respect Day was celebrated on September 29, 2017, with a special presentation by Sergio Argueta, a noted speaker on topics such as acceptance, tolerance and respect. Two assemblies were held and our Art Department provided visual reminders of "Respect" throughout our school.

### Opportunity

The clubs at Centre Avenue are off to a great start. Students held elections during the first two weeks. Interested candidates wrote campaign speeches and members of each club voted on officers. The first fundraisers for K-Kids will be to help with the hurricane relief and Treats for Troops. Student Council students are also brainstorming fundraiser ideas to raise money for the hurricane relief and to help collect supplies for the animals in rescue shelters, many who were displaced by the hurricanes. Student Council members are also preparing for Red Ribbon week to spread awareness of the being drug free and making positive and healthy decisions.

October is National Fire Prevention Safety Month and our students in Grades K-2 visited the Main Street Firehouse in East Rockaway to learn about the dangers of fire and how to stay safe. The children were given a tour of the fire house, the garage and even a fire truck that was parked on site. An East Rockaway Volunteer Firefighter explained the importance of staying safe during a fire and the children practiced the technique of “stop, drop and roll” under the supervision of their teachers and the firefighters that were present. It was an enjoyable and important learning opportunity for all of our students and we are grateful to have such a hard-working fire department that is willing to welcome our students each and every year.

October is also National Bullying Prevention Month and awareness activities are taking place in all three buildings. Wednesday, October 25<sup>th</sup> is Unity Day at the Jr./Sr. High School. The purpose of this day is to bring our community together to send one large ORANGE message of support, hope, and unity to show that we are together against bullying and united for kindness, acceptance, and inclusion.

Our Guidance Department conducted a Financial Aid Night on Monday, October 16, 2017. A guest speaker from SUNY Fredonia spoke on this critical topic. And on September 25, 2017, the Guidance Department also conducted a College Planning night for students and their parents which outlined the process involved.

10. Privilege of the Floor - none

11. Board Member Comments

Neil Schloth: Mr. Schloth thanked the parents, students, staff, and Rhame Avenue School community for the wonderful program that took place for tonight's Board of Education recognition. It was very heartwarming to see the youngsters perform and reinforces the reason why he continues to be a board trustee. A special thanks was sent to Erik Walter for his heroic acts in rescuing two girls from the ocean in Long Beach. One of Mr. Schloth's fire department colleagues told him that Mr. Walter took an extreme risk to save these girls. He is truly proud of his efforts while risking his own safety to help others. Mr. Schloth reported that all the members of the Board of Education and Ms. Ruiz just returned from Lake Placid for the NYSSBA Conference. He said he was pleased to have had all five members present; all of whom who are dedicated to the District and have no personal agendas. We are very fortunate in this District that our board works well together, there is no discourse among board members, and they share the same goals and achievements which is to have our students succeed and accomplish as much as they can while they are students in our district. Mr. Schloth also thanked the parents, students, staff, and community for their participation in the Fire Prevention Programs that were held during this week. It is a good learning experience for all of our children. He thanked everyone for coming out tonight and looks forward to seeing all at our next meeting.

Kristin Ochtera: Ms. Ochtera echoed the comments of Mr. Schloth. She also added that being a board member is one the most rewarding things she has done. It is incredibly powerful to work in an environment which serves children in the best way possible. She truly believes in public education and what we do here in East Rockaway is a good example of how a small school can make such a big difference.

John Giannotti, Jr.: Mr. Giannotti, Jr., thanked the Rhame Avenue School first graders, staff, and Mr. Walter for coordinating tonight's performance. He also thanked the PTA for hosting the celebration and the refreshments. He congratulated the Super Masters and Advance Placement recipients for their distinctions. He stated that it is an honor and privilege to serve as a Board of

Education member and looks forward to working for the families, parents, and children of the community.

Keith Gamache: Mr. Gamache stated that at the recent conference in Lake Placid, the key note speaker Dr. Yong Zhao, spoke about how school boards do not exist in other countries. School boards in our country serve as a pillar in our democracy. He thanked all the community members for their continued support, for attending the meetings, and bringing their concerns and suggestions to the Board so that all the needs of our students can be met.

Patti Nicoletti: Ms. Nicoletti echoed the comments of all of her colleagues who said much of what she wanted to say. She stated that the Board is a very dedicated board, all members come to the meetings prepared and with good questions to ask. When decisions are made, they look at the big picture to make sure that the best result will follow. She thanked the community for this recognition, for being involved and bringing their concerns and telling the Board what they are thinking. The community makes us a better Board. She wished everyone a good night.

12. Upon motion made by Neil Schloth, and seconded by John Giannotti, Jr., and passed unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vitina Fazi  
District Clerk