

EAST ROCKAWAY UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
East Rockaway, New York
Regular Meeting of the Board of Education
7:00 P.M., January 19, 2016 – East Rockaway Jr. /Sr. High School
Including Recognition of the Andrew Stern Essay Contest Winners,
Donald Poland, a Presentation on the Tablet Initiative,
and a Public Forum

MINUTES

Present: Members of the Board of Education: Kristin Ochtera, Patricia Nicoletti, Neil R. Schloth, Keith Gamache; Superintendent, Lisa J. Ruiz; Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations, James P. Robinson; Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Technology, John Piccarella, District Clerk, Vitina Fazi

Absent: John Giannotti, Jr.

1. The meeting was called to order by Kristin Ochtera at 7:12 p.m. and she led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board President Kristin Ochtera turned the meeting over to the Superintendent. Ms. Ruiz welcomed everyone and was excited to speak about tonight's recognitions. She introduced Mr. Don Poland, "one of our own teachers", who was recently named the "Herald Person of the Year 2015." Ms. Ruiz read the Herald article acknowledging Mr. Poland for all of his humanitarian efforts not only within the District and community, but also across the country. Ms. Ruiz congratulated Mr. Poland and thanked him for all he does for others.

Ms. Ruiz welcomed the family members of the late Andrew J. Stern and contest winners. She introduced Ms. Lisa Burch, sister of the late Andrew J. Stern who spoke about her brother and this year's contest theme. She thanked the students and teachers for participating in this year's contest and was happy to have received many responses. She then announced the winners of the contest: Shannon Monaco (Elementary-Centre Avenue School) and Victoria Kelly (Junior High School). Andrew Schwarzman, High School winner, was not present. Each entry was read and the recipients were presented with a certificate and a check from the Stern family who was represented by Mrs. Barbara Stern and Mr. Michael Stern. Ms. Ruiz thanked the Stern family for providing this opportunity for our students and congratulated the winners.

Ms. Ruiz then introduced Mr. John Piccarella who spoke about the 1:1 tablet initiative that is currently in place for Gr. 5 and Gr. 9 students. Mr. Piccarella then introduced Ms. Petra Schoen who conducted a presentation on how the tablets are being used in instruction in all schools. Ms. Napolitano, Ms. Donald and Ms. DeVarso spoke about their collaborative use of the tablets in Gr. 5. Ms. Perrone, Ms. Murphy and student Meghan Connor spoke about the Gr. 9 tablet use. Ms. Schoen then demonstrated with the audience using their cell phones, an interactive game on Kahoot. Ms. Ruiz thanked all of the teachers for supporting this initiative and their involvement in

the presentation. She also thanked them for integrating technology into their teaching and making learning more exciting and fun. A special thank you to Mr. Piccarella and Ms. Schoen for coordinating the presentation.

At 7:50 p.m. the meeting was turned over to Ms. Ochtera who continued with the agenda. Ms. Ochtera asked if there were any questions regarding the items on tonight's agenda and reminded the audience that there will be an opportunity for public comment at the end of the meeting.

2. Upon motion made by Keith Gamache, and seconded by Neil R. Schloth, the Minutes of the December 15, 2015, meeting was unanimously approved.
3. Acknowledge Receipt of Financial Reports – November 2015
4. Correspondence - None
5. Action Agenda

Upon motion made by Keith Gamache, and seconded by Patricia Nicoletti, the following Item Nos. 1 through 7 were unanimously approved on a consent agenda.

In connection with Item 6 below, Ms. Ruiz explained that the Board of Education would be approving the creation of a new security guard (part-time) position in the District, as well as a candidate for that position at the High School. She hopes that the position can be expanded to all schools. Joseph Gagnano, a retired police officer, has been added to tonight's agenda and she is pleased to add the appointment.

A. Personnel

1. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Edward Correll, as a Chairperson for CSE and CPSE meetings for the 2015-2016 school year.
2. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Edward Correll as a Dignity Act Coordinator for the 2015-2016 school year.
3. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request of Jennifer Moore for an extension of her child rearing leave of absence from her English teacher position, effective July 1, 2016, through June 30, 2017.
4. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request of Laura Clarke for a leave of absence from her teacher aide position under the Family Medical Leave Act, effective January 5, 2016.
5. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request of Samantha Clarke for a leave of absence from her part-time music teacher position under the

Family Medical Leave Act, effective January 5, 2016.

6. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Joseph Gragnano, to the position of security guard (part time), effective on or about February 1, 2016, contingent upon final approval of the Nassau County Civil Service Commission, at the hourly salary established by the East Rockaway Board of Education on the Non-Contractual Salary Schedule for the 2015-2016 school year.
7. 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 2015-2016 school year:
 - a. Ashley Thorp, substitute teacher, effective January 20, 2016
 - b. Jennifer Moya, substitute nurse, effective January 20, 2016
 - c. Lauren Pontrello, substitute teacher, effective January 20, 2016
 - d. Roopa Khaneja, substitute teacher, effective January 20, 2016

B. Other Items

Upon motion made by Patricia Nicoletti and seconded by Neil R. Schloth, the following Item 1 was unanimously approved.

1. BE IT RESOLVED that the East Rockaway Board of Education hereby establishes the position of security guard (part-time), effective January 20, 2016; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Non-Contractual Salary Schedule for the 2015-2016 school year be amended to include security guard (part-time) at the salary of \$15 per hour.

Upon motion made by Neil R. Schloth and seconded by Patricia Nicoletti, the following Items 2 through 6 were unanimously approved on a consent agenda.

2. Approve the terms of the Letter of Agreement dated December 23, 2015, between the Board of Education of the East Rockaway UFSD, and the East Rockaway Teachers Association for the employment of a tenured school psychologist currently on a child rearing leave of absence to return to work for the period February 1, 2016, through June 30, 2016, on a part-time, per diem basis; and authorize the Superintendent to execute the Letter Agreement on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
3. Accept the following donation:
 - a. Miscellaneous boys' lacrosse equipment from Mr. and Mrs. Saporito valued at \$3,291.58

- b. Office cubicles from Mill-Max Mfg. Corp. valued at \$5,000
- 4. Approve the Health and Welfare Services Agreement between the East Rockaway UFSD and Hempstead UFSD for health and welfare services for the 2015-2016 school year and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the agreement on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
- 5. RESOLVED, based on the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the budget appropriation increase to the General Fund budget for the 2015-2016 fiscal year in the amount of \$45,088.23 which represents grant funds received, accounted for in the General Fund, but not fully expended in the 2014-2015 fiscal year. Since this funding was received as a Grant, this increase in appropriations will have no impact on the tax levy.
- 6. Approve the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education **accepts** the draft copy of the audit report titled: “Purchasing, Report of Examination 2015M-253” for the period covered July 1, 2014 to July 31, 2015, received from the NYS Office of the State Comptroller and submit the District’s corresponding response and Corrective Action Plan.

C. Budget Transfers – None

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

E. Upon motion made by Patricia Nicoletti and seconded by Neil R. Schloth, the CPSE Recommendations were unanimously approved.

6. Policy Matters

1. For Review

- a. 5500, Student Records

7. Good and Welfare

- a. Congratulations to Alexa Koutsantanou on her marriage to Henry Sánchez on January 2, 2016
- b. Congratulations to Paula DePietro on the birth of her first grandchild, Emilie Reese, born January 7, 2016, weighing 7 pounds 15 ounces
- c. Condolences to our Director of Guidance, Mona Hecht, and her family on the passing of her father, **Rune Lundquist**

- d. Condolences to retired superintendent, Dr. Roseanne Melucci, and her family on the passing of her father, Gaspare Campo

8. Superintendent's Report

Elementary

Congratulations to Centre Avenue's Gr. 5 student, Shannon Monaco, and East Rockaway Jr. /Sr. High Schools, Gr. 7 student Victoria Kelly, and Gr. 10 student Andrew Schwarzman, for having the winning essays for the Andrew J. Stern essay contest.

Centre Avenue School will be holding its National Geographic Geography BEE on Tuesday, January 26, 2016, at 2:00 p.m. Students will compete on stage and show off their geography skills. Centre has sent two students to the State level in the past and hopes to accomplish that goal once again this year.

The NED Show was held at Rhame and Centre Avenue Schools today as part of our continued efforts to provide all children with opportunities to build character. The assembly is part of a character based education program that centers around three important messages that have lifelong relevance. Never Give Up, Encourage Others and Do Your Best. Thanks to school social worker, Dawn Ragone, for bringing in this high-powered assembly and motivating students to make good decisions.

The fifth grade students at Centre Avenue were recently treated to a pizza lunch compliments of Assemblyman Brian Curran. Mr. Curran came in and presented a government lesson to our students. Brian Curran was impressed with our students' knowledge of our political structure and current events.

Dr. Parker is back in district this week working in both elementary schools to facilitate MOY data meetings with Grades K-4. We will be using our most recent data gathered to continue making informed decisions about how to best support our students.

Winter Writing Samples will soon decorate the hallways at Rhame Avenue. Students have been working hard to finish their "Winter Themed" pieces which include poetry, personal narratives, How To Flip Books, and imaginary stories. We are looking forward to seeing the beautiful work of our students displayed on bulletin boards throughout the hallways. Next, our students across all grade levels will be working on "Research Based Informational Writing" followed by "Narrative Writing to Develop Real or Imagined Experiences."

Second grade students at Rhame Avenue recently visited the Long Island Children's Museum after learning about geography and the Seven Continents in school. The students explored geography in two separate "hands-on" exhibits and learned more about cardinal direction points and graphing. As a culminating project at the museum, the students were able to use what they learned to create "treasure maps" which was an exciting experience for everyone.

Both fifth grade classes are reading the novel titled *Holes*, by Louis Sachar. As a whole class and in small group literature circles, students will be discussing character development, author's craft, and themes of the novel. In social studies, students are learning about early peoples of the Americas and how they migrated here. Using their tablets, students are working in small groups to research the Adena, Haida, and Taino cultures. They will be sharing their findings with the class after creating a collaborative poster detailing their research.

The East Rockaway School District is pleased to announce that 20 district students had been selected to participate in the Nassau Music Educators Association's All-County Festival concerts at the Tilles Center for the Performing Arts this past weekend.

The students selected at Centre Avenue School are:

Matthew Pollackov- Trumpet

Sandra Quintanilla- Orchestra Violin

Chorus Sopranos: Ava Araoz, Emma Araoz, Lauren Kelly & Sarah Warszawiak

The students selected at Rhame Avenue are:

Joseph Bruzzo, Alto Sax

Sofia Valdebenito, Viola

Chorus Sopranos: Clare Acuti and Anthony Zappala

The students selected at East Rockaway Jr. /Sr. High School are:

Chorus: Natalia Cuttitta, Samantha Marx, Daniel Salazar

Band: Sarina Gonzalez, Kaitlyn Maltempi, Laura Millar, Emma Nicoletti

Orchestra: Andrew Schwarzman, Elizabeth Son and Gabriella Walsh

East Rockaway Jr. / Sr. High School

Danny Fusco broke the East Rockaway scoring record in Boys Varsity basketball, surpassing 1987 graduate, Mike West. Danny scored 28 points against Wheatley to break the record. This came shortly after he scored his 1,000th point against Carle Place. I, as well as Mr. Robinson were present when Danny broke the school record. His photo appeared in *Newsday*. Congratulations Danny on this great accomplishment.

The Guidance Department hosted two guest speakers recently. Dan Tramuta, Vice-President for enrollment at SUNY Fredonia spoke for nearly two hours on the changes coming down the pike in the financial process for college admissions. Daniel Maldonado from Nassau Community College gave a motivational address before the Curriculum Fair last Thursday. Both speakers were very well received.

Please join our middle school students and teachers this Thursday at the Science Fair beginning at 6:15 p.m.

Technology teacher, Nick Cimorelli, has been selected to present at the International Technology and Engineering Association's 78th annual conference, in Washington, D.C., in March.

Mr. Cimorelli will be presenting the results of his classroom implementation of the Engineering for All Food Unit. The presentation will include an overview of the unit, which focuses on the growing food shortages the world faces and how engineering can potentially address human challenges. Additionally, he will present to a group of teachers from across the nation on ways to embed math and science into authentic contexts, addressing national standards, planning instruction so that it fits into middle school programs and how he implemented the materials in his classroom.

The high school student council hosted a blood drive on Saturday, December 19, 2015, with a total of 51 donations from students, staff and community members. Thank you to all who donated.

Mr. Spero has been working on the selection of a mascot for the High School. A team at the High School began the process of soliciting student ideas through our art teachers, and reviewed several proposals and have been moving closer to a recommendation to the Board of Education for the new mascot. They will have a final recommendation within the next several weeks.

You may have seen the article in today's Newsday regarding results from a recent audit. The School District participated in an audit conducted by the Office of the New York State Comptroller. The audit involved purchasing procedures in the East Rockaway School District. The District has implemented new practices and will be following the recommendations made by the State.

Ms. Ochtera questioned if there was an update on the budget process. Ms. Ruiz then introduced Mr. Robinson who conducted a power point presentation on the budget process to date. Ms. Ochtera asked if there were any questions. One audience member questioned whether payment for new voting machines could come from the Smart Schools Bond Act. Mr. Robinson replied that it could not. Ms. Ochtera continued with the agenda at 8:37 p.m.

9. Privilege of the Floor

Cyndi Lark: Ms. Lark, on behalf of Club Rock, asked the Board to comment further on the status of the school mascot. Ms. Ruiz, Mr. Spero, and Ms. Ochtera spoke about the process to date. From the audience, Ms. Dineen Cilluffo then asked if there could have been a different way to involve parents before the Board of Education was involved. Ms. Ochtera stated that the final determination of the school mascot rests with the Board of Education. Ms. Ochtera thanked the community members for their time.

10. Board Member Comments

Patricia Nicoletti: Ms. Nicoletti congratulated Don Poland and said it is nice to acknowledge teachers for their good deeds outside of school. She also congratulated all the Stern contest winners for an outstanding job. The topic was looked at in different ways by each of the student winners. She thanked the Stern family for hosting this essay contest and keeping the events of the day alive and meaningful to our students. She referred to Andrew's essay wherein he writes

of having no memory of a pre “9-11-2001” world.

Keith Gamache: Mr. Gamache wished everyone a happy new year. He congratulated Mr. Cimorelli for presenting at the International Technology and Engineering Association’s 78th annual conference, in Washington, D.C., in March. He also thanked Mr. Cimorelli for the great job he does in the classroom with our students.

Neil R. Schloth: Mr. Schloth joins Mr. Gamache in his comments above. He also thanked Mr. Piccarella for giving tablet devices to all Gr. 5 and Gr. 9 students. He said now is a good time to let all our local and state representatives know about the financial needs of our District. Money is tight and we want to make sure we get our fair share. He spoke about a letter writing campaign. Mr. Schloth wished everyone a good year and thanked everyone for coming to tonight’s meeting.

Kristin Ochtera: Ms. Ochtera echoed all her fellow trustee comments. She thanked everyone for coming out this evening. She acknowledged that it was a cold evening and may have been difficult to attend, but does appreciate their input. She wished all a wonderful evening.

11. Upon motion made by Patricia Nicoletti, seconded by Neil R. Schloth, and passed unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 8:52 p.m. to discuss matters of personnel and negotiations.

Respectfully submitted,

Vitina Fazi
District Clerk