

EAST ROCKAWAY UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
East Rockaway, New York
Regular Meeting of the Board of Education
7:30 P.M., January 14, 2014 - East Rockaway Jr. /Sr. High School
Preceded by Recognition of Scholar Athlete Team Award Recipients and
Cross Country Track Athlete Jonathan Schloth, President's Award Recipient,
a Presentation of the Andrew J. Stern Memorial Essay Contest Winners,
and a Public Forum

MINUTES

Present: Kristin Ochtera, President; Patti Nicoletti, Vice President; Neil Schloth; Linda Schmidt; John Giannotti, Jr.; Lisa J. Ruiz, Superintendent; Marcy Tannenbaum, Director of Finance and Operations; Denise Lobascio, District Clerk; staff members and members of the community.

1. Kristin Ochtera called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:30 pm.
2. Upon motion by Patti Nicoletti, seconded by John Giannotti, Jr. the minutes of the December 10, 2013 meeting were unanimously approved.
3. Acknowledged Receipt of Financial Reports – November 2013
4. Action Agenda

A. Personnel

Upon motion by Neil Schloth, seconded by John Giannotti, Jr. the following items #1-5 were unanimously approved:

1. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, accept the following resignation(s):
 - a. Carly Zides, teacher aide, effective December 20, 2013
2. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, accept the resignation of Marcy Tannenbaum as the Director of Finance & Operations, as well as all other ancillary positions held by her, effective January 20, 2014.
3. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the two-year probationary appointment of Marie Anderson to the position of ESL teacher, (tenure area: ESL, certification status: Professional), effective February 3, 2014, through February 2, 2016,

at the prorated MA30, Step 1 annual salary set forth in the East Rockaway Teachers Association Contract for the 2013-2014 school year.

4. 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 2013-2014 school year:
 - a. Salvatore Posillico, substitute teacher, effective January 15, 2014
 - b. Alison Gronenthal, substitute teacher, effective January 15, 2014
 - c. Kristyn Klemm-Smith, substitute nurse, effective January 15, 2014
 - d. Kristen Martin, substitute nurse, effective January 15, 2014
 - e. Binafshah Hussan, substitute monitor, effective January 15, 2014

5. 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. Kristyn Klemm-Smith
 - b. Kristen Martin
 - c. Binafshah Hussan

B. Other Items

Upon motion by Linda Schmidt, seconded by Patti Nicoletti, the following items #1-9 were unanimously approved:

1. Approve the special education services contract with Rockville Centre UFSD for special education services for the following parentally placed students for the 2013 – 2014 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. 180006820
 - b. Student ID No. 180006311
 - c. Student ID No. 180007308

2. Approve the terms and conditions of the following contracts for consultation services during the 2013-2014 school year and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the contracts on behalf of the Board of Education:
 - a. Child Abuse Prevention Services (CAPS) for Dignity Act staff development on February 6, 2014
 - b. Math Camp for Common Core mathematics professional development

- c. SharpSchool for school web hosting
 - d. Robert Tobias for data analysis services
3. Declare obsolete for the purpose of disposal the equipment more fully set forth on the List of Equipment for disposal dated December 11, 2013.
 4. Accept the following donations:
 - a. Forty Dollars (\$40.00) from Lorraine Liberti to Rhame Avenue Schools for supplies
 - b. Two Apple iPad Mini's with covers valued at Six Hundred Seventy-Five Dollars (\$675.00) for the Centre Avenue School from the Centre Avenue PTA
 5. Approve the award of the contract for the purchase and installation of a kitchen exhaust hood to Valco, Inc., 29 Orchard Meadow Road., East Williston, New York, 11596, bid opening December 10, 2013; and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the contract on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
 6. Accept the proposal from Seneca Consulting Group, Health Insurance Consultant Service provider, to estimate the cost of the Affordable Health Care Act for the East Rockaway School District, RFP opening January 6, 2014, 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 contract with Joan L. Colvin as the Interim School Business Official and to serve as Purchasing Agent, Records Officer, and FOIL officer, effective January 14, 2014.
 8. Authorize Joan L. Colvin in his/her capacity as Interim Business Official to sign checks.
 9. Authorize Joan L. Colvin in his/her capacity as Interim Business Official to sign contracts with the lowest responsible bidders for transportation services and other commodities and services as appropriate.

C. Budget Transfers

Upon motion by John Giannotti, Jr., seconded by Neil Schloth, the following budget transfers were unanimously approved:

- a. Transaction No. 14-0004
- b. Transaction No. 14-0005

D. Upon motion by Linda Schmidt, seconded by John Giannotti, Jr. the CSE Recommendations were unanimously approved.

6. Policy Matters

1. Upon motion by Patti Nicoletti, seconded by John Giannotti, Jr. the following policy was unanimously adopted:

a. 5150, Student Admissions

2. For Review

a. 5205, Eligibility

b. 1900, Parental Involvement

7. Good and Welfare

- a. Condolences to the Stoger family on the passing of their son, Thomas Scanlan, a high school senior
- b. Condolences to Joseph Cangemi, Math/Science Chairperson, on the passing on his father-in-law, Salvatore Conza
- c. Congratulations to Sue Torborg, on the engagement of her daughter, Suzanne Torborg, to Christopher Schroeder

8. Superintendent's Report

- Mrs. Healy obtained a grant for \$250 from NEFCU to purchase a Samsung Galaxy Tablet for her classroom. The main use of the tablet will be for research. She will also be downloading educational apps onto the tablet. Her students are very excited!
- The Centre Avenue National Geographic Geography Bee is scheduled this week. The Championship round will be held on Friday January 17th at 2:00 PM in the All-purpose Room. The winner takes a 100 question test with the principal and for a chance at a 25,000 dollar college scholarship. Try this: Antarctica and which other continent lie entirely in the Southern Hemisphere? Answer: Australia
- In honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Centre Avenue school will hold a celebrate kindness week January 20th through 24th. Grade appropriate activities will be held throughout the week. Social worker Denise Winter will coordinate the events.
- The Centre Avenue PTA is sponsoring school-wide science assemblies from the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia on January 16th to teach students the properties of hot and cold. Thanks to Centre Avenue program chair Michelle Gamache for coordinating the event.

- Fourth grade students at Centre are working on the features of focused ideas to improve their persuasive writing. They also completed their Science Housing developments which were presented last Friday displaying the effects of planned development.
- In January, Rhame Avenue School, will be initiating a relaxation program. The focus of this program is to teach students strategies to effectively manage their emotions, improve their ability to handle stress and self-regulate when under pressure. Current times are stressful and it is no surprise that students are showing the effects of increased stress, worry, and fear at school. In helping students cope with these overall challenges, once a week for eight weeks, students will participate in a short, guided relaxation activity within their class. Topics to be covered during the eight-week activities include: introduction to the relaxation breathing topic, the brain–emotion connection, being in the present moment, active listening and relaxation for stress reduction. Research has proven these strategies have a positive effect on those who use them.
- This January the Math Challenge Committee is holding a school wide challenge asking students to create unique and exciting word problems! Each grade was given a specific number that must be the answer to their word problem. We are looking forward to the fascinating word problems that are sure to be developed by our exceptional students!
- The Healthy Action Team project for our last school week of December was, “Ring in a HEALTHY New Year!” All students were given a template of a bell where they wrote one way they plan on being healthy in 2014 (ex.: eat more fruit; walk to school; cut out drinking soda). The bells are displayed on the bulletin board near the gym/cafeteria. On Wednesday, January 15, trainers from ROK gym will be giving fitness classes to students during recess times. On Friday, February 14th, all students will be participating in “Show Your Heart Some Love by Exercising” day. All students will participate in activities that go along with our Jump Rope and Hoops for Heart events and teach the importance of heart health and physical activity.
- Rhame Avenue hosted an assembly for Grades 4 through 6 presented by Dennis Oehler. The students learned about disabilities and respect for differences.
- Reading teacher Ashley Tener, is facilitating a collegial circle professional development opportunity for our teachers at both Rhame and Centre Avenue schools. Teachers are reading and discussing the professional text, “Comprehension Going Forward, Where We Are and What’s Next” by Ellin Oliver Keene. Teachers meet weekly on their own time to discuss the text and apply new strategies in their classrooms. Ashley was also awarded a grant from Nassau Tract Teacher Center, in the amount of \$1,000 which covered the cost of the texts for our teachers. Thank you to Ms. Tenner for her efforts.
- Centre Avenue and Rhame Avenue Schools are holding a Social Media Awareness Week January 13th through 17th in 6th grade with Ms. Schutta instructing students on the proper use of the technology. The idea for Social Media Awareness Week was first suggested by a former 5th grader who recognized the importance of communication skills & self-awareness and the difficulties this can pose for the social media generation. As part of this experiment, students are being challenged to refrain from certain social media experiences (for example, No Texting Tuesday/ Unwired Wednesday) as well as being challenged to research the downfalls of social media such as cyberbullying via cyber threat Thursday.

Students will be reflecting on their daily performance by assessing that day's challenge on a scale of 1-5 rating system. Parents and guardians, as well as staff, are encouraged to participate!

- Centre Avenue and Rhame Avenue ELA and Math Academies begin this week to help students sharpen skills for the upcoming State tests in April. The academies consist of one hour of extra instruction in each discipline for 10 weeks held after school 3:00 to 4:00 PM.
- Rhame Avenue's fourth grade traveled to Centre Avenue for their annual "Monster Exchange," a descriptive writing Computer Project. The event was enjoyed by all.
- Students across the district will be participating in the All County Chorus, Orchestra, and Band Concerts to be held this weekend. Our All-County students have been working hard learning and preparing their festival music with their music teachers in preparation for their performances at the Tilles Center at LIU, CW Post this weekend.
- Several elementary, junior high and high school students have been registered to perform at the NYSSMA piano festival which takes place at Nassau Community College March 7th and 8th. Good luck to all.
- Both our holiday concerts were a huge success. The audience was filled from the beginning to the final number. I was so impressed by the skill and talent of our students, as well as that of our music teachers. Kudos to all! The junior high students remained for the entire concert and rated the high school students using a rubric the Music Department put together. Their ratings were shared and discussed with the high school performing groups. At the conclusion, the PTA sponsored a make your own sundae for all the performers.
- **LICADD (Long Island Council on Alcoholism and Drug Addiction)**
On January 16th LICADD will provide two assembly programs for our 7th through 12th graders.
 - 7th and 8th graders Substance Abuse and Addiction Overview
 - 9th - 12th graders Prescription Drug and Opiate Misuse and
 - Addiction
- We will be hosting our first ever Robotics Tournament on Saturday, February 1st from 7:30-5:00 PM in the gymnasium. There are approximately 12 school teams that will be participating including teams from Jericho, Dobbs Ferry, Massapequa, Levittown, and Port Washington. Club Rock is cosponsoring the event. We have a number of teachers and students who have volunteered their time. There will be a robotics competition followed by an awards ceremony. Thank you to Mr. Howard and Mr. Cimorelli for their efforts in organizing this important event and also for volunteering their time.
- The guidance department hosted the annual Financial Aid Information Night on January 9th.
- The Curriculum Fair and Programming Night takes place tomorrow beginning at 6:45 PM in the auditorium. All parents and students in grade 8-11 are encouraged to attend.
- The Guidance Department will host the annual Junior College Planning Program on Monday, January 27th at 7:00 PM in the auditorium.

- Course selection for 2014-15 will begin at the end of this month at the junior high/senior high school and all parents and students are encouraged to discuss the course options. The course description guide will be posted on the website.
- The Guidance Department is hosting a field trip to Nassau Community College on January 31st for seniors who have applied and need to take the placement test. Students will receive results while on campus and will obtain additional information about opportunities at Nassau Community College.
- The high school Music Department is putting together the final touches for this year's musical, *Little Shop of Horrors*, which will be performed at the high school on February 7th at 7:30 PM; and February 8th at 1:00 PM and 7:30 PM. Tickets are on sale in the Music Department.
- Friendship Games were a success this year. Varsity girls won; varsity boys lost on a buzzer shot! A lot of community sharing and terrific feedback on the athletic facilities after Sandy.
- The 7th grade will be participating in a project based SEL learning activity on January 17th. Students will be viewing the movie *Remember the Titans* and completing assignments which center on the movies central themes of tolerance and conflict resolution.
- On January 9th our 8th grade peer ambassadors, under the guidance of Ms. Schutta and Mrs. Reilly, led peer lessons in their 8th grade social studies classes. The central focus of the lesson was to promote the ideals of being an upstander, rather than a bystander in the fight against bullying behaviors. We would like to thank our wonderful student leaders for their fantastic dedication and the terrific job they did in leading their classmates in peer discussions.
- Students in Ms. Peckholdt's Family and Criminal Law elective recently performed a Mock Trial revolving around a murder case to better examine the nuances of trial preparation, execution, and the law. Students were highly enthusiastic and engaged.
- Our 7th and 8th grade Science Fair was held last night. What an interesting and creative array of projects and experiments were displayed, all applying the scientific method! We had a great turnout of students and parents. Congratulations to all of our junior scientists who participated and also thank you to our science teachers for their efforts in arranging this excellent learning experience for our students.
- NARCAN – Joint PTA Presentation
 - On February 5th, the PTAs as their Combined PTA Presentation, are offering a presentation hosted by Nassau County's Department of Chemical Dependency and County Executive Mangano's Office. The program trains people to recognize and prevent an overdose of an opiate (painkillers, heroin etc.) and it also trains people on how to administer NARCAN, which is a nasal spray that can block the effects of an opiate when someone does overdose and save their life! Given the recent tragedy in our community, this presentation could not come at a better time. The training will be open to anyone in Nassau County so it is not just an East Rockaway event. Anyone planning to attend, must RSVP to 571-6105 to register so that the County may ensure that enough NARCAN Kits and materials are available for those in attendance. Only adults, 18 and over can receive a NARCAN Kit. We are

encouraging high school students to attend so they may gain knowledge about the signs of an overdose and ways to help prevent one. This program is not appropriate for elementary age students; however, parents of elementary students may attend if they would like.

- Testing Opt Out/Boycott of State Assessments Movement
 - School Districts have broad authority to require students to participate in state and local assessments, as well as the potential consequences that may befall districts that fail to obtain adequate student participation in such assessments. As set forth below, districts should take steps to encourage student participation in student assessments and discourage so-called “opting-out.”
- Student Assessments
 - According to the NYS Education regulations: While parents do have a “qualified” right to direct the upbringing and education of their children, “this right does not include a right to exempt one’s child from public school requirements.”
- Parents and students considering opting out of tests should understand relevant federal law and regulations.
- Several federal and state laws obligate school districts to administer student assessments. For example, NCLB requires annual assessments in mathematics and English Language Arts, including reading, in grades 3-8 and at least once in grades 10 through 12.5
- Four major consequences may be incurred for the failure to achieve sufficient participation in student assessments:
 - Loss of State Aid
 - Failure to demonstrate Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) due to failure to meet the 95% participation requirement under NCLB. (Although this may not apply for the 2013-14 school year.)
 - Inaccurate teacher and principal evaluations
 - Removal of school officers
- NCLB requires schools to test at least 95% of students each year. Not doing so is just one of many ways to fail.
- If a school fails to make AYP for two years, a portion of federal Title I funds must be spent on transportation to enable students to attend another school that is making AYP, if such a school exists. After three years of not making AYP, funds must go to tutoring. In other words, opting out has an indirect effect on federal funding.
- I know that the school board shares the community’s interest in effectively advocating for political and academic changes; however, the board, our teachers, administrators and myself, as superintendent, have a legal obligation to carry out existing law in order to avoid real penalties (e.g., the loss of state aid). While we respect parents views on this subject, “opting out” of state and local assessments may hurt not only students, but also teachers, our schools and the district as a whole.

- The Board of Education is in the process of drafting a “high stakes testing” resolution in opposition to the increasing amount of assessments now mandated by New York State. We will be presenting this resolution at our February meeting.

9. Privilege of the Floor

- ELA and Math Academy
- Clarification of testing issues.

10. Board Member Comments

Patti Nicoletti – Thank you to the Andrew Stern family for recognizing our students every year. I congratulate this year’s winners on their thoughtful and well-written essays. Congratulations to all of our student athletes. I wish Marcy Tannenbaum the best of luck in her new position and thank her for all of her dedication to our district. She will be sorely missed.

John Giannotti, Jr. – Congratulations to our scholar athletes and to the essay winners. Marcy, I wish you good luck. Thank you all for coming, see you next month.

Neil Schloth – At a recent board meeting, members of our cross country track team were honored for their success in the fall track season. One of these runners is a member of my family, Jonathan Schloth. Tonight, I would like to honor the coaches who guided and supported our cross country team to some amazing accomplishments this past year. Mr. Andrew Rinn, our cross country coach, trained members of our team all summer. At times he showed up at 5am to give Carly Howard and Jonathan special training with other athletes. Mr. Rinn continued to mentor and advise our runners throughout the season. Mr. Rinn was a prime reason that Jonathan and Carly were able to compete for the last five year at the NY State Championship Finals.

In a similar way, our Athletic Director, Mr. Dominic Vulpis has been a driving force in our track team’s success. He gave Jonathan a chance to qualify for the varsity track team in 8th grade. Although a difficult qualifying exam, Jonathan was able to join the team that year. The additional year of training proved valuable. Last year Mr. Vulpis found an innovative way to keep our runners in shape. He was able to get them enrolled as a co-team with Malverne’s winter track team. The extra season of running enabled some of our runners to break existing track records last season in track and this season in cross country. I wish to thank these two dedicated individuals who have guided our track team to some great achievements.

Linda Schmidt – Thank you to the Stern family and congratulations to the essay winners. Congratulations to the scholar athletes. Thank you Marcy and welcome Joan.

Kristin Ochtera – Thank you Dr. Colvin for staying and good luck Marcy. We wish you the best.

11. Upon motion by Neil Schloth, seconded by Linda Schmidt, and unanimously passed, the meeting was adjourned at 8:52 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Lobascio
District Clerk