

EAST ROCKAWAY UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
East Rockaway, New York  
Meeting of the Board of Education  
7:00 P.M., September 15, 2020  
Meeting Closed to Public and Live Streamed on ZOOM

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Dominick Vulpis, Kristen O'Hagan, Peter McNally, Daniel DeMatteo, Joseph Kilgus, Superintendent Lisa J. Ruiz, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations, Jacqueline A. Scio; Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, Mona Hecht, District Clerk, Vitina Fazi

Absent: None

1. Mr. Vulpis called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.
2. Daniel DeMatteo led the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Public Comments on Agenda Items

Mr. Vulpis stated that he will be managing board of education email items this evening. If you have any questions regarding the agenda times, now is the time to contact the board's email. You will also have an opportunity at the public comments section to contact the Board.

4. Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Vulpis asked if there were any questions regarding the minutes below. There were none and Mr. Vulpis asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

Upon motion made by Kristen O'Hagan, seconded by Joseph Kilgus, all in favor AYE, opposed: NONE; abstained: NONE; the motion was unanimously passed, and the following minutes were approved:

- A. August 25, 2020, Regular Meeting of the Board of Education
- B. September 3, 2020, Special Meeting of the Board of Education

5. Acknowledgment of Monthly Reports and Correspondence

Mr. Vulpis acknowledged receipt of the June and July 2020 financial reports and 8 items of correspondence. Mr. Vulpis asked if there were any questions regarding the reports or correspondence. There were none and Mr. Vulpis asked for a motion to approve the reports and

correspondence.

Upon motion made by Peter McNally, seconded by Daniel DeMatteo, all in favor AYE, opposed: NONE; abstained: NONE; the motion was unanimously passed.

- A. Receipt of Monthly Financial Reports – June and July 2020
- B. Correspondence – 8 email correspondence

6. Recommendations of the Superintendent of Schools

Mr. Vulpis asked if the trustees had any questions regarding Items A-H below. There were no questions. Mr. Vulpis then asked for a motion to approve Items A-H.

Upon motion made by Daniel DeMatteo, seconded by Joseph Kilgus, all in favor AYE, opposed: NONE; abstained: NONE; the motion was unanimously passed, and the following Items A-H were approved on a consent agenda.

- A. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, accept the following resignations:
  - 1. Brian Fox, per diem substitute teacher, effective September 10, 2020
  - 2. Tamar Hiltzik, per diem substitute teacher, effective September 8, 2020
- B. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request of Crystal Valentin for a child rearing leave of absence effective September 11, 2020, through October 12, 2020.
- C. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Randi Kilcommons to the position of home tutor, effective September 8, 2020, at the hourly salary established by the East Rockaway Teachers Association contract at Appendix B, Other Educational Assignments, A. Home Instruction, for the 2020-2021 school year.
- D. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the following elementary recess and cafeteria supervision assignments at the annual salary established by the East Rockaway Teachers Association Contract, Appendix B, F. Grade School Lunch Supervision, for the 2020-2021 school year:
  - Centre Avenue Elementary School:
    - 1. Wayne Smyle, Recess Supervision
    - 2. Christian Soto, Recess Supervision and Cafeteria Supervision
  - Rhame Avenue Elementary School:
    - 1. Deborah Iannico, Recess Supervision
- E. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Jean L. Surlin to the position of Cleaner, effective upon Civil Service approval, at the prorated Step A annual salary established by the East Rockaway Custodial Unit agreement for the 2020-

2021 school year.

- F. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the request of Laura Clarke, teacher aide, for a leave of absence effective September 2, 2020, through January 27, 2021.
- G. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approve the appointment of Linda Ricciardi to the position of School Monitor, Part-Time, effective upon Civil Service approval, at the prorated Step 1 annual salary established by the East Rockaway UFSD Monitor and Security Unit and the United Public Service Employees Union agreement for the 2020- 2021 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:
  - 1. Stefano Cilluffo, substitute cleaner, effective upon Civil Service approval
  - 2. Jillian Cascio, per diem substitute teacher, effective September 16, 2020
  - 3. Alexis Freudenberg, substitute teacher aide, effective upon Civil Service approval

#### 7. Other Items

Mr. Vulpis asked if the trustees had any questions regarding Items 7 A-E below. There were no questions. Mr. Vulpis then asked for a motion to approve Items 7 A-E.

Upon motion made by Joseph Kilgus, seconded by Kristen O'Hagan, all in favor AYE, opposed: NONE; abstained: NONE; the motion was unanimously passed, and the following Items 7 A-E were unanimously approved on a consent agenda.

- A. Approve the 2020-2021 East Rockaway School District Guidance Plan serving students in grades K-12 through a comprehensive developmental program, as required by new NYS regulations for school counseling programs.
- B. Approve the admission of one Massapequa Public Schools, Student I.D. No. 218071020, to attend the East Rockaway Public Schools for the 2020-2021 school year and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the Special Education tuition agreement on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
- C. Approve the Special Education Services Contract with Hicksville Public Schools for special education services for one (1) parentally placed student, Student ID No. 180008377 for the 2020-2021 school year and authorize the President of the Board of Education to execute the contract on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.
- D. Approve the Special Rider for the Provision of Distance Learning Services to the previously approved Related Services Agreement between All About Kids, PLLC and

East Rockaway UFSD for Teleservices due to COVID – 19 pandemic for the 2020-2021 school year and authorize the President of the Board Education to execute the Rider on behalf of the East Rockaway Board of Education.

E. Declare obsolete for the purpose of disposal and/or recycling, the items listed on the Textbook Removal Form dated September 3, 2020.

8. Mr. Vulpis asked if the trustees had any questions regarding the CSE and CPSE Recommendations. There were no questions. Mr. Vulpis then asked for a motion to approve the CSE and CPSE Recommendations.

Upon motion made by Kristen O’Hagan, seconded by Joseph Kilgus, all in favor AYE, opposed: NONE; abstained: NONE; the motion was unanimously passed, and the CSE and CPSE Recommendations were unanimously approved.

9. Budget Transfers

Mr. Vulpis asked if there were any questions regarding the following budget transfers. There were no questions and he asked for a motion to approve the following budget transfers.

Upon motion made by Daniel DeMatteo, seconded by Peter McNally, all in favor AYE, opposed: NONE; abstained: NONE; the following budget transfers were unanimously approved:

- A. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education approves the following budget transfers:
1. Transaction No. 21-0004
  2. Transaction No. 21-0005
  3. Transaction No. 21-0006

10. Policy Matters

A. Policy Subcommittee Report

Mrs. O’Hagan reported that tonight we will be adopting Policy 8635, Information and Data Privacy Security Breach. This is a required policy that has been updated to reflect changes to State Technology Law Section 208. We will continue to review the policies listed under Item C (For Review) below. We have a Policy Sub-Committee Meeting scheduled for tomorrow, September 16<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 pm.

Mr. Vulpis asked if there were any questions regarding Item 10 B-1 below. There were no questions. Mr. Vulpis asked for a motion to adopt the policy listed in Item B (For Adoption).

Upon motion made by Peter McNally, seconded by Daniel DeMatteo, all in favor AYE, opposed: NONE; abstained: NONE; the following policy listed in Item B was unanimously approved for adoption.

B. For Adoption

1. 8635, Information and Data Privacy Security Breach

C. For Review

1. 4531, Field Trip and Excursions
2. 8121.1-R, Opioid Overdose Prevention Regulation
3. 9150, Non-Fraternization “New”
4. 6705, Federal Funds Purchasing

11. Reports

A. Superintendent’s Report

Thank you and good evening. This evening, a voicemail went out through ConnectEd informing the community that we had a staff member test positive for COVID-19 at the East Rockaway Jr./Sr. High School. All students have been instructed to continue with remote learning for the rest of the week. We are working closely with the Department of Health and they are doing contact tracing. The investigation is not complete. We want to make sure all bases are covered. No students were impacted. Anyone who had direct contact with the individual, would be required to quarantine. None of our students were involved and there was limited impact to staff in the building. We want to take the time to sanitize every space in the building due to the individual’s presence in the building. The building will be completely cleaned and sanitized to make sure every space is cleaned and ready for the return of our staff and students. We have done a thorough job of insuring that everyone that came in contact will be directed to quarantine. We followed the basic protocol from the Department of Health. Anyone having had close contact with the individual would quarantine on their own for 14 days. It is up to that person to get a COVID test or just quarantine. If the person does not have symptoms, they are not required to get a COVID test. Individuals who are impacted are getting tested and staying out for the duration. The person infected is staying home until COVID-free.

The remote schedule should be working well at this time and all students will be on remote instruction. Mr. Schaffer is sending out some further information this evening. Picture day has been postponed and will be rescheduled. The elementary schools have not been impacted at all and no elementary staff member was impacted. We expect the high school to reopen on

Monday and return to a normal schedule. Should that change, you will hear from me. Please email or call me with questions. District offices will be open, and administrators will be available tomorrow. Thank you for your cooperation and I hope that everyone will remain healthy.

Ms. Hecht will now provide a brief update on how well things have been going. We are very pleased with the start of the new school year. Teachers are working incredibly hard with this new schedule.

*[Ms. Hecht then provided a short update on how the school year is progressing.]*

Ms. Ruiz continued with her report stating that the students are amazing. They are coming in with their masks of all kinds. They have been following directions very well and seem not to be bothered by it. Ms. Scio, Mr. Daly, and our custodial staff have worked incredibly hard. You can see wonderful signage throughout the buildings instructing people on proper behavior, markings, and directional lines in the hallways. Students are following all protocols put in place. We worked hard to develop them, and they are working. Poly-carbonate barriers have been installed in classrooms which teachers have decorated. I must give a shout out to all our custodial workers, Ms. Scio and Mr. Daly who worked so hard through the Labor Day weekend to make sure school was ready to open on September 8<sup>th</sup>. Students know where to enter the building in the morning. Ms. Ruiz thanked the building principals and high school administrators for making arrival and dismissal go smoothly. Students are listening, following directions, and are adapting nicely.

There has been a concern expressed about high school athletics in the community. Like everything else, changes needed to be made for health and safety reasons. Section VIII and New York State have made decisions we think are in the best interest of students. We hope they will continue to monitor how things are going and make some adjustments if the level of COVID transmission stays stable and/or declines. We will have abbreviated sport seasons which will begin in January. I appreciate your patience and support as we navigate this. Mr. Barth presented to the Board of Education a return to play proposal which we will be hearing more about shortly. We would like to put something in place and keep our athletes engaged, working out to be ready when the seasons do begin. This is difficult for everyone and we hope we will not be in a situation where we have to shut down. If we use a measured approach, we will continue to introduce new activities. We want our students to remain safe and healthy. We will continue to share developments with you as more information becomes available.

## 12. Good and Welfare

- A. Congratulations to Seanna and Michael Silver on the birth of their son, Noah Burke, on September 11, 2020

B. Condolences to Jimmy Zervas and family on the passing of his father-in-law, Thomas DePippo, on September 9, 2020

### 13. Public Comments

Mr. Vulpis stated that the Board did not receive any email comments this evening. Please direct your comments to [boe@esrd.org](mailto:boe@esrd.org) and we will get back to you on those comments.

### 14. Board Member Comments

Joseph Kilgus: Mr. Kilgus welcomed everyone back to school. The first week of school is officially on the books and it was pretty successful. We all need to stay positive and we will get through this together.

Peter McNally: Mr. McNally piggy-backed on what Mr. Kilgus said. This is going to be a trying year and we need to stay positive, work together, and we will get through it.

Daniel DeMatteo: Mr. DeMatteo shared the following quote from Ernest Hemingway: *“Courage is grace under pressure.”* We have all been under pressure since Joe and I joined the board. Handling it with grace is what everyone has done from staff, to administrators, to board members and down the food chain. When you are in the midst of solving problems there is no perfect way to approach that, but we have everyone’s best interests at heart. The team is doing a great job and there have been setbacks. Once a rock, always a rock! Great job to everyone who has contributed.

Kristen O’Hagan: The start of school last week was truly impressive. The excitement on the kids’ faces as they returned to some type of normalcy, the enthusiasm of the administrators and staff, and the commitment of all to maintain a safe environment is something to be proud of. I recently read some powerful advice, “When you can’t control what’s happening, challenge yourself to control the way you respond to what’s happening. That’s where your power is.” It is my hope that the district continues to lead with compassion, teachers are flexible while kids adapt to their learning plans, and continued communication is maintained between parents, students, and the building leaders. Thank you!

Dominick Vulpis: Mr. Vulpis dittoed the comments from his fellow board members. He addressed the community and thanked them for backing the district. When he receives emails from residents there is never a condescending email; critical at times, yes, because that is what keeps us grounded and centered. It is evident that the community is backing the Superintendent, administration, and board of education. We are doing the best we can at this point. Thank you to the community for your support.

15. Mr. Vulpis asked for a motion to adjourn. Upon motion made by Peter McNally, seconded by Joseph Kilgus, and passed unanimously, the public meeting was adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vitina Fazi  
District Clerk