



Board of Education Meeting  
October 13, 2015

2015-2016 Board of Education  
Katy Keohane Glassberg, President · Chris Repetto, Vice President  
Karen Belanger·Blake Jines-Storey·Nancy Pasquale· Kelly Smith Powers·Nicole Weber

## A Summary of the 10/13/15 Rye City School District Board of Education Meeting

### **Welcome to the Public**

Board of Education President Katy Keohane Glassberg welcomed members of the public and stated that the meeting would begin with the presentation of Rye Recognition of Excellence awards, which the Board and Administration both enjoy.

### **Special Acknowledgements**

Dr. Alvarez announced that Rye High School has four National Merit Scholar Semifinalists and 26 National Merit Commended Students this year. The National Merit Scholarship Program is a competition presented annually by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation to recognize outstanding students based on their Preliminary SAT (PSAT) scores. Approximately 16,000 students nationwide become Semifinalists, representing less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors. Commended students place in the top 5 percent of high school seniors. Dr. Alvarez called the four Semifinalists to the podium to receive their awards:

William Colwell  
Julia Donovan  
Christopher Julian  
Su-Lynn Kok

Dr. Alvarez then called the 26 National Merit Commended Students to receive their awards:

Evangelia Alexopoulos  
Ryan Anderson  
Mihir Bala  
Nicholas Berger  
Elizabeth Brett  
Ryan Ciardiello  
Madeline Eck  
Quinn Fahey  
Charles Flynn

Madeline Johnson  
Christopher Karpovich  
Grant Keith  
Zichen Liu  
Taylor Maurer  
Thomas Mechem  
Dain Monaghan  
Owen Moore  
Elizabeth Moses

Franklin Goldszer  
Dominic Guarnieri  
Isabelle Hentschel  
Joshua Johnson

Luke Murphy  
Sakiko Nishida  
Deirdre Potter  
Kana White

The students received their awards, shook hands with Dr. Alvarez, Ms. Glassberg, Ms. Taylor and Administrators and Members of the Board of Education and posed for photographs.

### **Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent Dr. Frank Alvarez announced the Parsons Street Players first show, "Inherit the Wind," October 16 and 17. He reported the Rye Fund for Education and the District hosted a courtyard opening event last Thursday which was nicely attended. He stated that it is a great space for teachers and students in which to relax and enjoy the outdoors. He noted that the Rye Fund for Education is hosting a driving course with BMW this coming weekend. Interested parties should visit the Fund's website at [www.ryefundforeducation.com](http://www.ryefundforeducation.com)

Dr. Alvarez reported the District will present its annual academic achievement report which includes the District's test scores at the next Board of Education meeting. The District plans for the year based on these scores.

### **Presentations**

#### **Latin Grade 6**

Retired High School Foreign Language Teacher David Perry gave an overview of the new Latin 6 curriculum. Please link to his presentation [here](#). Dr. Wyks announced that Mr. Perry was kind enough to revise the curricula for Latin 6 over the summer despite having retired at the end of the last school year. Mr. Perry explained that, as is the case with many foreign languages, in Latin it is best practice to begin by teaching students about the environment around them: greetings, common phrases, and classroom and everyday objects. He noted that learning these terms teaches students about direct objects, a critical component of Latin instruction. Mr. Perry stated that he has noticed that students who have received FLES (Foreign Language in the Elementary Schools) instruction have a greater aptitude for language learning when they come to Latin 6 and have less reticence about classroom participation. As the curriculum continues, students learn how Latin words form the basis for many English words, study the history and geography of ancient Rome, and learn Roman numerals. Mr. Perry said that at a most basic level, the course prepares students to read the texts of the ancient Romans in higher grades.

Dr. Wyks thanked Mr. Perry for his hard work, and noted that the revision of Latin 6 is part of the District's periodic review of curriculum, which

differentiates it from the Spanish curriculum that was revised to reflect greater student aptitude resulting from FLES.

Andres Soltren, who is new to the District and is teaching Latin 6 this fall, stepped to the podium to thank Mr. Perry and to praise the curriculum. He then led the Board of Education and audience members in a rendition - in Latin - of "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes" to demonstrate one of the teaching methods he uses in Latin 6.

## **Algebra 1/Algebra 2**

High School Math Teacher Beth Naber gave an overview of the new Algebra 1 and Algebra 2 curricula. Please link to her presentation [here](#). Ms. Naber described the origin of the revision the Math Pathways in the High Schools. In prior years, students would take Algebra 1, followed by Geometry, followed by Algebra 2. Teachers, parents and students found that students, upon reaching Algebra 2, were struggling to recall the precepts of Algebra 1 after a year of studying Geometry. The Math Department and the District have altered the Math Pathways so that students now take Algebra 1, followed by Algebra 2, followed by Geometry/Trigonometry, which will now be merged into one course. Ms. Naber reported that the Department and District believe that the combined algebraic sequence will result in a more in-depth and cohesive study of algebra, which should also result in a stronger math foundation for chemistry and physics. Students will now take the Common Core Algebra 1 Regents exam after Algebra 2.

Ms. Naber stated that the Algebra 2 Honors course would study the same material as the Algebra 2 class, but would take a deeper look at each of the topics and also delve into some pre-calculus topics.

Ms. Naber showed the Board of Education and the audience the current math pathways trajectory. Board Member Karen Belanger inquired what it would take for a student to move up to a more challenging course. Ms. Naber responded that the student should be interested and curious about the topic. As every child is different, they would need to be evaluated on an individual basis by the Math Department. She stated that the Department was still determining the best means of doing so. Ms. Belanger recommended a rubric.

Board Member Chris Repetto inquired why AP Statistics was positioned as it is on the Math Pathways chart. Ms. Naber clarified that it is a challenging course, though it requires fewer prerequisites.

## **Fencing Team Proposal**

Three High School students came before the Board to present a proposal for a club-level fencing team. Link to their proposal [here](#). The club would be booster supported and would compete against local area clubs. Rod Mergardt

and Patricia Taylor spoke in support of the club. Katy Glassberg inquired whether scholarships for membership would be available for students who wished to join but could not pay the fees. The students replied in the affirmative. Board Member Blake Jines-Storey inquired if the club would be co-educational. Rod Mergardt replied that both boys and girls could participate in practice though matches are separated by gender. Katy Glassberg requested additional information from the Human Resources office of the District as to whether the proposed (non-District) Coach has the appropriate certification and could serve as a trainer for the proposed club, or if one would need to be provided. Rod Mergardt stated that the proposed Coach is not certified, but that his department could help with the process. Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources Elaine Cuglietto said she would oversee the certification of coaches. The Board of Education asked if there was still strong student interest in the club. The students replied in the affirmative.

Katy Glassberg told the students that the Board of Education needs to know answers to these questions before coming to a decision, that no decision would be forthcoming that night, but that the Board expects to be able to provide a decision at the next meeting on October 27<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Glassberg noted that the season start date is November 9, and it might be difficult for the club to be ready to compete by that time. The students responded that they would be content to begin practices and compete at a later date.

### **Presentation of External Audit for the Fiscal Year that ended June 20, 2015**

Robert Daniele, a partner from O'Connor Davies, the District's external audit company, came before the Board to present the results of their audit. Please click [here](#) to access the audit. Mr. Daniele reported that the District is still financially strong, and that the O'Connor Davies is delivering an unmodified, clean opinion, which is the highest level of opinion the District can receive.

Mr. Daniele reported that the district had a surplus of \$800,000 in revenue, within 1% of the total budgeted revenues, although he noted that the District is still not covering its operating expenses with revenues, but is supplementing with fund monies. He noted that the unrestricted fund balance was at \$13.2 million last year, and it is now at \$11.6 million. He cited the use of fund monies as a form of tax relief to maintain low tax rates.

Ms. Belanger thanked O'Connor Davies for its hard work on the audit, thanked the members of the Audit Committee, and pointed out that the Audit Committee is in need of community members for the 2015-16 school year. Interested parties can find more information and an application on the home page of the District's website at [www.ryeschools.org](http://www.ryeschools.org)

Ms. Belanger also noted that the District has only ever received unqualified, clean opinions from its external auditors, and Katy Glassberg thanked Mr.

Daniele for identifying the use of reserve funds as a form of tax relief for Rye residents.

### **Communications to the Board**

There were no new communications to the Board to report.

### **Gifts to the District**

The Board of Education accepted with gratitude the following gifts: a \$9,143 gift from Rye Garnets Ice Hockey, Inc. to support the JV Ice Hockey Program and a \$3,000 gift from the Rye Football Association, Rye Rugby Association, and Julia B. Fee to purchase a golf cart for the athletic trainer.

### **Information**

Policy Committee Chair Karen Belanger reported that the Immunization Policy has been extensively reviewed by the District's Director of Health, Tracey Barnett. The changes include a new immunization schedule and new requirements from the state. Ms. Belanger stated that the District is already in compliance with these regulations, but our policy must also conform to these regulations. It was noted that the District recently had a visit from a state health inspector and passed with flying colors. The policy will be up for vote at the next Board of Education meeting on October 27<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Belanger also said that she expects the District's dress code to be up for discussion at the next Board meeting, and that members of the public who wish to speak on the subject may wish to attend.

Next Regular Meeting  
October 27th, 2015  
7:30 p.m.  
Rye Middle School  
Multipurpose Room

Visit our District Website for complete information on Board of Education meetings, minutes, policies and actions: [www.ryeschools.org](http://www.ryeschools.org)

Streaming video of Board of Education meetings can be accessed on the District website. Videos should be available 2-3 days after each Board meeting. Past meeting videos are also accessible.