

EAST ROCKAWAY UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
East Rockaway, New York
Regular Meeting of the Board of Education
7:00 P.M., April 16, 2019, East Rockaway Jr. / Sr. High School
Preceded by Recognition of Winter Sport Scholar Athletes,
Poetry Madness Contest Winners, Hall of Fame Inductee Joe Lores,
Retiring Basketball Coach Karin Leary,
and a Public Forum

MINUTES

Present: Members of the Board of Education: Keith Gamache, Neil Schloth,
Patti Nicoletti, Dominick Vulpis, 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

1. The meeting started at 5:30 pm in the Conference Room of the East Rockaway Jr./Sr. High School. Representatives from Living With the Bay met with the Board of Education and community members regarding the status of the project. Thereafter, at 7:09 p.m. the regular monthly meeting was called to order by Keith Gamache in the auditorium of the East Rockaway Jr./Sr. High School.
2. Patti Nicoletti introduced high school senior and Valedictorian Laura Millar who led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Ruiz welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for coming out. She introduced Mr. William Gibbons, Chairperson of the English Department. Mr. Gibbons spoke about the annual school-wide Poetry Madness Competition. He thanked the English Department for continuing with this tradition. This year's theme was "Empowerment." Finalists Jiggy Kelly, Farha Khan, and Osmin Torres were called to the podium and read their poems. Student Gabe Padiernos' poetry reading was pre-recorded and played for the audience. Ms. Ruiz congratulated all the students for their very emotional and powerful poetry and for sharing with the audience.

Ms. Ruiz then introduced Mr. David Barth, Physical Education Director. Mr. Barth thanked the Board of Education and Ms. Ruiz for this opportunity to honor the winter teams and athletes. He explained the requirements of becoming a scholar athlete team. This year, the varsity cheerleading and girls' varsity basketball teams earned the distinction of a scholar athlete team. Mr. Barth introduced the coaches and members of both teams and presented them with certificates. Individual student athletes Juliet McCarthy, Brooke DeGiulio, Hunter Vertuccio, Sharon Oosterwijk and Christopher Levins were honored for their accomplishments and presented with certificates. Brooke DeGiulio was presented with a

commemorative basketball for her accomplishments. Mr. Barth congratulated all the athletes.

Mr. Barth also honored retired varsity basketball coach Joe Lores for his recent induction into the Basketball Coaches Association of New York Hall of Fame. Mr. Gamache presented Mr. Lores with a commemorative basketball. Girls' basketball coach Karin Leary, who is retiring as a coach, was also recognized for her 19 years of dedication to the basketball program. Ms. Leary was presented with flowers and a commemorative basketball by Mr. Gamache. Mr. Barth thanked both coaches for all they have done for the basketball program and the community. Ms. Ruiz thanked Mr. Lores, Ms. Leary and all of our coaches for what they do for our students.

At 7:40 p.m. Mr. Gamache continued with the public portion of the agenda.

3. Public Comments on Agenda Items - None

4. Approval of Minutes

Upon motion made by Patti Nicoletti, and seconded by Neil Schloth, and unanimously passed, the following minutes were approved:

A. March 26, 2019, Meeting of the Board of Education

5. Acknowledgment of Monthly Reports and Correspondence

A. Receipt of Monthly Financial Reports: February, 2019

B. Correspondence - None

6. Recommendations of the Superintendent of Schools

Upon motion made by Dominick Vulpis, and seconded by Patti Nicoletti, the following Items A through H were unanimously approved on a consent agenda.

A. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, accept the resignation of Eileen Levine from her tenured special education teacher position, effective June 30, 2019.

B. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve a change in the effective retirement date of Emily Pisani from August 30, 2019, to July 31, 2019.

C. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Melinda Best to the position of Student Mentor Program Club Advisor effective May 8, 2019, through May 20, 2019, at the prorated stipend salary set forth in the East Rockaway Teachers Association contract for the 2018-2019 school year.

- D. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve a change to the request for a FMLA leave of absence of Jennifer Melecio previously approved at the January 22, 2019, meeting to be effective April 1, 2019, through August 23, 2019.
- E. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request of Erin Kennedy for a 12-week FMLA leave of absence from her special education teacher position, effective June 10, 2019, through November 1, 2019.
- F. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request of Denise Cipriano for a medical leave of absence, effective April 29, 2019, through on or about June 24, 2019.
- G. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Donna David to the position of Part-Time Monitor, effective upon Civil Service approval, at the Step 1 hourly salary set forth in the East Rockaway Food Service and Monitors Union Agreement for the 2018-2019 school year.
- H. 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 2018-2019 school year:
 - 1. Melissa Power, substitute registered school nurse, effective upon Civil Service approval
 - 2. Lance Denni, substitute security aide, effective upon Civil Service approval

7. Other Items

Upon motion made by Neil Schloth, and seconded by Patti Nicoletti, the following Items A through D were unanimously approved on a consent agenda.

- A. Approve the following resolution:

PROPOSITION NO. 1: 2019-2020 School Budget for East Rockaway Union Free School District:

RESOLVED, that the Proposed Budget of \$40,298,143 for the East Rockaway Union Free School District of the Town of Hempstead, County of Nassau, State of New York, for the fiscal year 2019-2020 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.

- B. 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 2019 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. Approve 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 2019-20 school year (July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020), now therefore, be it

RESOLVED that the Nassau BOCES Proposed Administrative Operations Budget for the 2019-20 school year in the amount of \$22,190,616 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.

D. Approve 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 16, 2019, 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 Langsner and 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 Patti Nicoletti, and seconded by Dominick Vulpis, the following Items E through M were unanimously approved on a consent agenda.

E. Approve the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education accepts the Independent Accountant's

Report on Applying Agreed-Upon Procedures prepared by Cullen & Danowksi, LLP, for the period ended October 31, 2018.

F. Approve the following resolution:

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the East Rockaway UFSD authorizes and appoints the following individuals to serve in the capacity of election/poll workers in connection with the May 21, 2019, annual school district meeting and election, at the salary set forth on the Non-Contractual Salary Schedule for the 2018-2019 school year:

1. Carl Atteniese
2. Ronald DiRienzo (Poll Coordinator)
3. Donald Maclean (Chairperson)
4. Rose Trum
5. Barbara Stern
6. Anna Maria Culmone-Simeti
7. Jennifer Serrano
8. Kevin O'Neill
9. John Montague
10. Richard Miskell (substitute)

G. Approve the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the President of the Board of Education is authorized to establish the "*Frank X. Coppola II Family Memorial Scholarship*" to be awarded to one graduating East Rockaway Jr./Sr. High School senior who was a member of the varsity football team and committed to continuing personal education.

H. Approve the terms and conditions of the letter of engagement between C-BIZ Valuation Group, LLC, and the East Rockaway Union Free School District, for valuation of land and buildings for the 2018-2019 school year and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the agreement on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.

I. Approve the Twilight Alternative High School Program Contract (2019-2020) with Nassau BOCES for East Rockaway students for the period September 9, 2019, through on or about June 30, 2020, and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the contract on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.

J. Approve the Consultant Services Contract between the East Rockaway UFSD and Margaret Minardi, Visiting Artist, and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the contract on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.

- K. Approve the agreement with Textbook Central, a division of Tel/Logic Inc. d/b/a CentralEd with East Rockaway UFSD for textbook information and management services for the 2019-2020 school year and authorize the Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations to execute the agreement for said services on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
- L. Approve the terms of the Side Letter Agreement dated April 16, 2019, between the Board of Education of the East Rockaway UFSD, and the East Rockaway Teacher Aides Association, and authorize the Superintendent to execute the Side Letter Agreement on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
- M. Approve the terms of the Side Letter Agreement dated April 16, 2019, between the Board of Education of the East Rockaway UFSD, and the East Rockaway School Nurses Association, and authorize the Superintendent to execute the Side Letter Agreement on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.

Upon motion made by Dominick Vulpis and seconded by Neil Schloth, the following Items N through O were unanimously approved on a consent agenda.

- N. Declare obsolete for the purpose of disposal and/or recycling, the following item:
 - 1. For disposal, a black filing cabinet

- O. Accept the following donations:

- 1. From Councilman Anthony D’Esposito, a check in the sum of \$500, to offset the cost of the Kevin Alter presentation
- 2. A grant award from the East Rockaway Education Foundation for an amount not to exceed \$7,000 in support of the purchase of a large format printer for the Jr./Sr. High School
- 3. From the Centre Avenue PTA:
 - a. A check in the sum of \$40 for the 6th Grade Activities Fund
 - b. A curriculum enhancement grant in the sum of \$500

- 8. Upon motion made by Neil Schloth, and seconded by Patti Nicoletti, and unanimously passed, the CSE and CPSE Recommendations were approved.
- 9. Budget Transfers

Upon motion made by Patti Nicoletti, and seconded by Dominick Vulpis, and unanimously passed, the following budget transfer was approved.

- A. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education approves the following budget transfer:

1. Transaction No. 19-0017

10. Policy Matters

Ms. Nicoletti spoke about the policies being adopted this evening. The sexual harassment policy was revised to be consistent with changes in the law. School Board Election and Candidates and Campaigning policies were changed so they are similar with other policies. Poll Watcher policy is new for the District. Graduation and diploma policies had to be aligned with changes in New York State law for students who are in the skills and achievement programs.

Mr. Gamache asked for a vote of adoption. The following policies were approved for adoption by a unanimous vote:

A. For Adoption

1. 0110, Sexual Harassment
2. 2120, School Board Elections
3. 2120.1 Candidates and Campaigning
4. 2120.3, School Board Elections – Poll Watchers Policy
5. 4772, Graduation Ceremonies
6. 4772, Diploma and Credential Options for Students with Disabilities

B. For Review

1. 5150, 5150R, School Admissions
2. 4710, Grading
3. 4750, Promotion and Retention of Students
4. 4770,4770R, Graduation Requirements
5. 1120, School District Records
6. 1230, Public Participation at Board Meetings
7. 1400, Public Complaints
8. 1530, Smoking and Other Tobacco Use on School Premises
9. 1741, Home Schooled Students
10. 2340, Notice of Meetings
11. 4311.1, Display of the Flag
12. 4526.1, Internet Safety
13. 4531, Field Trip and Excursions
14. 5205, Eligibility for Extra Curricular Activities
15. 5225, Student Personal Expression
16. 6900, Disposal of District Property
17. 8630, Computer Resource and Data Management

11. Reports

A. Board President's Report

Legislative update: The NY State Budget has been finalized. The tax cap has been made permanent and the Foundation Aid Formula of 2007 has still not been fully implemented. The impact of this upon our district is a loss of \$549,490. But, a somewhat surprising item was included allowing school districts to establish a TRS reserve. The TRS reserve will join with the already existing ERS reserve. The TRS portion of the reserve will be capped at a 2% increase from year to year and cannot exceed 10% of the total liability. This is welcome news to districts. The annual TRS contribution is out of district control and can vary from year to year. Being able to utilize a reserve can even out the budget and soften the impact in the event of a spike in the contribution rate. The plan also allows for Piggyback Contracts for transportation costs, which could also bring some financial relief.

Budget work session: On April 9th Mrs. Scrio gave her fourth budget work session presentation highlighting the details of the budget we adopted this evening. We are happy to share that the tax levy increase is 2.94% which comes in .25% less than the Tax Levy Cap. This was achieved while maintaining all existing programs with a few additions as well. All budget work session information to date has been posted to our website. Thank you Mrs. Ruiz, Mrs. Scrio and the entire staff for working to achieve this prudent budget. We will have a budget hearing on May 8th and the Budget Vote and trustee election will be on May 21st. Please contact Mrs. Scrio if you have any questions.

Pre-bond update: We met with the architect during a facilities work session on April 8, 2019, to review projects, clarify some of the details and language and get answers to questions that came up during the forum and facilities tours. We anticipate having another public review of the projects in May at which time we plan to further solidify the scope of work being considered prior to the adoption of a bond resolution. We are still receiving input from the community and all comments are greatly appreciated.

Altaris Security Support: We continue to evaluate the potential need for a security supervisor. This person would oversee and train security personnel and staff and report to central administration. As we have expanded our security personnel over the past few years this may be necessary next step. We are currently gathering information on how other districts provide supervision of their security.

Graduation update: In graduation news, the mayor will be invited to attend the graduation ceremony as a guest as we continue working to establish strong school to community connections.

B. Communications Sub-Committee Report

Mr. Vulpis reported that the Communications Sub-Committee invited Mr. Araoz to give a presentation at their April meeting. Since enhancing communication with our families is a major goal of our strategic plan as well as a focus of our Engage Every Family initiative, the district has employed a variety of communication tools to achieve this goal. The communication tools the district currently employs are:

Blackboard Connect; RobocaUs, emails, texts, and the app; District Website; ERSD Mobile App; Infinite Campus Portal; Facebook pages: District and PTAs; Instagram; Twitter; Remind; Google Classroom; Class Dojo; Electronic Sign; and Parent Newsletters

The Committee broke into groups to answer this month's essential questions:

How can we better leverage technology to increase connection?; and What does ideal parent communication look like to you? How can this best be accomplished?

Ms. Ruiz reported on what has been accomplished and what the Committee will be working on in the future. The next meeting is scheduled for June 4, 2019, at Rhame Avenue School at 6:00 pm. Mr. Gamache added that there was discussion of live streaming or recording district meetings.

C. Superintendent's Report

Achievement:

This past week, classroom teachers at Rhame and Centre Avenue came together for a final professional learning opportunity as we move toward the end of the year in alignment with our Teachers College Writers Workshop initiative. Demo lessons were delivered by teachers and their peers and our lead literacy consultant watched to deliver valuable feedback in connection to specific mini-lessons that provide our students with the next-level skills necessary to produce high caliber "opinion and argumentative" writing performance tasks.

Students in 7th Grade Spanish and Italian produced excellent research papers and presentations to explore culture components of regions in which their target language is spoken.

Twelve 7th and 8th grade students represented East Rockaway High School at the Middle School Long Island Science Congress on April 9, 2019.

Junior Zackary Hirashima was awarded a certificate of excellence for his essay written in conjunction with the 8th Annual Evaluation of Presidential Leadership Symposium held at

Hofstra University.

We have two Varsity Scholar Athlete Teams: Varsity cheerleading and Varsity Girls Basketball. There were 67 Winter Scholar Athletes, achieving over 90% GPA's.

Coach Joe Lores was officially introduced as a member of the 2019 Nassau County Athletics Hall of Fame. The induction ceremony will take place on September 25, 2019, at Crest Hollow Country Club. Congratulations to Mr. Lores for all of his achievements. We are so proud to have him on our team!

Opportunity:

All three buildings have been scheduled for security training with Altaris Security Consulting group specific to emergency evacuation and reunification procedures. These continued trainings help our building response teams learn best practices in case of an emergency so that we are best prepared to meet the needs of our students, staff and families.

Students will begin working on their Advisory service learning projects now that they have been approved by building administration.

Middle School Sports Night was a big success. Students showed great school spirit and great participation. The winning T-shirt, designed by Nicholas Alter and Guisepe Monteverde, was distributed to all middle school students.

On April 2, 2019, East Rockaway Jr./Sr. High School began its new Homework Help Program. On Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays students can go to the library from 3:15 to 4:15 p.m. to have access to resources and support to complete their homework.

High School Seniors were able to register to vote with the Nassau County Board of Elections in their classes on Tuesday April 16, 2019.

Connection:

Rhame and Centre Avenue schools will be engaged in a number of exciting activities and opportunities during "Career Week" that will take place the week of May 6th. The purpose of this week is to heighten awareness of a variety of occupations and career exploration. We thank our elementary school social workers and guidance counselor for their hard work in helping to organize this very special week for our students.

A suggestion was made by parents to live stream meetings. It was decided that the next Rhame Avenue School PTA will be live streamed. We will let you know how livestreaming goes at Rhame Avenue School!

Innovation:

Sixth grade teachers at Rhame and Centre Avenue, with the support of Mrs. Schoen, have been hard at work preparing for this year's Science Fair in early May. This year, students are creating videos of their research process that will be uploaded into a website. QR codes of the website will be on display for everyone to scan and enjoy while attending the Science Fair.

The East Rockaway Jr./Sr. High School Building Emergency Response Team met with a representative from Altaris Security Consultants to review emergency response procedures and to discuss parent reunification in the event that a building evacuation was necessary.

Tonight we adopted the 2019-2020 budget which keeps the district under the allowable tax levy cap. Thank you to Mrs. Scio for her excellent stewardship in managing the district's finances. Thank you as well to the Board of Education and our administrators for their role in supporting and developing a fiscally responsible budget that continues to support all district programs and adds a number of enhancements including a few additional clubs and assistant coaches and funds to purchase new e tech books for all math and science classes for grades 6- to high school.

The budget hearing will take place on May 7th. You are invited to attend the hearing before the May 21st vote. Budget newsletters will be received shortly after the break.

12. Good and Welfare

- A. Congratulations to Jen Melecio and her husband, Jason, on the birth of their baby boy, Julian Melecio, 8lbs 3oz, 21 inches, born March 30, 2019

13. Public Comments - None

14. Board Member Comments

Neil Schloth: Mr. Schloth thanked everyone for staying until the end. He also thanked the poetry madness finalists. There is enormous talent and our students used much energy and spirit in creating their poetry. We thoroughly enjoyed hearing their pieces. Thank you to Dom Vulpis, Ms. Ruiz, and the Sub Communications Committee members for moving this Committee forward in a productive way. Mr. Schloth looks forward to continuing next year. Thank you also to the members of the Facilities Committee and Ms. Scio for their hard work in continuing to upgrade our facilities and considering all proposals and suggestions. Congratulations to Coach Lores and Coach Leary on their accomplishments and dedication to our school and students. He wished them much success in the future.

Dominick Vulpis: Mr. Vulpis wished the administration a very restful spring break. He thanked them for what they do throughout the year. He congratulated Mr. Lores and Ms.

Leary on their accomplishments. The public poetry readings were moving. He applauded the English Department for their ability to instill confidence in writing and reading poetry. Mr. Vulpis congratulated Laura Millar who is very dedicated, has such an array of talents, and represents East Rockaway well. The community of East Rockaway lost a terrific neighbor and friend, Dr. Ken Leistner. Dr. Leistner donated t-shirts and equipment to the District. He was a good friend of the District. Mr. Vulpis thanked Mr. Walter for moving forward with live streaming their next PTA meeting.

Patti Nicoletti: Ms. Nicoletti shared the sentiments of her fellow board members. She congratulated Laura Millar, Coach Lores, and Coach Leary on their accomplishments. Ms. Nicoletti also congratulated the poetry madness finalists who never cease to amaze her with the quality of their work. Credit goes to the teachers who engage them and inspire them to share their work. Ms. Nicoletti thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

Keith Gamache – Mr. Gamache thanked the administrators and teachers who worked with the students who participated in the poetry madness writing contest this year. It is a joy to always listen to them. They are brave and inspiring. He thanked the audience for attending tonight’s meeting.

15. Upon motion made by Patti Nicoletti, and seconded by Dominick Vulpis, and passed unanimously, the public meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vitina Fazi
District Clerk