

EAST ROCKAWAY UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
East Rockaway, New York
Regular Meeting of the Board of Education
7:00 P.M., November 13, 2018, East Rockaway Jr. / Sr. High School
Preceded by a Science Research Presentation
and a Public Forum

MINUTES

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

Absent: Superintendent, Lisa J. Ruiz

1. The meeting was called to order by Keith Gamache at 7:00 p.m.
2. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Kristin Ochtera.

Mr. Gamache introduced Ms. Mona Hecht. Ms. Hecht spoke about this evening's presentation in place of Superintendent Lisa Ruiz, who was home sick. Ms. Hecht introduced Mr. Bradley Krauz, Assistant Principal and Science Chairperson who presented the Science Research Program. Mr. Krauz announced that Ms. Refino, science teacher and program coordinator, was unable to attend this evening. Mr. Krauz thanked the Board of Education for taking the time to hear about the Science Research Program. He also thanked Ms. Ruiz and Ms. Hecht for their support of the program. Mr. Krauz gave a brief overview and summary of the program. East Rockaway High School students Scott Buzzolani, and Emily McLaughlin, shared their experiences of the program with the audience. Mr. Krauz asked and answered questions from the audience. Ms. Hecht and Mr. Krauz thanked the students for attending tonight and speaking so enthusiastically of their experiences.

At 7:39 pm, Mr. Gamache continued with the public portion of the agenda.

3. Public Comments on Agenda Items – None
4. Upon motion made by Kristin Ochtera, and seconded by Neil Schloth, and unanimously passed, the following minutes were approved:
 - A. October 16, 2018, Regular Meeting of the Board of Education
 - B. November 6, 2018, Special Meeting of the Board of Education
5. Acknowledgment of Monthly Reports and Correspondence
 - A. Receipt of Monthly Financial Reports: September, 2018

B. Correspondence – Four (4) received

6. Recommendations of the Superintendent of Schools, as read by Jacqueline A. Scrio, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations.

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

A. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, accept the following resignations:

1. Nancy Schwager-Hochman, substitute teacher, effective October 19, 2018
2. Nicole Berberena, substitute teacher, effective June 30, 2018
3. Mindi Weinstein, substitute teacher, effective September 1, 2018
4. Diana Liguori, substitute teacher, effective October 19, 2018
5. Michael Lennon, substitute physical education teacher, effective October 19, 2018
6. Sejia Bellew, substitute teacher, effective October 19, 2018
7. Thomas Saitta, security aide, effective November 9, 2018

B. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request of Eileen Levine for an extension of her child rearing leave of absence, effective January 26, 2019, through June 30, 2019.

C. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request of Emanuela Matthews for a FMLA leave of absence, effective January 7, 2019, through April 5, 2019; and thereafter approve an unpaid child rearing leave of absence, effective April 6, 2018, through June 30, 2019.

D. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request of Laura Risorto for a medical leave of absence effective September 25, 2018, through December 17, 2018.

E. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve a correction to the coaching salary step for Patricia Refino as the Traditional Cheerleading Coach 2018 Fall Season, and Competitive Cheerleading Coach 2018 Winter Season, to be Year 2, Step 1.

F. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, rescind the appointment of Philip Neidecker, substitute cleaner, effective immediately.

G. 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. Ann Kerner, substitute teacher, effective November 14, 2018
2. Joseph Todero, athletic supervisor (day/evening) effective November 13, 2018
3. Marissa J. Defrin, substitute teacher, effective November 14, 2018

7. Other Items

Upon motion made by Dominick Vulpis, and seconded by Kristin Ochtera, the following Items A through J, were unanimously approved on a consent agenda.

A. Approve the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education of the East Rockaway UFSD hereby approves the terms of the Memorandum of Agreement dated October 31, 2018, between the District and the East Rockaway Administrators Association regarding the terms and conditions of employment for the District's administrators unit members for the period July 1, 2018, through June 30, 2022.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations is authorized to execute the resulting collective bargaining agreement on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.

B. Approve the employment agreement with Leon D. Araoz as the Director of Technology and Learning Analytics, effective November 13, 2018, and authorize the Superintendent of Schools to execute the resulting Employment Agreement.

C. Approve the revised Non-Contractual Salary Schedule for the 2018-2019 school year.

D. Approve the award of the bid for 2018/2019 Capital Improvement Program Phase 4, SED No. 28-02-19-03-0-002-016, Rhame Avenue Elementary School, Window Replacement, Phase 4, Contract No. 1 to Arrow Steel Windows, as the lowest responsible bidder and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the resulting contract on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.

E. Approve the Consultant Services Contract between the East Rockaway UFSD and The Balance Between, for professional development services for the period from July 1, 2018, to December 31, 2018, and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the contract on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.

F. Approve the Consultant Services Provider Contract between the East Rockaway UFSD and Dr. Caryl Oris M.D. for psychiatric consultation and evaluation services 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.

G. Approve the Contract for Oasas Youth Drug Abuse Services between the East Rockaway UFSD and the Nassau County Department of Human Services, Office of Mental Health, Chemical Dependency and Developmental Disabilities Services, for chemical dependency services, for the period January 1, 2018, through December 31, 2018, and authorize the President of the East Rockaway Board of Education to execute the Contract on behalf of

the East Rockaway Board of Education.

H. Accept the following donations:

1. From the Rhame Avenue School PTA, a curriculum enhancement grant in the sum of \$400
2. From James Lores, a check in the sum of \$3,000 for the Athletic Department

I. Declare obsolete for the purpose of disposal and/or recycling, the following items:

1. For disposal, the items contained on the Textbook Removal Form dated September 21, 2018.
2. For disposal, the items contained on the Textbook Removal Form dated September 18, 2018.
3. For disposal, the item contained on the Change of Disposition form dated October 25, 2018.

J. Approve the Consultant Services Contract with Engtze Pan for piano accompaniment for the winter and spring choir concerts and elementary chorus winter concert.

8. Upon motion made by Neil Schloth, and seconded by Patti Nicoletti, the CSE and CPSE Recommendations were unanimously approved.

9. Budget Transfers

Upon motion made by Patti Nicoletti, and seconded by Kristin Ochtera, the following budget transfers were unanimously approved.

A. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education approves the following budget transfers:

1. Transaction No. 19-0002
2. Transaction No. 19-0003
3. Transaction No. 19-0004
4. Transaction No. 19-0005
5. Transaction No. 19-0006

10. Policy Matters

Ms. Ochtera spoke about the policies being adopted tonight. Policy 4325 is a new policy to the District. This policy cross-references the policy for RTI. Policy 4326 was updated to reflect changes in New York State law. Policy 5100 was changed to be in alignment with New York State language and clarified legal requirements for students being absent. Policy 5300.40 was changed to reflect new language regarding referrals for P.I.N.S. service. Policy 8130 was updated to include language on who is responsible for execution of training. There

was a slight change in Policy 8413 to reflect what is being done in 2018 as opposed to the last time the policy was reviewed. Mr. Schloth had a question regarding Policy 5300.40 to which Ms. Ochtera responded.

Mr. Gamache asked for a vote of adoption. The policies were approved for adoption by a unanimous vote.

A. For Adoption

1. 4325, Academic Intervention Services
2. 4326, Programs for English Language Learners
3. 5100, Attendance
4. 5300.40, Disciplinary Penalties, Procedures and Referrals
5. 8130, School Safety Plans and Teams
6. 8413, Transportation for Nonpublic School Students

B. For Review

1. 0110, Sexual Harassment
2. 1050, Annual District Election and Budget Vote
3. 2120, School Board Elections
4. 2120.1, Candidates and Campaigning
5. 4710, Grading
6. 4750, Promotion and Retention of Students
7. 4770, 4770-R - Graduation Requirements
8. 4772, Graduation Ceremonies
9. 4773, Diploma and Credential Options for Students with Disabilities
10. 5150, 5150-R - School Admission
11. 5205, Eligibility for Extra Curricular Activities
12. 5420, Student Health
13. 5460, Child Abuse
14. 8414.5, Alcohol and Drug Testing of Drivers

11. Reports

A. Board President's Report

Bond Timeline and review of projects: An informational Bond Forum will be held in January followed by building tours throughout the month of February. During this meeting we will review the findings of the Facilities Committee including the scope of recommended projects, their associated costs, and re-cap our board discussion from September 5, 2018. Our district architect will be present at the forum to answer specific and technical questions and the board will be listening to your input and answering questions as well. This is an important opportunity for us to gather additional information from the community and hope that we will have a good

turnout. Once an exact date is determined it will be posted on our website, announced at meetings and promoted through the buildings and community at large. All work done by the committee to date has been posted on the district website along with costs associated with each project for your review. Related to this matter, Living with the Bay/GOSR will be having a community forum on December 12, 2018, from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. in the large gym. I hope you will attend.

Volunteer coaches: The success of our athletics program has relied on the support of volunteer coaches throughout the years. Some of our volunteer coaches are not certified. In order to be in full compliance with all regulations and limit any insurance liabilities, we are requiring all volunteer coaches to be properly certified. As a gesture of appreciation for those volunteer coaches already in the system who have given so generously of their time, the District will cover the costs associated with certification.

Give Back to the Community Breakfast Week: During the week of November 26-30, 2018, we will be sponsoring a free breakfast week providing breakfast to all students at no cost. This is an opportunity to share the low-cost breakfast offerings available to families in hopes that more will want to participate in the future.

College essay writing: Concerns regarding college essay writing no longer being done in the English classes were brought up at the last meeting. It turns out that this practice was discontinued three years ago. Our procedures for making such changes are being internally evaluated by staff and administration to ensure that our practices remain in line with the goals established by our strategic plan. A well-attended essay writing "Boot Camp" was held on PSAT day and teachers are providing additional assistance during extra help periods. If you have concerns about the curriculum, we encourage you to bring these matters to the attention of the teachers, building administration, and central administration before bringing those concerns to the board. We have confidence in their leadership and believe they will successfully address your concerns and the needs of your child.

Eligibility for Extra Curricular Activities Policy: We had a healthy discussion regarding this policy and continue working on an update that is effective at motivating students to be successful academically while also keeping them involved with their interests during periods of academic struggle. We recognize that extracurricular activities provide an important connection to the school community and contribute to a student's self-esteem. However, it is also important that students manage their time effectively and pass their classes. We aspire to create an effective policy that strikes the right balance and meets the needs of our student body.

BOE Email: Board email is checked immediately after a meeting and during the week leading up to a monthly meeting. If you email the Board, please be patient if your email is

not immediately returned. Someone will get back to you.

B. Superintendent's Report – [read by Ms. Scio in Ms. Ruiz's absence]

Achievement:

Teachers in Grades 3-5 are working diligently to lift our new Eureka Mathematics program off the ground with their students. This past week, teachers were treated to three consecutive days of grade level specific professional development where they engaged in deep discussion about how to best use this new program to meet the needs of their students. They were able to observe an expert Eureka Math consultant deliver model lessons within their classrooms. Our elementary math specialists have also been hard at work supporting teachers inside and outside of the classroom with planning, preparation and lesson delivery through a newly revamped coaching model. Teachers were also provided with a comprehensive day of professional development around the Lucy Calkins Writers Workshop on Superintendent's Conference day across both elementary schools.

Students in both elementary schools recently published their informative writing pieces. On Superintendent's Conference Day, all elementary teachers collaborated and delved into the Teachers' College Writing Units of Study. With the help of our literacy consultant, teachers will teach mini lessons, conference with students and provide meaningful feedback, as they work on their narrative writing pieces in the coming weeks.

Superintendent's Conference Day featured an Edcamp Model, in which teachers were given the opportunity to choose two sessions around educational technology and student engagement professional learning opportunities. Many of the learning opportunities were facilitated by our own staff. The day concluded with team building activities including baking scones, power walking, volleyball, and yoga.

Each high school department set three departmental goals for the 2018-2019 school year. Goals are aligned to the school's instruction focus of student engagement, with an emphasis on student collaboration and communication, critical thinking about real world problems, productive use of technology, and conducting meaningful research.

The Middle School Robotics won first place in VEX IQ Challenge, moving on to the Southern New York championship in February.

Our East Rockaway High School student council won the silver award for their work in the blood donor program last year. Their first blood drive for this year is on November 13, 2018.

Innovation:

Mr. Araoz, our new Director of Technology, began working with teachers in grades K-2 at

Rhame Avenue School this past week to discuss and showcase new, innovative ways for students to use their Chromebooks in the primary grade classrooms. Different resources and Google classroom tips were shared to make the use of technology more accessible for our younger students. The teachers left this first introductory session filled with new ideas and eager to try them out in their classrooms.

Mr. Araoz has been launching instructional technology kick-off sessions with the teachers in grades K-6. In these sessions, he will present various websites and digital tools to help shift from a teacher-centered to a learner-driven classroom. In addition, he will introduce student-created live learning games and have teachers pilot some new math programs such as Zearn.

The East Rockaway High School CANstruction Team won "Best CANcept, for Best Use of Labels" in the student competition. This is the first year that the students entered the competition. Team members and staff advisors are recruiting students for next year's competition and planning a trip to see examples of structures.

The East Rockaway High School Library opened its "Maker Space" where students can engage in activities around coding, robotics, puzzles and art during their lunch period.

The Science Department has obtained the Moticam Wireless Microscope camera system. This innovative series of digital eyepiece cameras can transform a standard microscope to a high-resolution digital microscope. The Motic Images Plus Software allows for image capture, still or video clips, annotation, measurement, and more.

Connection:

Rhame Avenue's Art Club and the PTA are teaming up this month to provide a workshop for students to participate in this year's PTA Reflections Contest. Students have already participated in a brainstorming session in connection to this year's theme "Heroes Around Me," and will begin to design their projects shortly. The categories are visual arts, literature, photography, music, film and dance. We are excited to see our students present their work and look forward to the judging and awards that will be forthcoming as the year progresses.

The elementary PTA's provided pumpkins for students to take home in kindergarten and first grade this year. Teachers used the pumpkins to teach various interdisciplinary concepts including whether pumpkins sink or float, estimating and counting the number of seeds in pumpkins, reading books about pumpkins, and writing thank you letters to the PTA.

Members of the East Rockaway High School Student Cabinet began work on creating a "Student Engagement Survey" that will be administered to all students to collect valuable

data around students' perceptions of academics, safety and extra-curricular activities.

The Middle School Social Worker pushed into all 7th and 8th grade English classrooms to talk about National Bully Month in October. Students also discussed Dignity for All Students Act (DASA), and different types of bullying, along with strategies to intervene. Students and staff also wore orange for Unity Day.

The theme of “respect” has been a focus and advisory students worked on ways to respect themselves and others. They brainstormed respected public figures and looked beyond external qualities to uncover other traits. Middle school students are now working on determining their own personal strengths, for to know our personal strengths is the first step in developing self-respect and respect for others. Visitors from West Hempstead Middle School were here on Thursday, November 8, 2018, to learn more about how our advisory program has developed over the years.

Opportunity:

Thanks to our generous PTA’s, both elementary schools were given enough pumpkins for each student to have, at no cost, to bring home during the week of Halloween. Outside of that, there were enough pumpkins leftover for many classroom teachers to use with their students for educational purposes inside the classroom. One example would be how second graders had an opportunity to engage in a hands-on “pumpkin investigation” where the students made predictions before dissecting their pumpkins to see what could be found inside. They were able to measure the height of their pumpkins using rulers and tape measures as well as weigh their pumpkins using an actual scale. Students used Thinking Maps to showcase their findings and created Bubble Maps with adjectives to describe their pumpkins after the investigation was over.

Students took a field trip to the Oceanside Marine Nature Study Area to learn more about saltwater marsh ecology and water quality testing. They worked directly with a conservation biologist on the field trip.

Centre Avenue recently held two Code of Conduct assemblies for students in grades 2-6. Part of the presentations included members of K-Kids speaking in front of the rest of the school to describe characteristics that all staff and students should strive for. Some of these characteristics explained were empathy, respect and compassion. These student leaders did a great job speaking in front of the student body.

Mr. Joseph Sciame, Vice-President for Community Relations, spoke to over 50 students and parents about the Financial Aid Process during Financial Aid Night.

On Thursday October 25th, 2018, students in Grades 7-12 showcased their musical talents at our annual Broadway by the Bay concert. The event opened with a “rockin” number by

the music department faculty. It featured over 20 acts, with a grand finale from the Junior and Senior Chorus. The audience was packed and lively, with a full house for the duration of the performance. Broadway by the Bay is held annually and serves as a fundraiser for the Music Department Scholarship Fund.

The Junior-Senior High School varsity football team competed in the Nassau Division IV semifinal playoff round at Hofstra University on Friday, November 9, 2018, for the first time since 2011.

The Varsity Volleyball team competed in the Long Island Class C finals at SUNY Farmingdale on Sunday, November 11, 2018.

East Rockaway High School students Brianna Halstead, Mairead Connor, Elissa Velasquez and Tom Chojnacki competed in the New York State Cross Country Championship on Saturday, November 10, 2018, at Sunken Meadow Park.

Lastly, Ms. Scio shared the accomplishments of alumnus Jonathan Schloth. Jonathan recently competed in the A-10 Championship Race in Cross Country in Virginia. He came in first place for his team and ninth overall. He received an All- Conference Award. Jonathan will be advancing to regional finals. We are very proud of all of our graduates and wish him the best of luck in regionals.

C. Communications Subcommittee Report – Mr. Dominick Vulpis

Mr. Vulpis reported that he recently met with Ms. Ruiz, Mr. Schloth and SYNTAX. During this meeting, the charge and goal statement of the Communications Subcommittee was created:

“This committee is charged with engaging in productive dialogue regarding communications methods and messaging strategies for the East Rockaway School District. The goal is to create a positive discussion that will potentially drive future district communications decisions.”

The first meeting has been scheduled for November 27, 2018, 6:00 pm at Rhame Avenue School. All members were sent an email asking for their individual goals for the committee (two-minute summary). Once the goals are received, the committee will determine which course it will take. Future meeting dates of January 29, April 2, and June 4, 2019, have been scheduled. The committee will be based upon the following norms: *Be Respectful; Be Mindful of Time; Be a Good Listener.*

12. Good and Welfare

- A. Congratulations to Aida Rubin and family on the birth of her grandchild, Willow Dai, born on October 25, 2018.
- B. Congratulations to Jennifer McKeon and family on the birth of her granddaughter, Zoe Emma, born on October 23, 2018.
- C. Condolences to Debra Ferrato and family on the passing of her brother-in-law, Michael Ferrato.
- D. Condolences to the Perri family on the passing of Eleanor Perri, former home tutor for the East Rockaway School District.

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.

Kristin Ochtera: Ms. Ochtera spoke on behalf of the East Rockaway Education Foundation. She expressed gratitude for those who attended the 20th anniversary party last Friday. There was plenty of food, fun, and festivities and she thanked the community for their support. Ms. Ochtera reminded the staff that the Fall grant window closes this week. Anyone anticipating submitting a grant application can find a link on the District’s website, or can contact herself, or Mrs. Theresa Devlin.

14. Board Member Comments -

Patti Nicoletti: Ms. Nicoletti thanked Mr. Krauz and Ms. Refino for their work with the Science Research Program. It has been a long time coming and she was pleased to see how it has been rolled out. She thanked students Scott and Emily for so passionately sharing their experiences of the program with the Board. They did a fabulous job. At board meetings, we have accepted donations from the PTA’s and the Education Foundation. She gave Jimmy Lores a special shout out for his donation tonight. He is undying in his energy when it comes to thinking about our school district. He raised \$3,000 for the athletic program. His hard work is very much appreciated.

Ms. Nicoletti spoke about the Board’s opportunity to attend the NYSSBA conference in October. The board usually attends this conference yearly. She was able to attend different seminars which are important to public education. There were many topics about school safety. Some of the presenters were attorneys, professors of psychology, police chiefs, and a former secret service agent. In this particular seminar, the presenters spoke about what schools should do to become safe. They talked about physical upgrades, such as security

cameras, locks on doors. They suggested inviting the local police into the buildings, hiring security guards. One common statement from all the presenters was that in many of these cases of active shooters, there was a bystander who knew about it. The shooter shared and said something to someone. Ms. Nicoletti believes the District is very proactive and we are doing many of the things the presenters have suggested. We have spent more money on security guards, we have reinforced the locks. We are on the right path and are doing what we need to do to keep safe.

Neil Schloth: Mr. Schloth also thanked Jimmy Lores for the donation. He has watched Jimmy over the years as he does fundraising by selling candy, chips, etc. It is a lot of work but he does it because he is an advocate for the kids. Mr. Schloth was able to donate blood during the student council blood drive. He was pleased to see the students and staff that were also there. He was contacted by Long Island Blood Services to let him know that it was happening at the school. The next blood drive is in April and he encouraged everyone to donate for this good cause. Mr. Schloth also thanked Mr. Krauz and Ms. Refino for their work on the Science Research Program. He saw from the students tonight the value in this program and believes the District is doing a fine job in supporting this program.

Dominick Vulpis: Mr. Vulpis also thanked Jimmy Lores for his donation to the Athletics Department. He commended David Barth on an excellent fall post season. Mr. Vulpis was happy to share a letter he received from a parent regarding their pleasure with how their child is growing and maturing. During the NYSSBA conference, Mr. Vulpis attended a seminar with members of the Hicksville School District who have a similar communications committee. The committee is driven by those members who want to participate in this venture. He believes we are on a great path to get started.

Kristin Ochtera: Ms. Ochtera acknowledged all the people who give so generously. She is very thankful for the support of this community. As some residents may have received tax bills and a letter from Nassau County regarding reassessments, she reminded the residents that it is the work of the board, administrators and teachers to try to figure out budgetarily how to provide the resources for our students. When that number is determined in May, that is the number we ask you to vote on. If you have questions on the budget, please feel free to contact us. If you have questions on how your taxes are calculated, please reach out to the Town of Hempstead or County of Nassau. They will be more accommodating to your own particular needs and can explain in greater detail your tax assessments. She wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Keith Gamache: Mr. Gamache thanked his fellow trustees for attending the NYSSBA conference. It was nice to sit down in a more relaxed atmosphere and have conversations about their attendance at workshops. He attended a workshop where the information he learned would be instrumental at the Board of Education retreat in January. Mr. Gamache took a moment to thank our veterans, those in our community and on our staff. His dad was

in the Navy and never spoke much of it. He makes sure that his sons call their grandfather on Veterans' Day. We should all take a moment to thank our veterans and acknowledge their service to our country.

15. Upon motion made by Kristin Ochtera, and seconded by Patti Nicoletti, and passed unanimously, the public meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vitina Fazi
District Clerk