

EAST ROCKAWAY UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
East Rockaway, New York  
Regular Meeting of the Board of Education  
7:30 P.M., March 20, 2012 – East Rockaway Jr./Sr. High School  
Preceded by a Response to Intervention Presentation and a Public Forum

MINUTES

Present: Members of the Board of Education: Linda Schmidt; Neil Schloth; Michaelene Abbott-Cooper; Patti Nicoletti; Kristin Ochtera; Superintendent, Dr. Roseanne Melucci; Director of Finance and Operations, Marcy Tannenbaum; and District Clerk, Denise Lobascio, members of the community

1. The meeting was called to order at 8:20 pm by Neil Schloth and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Patti Nicoletti.
2. Upon motion by Kristin Ochtera, seconded by Linda Schmidt the minutes of the February 15, 2012 Board of Education meeting were unanimously approved.
3. Acknowledge Receipt of Financial Reports – January 2012
4. Correspondence – One
5. Action Agenda

A. Personnel

Upon motion by Patti Nicoletti, seconded by Michaelene Abbott-Cooper, the following items #1-7 were unanimously approved:

1. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, accept, with regret, the resignation of Solomon Yousha, for the purpose of retirement, from his science teacher position, effective June 30, 2012.
2. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, accept the resignations:
  - a. Angela Iadevaia, permanent substitute teacher and special education teacher for the after-school program, effective March 5, 2012
  - b. Colleen Ann Driscoll, teaching assistant, effective March 9, 2012
3. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, accept the resignation of Jennie Moore from the position of substitute teacher aide, effective February 27, 2012.
4. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request of Gail Beyrer for a child rearing leave of absence from her elementary teacher position, effective May 3,

2012, through June 30, 2012.

5. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request for a child rearing leave of absence of Deanna Mignella from her mathematics teacher position, effective July 1, 2012 through the end of the fall semester of the 2012 – 2013 school year.
6. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, terminate the following temporary assignments:
  - a. Marianne Riordan, substitute teacher aide, end date June 30, 2008
  - b. Laura Mistretta, substitute food service worker, end date February 15, 2010
  - c. Nora Anemone, substitute monitor, end date May 22, 2010
  - d. Susan Breidenbach, substitute teacher aide, end date May 6, 2010
  - e. Rosemarie Crescitelli, substitute monitor, end date April 8, 2009
  - f. Consuelo Da Costa, substitute teacher aide, end date July 1, 2009
  - g. Patricia Griffith, substitute teacher aide, end date July 1, 2011
  - h. Vanessa Haltigan, substitute teacher aide, end date July 1, 2011
  - i. Siobhan Kearns, substitute teacher aide, end date February 1, 2009
  - j. Lisa Stamile, substitute teacher aide, end date June 30, 2010
  - k. Debra McGeary, substitute teacher aide, end date December 2, 2010

7. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the following temporary assignment at the salary established by the East Rockaway Board of Education:

Substitute Teachers effective March 21, 2012:

- a. Wendy Beauchesne
- b. Melissa Jordan
- c. Kristin Gromling
- d. Susan Pesce-Moscheni

Substitute Teacher Aides, effective March 21, 2012:

- e. Phyllis Campanelli
- f. Lisa Machovec

Short-Term Substitute School Psychologist:

- g. Peter Mancuso, effective March 23, 2012, through June 22, 2012

Substitute School Nurse:

- h. Maria Cacciatore, effective March 21, 2012

8. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the continuation of the “emergency, conditional” personnel appointments for the following individuals

pending receipt of notification of their fingerprint clearance from the State of New York, Department of Education:  
None

B. Other Items

Upon motion by Linda Schmidt, seconded by Patti Nicoletti, the following items #1-16 were unanimously approved:

1. Approve the tuition agreement for special education services with Malverne UFSD, for one student, Student ID No. 180006766 for the 2011-2012 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 following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that approval is hereby granted to enter into agreement with the following individuals/firms for student related services, as indicated, in the Requests for Proposal published in Newsday on March 5, 2012, for the 2012-2013 school year, and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the resulting service contracts on behalf of the Board of Education.

PROVIDERS: Access 7 Consulting, Inc.; All About Kids, Mid Island Therapy Associates; Bilinguals; Blue Sea Educational Consulting; Career & Employment Options; Creative Tutoring; Carina Hamel, LMHC; Horizon Healthcare Staffing; Islip Tutoring; Kids First Evaluation & Advocacy Center; Metro Therapy; New York Therapy Placement; Dr. Caryl Oris, M.D.; St. James Tutoring Inc.; South Oaks; Syosset Tutoring; Team Therapy; Top Grade; Variety Child Learning Center.

3. Reject the bids received for the purchase of door hardware and installation at Rhame Avenue Elementary School, Capital Improvement Program No. 28-02-19-03-0-002-008.
4. Approve the participation of East Rockaway School District in the cooperative bid conducted by Garden City Schools on behalf of the participating school districts for automotive supplies, materials, parts as more fully set forth on the attached resolution and authorize the District Clerk to file the resolution with Garden City UFSD.
5. Approve the contract with Eve B. Feldman, visiting author, on May 2, 2012 at the Rhame Avenue School and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the contract on behalf of the Board of Education.

6. Approve the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education of the East Rockaway Union Free School District approves the terms of the Memorandum of Agreement dated March 20, 2012, between the Board of Education and the East Rockaway Teachers Association, concerning a one-time retirement incentive for members of the teachers bargaining unit and authorize the Superintendent to execute the Memorandum of Agreement on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.

7. Accept a donation from the family of Andrew J. Stern of three books, *My 9-11, One Man's Journey through the Unexpected Events of September 11, 2001, A New Yorker's Story*; Barry Lestner and Koenig Iron Works, Published by My 9-11, copyright 2011, having a value of \$32.00 each.
8. Declare obsolete for purpose of disposal the equipment more fully set forth on the List of Obsolete/Broken Equipment for disposition dated March 2012.
9. Approve the contract with Rolling River Day School and Camp for the rental of parking spaces for the 2012 summer camp season and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the contract.
10. Approve the following resolution:

RESOLVED, (a) that the Board of Education of the East Rockaway Union Free School District ("District"), is hereby authorized to undertake certain school building improvements ("Project"), as described in a Capital Projects 2012/13 report on file and available for public inspection in the office of the District Clerk ("Report"), all at no additional cost to District taxpayers; said Project to commence during the 2012-2013 school year and to consist of the following capital improvements, renovations and/or alterations: (1) univent repairs and pneumatic control updates, rotunda doors replacement and gutter replacement at the East Rockaway High School; (2) repaving of playground and concrete repairs and lighting in front of building at Rhame Avenue Elementary School; (3) replacement of first grade doors and updating of rusting fire escape at Centre Avenue Elementary School; and (4) security camera upgrades and window repairs or replacement district wide; all of the foregoing to include equipment, construction and other work required in connection therewith, as well as preliminary costs and costs incidental thereto and to the financing thereof; provided that the detailed costs of the components of the Project as set forth in the Report may be reallocated among such components if the Board of Education shall determine that such reallocation is in the best interests of the District and no material change shall be made in the scope of the Project.

11. Approve the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the East Rockaway Union Free School District (“District”), is hereby authorized to expend from the District’s Capital Reserve Fund for Technology Replacement, heretofore established by the voters of the District on May 20, 2008, an amount not to exceed \$126,174 to undertake the district-wide purchase and/or replacement of certain technology and tele-communications equipment and software (“Project”), as described in a report entitled “Proposed Technology Reserve Spending 2012-13” on file and available for public inspection in the office of the District Clerk (“Report”), all at no additional cost to District taxpayers; said Project to commence during the 2012-2013 school year and to consist of the following: (1) smart classroom upgrades necessary to complete the outfitting of all classrooms with interactive white board technology; (2) network upgrades and replacement; and (3) software upgrades and replacement; all of the foregoing to include equipment, installation and other work required in connection therewith, as well as preliminary costs and costs incidental thereto and to the financing thereof; provided that the detailed costs of the components of the Project as set forth in the Report may be reallocated among such components if the Board of Education shall determine that such reallocation is in the best interests of the District and no material change shall be made in the scope of the Project.

12. Approve the Notice of Budget Hearing and Annual District Election of the East Rockaway UFSD and the publication of such notice as required by law in the “Oceanside, Rockville Centre, East Rockaway Tribune” and “The Lynbrook/East Rockaway Herald.”

13. BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education of the East Rockaway School District hereby abolishes three (3) positions in the elementary teacher tenure area and one (1) position in the school media specialist (library) tenure area, effective June 30, 2012. The Superintendent is directed to notify the effected staff members of this action.

14. Approve the contract with Harriet Palmer for consultant and training services for accounts payable and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the contract on behalf of the Board of Education.

15. Approve the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that Carol Hernandez be appointed to serve as a member of the Board of Registration for the annual District Election to be held on May 15, 2012; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Education authorizes Carol Hernandez, a member of the board of registration, to be available for the purpose of

registering qualified voters of the District at the following times and locations:

March 21-23, 2012 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. Centre Avenue Elementary School  
April 16-21, 2012 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. Rhame Avenue Elementary School

16. Approve the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education authorizes the District Clerk to be available for the purpose of registering qualified voters of the District at the following times and locations:

May 1, 2012 11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. Rhame Avenue Elementary School  
May 2, 2012 2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. Centre Avenue Elementary School

C. Budget Transfers

1. Upon motion by Michaelene Abbott-Cooper seconded by Kristin Ochtera, the following budget transfers lettered a – e were unanimously approved:

- a. Transaction No. 12-0009
- b. Transaction No. 12-0010
- c. Transaction No. 12-0011
- d. Transaction No. 12-0012
- e. Transaction No. 12-0013

D. Upon motion by Michaelene Abbott-Cooper, seconded by Patti Nicoletti, the CSE Recommendations were unanimously approved.

E. Upon motion by Linda Schmidt, seconded by Michaelene Abbott-Cooper, the CPSE Recommendations were unanimously approved.

6. Policy Matters - None

7. Superintendent's Report.

I would like to inform everyone that the start time for Board of Education Agenda meeting on April 3rd has been changed to 6:00 PM to accommodate those interested in attending Middle School Sports Night.

Tonight I will be focusing my comments on budget matters.

I want to thank all the parents and community members who attended the last Budget Advisory Committee meeting on March 8th. All of the handouts from that meeting are posted on our website under the budget information link. The next BAC meeting is on

April 2nd. I hope you will join us.

I also want to thank all the community members who wrote letters to legislators about the need for mandate relief and the removal of the Gap Elimination Adjustment money, which for 2012-2013 is \$825,000. I know that your representatives heard you because at least one of them has told me he is inundated with letters from East Rockaway and he wanted to know what is going on. I have tried to keep our representatives informed about our budget planning but clearly your participation has gotten their attention. Regarding your letters, I explained to our representative that the money the Governor used and is using to close Albany's budget gap has created a large gap for the 2012-2013 budget for the East Rockaway Public Schools and we are working to close the gap to reach the tax levy limit. You have seen the TV ads that the Governor has balanced the budget without raising taxes and closed the budget gap without raising taxes. Over the last three budget cycles, starting with Governor Patterson, the Gap Elimination Adjustment money that went to Albany, instead of East Rockaway, to help close the budget gap totals over \$2,000,000.

Most of the money being applied to balance East Rockaway's budget is coming from our reserves; the rest is coming from programs. When you use a lot of reserves to get through a difficult time it creates an obligation for the following year's budget, unless additional revenue is received. Mrs. Tannenbaum spoke about this at the last BAC meeting and will continue to discuss it at the next BAC meeting. Knowing the risk, and knowing that we are fortunate to have reserves for the tough times, we used them to keep from having to make additional reductions and cuts.

These were very difficult decisions to make and we did our best to balance the pain. Part of the discussion was to make sure we were considering all of the students who are involved in a variety of programs, including those who do not have adults coming to meetings on their behalf. No one is happy about these cuts and reductions. It was agonizing and depressing to eliminate elementary positions, an elementary librarian, summer school, the non-public late bus, athletic reductions, clubs and other personnel and programs. The complete list can be found in the BAC #3 presentation on the website. Some parents have asked if they can fund raise. There can be fund raising efforts and this will require some time to coordinate an understanding of the procedures. In addition, we are still hopeful that there will be some restoration from the \$250,000,000 set aside for competitive grants. If additional money is returned to East Rockaway, the Board and I, in collaboration with the administrators, will make a decision in the best overall interest of the current and future students.

I want to go back to the Governor and his TV ads. If in fact he has been able to balance Albany's budget, we need to commend him for this. It's good news for the entire state. It is also significant because if he has a balanced budget, and the Gap Elimination Adjustment money was created because he needed to balance the Albany budget, then I am anticipating that will disappear in the future state aid projections, which will be important in budget planning for the 2013-2014 budget. Let's hold out hope for the future and let's get over this hurdle by working together to keep a bad situation from getting worse.

I would like to also address the use of social media. Please use it responsibly. It does not help the cause when people bad mouth others or are disrespectful or target groups of individuals. It is not any less inappropriate because it's happening electronically. Please

use social media to educate people on the facts, and if you don't know them please ask. Use it to motivate people to come to meetings to learn about the district budget.

I know that this budget cycle is very difficult and unpleasant but you need to know that the people who are gathering the data, organizing the information and making the decisions have the best interests of your children and the community in mind. As many of you know, most of us spend more time with your children than we do with our own. The decision makers do not take these responsibilities lightly and we are working as hard as we can, to the best of our ability, with the tools that are available, to keep the East Rockaway Public Schools on the map and moving forward. Thank you to all of the people who have called to show support and have joined the crusade for state aid and mandate relief.

A final note, you saw in the agenda this evening that the Board has approved the District Clerk to be available to register community members at each of the elementary schools on May 1st and 2nd. Please help us spread the word.

That concludes my report.

#### 8. Privilege of the Floor

- Middle school sports budget cuts
- Centre Avenue teacher budget cuts
- The possibility of fund raising for Greenkill trip 2013

#### 9. Board Member Comments

**Linda Schmidt** – Thank you Mr. Piccarella and Dr. LoVerde for your presentation. It is a shame that more parents aren't here to hear the services we offer. Thank you for coming and sharing your feelings. This is a very difficult year for all of us, we have had to make very painful decisions. We do it for the kids. Good evening.

**Kristin Ochtera** – If we could find another way to close the \$1.2 million gap we are facing this year, we would. I cannot leave here tonight without everyone understanding one important part of this. Even with the cuts we have already made, we are still looking at a \$35,000 hole. We understand that all of you want us to find money somewhere else to restore the items you want back and we really wish we could. The fact of the matter is today, right now, we still need to find another \$35,000 to make the cap. We stopped looking with the hope that the State will restore enough aid to fill the hole. We do not go into this blindly. We listen to recommendations from the administration, the BAC committee, the PTAs and those of you who take time to speak at these meetings. The budget that is put up for vote in May will be lean and we will need to make difficult decisions in order to meet the cap. Right now we need \$35,000. The cuts that would need to be made if our budget fails are unimaginable .

**Patti Nicoletti** - Thank you Mr. Piccarella and Dr. LoVerde for your presentation. Mrs. Ochtera presented our dilemma with the budget very well. You are asking for restoration of a program when we actually still have more money to cut. Please continue sending your letters to our legislators. Unfortunately, we may need to make even more cuts next year with the 2% cap. If that happens, I fear that all we will be left with will be reading, writing and arithmetic and the gap will continue to widen between the haves and have nots. There



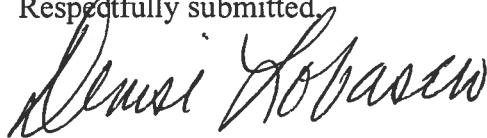
is a very dismal outlook. This is very difficult for all of us as all cuts we make are taking from all of our students.

**Michaelene Abbott-Cooper** – Thank you Mr. Piccarella and Dr. LoVerde for the presentation. Thank you parents for being advocates for your children. As a parent myself, I strongly agree that this is a role all parents should play in support of their children's education. With current budget cuts, the demand for student activities may become a parent's responsibility. I realize there may be a financial burden, and I would personally support fundraising endeavors.

**Neil Schloth** – I went to Albany on March 11 and 12th and spoke to our Legislators. I gave them all of our issues from the Board and our Superintendent. Michaelene, Kristin and I spoke later that week with Assemblyman Curran, Dr. Melucci and Mrs. Tannenbaum stating the grave situation with our budget. It is extremely important that everyone continue to write our representatives and ask them to restore our funding. During the meeting that we had with our Legislators, they commented on the high volume of mail coming from our school district. So these letters do help in getting the attention of our representatives. We are in a very serious situation of funding shortfalls. We need to make tough decisions now in order to remain viable in the years to come.

10. Upon motion by Michaelene Abbott-Cooper, seconded by Linda Schmidt and unanimously passed, the meeting was adjourned at 9:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Denise Lobascio