

EAST ROCKAWAY UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
East Rockaway, New York  
Regular Meeting of the Board of Education  
7:00 P.M., February 24, 2015 – East Rockaway Jr. /Sr. High School  
Including Recognition of the Andrew J. Stern Memorial Essay Contest Winners, the New High  
School Course Offerings Presentation, and a Public Forum

MINUTES

Present: Members of the Board of Education: President; Kristin Ochtera, Vice President; Patricia Nicoletti, John Giannotti, Jr., Keith Gamache; Superintendent, Lisa J. Ruiz; Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations, James P. Robinson; Director of Curriculum & Technology, John Piccarella; and District Clerk, Denise Lobascio, staff and members of the community.

Absent: Neil Schloth

1. The meeting was called to order by Kristin Ochtera at 7:08 pm and she led the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Upon motion by John Giannotti, Jr., seconded by Patti Nicoletti, the minutes from the January 20, 2015 Board of Education meeting were unanimously approved.
3. Acknowledges Receipt of Financial Reports
4. Correspondence – Three
5. Action Agenda

A. Personnel

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

1. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, accept the following resignations:
  - a. Tina B. Smith, School Psychologist, effective March 6, 2015.
  - b. Jessica Howell, Coach, Junior Varsity Volleyball, effective February 9, 2015
2. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Monica Saavedra to the position of leave replacement school psychologist, effective February 2, 2015, through June 30, 2015, at the prorated MA, Step 1 (plus stipend), annual salary set forth in the East Rockaway Teachers Association contract for the 2014-2015 school year.

*East Rockaway Public Schools*  
*Board of Education*  
*Regular Meeting - February 24, 2015*

3. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, accept the resignation of Rafael Santiago from his position as a substitute monitor effective February 24, 2015, and approve the appointment of Rafael Santiago to the position of monitor, effective February 25, 2015, at the Step 3 annual salary set forth in the East Rockaway Food Service & Monitor Union contract for monitors for the 2014-2015 school year.
4. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the spring sports 2014-2015 coaching assignments as more fully set forth on the 2014-2015 Spring Coaching Schedule dated February 24, 2015.
5. 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 2014-2015 school year:
  - a. Emily Jackowicz, substitute teacher, effective March 13, 2015
  - b. Luke A. Tesoriero, substitute teacher and athletic supervisor (day/evenings), effective February 25, 2015
  - c. Kristen Silk, substitute teacher, effective February 25, 2015

B. Other Items

Upon motion by John Giannotti, Jr., seconded by Patti Nicoletti, the following items #1-7 were unanimously approved:

1. Approve the 2015-2016 school district calendar.
2. Declare obsolete for the purpose of disposal and/or recycling the equipment more specifically set forth on the Equipment for Disposal list dated February 2015.
3. Approve the Consultant Services Contract between the East Rockaway UFSD and Disabilities Unlimited, Inc. for three Presentations of Changing Hearts and Minds for Abilities Week on February 11, 2015, and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the contract on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
4. Approve the Consultant Services Contract Addendum between the East Rockaway UFSD and Barry McNamara to increase the original 2014 – 2015 contract amount for additional services and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the contract on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
5. Approve the Flexible Compensation Agreement with Brown & Brown of New York, Inc. d/b/a Fitzharris & Company for the 2015 calendar year and authorize the President of the East Rockaway Board of Education to execute the contract on behalf of the Board of Education.

*East Rockaway Public Schools  
Board of Education  
Regular Meeting - February 24, 2015*

6. 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 19, 2015; 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 during kindergarten registration periods.

7. Accept the Federal Single Audit for year end June 30, 2014, as submitted by RS Abrams & Co.

5. Upon motion by Patti Nicoletti, seconded by John Giannotti, Jr. the following budget transfer was unanimously approved:

a. Transaction No. 15-0005

D. Upon motion by Patti Nicoletti, seconded by Keith Gamache, the CSE Recommendations were unanimously approved.

E. Upon motion by John Giannotti, Jr. seconded by Patti Nicoletti, the CPSE Recommendations were unanimously approved.

6. Policy Matters:

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

a. 2220, Board Officers

7. Good and Welfare

- a. Condolences to the Butler and Loes families on the passing of Jack Butler, a graduate of East Rockaway High School, Class of 2010
- b. Condolences to Tina Smith and family on the passing of her father, Francis Bruno
- c. Condolences to Fran Dixon and family on the passing of mother, Edie Geller
- d. Condolences to Peggy Koulias, retired East Rockaway special education teacher, on the passing of her husband, Louis
- e. Condolences to Karen Lee Callaghan and family on the passing of her brother, Thomas Lee
- f. Congratulations to Linda Jarmel on the birth of her second grandchild, Sabrina Alexandra, 8 lbs. 9 oz.

8. Superintendent's Report

*East Rockaway Public Schools  
Board of Education*

*Regular Meeting - February 24, 2015*

- February 7<sup>th</sup> our Board of Education and Central Office administrators held a meeting with our legislators: Senator Skelos, and Assemblymen Curran and Kaminsky. We provided a good deal of information about our successes and challenges, how the reduction in state aid and the GEA has impacted our district and what are our goals and needs for the future. It was a productive conversation and we received positive feedback from our legislators.
- Please visit our website for an important letter and link to Senator Skelos' petition to fully eliminate the GEA. This appears on all four home pages of our district's website. I hope you will take the time to sign the petition and publicize this in the community.
- The Reading Action Committee at Centre Avenue has planned a Community Reader's event during the month of February. East Rockaway community members and administrators will be reading aloud a story to specific grade level classes and will be explaining who they are and what they do for our community and/or school district.
- Councilman Anthony Santino visited Rhame Avenue on Monday morning as a guest reader. He visited a Kindergarten class and read the story, *Ella's Trip to the Museum*. He also visited a third grade class to read, *Just Grace Goes Green* and had a follow-up discussion with the children about recycling and conservation and the role he plays as a councilman to make sure these things take place right here in our own community.
- Centre Avenue second grade is having a guide dog assembly. It matches up with our unit on Helen Keller, which also ties in our biography module of people "who make a difference." This also dovetailed nicely with our Abilities Week activities across all three schools which were coordinated by Ms. Guggino-Hastings during the week of February 9th. Activities were planned throughout that week that celebrated the outstanding abilities of those with "disabilities." A highlight of the week was a special assembly, held in all three buildings, led by Dennis Oehler, a Paralympic gold medal athlete and motivational speaker who captures the students' attention with his personal story of triumph and success living with a prosthetic leg.
- Our elementary schools recently completed a "Beautiful Me" girls' group run by our social worker, Ms. Ragone, and school psychologists, Ms. Smith and Ms. Saavedra. "Beautiful Me" is a self-esteem program designed to educate females by promoting appreciation for their genuine qualities, accurate self-awareness, and the satisfaction of helping others. We have received such great feedback from the students and parents that a new 4th grade group will begin at the end of February.
- The kindergarten students celebrated the 100 days of school! They had a presentation in the All-Purpose Room and invited 100 guests which included parents, grandparents and other family members...and even one of our Board members...Mr. Gamache!!!

*East Rockaway Public Schools*  
*Board of Education*  
*Regular Meeting - February 24, 2015*

- March is Music in Our Schools Month and the Music Department will participate in various ways this year. Students participating in the Piano NYSSMA Festival will play for their class and Vocal NYSSMA lessons will be under way. Music facts and jokes will be part of the morning announcements and Music Questions of the Week will be posted in each building. We know that music is an important component of a child's education and we plan to enhance this experience as much as possible throughout the month.
- Students at Rhame Avenue have recently published their first Informational Writing pieces of the year. Bulletin boards are filled with a wide variety of reports and projects of which students are extremely proud. In alignment with the Common Core Standards, each grade level chose a unit of study in Social Studies or Science to connect with writing. Sixth grade classes researched a wide variety of carriers and also wrote about *The Code of Hammurabi vs. The Bill of Rights*. We are so very proud of our students' accomplishments and the planning and preparation demonstrated by their teachers to design these engaging units.
- Leading up to Valentine's Day, the Rhame Avenue fifth graders completed "Random Acts of Kindness." Students participated in at least one kind act each day of the week and shared their "random acts of kindness" with each other and talked about how they made people feel. Our fourth grade students are working on writing a song in music class for their "Random Acts of Kindness" projects.
- Congratulations to the cast and crew of *Willy Wonka* on their outstanding performance in this year's musical. They performed to a packed audience at each performance and everyone in attendance truly seemed to enjoy the show. Our performers received high praise from the audience.
- Rock Rivalry season has officially begun with the Volleyball competition. This Thursday will be Sports Night. Entrance is scheduled for Friday, March 20th.
- Our middle school teachers continue to work with consultant, Nancy Doda, a national expert on middle level education. She has provided workshops, small group teacher support and is currently coteaching lessons with our faculty to support our new middle school model. As part of this initiative, teachers have also been on several site visits to observe various middle school approaches across Long Island.
- Our first meeting of our Strategic Planning Committee will take place on March 5<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to all who volunteered for our committee – we have over 30 members who will serve.
- Mr. Robinson will now give us an update on the budget process:  
We also will have a separate proposition for the capital reserve. This year, we are taking a slightly different approach where we will be proposing more work than the reserve allocation will allow us to do. This affords us the opportunity to take advantage of what we hope will be continued favorable market conditions and more aggressive bids. With more aggressive

*East Rockaway Public Schools  
Board of Education*

*Regular Meeting - February 24, 2015*

bids, it will allow our budget dollars to go further as we finalize the full scope of these projects.

**Mr. Piccarella:**

Five years ago we asked the voters to establish a reserve to replace and enhance technology in the district. Our five year plan included adding wireless capability, smart boards and projectors in all classrooms as well as replacement of computers. Our new technology reserve will provide ten years of funding which will be used to bring mobile technology to students beginning with tablets for students in grades five and nine.

**Mr. Robinson:** One of the projects will be replacement of windows at Rhame and repairs or replacements District Wide. Some of the windows at Rhame are the old wood frame windows which don't close or secure properly. With increasing security demands our objective would be to get the benefit of increased ventilation along with increased security. As you know, we have already been able to install our ID card readers at the elementary buildings which has benefitted our staff in various ways. We will also be introducing a multi-media marquis sign at the High School. We are currently seeking proposals and reviewing different styles and will be discussing more details at our next BAC meeting on March 4th.

9. Privilege of the Floor - none

10. Board Member Comments

**Kristin Ochtera** – It is wonderful to celebrate the achievement that Keith Gamache earned. 75 points for a NYSBA achievement level – in a very short time. It is a very admirable quality in Keith.

**John Giannotti, Jr.** – Thank you all for coming.

**Patti Nicoletti** – Congratulations to the winners of the Andrew Stern Contest and thank you to the Stern family for sponsoring this event every year. I would like to thank the teachers and the students who all gave great presentations tonight which highlighted some great things going on in East Rockaway. I commend Mrs. Ruiz, Mr. Piccarella and Mr. Robinson for organizing the legislator's breakfast several weeks ago. They did a fabulous job advocating for our district. We appreciate the time and effort they put into the presentation.

**Keith Gamache** – Thank you for acknowledging and recognizing my achievement. I am very proud. I am very proud of the teachers and students. It is great to see what was a club grow into a new course.

**Kristin Ochtera** – I am very proud of the district leadership. These are people who care about the future of the district and I am very proud working with you.

11. Upon motion by John Giannotti, Jr., seconded by Keith Gamache and unanimously passed, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*East Rockaway Public Schools*

*Board of Education*

*Regular Meeting - February 24, 2015*

Denise Lobascio  
District Clerk

*East Rockaway Public Schools  
Board of Education  
Regular Meeting - February 24, 2015*