

EAST ROCKAWAY UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
East Rockaway, New York
Regular Meeting of the Board of Education
7:00 P.M., January 23, 2018, East Rockaway Jr. / Sr. High School
Preceded by Recognition of Andrew Stern Essay Contest Winners,
Retirees Linda Jarmel and Pamela Castellano,
a Research Writing Initiative Presentation, and a Public Forum

MINUTES

Present: Members of the Board of Education: Patti Nicoletti, Keith Gamache, Neil Schloth, Superintendent, Lisa J. Ruiz; Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations, Jacqueline A. Scio; Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, Mona Hecht; District Clerk, Vitina Fazi

Absent: Kristin Ochtera and John Giannotti, Jr

1. The meeting was called to order by Patti Nicoletti at 7:06 p.m. Neil Schloth led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board President Patti Nicoletti welcomed everyone to the meeting. She stated that there were three presentations before the public meeting: (1) recognition of winners of the Andrew Stern essay contest; (2) acknowledgment of two retirees; and (3) the Research Writing Initiative presentation. Ms. Nicoletti turned the meeting over to Ms. Ruiz.

Ms. Ruiz thanked everyone for coming tonight. One of our annual important events is the recognition of the winners of the Andrew Stern Essay Contest. Andrew Stern, a former graduate of East Rockaway High School, was killed in the terror attack on September 11th. The Stern family continues to honor the memory of Andrew by sponsoring this contest each year. Ms. Ruiz introduced Lisa Burch and Mike Stern, siblings of Andrew. Ms. Burch thanked everyone for coming and said they are entering their 12th or 13th year of this contest. She apologized that Mrs. Stern, their mother, was not able to attend due to a conflict in a planned trip. This year's topic was "What suggestions do you have to help recreate the unity our country experienced post 9/11?" Over 600 essays were received and the following students were chosen as winners: William Lewald (elementary); Madeleine Prucha (middle school); and Ezequiel Espinal (high school). The students all read their essays and were presented with awards. Ms. Burch thanked Ms. Ruiz, principals, teachers, and parents for encouraging the students to participate. She thanked the District for allowing this contest to occur every year to carry on her brother's legacy and to keep the memory of 9/11 alive in East Rockaway. Ms. Ruiz commented that the essays are powerful and that our students are listening.

Ms. Ruiz announced that we will be recognizing and celebrating the careers of two staff members who are retiring. She introduced Mona Hecht. Ms. Hecht spoke on behalf of Linda Jarmel, senior typist clerk in the Office of Curriculum & Technology. She wished her well on her retirement,

thanked her for many years of service and presented her with a recognition award.

Ms. Ruiz then introduced Mr. James DeTommaso. Mr. DeTommaso spoke on behalf of Pam Castellano, teacher aide. He wished her well on her retirement, thanked her for many years of service and presented her with a recognition award. Ms. Ruiz thanked them both for their professionalism and many years of service to the children of the community.

Ms. Ruiz then introduced Ms. Mona Hecht who spoke about the Research Writing Initiative Presentation. Ms. Hecht then introduced Ms. TJ Terranova who continued with the presentation. This initiative, for Grades 7-12, was implemented to improve writing research skills to better prepare our students for college. The following staff members spoke about the research process which is specific to their grade level and topic: Ms. Terranova (Gr. 7); Mr. Zervas and Ms. Murphy (Gr. 8 - science); Mr. DeTommaso (Gr. 9 – business plan); Ms. Curcio and Mr. Kennedy (Gr. 10 – ELA); Ms. O’Shea (Gr. 11 – argument essay); and Ms. Sanders (Gr. 12 – thesis statement). Students Anjaly Baloy, Laura Millar, and Eric Reicherter read excerpts from their research papers. Ms. Terranova concluded the presentation with the District’s future plans. She thanked the audience for listening, her colleagues for presenting, and the students for sharing their essays. Ms. Ruiz thanked Ms. Terranova and the teachers for coming out tonight. She also thanked the students, whose writing is quite remarkable. She stated that we will be working with the elementary principals to better prepare our students in addressing more challenging writing tasks. Ms. Ruiz asked if there were any questions. Mr. Gamache thanked Eric Reicherter for sharing his anecdote with his brother which shows that the District has made progress and for which he is very grateful and appreciative.

At 8:00 p.m. Ms. Nicoletti resumed the public portion of the agenda. She stated that audience members will have an opportunity to question any items on the agenda.

2. Upon motion made by Keith Gamache, and seconded by Neil Schloth, the minutes of December 19, 2017, were unanimously approved.
3. Acknowledge Receipt of Financial Reports – November 2017
4. Correspondence – None
5. Hearing of visitors on items in the Agenda – Ms. Nicoletti reminded the audience to fill out a card if anyone wished to speak during Privilege of the Floor.
6. Action Agenda

Upon motion made by Neil Schloth, and seconded by Keith Gamache, the following Items 1 through 10 were unanimously approved on a consent agenda.

A. Personnel

1. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, accept the following resignations:
 - a. Jennifer Moore, English teacher, effective February 16, 2018
2. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request of Eileen Levine for an extension of her child rearing leave of absence effective January 27, 2018 through June 30, 2018.
3. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request of Kathleen Rottkamp for a leave of absence, effective April 16, 2018, through August 31, 2018.
4. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Mariana Pineda to the position of curriculum writer, effective November 20, 2017, through June 30, 2018, at the hourly salary set forth in the East Rockaway Teachers Association contract at Appendix B, D.
5. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Mariana Pineda to the position of leave replacement special education teacher, effective January 28, 2018, through June 30, 2018, at the BA, Step 1, annual salary set forth in the East Rockaway Teachers Association contract for the 2017-2018 school year.
6. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Melanie Primm to the position of short term substitute mathematics teacher, effective January 8, 2018, at the per diem salary established by the East Rockaway Board of Education on the Non-Contractual Salary Schedule for the 2017-2018 school year.
7. Approve the revised high school club advisor assignments for the 2017-2018 school year as more fully set forth on the schedule of club/advisor assignments at the stipend salaries established by the East Rockaway Teachers Association contract for the 2017-2018 school year.
8. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Kerri-Ann P. Cucciniello to the position of Senior Typist Clerk (12 month), effective January 9, 2018, at the prorated Step 3 annual salary set forth in the East Rockaway Secretaries Association Agreement for the 2017-2018 school year.
9. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve an unpaid leave of absence for Kerri-Ann P. Cucciniello from her appointed position as a Senior Typist Clerk from January 9, 2018, through February 4, 2018.
10. 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 2017-2018 school

year:

- a. Gina Tricarico-Manos, substitute monitor, effective upon Civil Service approval
- b. Persephone Small, substitute monitor, effective upon Civil Service approval
- c. Luke Tesoriero, athletic supervisor (day/evening), effective December 19, 2017
- d. Seija Bellew, substitute teacher, effective January 24, 2018
- e. Melanie Primm, substitute teacher, effective January 8, 2018
- f. Olivia Hupp, substitute teacher, effective January 24, 2018
- g. Samantha Czczotka, substitute teacher, effective January 24, 2018
- h. Heather Cegelski, substitute teacher, effective January 24, 2018
- i. Kathleen Owens, substitute teacher, effective January 24, 2018

B. Other Items

Upon motion made by Keith Gamache, and seconded by Neil Schloth, the following Items 1 through 11 were unanimously approved on a consent agenda

1. 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 January 8, 2018, between the Board of Education and the East Rockaway Teachers Association, ("E.R.T.A.") with respect to the terms and conditions of employment for the members of the teachers bargaining unit for the period July 1, 2017, through June 30, 2021, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Superintendent of Schools be authorized to execute the resulting collective bargaining agreement on behalf of the Board of Education of the East Rockaway UFSD.

2. Approve the following resolution:

RESOLVED that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education of the East Rockaway UFSD, accepts the attached District's Response Letter in regard to the findings resulting from the audit of the financial statements as of, and for the year ended June 30, 2017, conducted by Nawrocki Smith, LLP.

3. Approve the agreement with Linda Jarmel as a temporary secretary, and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the Agreement on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.

4. Approve the terms of the Consultant Services Contract with Karen Yelaney for the district musical *The Little Mermaid* leading up to and including the public performances, and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the contract on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.

5. Accept the TITLE IIIA – Immigrant Education Federal Funding for the dates of September 1, 2017 – August 31, 2018 with an approved budget total of \$7,945.
6. Approve the Special Education Services Contract with Hewlett Woodmere UFSD for special education services for one parentally placed student for the 2017-2018 school year and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the contract on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
7. Approve the Enterprise Program Services Agreement between the East Rockaway UFSD and Lynbrook UFSD for Enterprise Program services for the 2017-2018 school year, and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the Agreement on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
8. Approve the proposal of AFLAC to offer a Short-Term Disability Income Policy for District employees at no cost to the District.
9. Approve the formation of the District Policy Subcommittee which shall review policy and advise the Board of Education on policy matters and appoint the following individuals to service as members of the District Policy Subcommittee:
 - a. Kristin Ochtera
 - b. John Giannotti, Jr.
 - c. Lisa J. Ruiz
10. Accept the following donation:
 - a. A check in the sum of \$300 from the East Rockaway Jr./Sr. High School PTA for the Yearbook Club
11. Declare obsolete for the purpose of disposal and/or recycling:
 - a. Items listed on the attached “Equipment for Disposal” form dated January 23, 2018

C. Budget Transfers

Upon motion made by Neil Schloth, and seconded by Keith Gamache, the following budget transfers were unanimously approved.

1. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education approves the following budget transfers:
 - a. Transaction No. 18-0010
 - b. Transaction No. 18-0011
 - c. Transaction No. 18-0012
 - d. Transaction No. 18-0013

- D. Upon motion made by Keith Gamache, and seconded by Neil Schloth, the CSE Recommendations were unanimously approved.
- E. Upon motion made by Neil Schloth, and seconded by Keith Gamache, the CPSE Recommendations were unanimously approved.

7. Policy Matters

Upon motion made by Keith Gamache, and seconded by Neil Schloth, and passed unanimously, the following policies were adopted:

- 1. Policies for Adoption
 - a. 0100, Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity
 - b. 4531, Field Trips and Excursions
 - c. 5151, Homeless Children
 - d. 6700, Purchasing
 - e. 8140, Unsafe School Transfer Choice
 - f. 9630, Sexual Misconduct
 - g. 9645, Disclosure of Wrongful Conduct (Whistleblower Policy)
- 2. Policies for Review
 - a. 0115, Student Bullying, Prevention and Intervention
 - b. 2110-E, School Board Powers and Duties Exhibit
 - c. 2111-E, School Board Member Code of Conduct Exhibit
 - d. 2210, Board Reorganizational Meeting
 - e. 2342, Agenda Preparation and Dissemination
 - f. 2360, Minutes
 - g. 2120.1, Candidates and Campaigning
 - h. 5100, Attendance
 - i. 5251, Student Fund Raising Activities
 - j. 5252, Student Activities Funds Management
 - k. 5405, Wellness
 - l. 8332, Use of District-Owned Cell Phones

8. Good and Welfare

- a. Condolences to April Francis and family, on the passing of her mother, Ramona J. Francis
- b. Condolences to Pete Ceglio and family, on the passing of his mother, Margaret Ceglio

9. Superintendent's Report

Achievement

Once again congratulations to our Stern Essay Contest Winners: William Lewald, Madeleine Prucha and Ezequiel Espinal.

Students in Grade 6 at Rhame Avenue have finished their Informational Writing Pieces on Ancient Egypt as a culminating product of a recent unit in Social Studies. The students utilized their 1:1 device to conduct research about a variety of chosen topics and used Thinking Maps to organize their thoughts as a part of the writing process. Next, the sixth grade students will begin to write argumentative essays where they take a stand on the issue of “screen usage” and whether or not we should have a National Shut Down Your Screen Week.

Elementary school teachers have been working with students to become better readers and writers by focusing on the author's craft of a text. Some examples of authors craft include: repetition, dialogue tags, word choice, personification, and metaphors. Teachers watched their colleagues teach model lessons and in the coming weeks, they will participate in inter-classroom visitations to try their own author's craft lessons then debrief and obtain feedback from a colleague.

Midterm Exams and Regents are administered the week of January 22, 2018.

The second marking period will end on Friday, January 26, 2018. The second semester will begin on Monday, January 29, 2018.

Opportunity

Third Grade students at Rhame Avenue recently visited the Cradle of Aviation Museum in Garden City and were provided with an opportunity to learn about the physics behind toys and how things fly. The students were amazed by what they were able to see and were also given hands on activities and group projects to complete under the direction of the museum's student services coordinator in connection to how birds, planes, and helicopters are able to take flight.

Student Council students from Centre Avenue visited the Lynbrook Restorative Therapy and Nursing Facility on January 18th. About 22 students went with handmade New Year's cards to spread a little cheer and brighten up the seniors' day. Students also played Bingo, made a craft, and read books with their senior friends. The Student Council advisors are looking into starting a pen pal program with their new senior friends in the near future.

Over 25 Social Studies, Science and Math academies were conducted to prepare students for January exams.

This year we provided support and tutoring by a math specialist to help small groups of students during their lunch, study hall and lab periods to prepare for Algebra and Geometry Regents.

DASA training took place for all administrators this week. Very important law and important that we are in compliance as a school district.

Every 7th and 8th grade student completed a Middle School Science Fair Project. Exhibits were on display on January 11. Twelve students will advance to the Long Island Science Congress in

April and 41 students received honorable mention awards. (See below for award winners)

Connection

Students in grades 4-6 at Rhame Avenue are participating in this year's National Geographic "Geography Bee" and have been hard at work preparing for the final "bee" that will be taking place this week. Parents are invited to attend the event and the winner will be crowned as Rhame Avenue's Geography Expert and will possibly have an opportunity to compete at the State Level.

On January 18th, Centre Avenue held the Kindergarten Interim Parent meeting. Parents were invited to hear the teachers discuss the increased expectations for the second half of kindergarten. During the presentation, online resources were explained and strategies were shared with parents to help support student learning at home.

A Curriculum Fair took place on January 18 at the Jr/Sr. High School. Each discipline offered course offerings. Guidance gave an overview of requirements. Several colleges were present to share what they look for in applicants. Many extra-curricular clubs were present, as well.

There will be a College Planning Night for Juniors on Thursday, February 8 at 7 pm in the High School Auditorium.

All three buildings held Family Engagement Committee meetings to discuss a building plan. Our principals and committees will construct plans to be implemented and shared in their buildings.

The High School Musical, Disney's *The Little Mermaid*, will have performances on Friday, February 2 at 7:30 p.m. and Saturday, February 3 at 1:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Tickets can be purchased. Seats are still available.

Twelve Middle School students are headed to the Long Island Science Congress in April.

Seven Science Research Students are registered for the Long Island Science and Engineering Fair in March.

Innovation

First grade students at Rhame Avenue welcomed winter by participating in a STEAM project that required them to use toothpicks and marshmallows to design the tallest snowman possible that could stand alone. Students were broken up into groups and created a design before moving forward with building the actual snowmen. They then carried out their plans together and the end products were amazing. The students even critiqued their own work and the work of others while providing feedback (and this is all happening in first grade! Wow!)

Recently Centre Avenue sixth graders have experienced some flipped classroom lessons. In this approach, students have their first exposure to new material outside of class and then use class

time to do more challenging work of using that knowledge through problem-solving, discussion or debates. Most recently students viewed a Stanford commencement speech given by Steve Jobs outside of school. Then in school, students compared and contrasted the difference and similarities between Steve Jobs and Bud, the main character in the chapter book *Bud, Not Buddy*. Finally, they had to determine the most important character trait that both Steve Jobs and Bud shared. The flipped classroom model helps to maximize class time in a more productive and engaging way.

The January faculty meeting held collegial circles on how to best use laptops for instructional research purposes.

Science and Math teachers presented at their departmental meetings about innovative ways to use technology in the classroom, including Google Classroom and Nearpod interactive technology.

Middle School Science Fair Winners

7th Grade Life Science

3rd Place - Louis DeSano

2nd Place - Patrick McLaughlin

1st Place - Clare Acuti

7th Grade Physical Science

3rd Place - Mackenzie Sackaris

2nd Place - Luke Arciere

1st Place - Shane Lonergan

8th Grade Physical Science

3rd Place - Felicia Oosterwijk

2nd Place - Katy Howard

1st Place - Matthew Lacey

8th Grade Living Environment Accelerated

3rd Place - Maddy Prucha

2nd Place - Emily McLaughlin

1st Place - Sofia Valdebenito

James Spelman Award Winner

Clare Acuti - The Waiting Game

BOCES VOTE

BOCES is holding a Public vote to purchase Jerusalem Avenue School on Thursday, February 8, 2018. Nassau County residents are asked to participate in a public vote that would authorize Nassau BOCES to purchase the Jerusalem Avenue School for \$12 million. Nassau BOCES has leased the school from the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District since 1998, incurring an annual rental expense that was charged to all 56 component districts. Owning the building will eliminate that expense of \$1.4 million in 2018-19 and in all subsequent years. The special vote will be held on Thursday, February 8, 2018. Flyers are available with more information if you are interested.

Budget Update

Our first budget work session was held on Tuesday, January 16, 2018. Ms. Scio discussed the program enhancements, which were included in the current budget; estimated increases for the retirement systems and health insurance; as well as the overall budget process. This year the CPI, which is a key component of the tax cap formula, increased from 1.23% last year to 2% year. There are multiple variables unique to each school District that are used in the tax cap calculation that are still not finalized.

Currently, the tax levy cap for East Rockaway based on the tax cap formula is approximately 2.54%, for an increase of approximately \$741,000. The budget presentation has been posted on the District's website. Please continue to check our website as all future presentations will be posted.

Our next budget work session is scheduled for Tuesday, February 6th at 7:00 p.m. in the High School Conference Room. We will be discussing District Initiatives for the 2018-19 school year, Reserves, Capital and Technology Projects, and Transportation. We encourage you to join us during these budget work sessions.

10. Privilege of the Floor

Ozzie Lonergan – Ms. Lonergan questioned how many monitors are on staff in the high school and if there is a form of communication in place if there is a problem in the halls.

Ms. Ruiz responded that all monitors have walkie-talkies and there is a protocol that is followed. They have cell phones to alert administrators who arrive within minutes. She did not know the exact number of monitors. Ms. Lonergan asked if a need arises, can additional monitors be hired. Ms. Ruiz responded that if additional staffing is needed, a justification is provided by Mr. Lederer and Mr. DeTommaso, and the District supports identified needs. Ms. Nicoletti also added that safety and security is an item of concern that is always on the agenda.

Ms. Lonergan also questioned why some classes are closed due to maximum enrollment while there are teachers who have free periods and can teach these classes. Ms. Ruiz responded that she cannot speak about an individual teacher or class. However, Ms. Ruiz explained general staffing;

that all teachers do have a full schedule; and the situation as Ms. Lonergan explained, does not exist. Ms. Lonergan asked if the Board of Education can look at the teachers' class schedules. Ms. Ruiz responded that she is welcome to contact Mr. Lederer and speak to him privately about her concern.

Ms. Lonergan questioned teacher placements in elementary buildings. Ms. Ruiz responded that this is a staffing decision which is made in the best interest of the building and students. Although there could be a multitude of reasons, decisions are based on the needs in the building and the principals have the prerogative to make that decision.

Ms. Lonergan expressed concern about staff who left the District. Ms. Nicoletti replied that teachers and administrators leave for many reasons, and to insinuate anything different is insulting to the Board and to the administration as well. We have a fine administration and excellent teachers. When our staff members move on, it is for a good reason. She doesn't believe the Board needs to take a "good look at it." She is confident that the District is moving forward. We are changing with the times and challenging our students and our teachers more. Presentations like tonight's confirms how far the District has come.

11. Board Member Comments

Neil Schloth: Mr. Schloth thanked the Stern Family for continuing to support the essay contest. He said this is a great way to have children remember our past, and how important it is for our country to stay together. It is a great learning experience. He also thanked Linda Jarmel and Pam Castellano for their hard work. They completed their assignments with excellence and assisted with transitioning new staff. Many thanks also to the presenters of the Research Writing Initiative. It was fabulous. This was one area where his sons, who graduated a number of years ago, were not prepared for when they graduated the high school. Thanks to the hard work of our administration, this will now give our students a better chance to be prepared when going onto college.

Keith Gamache: Mr. Gamache said he usually has an afternoon cup of coffee two Tuesdays a month. As he was having his coffee today, he checked his IPAD and saw that there was another school shooting and he was very saddened. He researched and found that there have been 292 shootings since Columbine. Another statistic more eye-opening, is that in 81% of these incidents, someone else beside the shooter had some prior knowledge that something was going to happen. Today's shooter was 15. Many children today feel disengaged. In listening to the essays tonight about the power of media and social media, we are reminded to continue to speak to our children, especially as they approach their teens. If you hear something or have concerns, support staff is available in the buildings to help our children. His concern is for those students who must go back to the building, where the shooting occurred, to continue to learn. Let us be reminded of tonight's theme of the Stern essay contest which is to stay together. He hopes this is something that we can do.

Patti Nicoletti: Ms. Nicoletti congratulated all the Stern essay contest winners. She congratulated Linda Jarmel and Pam Castellano on their retirement and wished them many happy years. Ms. Nicoletti thanked the staff and student presenters of the Research Writing Initiative. These

presentations are indicative of the successes that we have accomplished, and it is these successes that makes me proud to be a board member; She thanked everyone for coming tonight and participating in their child's education. She looks forward to seeing everyone in February. Ms. Nicoletti reminded the audience that tickets are still available for *The Little Mermaid* musical.

12. Upon motion made by Neil Schloth, and seconded by Keith Gamache, and passed unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vitina Fazi
District Clerk