

EAST ROCKAWAY UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
East Rockaway, New York
Regular Meeting of the Board of Education
7:00 P.M., April 19, 2016 – East Rockaway Jr. /Sr. High School
Including Student Recognition, Madeleine Prucha, National Geographic
GeoBee Challenge Winner, Art Awards for Student Artists,
Varsity Girls Basketball Team Scholar Athletes,
Budget Adoption Presentation 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 7:08 pm and Patricia Nicoletti led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board President Kristin Ochtera turned the meeting over to the Superintendent. Ms. Ruiz welcomed everyone. She stated that this evening was a special occasion because of the number of students being honored for various achievements. She then introduced Mr. Silk, Centre Avenue School Principal.

Mr. Silk spoke about Madeleine Prucha, the first student recognition. For the second year in a row, Maddie won the National Geographic GeoBee Challenge on the building level, as well as having moved onto the State level. Maddie got all the answers correct on the exam. Mr. Silk asked the audience a few sample questions contained on the exam. She was presented with a certificate. Ms. Ruiz thanked Maddie for representing the District.

Ms. Ruiz then introduced Mr. Tom Schloen, Chairperson of Fine Arts, and spoke about this evening's art exhibit and art awards. She mentioned that the art work on the stage was also displayed at a recent realtors' breakfast held at Rhame Avenue School. She thanked Mr. Schloen and the entire Art Department. Mr. Schloen stated that, under the guidance of Ms. Brody, Ms. Cabasso, Ms. Hirten, and Ms. Dilmanian, over 45 students were recognized for their achievements in various regional art exhibits. Each teacher introduced students whose art work was chosen to be displayed at the following exhibits:

Long Island's Best: Young Artists at the Heckscher Museum
Art Supervisors Show
NYSATA Legislative Exhibit
Long Island Museum Colors of Long Island Exhibit

Huntington Camera Club High School Photography Competition
Art in the Heart
Nassau Community College 18th Annual Art Competition
Congressional Art Competition
NYSATA Portfolio Review
Art Guild I'm Ready for My Close-Up Photography Exhibit
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Art Exhibit
NYSSBA

Ms. Brody thanked everyone for their support and looks forward to bringing more artwork to the District. Ms. Ruiz thanked Mr. Schloen for being quite the “conductor” for coordinating tonight’s event and to the art teachers for providing these rich opportunities. She was very proud of all of their work and knows it is very special for the students to share their artwork in these authentic contexts. Ms. Cabasso, who is on maternity leave, was also very involved with the exhibit.

Ms. Ruiz then introduced Mr. Vulpis who spoke about achievements in athletics, specifically the Girls’ Varsity Basketball Team. Mr. Vulpis thanked the Board of Education and Ms. Ruiz for inviting them this evening. The girls were acknowledged for achieving the Team Scholar Athlete Award from New York State. In order to achieve this award, a varsity team must maintain an overall team average of 90% or higher throughout the season. The girls on the team that contributed to this award are as follows: Marina Drevnak, Rachel Graves, Corinne Haab, Jessica Loyer, Juliet McCarthy, Rachel O’Hagan, Caitlin O’Mara, Erica Acampora, Brooke DeGiulio and Michelle Sheridan. Mr. Vulpis introduced head coach Karin Leary who has been with the District for 19 years and spoke about her commitment to the players and the school. Certificates were presented to all the girls. Ms. Ruiz thanked Mr. Vulpis and Ms. Leary for all they do for our student athletes.

Ms. Ruiz then introduced Mr. Robinson who spoke about the budget that was being adopted tonight. Mr. Robinson recapped the culmination of the work that had been started in September to prepare the budget. He also spoke about the four Budget Advisory Committee meetings that took place during the school year. Tonight a budget amount of \$38,436,281 is being presented for a vote which represents a budget to budget increase of 1.16%. Ms. Ruiz thanked Mr. Robinson for all of his hard work in preparing the budget. She thanked all administration and Mr. Quercia for their hard work and is very appreciative of working with such a dedicated staff who always has the best interest of the students at heart.

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 Patricia Nicoletti, and seconded by Keith Gamache, the minutes of the March 22, 2016, regular meeting, and minutes of the April 12, 2016, special meeting were unanimously approved.

3. Acknowledge Receipt of Financial Reports – February 2016
4. Correspondence - none
5. Action Agenda

Upon motion made by Neil Schloth, and seconded by Patricia Nicoletti, the following Item Nos. 1 through 9 were unanimously approved on a consent agenda.

A. Personnel

1. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve a change in the end date of Gregory Razzano's short term substitute teacher position to be April 18, 2016, and further accept his resignation from the position of substitute teacher, effective April 28, 2016.
2. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Theresa Garcia, to the position of senior typist clerk (12 month), effective April 20, 2016, at the prorated Step 4, annual salary set forth in the East Rockaway Secretaries Association contract for the 2015-2016 school year.
3. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Lisa Coscia to Food Service Worker, effective April 20, 2016, at the Step 1 hourly salary established by the East Rockaway Board of Education Food Service and Monitors Union agreement for the 2015-2016 school year.
4. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve a child rearing leave of absence for Eileen Levine from her special education teacher position, effective July 1, 2016 through January 27, 2017.
5. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request of Laura Clarke from her position as a teacher aide in the East Rockaway UFSD for a Leave of Absence, effective April 11, 2016 through June 30, 2016.
6. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request of Samantha Clarke from her position as a music teacher in the East Rockaway UFSD for a Leave of Absence, effective April 8, 2016 through June 30, 2016.
7. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Nicole Mihalek to the position of short term substitute music teacher (.5 FTE), effective April 20, 2016, through June 23, 2016, at the per diem salary established by the East Rockaway Board of Education on the Non-Contractual Salary Schedule for short term substitute teachers for the 2015-2016 school year, and further appoint Nicole Mihalek

as a supervisor, effective April 20, 2016, through June 23, 2016, at the salary established on Appendix C of the East Rockaway Teachers Association contract for the 2015-2016 school year.

8. 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. Michael Santa Maria, athletic supervisor (day/evening), effective March 15, 2016 through June 23, 2016
 - b. Thomas Barone, athletic supervisor (day/evening), effective April 2, 2016 through June 23, 2016
 - c. Seasonal Cleaners, effective May 1, 2016 through September 30, 2016:
 1. Paul Bergersen
 2. Rosemary Bottiglieri
 3. Vincenzo Careccia
 4. Lucia Castro
 5. Aniello Scotto D'Aniello
 6. Thomas DeCrescenzo
 7. James Lores
 8. Jennifer Lemus Maldonado
 9. Peter Ryan
 10. David Swift
 11. Timothy Thompson
9. 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: NONE

B. Other Items

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

1. Approve the following Resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Non-Contractual Salary Schedule for the 2015-2016 school year be amended as per the attached schedule.

2. Approve the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that approval is hereby granted to enter into an agreement with the following individuals/firms for student related services, as indicated, in the Requests for Proposal published in *Newsday* on March 7, 2016, for the 2016-2017 school year, opened at the District Office on March 22, 2016, at 10:00 am, and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the resulting service contracts on behalf of the Board of Education.

PROVIDERS: Abilities Inc., at The Viscardi Center, Abilities Inc. d/b/a Kornreich Technology Center; Access 7 Services, Inc.; All About Kids; Alternative Tutoring; Bilinguals Inc. d/b/a Achieve Beyond; APEX Therapeutic Services; Blue Sea Educational Consulting, Inc.; Carina Hamel, LMHC; Creative Tutoring, Inc.; Eden II School For Autistic Children, Inc. d/b/a Eden II/Genesis Programs; GB Innovations, Inc.; Helping Hands Children Services; Homecare Therapies LLC d/b/a Horizon Healthcare Staffing; Institute for Children with Autism; Islip Tutoring Services, Inc.; Kids First Evaluation & Advocacy Center, Inc.; MKSA, LLC; Marra & Glick Applied Behavior Analysts, PLLC; Dr. Barry McNamara; Metro Therapy Inc.; Nassau Suffolk Services for Autism; New York Therapy Placement; Dr. Caryl Oris; Positive Behavior Support & Consulting & Psychological Resources, P.C.; Providastaff DBA EDU Healthcare; South Shore Pediatric Physical Therapy, LLP; St. James Tutoring, Inc.; Syosset Home Tutoring, Inc.; The Execu Search Group; JNC Services d/b/a/Top Grade; Tutoring Service of Long Island; US Medical Staffing; Variety Child Learning.

3. Approve the Parking Stall Lease Agreement between the East Rockaway UFSD and Rolling River Day School and Camp for the use of parking stalls located at the East Rockaway Jr. /Sr. High School for the period March 19, 2016 through November 5, 2016, and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the agreement on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
4. Declare obsolete for the purpose of disposal the equipment more fully set forth on the list of Equipment for Disposal dated April, 2016.
5. Approve the following resolution:

WHEREAS, a number of public school districts in Nassau County wish to jointly solicit proposals, together with the Nassau Board of Cooperative Educational Services (“BOCES”) for pupil transportation services for the 2016-2017 school year and Summer 2016 (and any renewal period) in accordance with the applicable provisions of General Municipal Law;

WHEREAS, the public school districts and the BOCES have agreed to form a Cooperative (the “Cooperative”) for this purpose;

WHEREAS, the East Rockaway Union Free School District is desirous of participating in the Cooperative for joint solicitation of proposals for pupil transportation services as authorized by General Municipal Law, Section 119-o in accordance with the terms and

conditions of the Inter-Municipal Cooperative Transportation Agreement attached hereto;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education authorizes the School District to participate in the Cooperative; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education hereby approves the Inter-Municipal Cooperative Transportation Agreement attached hereto and authorizes the Board President to execute the Agreement on behalf of the Board of Education.

6. Approve the following resolution:

WHEREAS, It is the plan of the Boards of Education of Garden City UFSD, Herricks UFSD, Mineola UFSD, Great Neck UFSD, Levittown UFSD, North Shore Central School District, Port Washington UFSD, East Rockaway School District, Roslyn UFSD, Long Beach UFSD, Island Park UFSD, Floral Park-Bellerose School District, Plainedge School District, Jericho School District, and East Williston UFSD County of Nassau, New York to bid jointly for Materials & Supplies (Bus and Auto Parts & Transmission) and

WHEREAS, The East Rockaway UFSD is desirous of participating with other school districts in Nassau County in the joint bidding of the commodities mentioned above as authorized by General Municipal Law, Section 119-0 and

WHEREAS, The East Rockaway UFSD wishes to appoint a committee to assume the responsibility for drafting of specifications, advertising for bids, accepting and opening bids, tabulating bids, reporting the results to the Boards of Education and making recommendations thereon, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Education of the East Rockaway UFSD hereby appoints David C. Murphy, Jr., for the East Rockaway UFSD to represent it in all matters related above, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the East Rockaway UFSD Board of Education authorizes the above mentioned committee to represent it in all matters leading up to the entering into a contract for the purchase of the above mentioned commodities, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the East Rockaway UFSD Board of Education agrees to assume its equitable share of the costs of the cooperative bidding, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the East Rockaway Board of Education agrees (1) to abide by the majority decisions of the participating districts on quality standards; (2) that unless all bids are rejected, it will award contracts according to the recommendations of the committee; (3) that after award of contract(s) it will

conduct all negotiations directly with the successful bidder(s).

7. Approve the award of the bid for the AC Split Systems for the 2016-2017 school year to the lowest responsible bidders: L&J Heating & Air Conditioning, Inc. and All Air Specialist Inc., as more fully set forth in the Facilities Directors Consortium bid run for AC Split Systems on April 5, 2016, and authorize the Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations to execute the resulting contracts on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.

Ms. Ochtera took a moment to explain “B. Other Items 8”. She explained that BOCES was asking the District to support their budget. Ms. Ochtera asked if there were any questions or comments.

Upon motion made by Keith Gamache, and seconded by Neil Schloth, the following Other Item 8 was unanimously approved.

8. Adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Board of Cooperative Educational Services of Nassau County (hereinafter “Nassau BOCES”) has proposed and presented its Proposed Administrative Operations Budget for the 2016-17 school year (July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017), now therefore, be it

RESOLVED that the Nassau BOCES Proposed Administrative Operations Budget for the 2016-17 school year in the amount of \$20,789,248 be, and hereby is, approved by this Board

AND authorize the District Clerk to execute the Ballot and Clerk’s Certificate and file same with Nassau BOCES.

Ms. Ochtera took a moment to explain “B. Other Items 9”. She explained that this resolution has to do with three open trustee BOCES board positions. She said that there were three incumbent candidates and one new candidate. The new candidate was Laura Pierce from Westbury. Ms. Ochtera asked the Board if they had a recommendation for those seats. Ms. Nicoletti recommended voting for the three incumbents.

Ms. Ochtera requested a motion to cast the ballot for the three incumbent candidates: Ronald Ellerbe, Fran N. Langsner, and Robert “B.A.” Schoen which was seconded by Keith Gamache.

Upon motion made by Neil Schloth and seconded by Patricia Nicoletti, the following Item 9, to cast their vote for the three incumbents, was unanimously approved.

9. Adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the filling of three (3) vacancies on the Board of Cooperative Educational Services of Nassau County will be determined by votes of component school district boards of education to be conducted at regular or special meetings of such boards to be held on April 19, 2016, and

WHEREAS, the trustees or board of education of each component school district, by resolution, may cast one vote for each vacancy to be filled, provided that no more than one (1) vote may be cast for any candidate, be it hereby

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the East Rockaway Union Free School District, hereby elects by a majority vote of its members three of the candidates listed below (in alphabetical order) for such vacancy on the Board of Cooperative Educational Services:

Ronald Ellerbe
Fran N. Langsner
Robert "B.A." Schoen

AND authorize the District Clerk to cast one ballot for each of the said individuals for their election to the Board of Cooperative Educational Services.

Upon motion made by Patricia Nicoletti, and seconded by Keith Gamache, the following Other Items 10 through 12 were unanimously approved on a consent agenda.

10. Accept the following donations:

- a. \$500 from The Honig Family Foundation for the Music Department in memory of John Charles Ohman
- b. \$300 from the Rhame Avenue School PTA for a Gr. 4 STEM Curriculum Enhancement.
- c. From the Centre Avenue School PTA:
 1. Classroom Science Discovery Kits for both kindergarten classes valued at \$318 (\$159 each)
 2. Materials and supplies to raise and hatch chicken eggs for both kindergarten classes valued at \$154
 3. Funds assistance for classroom presentation and hands-on science workshop on magnets for both first grade classes valued at \$75 (\$37.50 each)
 4. Funds assistance for classroom presentation and hands-on science workshop on matter for both first grade classes valued at \$325 (\$162.50 each)
 5. Funds assistance for Grade 5 Commerce Plaza trip valued at \$100
 6. Classroom Earth Day presentation and hands-on science workshop for Gr. 2 (Glickman) class valued at \$143
 7. Classroom Earth Day presentation and hands-on science workshop for Gr. 2 (Rottkamp) class valued at \$136.50
 8. Shopping Basket Math Program for Special Education students valued at \$135.20

9. Two one-hour hands-on workshops on chemical and physical changes of matter for the entire third grade valued at \$200
10. Classroom presentation and hands-on workshop on Simple Machines for the entire third grade valued at \$200
11. Classroom presentation and hands-on workshop on Electricity for the entire fourth grade valued at \$200
12. Classroom presentation and hands-on workshop “Build A Bug” program for the entire second grade valued at \$279.50
13. T-Shirts for Grade 6 students for the Science Fair valued at \$400

11. Approve the following resolution:

PROPOSITION NO. 1 (2016-2017 School Budget for East Rockaway Union Free School District:

RESOLVED, that the Proposed Budget of \$38,436,281 for the East Rockaway Union Free School District of the Town of Hempstead, County of Nassau, State of New York, for the fiscal year 2016-2017 be adopted and that the amount of said budget be raised by tax upon the taxable property of the School District after first deducting the monies available from State Aid and other sources.

12. Approve the following resolution:

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the Board of Education of the East Rockaway UFSD approves the Real Property Tax Report Card prepared by the District’s Business Office for the 2016 Annual District Meeting; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of said report card shall be submitted to the State Education Department by the end of the next business day following this approval

C. Budget Transfers – None

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

E. Approval of CPSE Recommendations – None.

6. Policy Matters - None

7. Good and Welfare

1. Congratulations to Sue Torborg on the birth of two grandsons: Lisa and Scott (Class of ’01) Torborg welcomed Kyle Ryan on Friday, March 25th. Additionally, Suzanne (Class of ’07) and Chris Schroeder welcomed Connor Everett on Monday, March 28th.

2. Congratulations to Patricia Murphy on her recent engagement to Anthony Ruffino.

8. Superintendent's Report

Ms. Ruiz stated that her report will be shared in a new format. She reported that the design of the school mascot had been reviewed by the Board of Education and it is being passed onto the High School, school community and different groups for their review. She hopes to have a final design shortly.

Achievement:

Congratulations to Mrs. Donald's fifth grade class at Centre Avenue School for completing the most assignments in Achieve3000 and scoring at 75% or higher winning achievements. The students won a gift certificate of their choice, received a congratulations banner and stickers.

The Achieve3000 program in Grades 3-6 at Centre and Rhame Avenue have shown on average, a Lexile growth of 25 points per student. That's more than 1.5X the expected reading growth!

Students at Rhame are currently working on their Narrative Writing Pieces across all grade levels which will be displayed on bulletin boards throughout the building on May 1, 2016. Some examples to look forward to include fourth grade students writing a journal entry from the perspective of either a Patriot or a Loyalist during the Revolutionary War. Fifth grade students were inspired by a recent unit of study on Lewis and Clark. They will be using their knowledge of Westward Expansion to write narratives from the perspective of a member of the Corps of Discovery. Their stories will give insight to the emotions, challenges and successes that members of this important expedition faced. Parents will have the opportunity to read the published writing pieces of their children on Special Visitors' Day in May.

The High School Annual Poetry Madness Contest is underway. The assembly will be held during ninth period on April 22nd. The competition begins with a field of 64 student entries and culminates in a final group of eight who will read their poems at the assembly.

East Rockaway has been honored with the Best Communities for Music Education designation from the NAMM Foundation for its outstanding commitment to music education. The Best Communities Music Education designation is awarded to districts that demonstrate outstanding achievement in efforts to provide music access and education to all students. Districts that have been recognized by the NAMM Foundation are often held up as models for other educators looking to boost their own music education programs.

There were 127 students who participated in the NYSSMA festival this past Monday and Tuesday at Long Beach High School.

East Rockaway High School senior, Meagan Fuerer's art work has been accepted into the Heckscher Museum's Young Artists Exhibit. Eighty-three works of art have been selected for the museum's prestigious annual exhibition for high school students Long Island's Best.

Centre Avenue's Madeline Prucha has advanced to the State level National Geographic Geography Bee. Congratulations to Madeleine!

Opportunity:

Jason Miller was nominated for and recently participated in the test for admission into next year's Institute of Creative Problem Solving for Gifted and Talented Students.

Mark DiLapi recently completed his year-long participation in SUNY Old Westbury's Institute of Creative Problem Solving for Gifted and Talented Students.

As part of our district's newly developed Career Planning Curriculum, Ms. Ragone and the fifth grade teachers planned an amazing trip to Commerce Plaza that took place on March 31, 2016. Students were assigned jobs for the day that included mayor, bookkeeper, bank teller, physician's assistant, architect, waiter, photographer and research lab technician. They dressed professionally, managed their finances and worked diligently in their chosen role. The children had a great time and learned about a variety of professions that they may want to consider as adults.

Our guidance counselors are meeting individually with junior parents and students to explore college options. All junior parents are encouraged to make an appointment with their child's counselor to discuss their post-high school plans. Ms. Spiteri and Mr. O'Driscoll are conducting group counseling sessions with a variety of eleventh grade students and middle school students. Mr. O'Driscoll is continuing to explore learning styles with students in eighth grade during the month of April as they complete a Learning Styles Inventory and connect the results with their school experience.

Innovation:

Madeleine Prucha, Safiya Lawrence, Clare Acuti, Colleen Chojnacki all won honorable mention awards from Exploravision for their innovative science research project.

Jason Miller and Grace Delvalle - recently came in first place out of students who participated in Cradle of Aviation's Egg Drop Competition.

Achieve3000, a software-based, innovative approach to helping students make gains in their Lexile reading levels has really taken flight at Rhame Avenue. Since implementing this new program in November with our students in Grades 3-6, we currently have over 8,290 completed program sessions to date. On average, Achieve3000 students at Rhame have exceeded their expected Lexile reading growth by 12 points! That equates to more than three times the expected growth for students working within their instructional zone. We are very proud of the progress that our students are making in this area and commend our teachers for their continued efforts in supporting this new initiative.

Connection:

Many thanks to the Centre Avenue PTA. They purchased large stencils of playground games and activities. They have bought all the materials and have hired On the Edge Graphics to begin the process of painting onto the blacktop. Children will be able to play tic-tac-toe, hopscotch, four square, target games and practice agility on a Nature Circuit. There will be a large checker board and a map of the United States. The new rolling cart stores the accessories needed to play some of the games, like bean bags, dice, chalk, and a set of giant checkers. Also on the cart for lunchtime are a flag football set, hula hoops, jump ropes, some for solo fun and some for Double Dutch! There will be some money left over to replenish and replace the equipment, as well as repaint the stencils as they will be well-played on for many recesses to come!

The Centre Avenue fifth grade students are participating in the Lynbrook Restorative Therapy and Nursing home essay contest this month. Students are writing about a favorite memory of a time with a grandparent.

The Centre Avenue PTA held its All Star Breakfast this past Saturday. The purpose of the breakfast is to encourage as many fathers or significant adults as possible to get involved with their children and school.

The Rhame Avenue PTA held a "Family Fun Night" last Friday night where children and their parents were invited to participate in an actual "Game Show." An actual "Game Show Host" engaged the audience by challenging families to "trivia battles" behind an electronic podium equipped with working lights and buzzers. Tickets were awarded to the winners that were later redeemable for some awesome prizes. Mr. Walter and Mrs. Kreit were challenged by a group of Rhame Avenue moms to culminate the evening's festivities, but lost in a tie-breaker on the question, "Which president is on the \$50 dollar bill?" This was just one of many special events planned by our PTA to help foster the importance of the home-school connection at Rhame and Centre Avenue.

Today our sixth grade students from Centre Avenue and Rhame Avenue Schools visited the high school for the middle school orientation. Our middle school Ambassadors of Character will be assisting our staff in the day's events. The sixth graders will be participating in many engaging activities such as team building exercises, ice breakers, and a tour of the high school.

On Thursday evening Mr. Spero, Mr. Piccarella, Ms. Hecht and I provided presentations for parents on Promoting an Academic Mindset, Assessments: What are they and why do we need them? and Critical Thinking Skills for Student Success. We also provided a brief opening presentation on "The Power of Yet" for both parents and students. Following the opening, students participated in two workshops on College and Careers and the Growth Mindset and were treated to pizza in between. Ms. Reilly coordinated the student portion and the workshops were presented by several of our middle school teachers. Approximately 30 parents and 16 students attended. Thank you to our PTA's for providing refreshments. The PowerPoints can be found on the district website. This was a successful event in spite of a somewhat smaller, than

we hoped for, parent turnout.

Our middle school advisory students are participating in an exciting contest about Earth Day this month. Students will be decorating bulletin boards in the middle school wing in an effort to raise awareness about the importance of being kind to our Earth through an interactive team building learning project. Each advisory group will brainstorm themes and design their bulletin boards to reflect their chosen theme. The PTA has generously agreed to judge the bulletin boards and award the winning advisory Apple I Tunes gift cards.

The Realtor's Breakfast was held on April 12th. Fifteen realtors from across our area participated.

Success in school involves being able to complete work, staying organized, getting along with peers and adults, being positive about abilities, and following rules, in school and at home. But some students have difficulty with these tasks, and as educators and parents, we try and understand the root of the cause and respond to the needs of the child. On April 20, 2016, at 7:00 p.m. the Special Education Parent Group is hosting Part I of a two-part series on understanding behavior and what strategies we can use to shape it.

Connection and Opportunity:

I attended an event at Molloy College's Rebecca Center yesterday in recognition of our partnership with the college and our skills and achievement program. Our teachers were recognized and Molloy faculty from the Education, Social Work, Criminal Justice, Athletics, Nursing and Music Therapy departments spoke about the various partnerships that have been formed to engage and support our students. Thank you to Ms. Guggino-Hastings for her vision to further enhance this partnership and kudos to Ms. Schutta, and Ms. Imandt, for their work.

Recently our business teachers along with five juniors, had the opportunity to meet with Mercy College to discuss their High School Summer Leadership Academy and their Business Honors Program. These programs are a great academic fit for our students and, in fact, two students James Tierney and Connor Irvine have been accepted into the Summer Leadership Program. In order to be accepted into this prestigious program, the students must have a cumulative GPA above 90, demonstrate leadership skills, and be recommended by their high school. This five-day summer program takes place at their Dobbs Ferry campus where students are privy to a professional development training that enables them to match their personality to their career; they partake in team-building activities that emphasize communication, cooperation, perseverance and self-reflection; they have a career exploration day where they are exposed to entrepreneurship, finance, accounting and marketing; they visit corporate sites in New York City including Goldman Sachs, MTV, the Federal Reserve, and Bloomberg; and lastly, they put their leadership skills into action by learning how to give a "Ted Talk", learn about career panels, and are required to make a student presentation. Upon completion of this academy, many students are offered scholarships on the spot into the Business Honors Program. Mercy College prides itself on setting up internships with major Fortune 500 companies for students in their freshman year. Dr. Ed Weiss, Dean of the School of Business and former Merrill Lynch managing

director, opened these doors for his students to have an opportunity to intern at Merrill Lynch, American Express, Price Waterhouse Coopers, CBS, Pfizer, etc. Thank you to Mr. DeTommaso and Ms. Hecht and their departments for this opportunity.

9. Privilege of the Floor

Ms. Liz Romero and Andrew Romero: Ms. Romero, her son Andrew, and others from the Lynbrook Titans Wrestling team thanked the Board and administration for their support in establishing a joint wrestling program with the Rockville Centre School District for the new school year and for adding the cost into the new budget. Andrew read a letter he wrote thanking the board. A petition was submitted with additional names to continue to show that there is still support in the community for the program.

Mrs. Maggie McCarthy: Mrs. McCarthy was also very pleased that the program has been established. Her son took very well to wrestling and he amazes her every day. Even though her son is a fourth grader, Mrs. McCarthy will continue to support the program.

Liz Romero: Ms. Romero spoke about the need for a crossing guard at the intersection of Atlantic Avenue and Ocean Avenue. Even though a petition has been circulated she asked the Board for their help in the requesting of a crossing guard at that intersection. Ms. Ochtera said that we value all of our crossing guards who work on the busy school roads and support the work that they do. She will be very happy to bring it up with the 4th Precinct in their conversations; but it does fall under the realm of the 4th Precinct and the Nassau County Police Department. It has always been a concern of parents living south of Atlantic Avenue.

Ms. Ozzie Lonergan: Ms. Lonergan asked who Dr. Parker was. Ms. Ruiz referred the question to Mr. Piccarella. Mr. Piccarella replied that Dr. Parker runs a consulting agency and is a reading specialist who comes into the district and works with Gr. K-4 teachers, reading teachers, and teaching assistants to support students in reading. He helped us build our capacity to analyze data. Dr. Parker works 17-18 days during the school year and has provided the District with training on reading instruction, remedial reading and intervention services. Dr. Parker has also provided us with a consultant who worked with Gr. 5 & 6 teachers in the upper elementary grades. When asked why administration is not able to train teaching staff, Ms. Ruiz replied that he is a national expert in this area. Dr. Parker and his associates have been funded through Title I Grants. His work is very specific and so well designed. There has been a huge shift in the way our program works.

Ms. Ozzie Lonergan: Ms. Lonergan asked about free water testing. Ms. Ochtera replied that nothing is for free and the District is moving ahead to have our water tested and it is in the process of getting done. The cost will be approximately \$8,000.

Ms. Ozzie Lonergan: Ms. Lonergan asked why voting is conducted in the elementary schools. Ms. Ochtera replied that every year this is addressed with the Board of Elections. This directive falls directly under the Board of Elections purview. She said the Board would welcome her to support that change. Ms. Ruiz also said that the Superintendents'

Association is also looking to have this changed but the Board of Elections doesn't seem to be willing to consider other venues at this time.

Ms. Ozzie Lonergan: Ms. Lonergan inquired about a bus to Bay Park for East Rockaway High School student athletes who practice at Bay Park. Ms. Ochtera replied that this is an administrative issue that Mr. Vulpis would have to follow up with. She referred Ms. Lonergan to speak with Mr. Vulpis.

Ms. Dineen Cilluffo: Ms. Cilluffo commended the ninth grade teachers and staff for helping her son get through this year. She asked if we can revisit open campus policy; specifically tenth graders going out to lunch. Ms. Ochtera explained that currently we have an open campus policy for students in Grades 10-12. She suggested that Ms. Cilluffo make an appointment with Mr. Spero to speak further about this policy.

Ms. Dineen Cilluffo: Ms. Cilluffo asked what is the district policy on suspicion of someone dealing drugs at school. Ms. Ochtera referred her to speak with Mr. Spero.

Ms. Dineen Cilluffo: Ms. Cilluffo also asked what is the district policy on felons being allowed to participate in after school activities that are not school related. Ms. Ochtera responded that she should make an appointment with the Superintendent to speak more in detail.

Ms. Janine Araoz: Ms. Araoz stated that as a new seventh grade parent, her son is participating in an after school sport program at the high school but some kids have to go to Bay Park. Ms. Ochtera referred Ms. Araoz to speak to Mr. Vulpis about the matter.

10. Board Member Comments

Keith Gamache: We are very appreciative of all the people who come every month to the board meetings. He reiterated what Mr. Robinson said, i.e., that this year we have the lowest budget to budget increase in 15 years. He was most excited about the slide in the presentation where a list of things have been added to the schools in all areas of school instruction and athletics. It is something of which we can be very proud. He also thanked the art department for their dedication. As an art teacher himself, he was very happy to see and hear about so many wonderful opportunities for our students.

Neil R. Schloth: Mr. Schloth thanked the wrestling group that attended this evening. He was very impressed that they stayed until the end. He said Ms. Romero and her son were at his firehouse this weekend collecting signatures for the petition. Fire department members were happy to sign the petition. He thanked Ms. Romero for proceeding in the established manner, following protocol and working together with the District to make this possible. He thanked Ms. Ruiz for reaching out to the community and coordinating the Realtor Breakfast. His fellow board members were there and it went very well especially with students there to greet the realtors. As a reminder we should know the results of our new state senator. We should consider writing them, congratulating them and asking them to help us especially

since we've been without a state senator. Mr. Schloth thanked everyone who stayed to the end and also congratulated all the students who were recognized tonight.

Patricia Nicoletti: Ms. Nicoletti congratulated all the students who were recognized tonight; across all the areas: academics, arts and scholar athletes. This represents the well roundedness of our students. She thanked the teachers and coaches who motivated them. Special thanks to Mr. Robinson for providing the fabulous budget presentation. Mr. Robinson has provided the board with the progress of the budget formation since October and he has increased transparency. She thanked Ms. Ruiz for her strategic planning which has simplified the process and for her efforts in helping make that process easier than in the past. A thank you also to Andrew who proved that wrestling does improve your self- esteem. Andrew wrote a wonderful piece and presented it well. Special thanks to Chloe – girls can do anything!

Kristin Ochtera: Ms. Ochtera echoed the comments of her fellow board members. She looks forward to three exciting events in May: budget vote, art show, and meet the candidates night. Since we have a limited budget, what we can take away with it rests on what Mr. Gamache said, that we can only grow \$78,000 more than we had last year and we know from the presentation that it was the lowest budget to budget increase in 15 years. We aim to get the best out of what we have to work with. We are thrilled to be putting the budget up for a vote and our hope is that it gets a lot of people thinking about our schools and how far we've come. There is nothing we can't do if we have the support of the community. Thank you for coming.

11. Upon motion made by Patricia Nicoletti and seconded by Neil Schloth, and passed unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vitina Fazi
District Clerk